

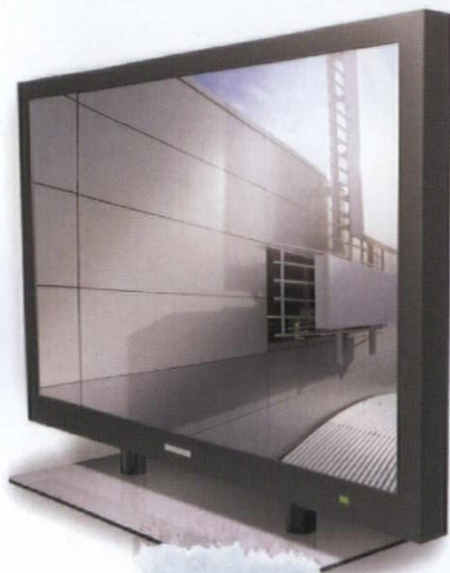


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#### Editorial enquiries

020 7505 6700

#### Editorial fax number

020 7505 6701

#### E-mail

[firstname.surname@construct.emap.com](mailto:firstname.surname@construct.emap.com)  
(isabel.allen@construct.emap.com)

#### Editor

Isabel Allen (020 7505 6709)

#### Deputy editor/Online editor

David Taylor (020 7505 6716)

#### News editor

Steven Palmer (020 7505 6715)

#### Reporter

Zoe Blackler (020 7505 6636)

#### Technical and practice editor

Austin Williams (020 7505 6711)

#### Working details editor

Susan Dawson (015242 21692)

#### Review and information editor

Andrew Mead (020 7505 6717)

#### Editor, AJ Focus/Special projects

Ruth Slavid (020 7505 6703)

#### Chief sub-editor

Paul Lindsell (020 7505 6707)

#### Sub-editor

Elizabeth Chamberlain (020 7505 6708)

#### Art editor

Mimesh Parmar (020 7505 6704)

#### Assistant art editor

Dani Hart (020 7505 6705)

#### Editorial administration

Victoria Nowell/Angela Newton (020 7505 6700)

#### Display advertising

020 7505 6823

#### Recruitment advertising

020 7505 6803

#### Advertising fax number

020 7505 6750

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Toby Redington (020 7505 6706)  
Samuel Lau (020 7505 6803)

#### Telesales manager

Malcolm Perryman (020 7505 6698)

#### Account executives

Alexandra Gill (020 7505 6816)  
James Hutchinson (020 7505 6742)  
Cristina Esposito (020 7505 6873)

#### Key account manager

Midge Myatt (tel 01902 851645)  
(fax 01902 851496)

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Lindsey Cantello (020 7505 6823)

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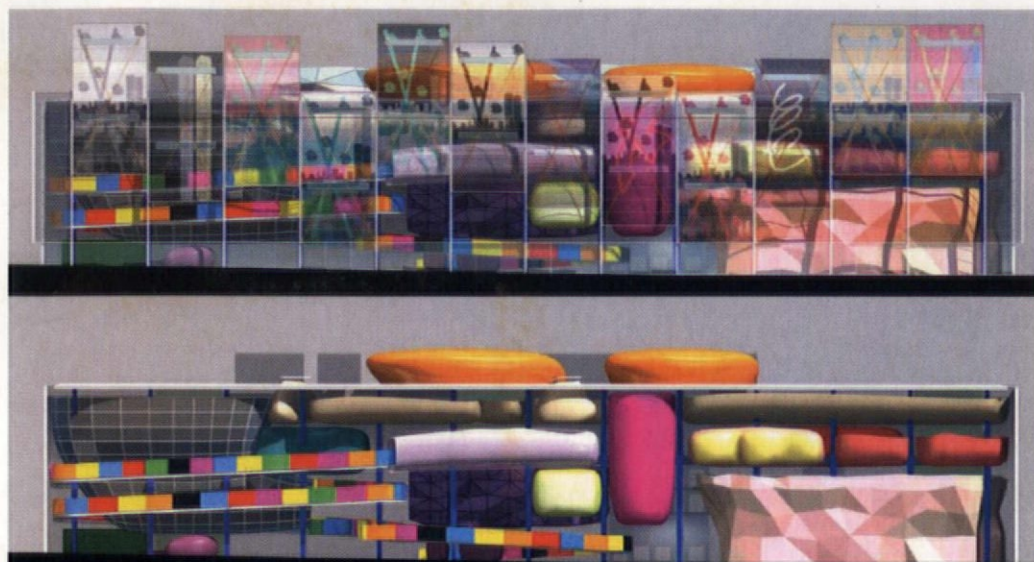
Andrew Knight (020 7505 6811)

#### Publisher

David Fox (020 7505 6735)

#### Publishing director

Paul Finch (020 7505 6702)



Will Alsop's C-Plex scheme in the West Midlands won the final go ahead last week when the Arts Council confirmed the award of a £17.4 million Lottery grant. The community arts centre project is the flagship scheme of a £200 million regeneration of West Bromwich town centre. It will house a gallery, an education centre, shops, a conference centre, cafes and restaurants. The total cost of the project is £38.8 million. The scheme had faced an uncertain future last year (AJ 19.7.01) when the Arts Council reviewed its commitment to the project. C-Plex will open in 2004. +

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Artist's house, Roche Court, near Salisbury  
Photographs by Richard Bryant/[www.arcaid.co.uk](http://www.arcaid.co.uk)

+ DENOTES MORE INFORMATION ONLINE. FOR AN ARCHIVE OF AJ ARTICLES VISIT [WWW.AJPLUS.CO.UK](http://WWW.AJPLUS.CO.UK)



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'It has earned universal acclaim, in loud voices. Even the most curmudgeonly critics seem to bite their tongues once they walk inside.'

Brian Lavery on Benson + Forsyth's Millennium Wing at the National Gallery of Ireland. *International Herald Tribune*, 9.2.02

'They work for volume house builders and design big, brash wedding cakes, but they tell everyone that all they are doing is taking Richard Rogers at his word...'

Deyan Sudjic on Broadway Malyan. *Observer*, 10.2.02

**aj** news



Wilkinson Eyre Architects has won planning approval and listed building consent for a new footbridge for the Royal Ballet School, which will span Floral Street in Covent Garden, London. +

#### SPIITALFIELDS TWEAKING

Foster and Partners will lodge a planning application for the revised Spitalfields scheme tomorrow.

#### TOWER RESEARCH LAUNCHED

EH and CABE is to commission research into the social, economic and environmental impact of tall buildings. The research was announced on the final day of the select committee hearing into tall buildings on Tuesday. The Urban Affairs sub-committee expects to publish its report by April.

#### BENNETTS SEES STARS

Bennetts Associates has won a competition held by the Edinburgh Royal Observatory to build a laboratory for its astronomical telescopes.

For the best jobs in architecture turn to page 50 or visit [www.careersinconstruction.com](http://www.careersinconstruction.com)

## Archigram wins Royal Gold Medal

Archigram, the forward-looking experimental architecture collective from the 1960s, has won the RIBA Royal Gold Medal for 2002, subject to the sanction of the institute's ruling council.

The AJ has learnt that the award to Archigram, from a nomination by past president David Rock and ahead of rumoured contenders such as Rafael Moneo, owed something to pressure from some quarters for a British winner once more. Archigram is the first from the UK to win since Colin Rowe in 1995 and will take the prize – council permitting – in the Queen's Golden Jubilee year.

Ron Herron, Peter Cook, David Greene, Dennis Crompton, Michael 'Spider' Webb and Warren Chalk formed the Archigram group in London in 1961 and produced a radical, influential magazine of the same name over the 12 years they worked together. Since then, their thinking, built from the era of the Beatles, space exploration, science fiction, Telstar, new materials, Buckminster Fuller and Pop Art has been widespread and influential for generations of key architects. An exhibition on their work has toured the world and may move to the RIBA towards the end of this year.

RIBA president and chair of the RGM judges Paul Hyett said he was 'thrilled' at the choice, which he thought would be deeply popular with the profession. 'Even today, the work of Archigram reflects a freshness, a courage and a creativity that is simply mind-blowing,' he said. 'Those guys started in the days of the Mini car, mini-skirt and the dawn of a mini-technology; they were tremendously exciting times. Their love and passion for architecture and their insatiable desire to posit alternative futures for our society, such as Ron Herron's tantalising images of Walking City, still dazzle and delight today.'

The Walking City (see pages 6-7) was perhaps the most famous of Archigram's work – often expressed using colourful pop imagery – along with the Plug-in City, Living Pod and the Instant City, while the group's gurus were Buckminster Fuller and Ornette Coleman. Rock's citation said the Archigram Effect 'has been to instill a mood of optimism, so that, however it turns out, a piece of work will not worry too much about justification.'

Rock said the phenomenon of Archigram – the name comes from ARCHItecture and teleGRAM – and exemplifies their belief that architecture is a form of communication – was a fitting and unanimous choice for the beginning of the 21st century. This was because of the group's 'mixture of enthusiasm, optimism, debunking, imagination, harnessing awareness of the boundary-breaking realities of the sciences and arts outside, or on the edge of, architecture. While part of history, Archigram's messages can be interpreted for the future.'

Many of the group's ideas have percolated into today's world. Archigram's 'bugged' walls, implanted with electronic controls, have become today's 'smart glass', programmed to respond to temperature and light. The 'robotics' in its designs looked to the increase in electronic automation, while its 'information centres' predated the Internet.

The jury this year was: Sir Terry Farrell, Piers Gough, Eva Jiricna, Rick Mather, Mohsen Mostafavi and Lord Rogers of Riverside – whose Pompidou Centre owes a debt to the work of Archigram and Cedric Price.

The institute will present the surviving members of Archigram – Cook, Crompton, Greene

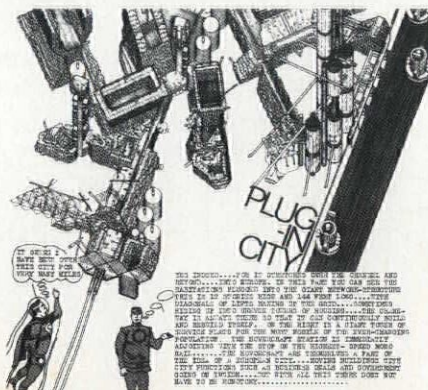
and Webb – with the medal at a special ceremony on 3 December. Fittingly, this will take place alongside the RIBA's Presidents' Medals for education and the biennial Annie Spink prize for 'outstanding contribution to architectural education' – for which Peter Cook was a frontrunner in 2000 and may be again this year.

It is the fifth time the institute has given the medal to a group – the others being Powell and Moya (1974), the office of Charles and Ray Eames (1979), Michael and Patti Hopkins (1994) and the City of Barcelona (1999).

The Queen personally approves the recipient's name every year – RIBA council was expected to endorse the Archigram choice at its meeting yesterday.

David Taylor

● See Archigram special on pages 6-7. Read the full citation, list of previous winners and view more images at [ajplus.co.uk](http://ajplus.co.uk) +





**'It's like being a writer. Being good at journalism is not the same as being a Whitbread Prize winner.'**

Broadway Malyan director Peter Crossley on his practice's work. *Observer*, 10.2.02

**'Who would have thought that Seifert's Centre Point, a mean-spirited awkward crib of Marcel Breuer, that used to symbolise all that was worst about rapacious office development, would turn into a listed building?'**

Deyan Sudjic. *Observer*, 10.2.02

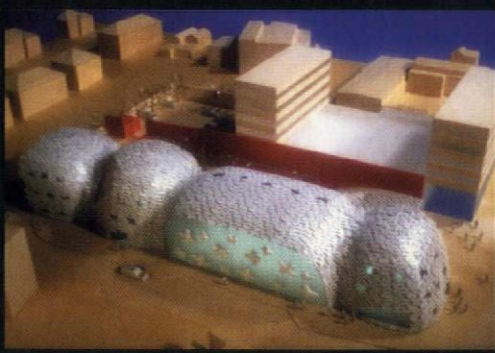
**'The colours are cacophonous, the forms ungainly. It is like a Happy Eater on acid.'**

Design Museum director Alice Rawsthorn on the Lowry. *Guardian*, 11.2.02

+ FOR A DAILY NEWS FEED ON THE LATEST ARCHITECTURAL STORIES GO TO [AJPLUS.CO.UK](http://AJPLUS.CO.UK)



Alsop Architects has submitted a planning application to the London Borough of Brent for this £9.5 million health and community centre for the Stonebridge Housing Action Trust. The scheme provides a new health centre, community centre, shops and car park. Although functionally separate buildings, the health and community centre present a single strong architectural form on the tight sloping urban site. It takes the form of four undulating structures – these 'shells' protect the multi-functional space and are clad with vitreous enamel free-form 'petal' panels.



## Bishopsgate listing crisis threatens East London line

The future of the planned East London line was in jeopardy this week as culture secretary Tessa Jowell considered listing railway arches at the Bishopsgate Goods Yard.

With a decision due as the AJ went to press, the Strategic Rail Authority (SRA) warned that, without a station at Bishopsgate, the project could be scrapped – including the extra stations at Hoxton, Haggerston, Dalston and Queen's Road, Peckham.

The controversy follows a recommendation from English Heritage that the arches should be protected. EH believes the 1839 Braithwaite Viaduct is a 'benchmark' for railway architecture and a 'substantial and important heritage asset'. Prince Charles' architectural foundation is among the organisations pushing for a reprieve for the yard,

which is scheduled for demolition later this year.

Jon Bootland, the foundation's director of 'regeneration and policy, said the move was designed to play for time while it explored an alternative approach to the site: 'The last thing we would want is for the East London line not to go ahead. But why not reuse the existing structure?'

The row looks set to escalate, with rumours circulating that the lord mayor of London has met with the Prince to criticise him for intervening.

Meanwhile, the current tenant at the arches, events organiser Bill Bailey, has said he will be seeking a judicial review of the decision to evict him. He claimed the SRA was acting prematurely by demolishing the goods yard – before it had put in place the funding needed to build the East London line.

The SRA has said it is determined that the stations will be of the highest architectural quality.

Zoë Blackler

### EH IN STRIKE BALLOT

Workers at English Heritage are to be balloted for strikes over pay, threatening delays to planning applications involving listed buildings. Around 500 staff are being urged to support industrial action in protest at the imposition of a 3.5 per cent pay rise. Their union, Prospect, said popular tourist attractions run by English Heritage including Stonehenge and Battle Abbey would be hit by any action. +

### BANKING ON WEMBLEY

Barclays Bank and HSBC are understood to have agreed to a £400 million loan to enable the Football Association to start work on the Foster and Partners/HOK Sport-designed £715 million Wembley Stadium redevelopment.

### MIPIM AWARDS NOMINATIONS

A shortlist of 18 projects has been announced for the MIPIM Awards competition. UK nominations are Swanke Hayden Connell International for GSK House in Brentford; Falconer Chester for the Liverpool Marriott Hotel South; and Broadway Malyan for the Emerald Safari Resort in South Africa. MIPIM participants will vote for the winner during the event (12-15 March).

### Q&A

# 63%

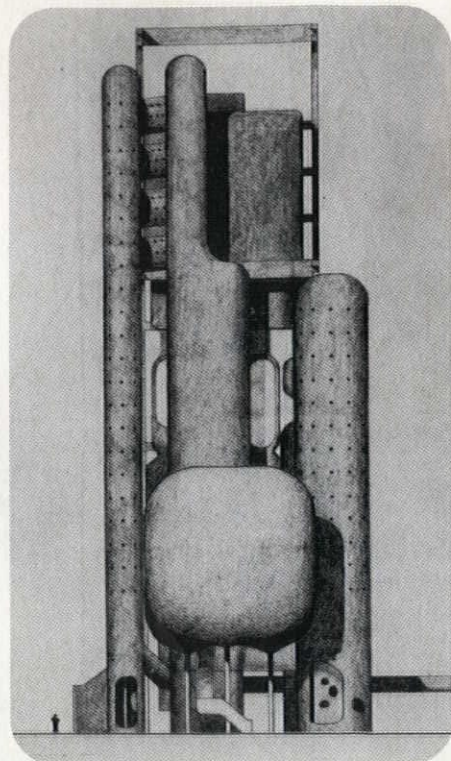
... of voters in a poll on the AJ's website think Ken Livingstone should be given greater powers to intervene in local planning decisions.  
Respondents: 46

This week's question:  
Who should win next year's Royal Gold Medal?

+ Register your view at  
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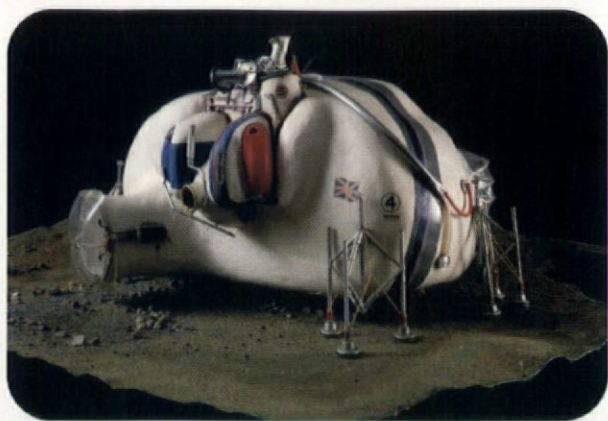
The distinctly Yellow Submarine-esque Seaside Bubbles, leisure study, Ron Herron, Archigram 1966



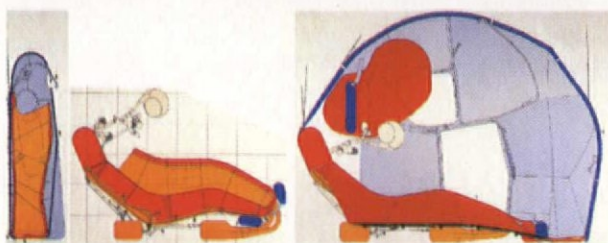
# Archigram:

In the early 60s Herron and Chalk had just designed the Hayward Gallery and Queen Elizabeth Hall complex with the young Crompton when Theo Crosby poached them from the GLC for a huge development project. In turn they suggested bringing in Cook and Greene and Webb, who had just published some of their work in an early issue of *Archigram*. Crosby's project eventually folded but the

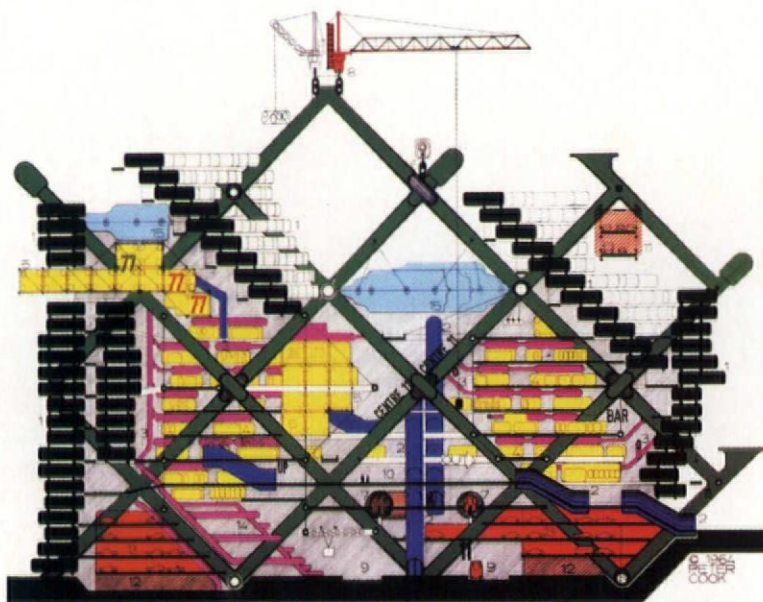




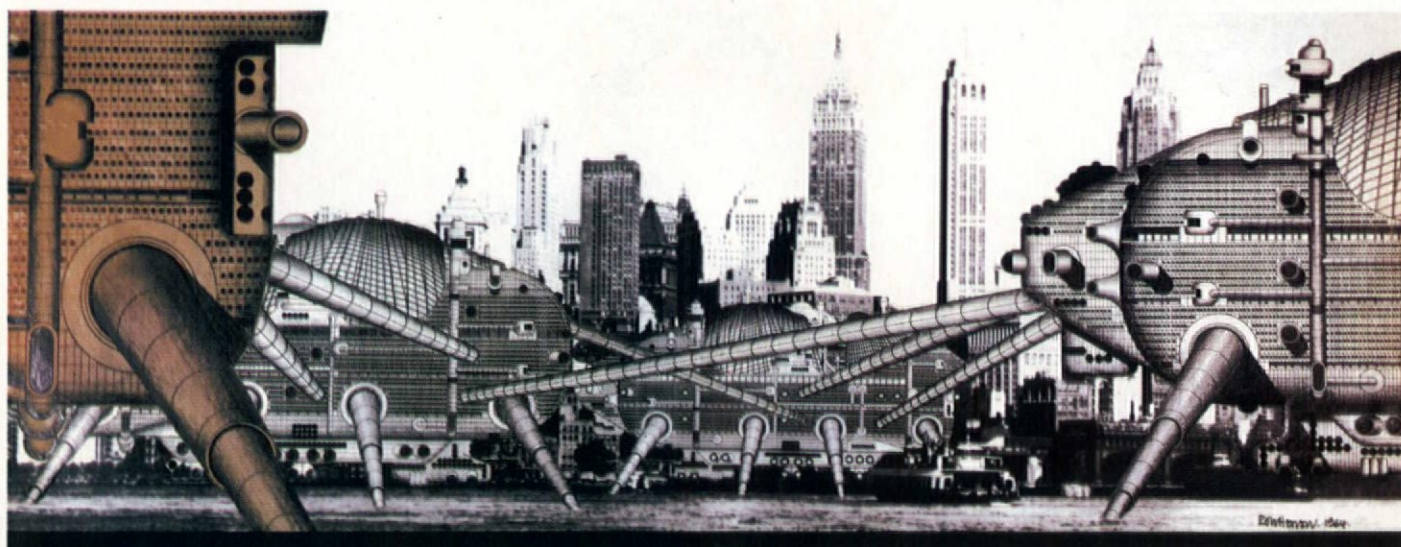
Model, Living Pod, David Greene, Archigram 1966. House as living pod and attached machines, using the paradigms of trailer homes and prefabs.



Three phases of the Cushicle, Michael Webb, Archigram 1966. It allows a man to carry a complete environment on his back.



Typical section, Plug-In City, Peter Cook, Archigram 1964. Below: Walking City in New York, Ron Herron, Archigram, 1964. Mobile architecture.



EACH WALKING UNIT HOUSES NOT ONLY A KEY ELEMENT OF THE CAPITAL, BUT ALSO A LARGE POPULATION OF WORLD TRAVELLER-WORKERS.

## A WALKING CITY

# necessary irritants

group flowered for the whole of the sixties and the first few years of the seventies, publishing their ideas not only in *Archigram* but in Monica Pidgeon's *Architectural Design*. The name of the magazine stuck as a collective name for the six.

At the time, a bunch of young architects helped with drawings and lurked around the living room of whoever had a project going. Cedric Price acted as a kind of hands-off guru figure and Reyner Banham, who lived with his family across the road from the Cooks in Swiss Cottage, distributed copies of *Archigram* during his lecture tours around the world and provided approving but independent commentary.

In Peter Cook's 1972 instant history of the group Banham wrote, 'Theoretic propositions? You must be joking... Archigram is short on theory, long on draughtsmanship and craftsmanship. They're in the image

business and they have been blessed with the power to create some of the most compelling images of our times.' Herron's *Walking City* (actually first titled *Cities Moving* and based on a kind of hovercraft motive power) has turned into the defining image of the arts of 60s Britain.

Their extraordinary influence on students and young architects was, one suspects, partly because of the packaging of the stunningly drawn, brilliantly left-field ideas. Probably more important was that they were never particularly prescriptive. Where the propositions of contemporaries such as Yona Friedman and Super Studio and even Habraken ultimately relied on people handing over to architects most of their rights of self-determination, Archigram offered some nice ideas which people could, if they liked them, incorporate into their own lives.

Sutherland Lyall

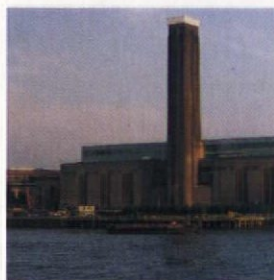


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#### FOSTERS AND ARUP PLAY SAFE

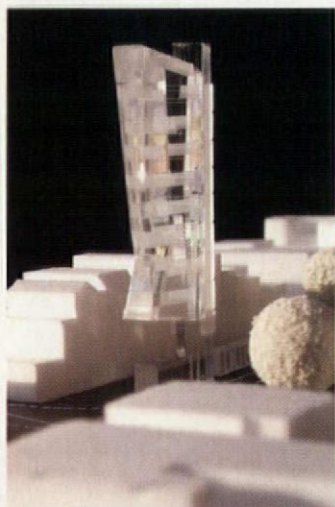
Foster and Partners and the Arup Group have launched an industry-led Health and Safety Design Forum (London). It will focus on the importance of health and safety as an integral part of design work. It will promote the exchange of information, share good practice and provide innovative ways to improve the management of health and safety by designers in the London area. Details are available from james.preston-hood@arup.com or Thouria Istephan at Foster and Partners on 020 7738 0455. +

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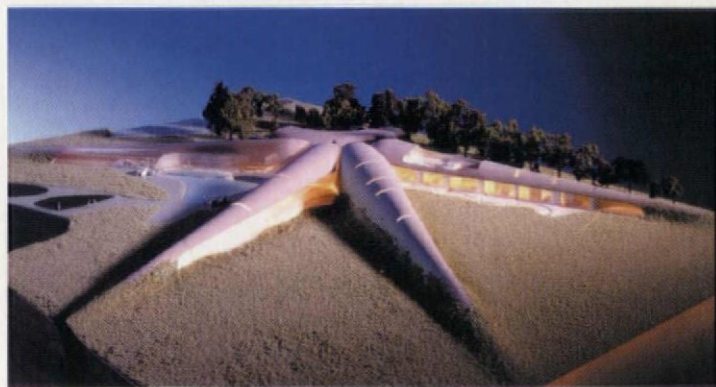
Peter Rennison Public Relations has become the first PR consultancy to be approved by the RIBA to join its CPD Providers Network. The agency will run a series of seminars on public and media relations for architects. Further information is available from 01442 245030.

#### WTC MODEL SAVED

The US Museum Loan Network has awarded a \$45,000 (£32,000) grant to The Skyscraper Museum to support the conservation of the only full architectural model of the World Trade Center complex in existence.



Kiran Curtis Architects has submitted this 'Tree House' project in east London for planning. The £750,000 project was commissioned by Taja Enterprises – a group of local companies – to provide a cultural gateway to Whitechapel Market. The building provides accommodation for a new web radio station, a public viewing gallery, several small IT incubator units for new software design-related companies plus a cafe and restaurant. +



Ushida Findlay Architects unveiled its 2,300m<sup>2</sup> Grafton New Hall scheme on Tuesday – winner of the RIBA Modern Country House competition. The brief called for reinterpretation of the English country house on a 46ha site in Cheshire. The practice opted for an 'organic' design 'offering an alternative to the tired old townie cliché of minimalism'. +

## Southwark threatens Mayor Livingstone with legal action

Southwark council is considering legal action against Ken Livingstone following his decision to block plans for the £22 million City Academy in Bermondsey.

The move came as the council became desperate to green light the 1,200-pupil school. The borough has a dire lack of secondary school places and is also concerned that the Corporation of London, one of the school's backers, could pull out if the scheme is delayed. Foster and Partners, Studio E, Nicholas Grimshaw and Partners and Jestico + Whiles have already been shortlisted for the project (AJ 7.2.02).

London mayor Livingstone rejected the proposal last week on the grounds that it would set a dangerous precedent – it is sited on a 3ha green-field site, Paterson Park. He said he understood the need for a school, but 'building it on a site which would take away a park from local people is unacceptable'. The mayor promised to help the borough find an alternative site.

However, his aid was dismissed as costly and pointless. Stephanie Elsy, Southwark council leader, said: 'We are appalled at the mayor's behaviour on this. We must get on with building this school.'

She added that the council believed Livingstone had 'exceeded his powers as mayor' and that his decision had overlooked the fact that the new school will include leisure and educational facilities which will be open to the community.

A spokesman for the Corporation of London described the mayor's decision as 'exasperating' and added: 'We are considering our options. This could turn into a costly and lengthy process. It's all a bit galling really – half of the site is derelict and the park is a mess and barely used.'

A Southwark planning office spokesperson added: 'We've looked at all the alternative sites. This is the best one. The mayor's advisors will just

go over the same ground we have – and probably come to the same conclusion.'

On Tuesday, Coral Newell, chair of the City Academy action committee, organised a demonstration by local children who could not get secondary school places last September.

Steven Palmer

## Wanted: one more 'grace' for Liverpool waterfront

Liverpool is to launch an international competition to find an architect for a Fourth Grace for the city's famous Mersey waterfront.

City leaders are hoping to attract a major player to design the building, which will sit next to the existing Three Graces – the Edwardian icons that made Liverpool's Pier Head a symbol of the city.

The North West Development Agency (NWD) last week bought the 2.5ha Mann Island site. The agency – along with Liverpool Vision and a forum of public and private figures – has been considering the plans for over a year. It is developing a brief for the competition, which will be announced next month.

Baron Isherwood, NWD director of regeneration, said the building will provide a major public space, that will improve the city's image and help with its bid for World Heritage Site status.

'We have been looking to Sydney and Bilbao, and considering how to emulate that,' Isherwood said. 'The first Three Graces were all office buildings that reflected the important businesses of the time – shipping and trade. The Fourth Grace should be a building that reflects Liverpool today, with an emphasis on education and tourism.'

Alistair Macdonald, project surveyor at Liverpool Vision, added that the site was internationally important and an architect of international stature should be sought.

But architect Peter Hunter, who has produced a design for the site, argued that the graces were all designed by local architects. 'It would be good for a young Liverpudlian to do it,' he said.


#### RA ARCHITECTURE AWARDS – CALL FOR ENTRIES

The AJ/Bovis Lend Lease Awards, for the best architectural work in the Royal Academy Summer Show, take place again this year. The awards, which have been made annually for the past 20 years, are worth a total of £15,000. The premier prize, for the best piece in the show, is worth £10,000, while a £5,000 prize goes to the best work by a first-time exhibitor. In each case, the award will be made for a project rather than a completed building. Winners and a selection of other entries will be published in the AJ.

Judges this year include Graham Stirk of Richard Rogers Partnership (last year's premier winner), and academician and AJ columnist Will Alsop.

All work appearing in the RA show is considered by the award judges. Entry forms for inclusion in the show are available from: Summer Exhibition Office, Royal Academy, Burlington Gardens, Piccadilly, London W1V 0DS. A stamped-addressed envelope is required. The deadline for completed entry forms is 28 March.



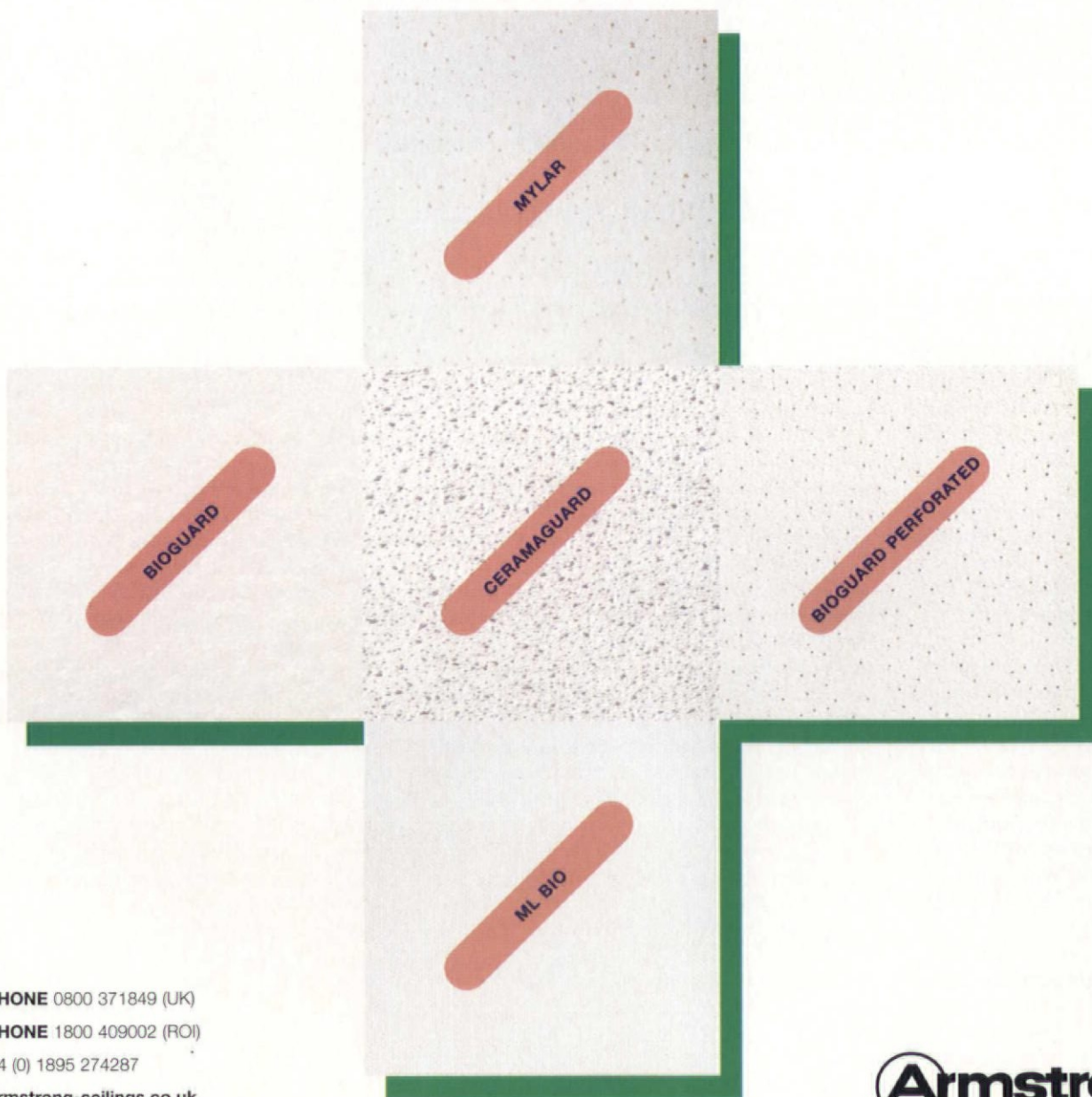
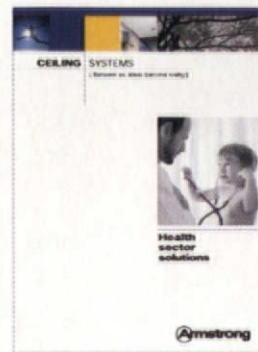


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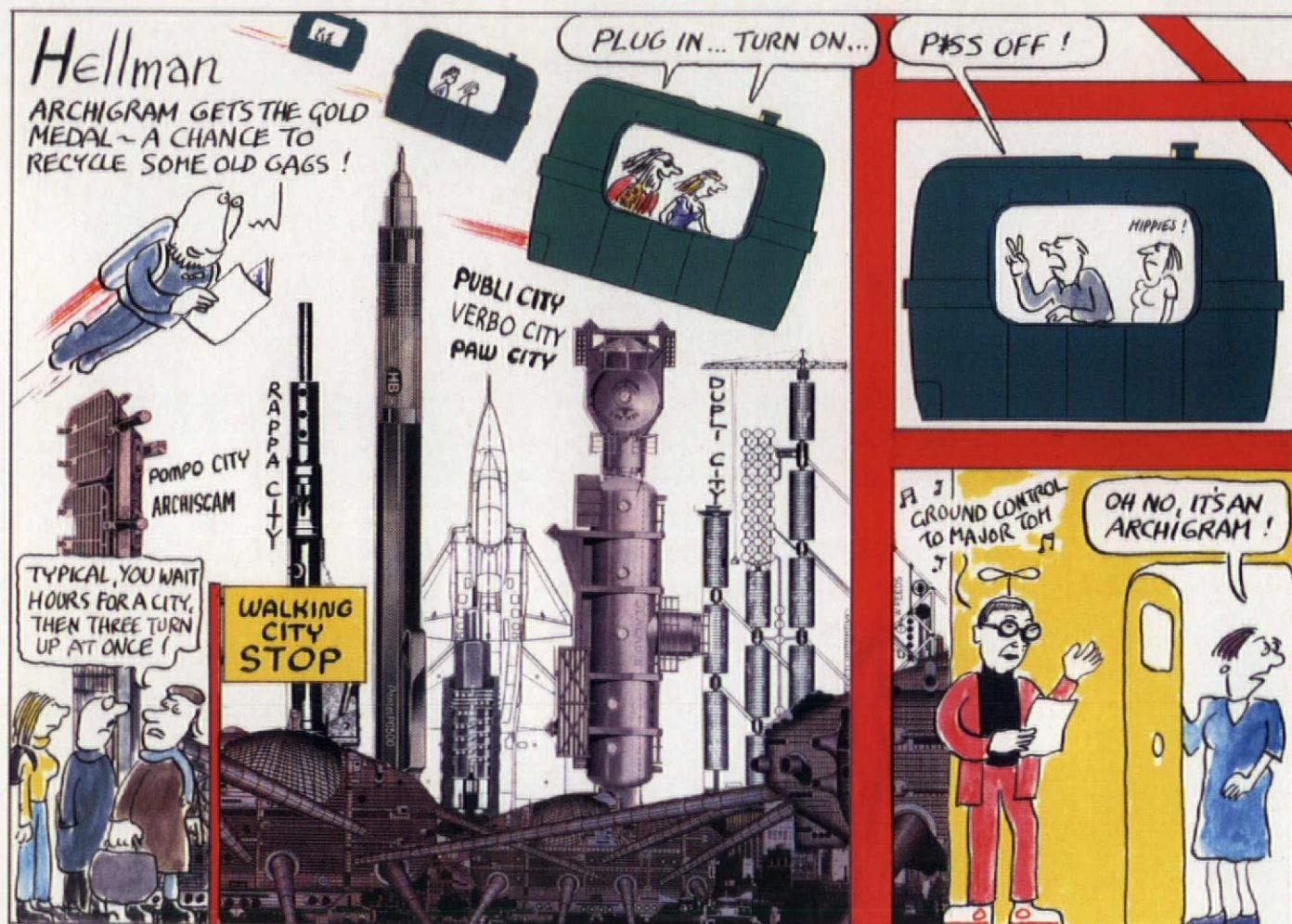
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## vital statistics

- Romantic Britons are set to spend £503 million on Valentine's Day. The research from Yorkshire Bank estimates that: £18.6 million will be spent on cards; £35.3 million on chocolates; £139.8 million on flowers; £14.2 on lingerie; and £35.5 on fragrances.
- The cost of the average UK home is £100,000, according to the Halifax. The first house price survey, held in 1956, revealed an average of £2,230.
- London's West End is the most expensive area to rent property in the world according to a survey from property services company DTZ. The West End average is £1,000/m<sup>2</sup>. The second spot is taken by the City of London (£890/m<sup>2</sup>) and central Tokyo came in third (£741/m<sup>2</sup>).
- 63 per cent of small- and medium-sized businesses are now online. The figures from telecom watchdog Ofcom showed an 8 per cent increase from last May.

## Clare Melhuish reviews...

### Joseph Rykwert's social and urban history of Rome

The second in Joseph Rykwert's three-part Jane Jacobs lecture series, 'Anthropology and the City', focused on the development of ancient Rome. It dealt with the city's growth over the centuries into an urban image more familiar to us today as the iconic model for the 'world city' of our time. This latter subject will form the basis of the third and final lecture in the series (see next week's column).

The lectures are named in honour of Jane Jacobs, 'the individual who in the 20th century most encouraged the discussion between visual design and social life of cities'. But Rykwert's discourse on Rome seemed rather lacking in social content. In that sense, the proposed connection with anthropology seems somewhat misleading, particularly when one considers anthropology's limited interest in historical, even documentary, research. The core of the discipline lies in fieldwork, primarily social observation. Although archaeology may be a close ally, this does present problems of engagement with historically obsolete cultures.

Neither did Rykwert make any direct reference to anthropological theory or research, citing only the biologist Peter Wilson in support of a very loose description of his approach. One based in 'the story of culture... me and the world', and 'the development of the ability to symbolise, make metaphor... the condition of language'. This provided the starting point of the lecture in a brief

discussion of 'the notion of archetype', the squaring of the circle, which supplied the basic schema for the ancient Roman city plan. This can also be traced through various forms of human material culture of the ancient period, such as the decorative schema of Neolithic pots.

Rykwert's discussion developed into what was essentially a social and urban history of Rome, illustrated by maps. It would no doubt have interested Jane Jacobs, in view of her antipathy to the concept of formal planning, for Rykwert pointed out that, in its earliest form, Rome was far from being a centralised, rationalised city. The key public focus, the forum – and the 'biggest pedestrian space in the world' – was in fact located outside the main boundaries of the settlement. And public space in general was made up out of 'leftovers' in which people might congregate.

This was the 'essential element of urban life – coming together', rather than any formally imposed notion of political order. This only happened much later in the city's history, argues Rykwert. At a point when the invention of perspective, combined with that of artillery, led to what he regards, along Jacobsian lines, as a 'deformation' of the city. The development of a new urban model, comprising a central space with avenues radiating out to peripheral bastions, led to the revamping of Rome 'on new perspectival lines', and it is this, suggests Rykwert – the city as gridded island – which has dominated – and deformed? – urban history to the present day.

Joseph Rykwert's lecture, *The City in Perspective: defensible space, columns, and obelisks*, was hosted by the Cities Programme at the LSE



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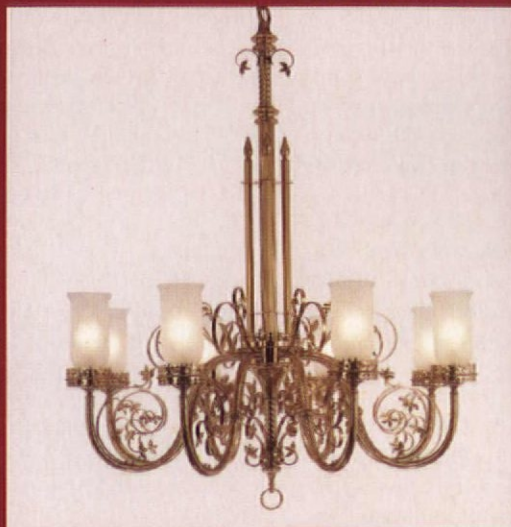
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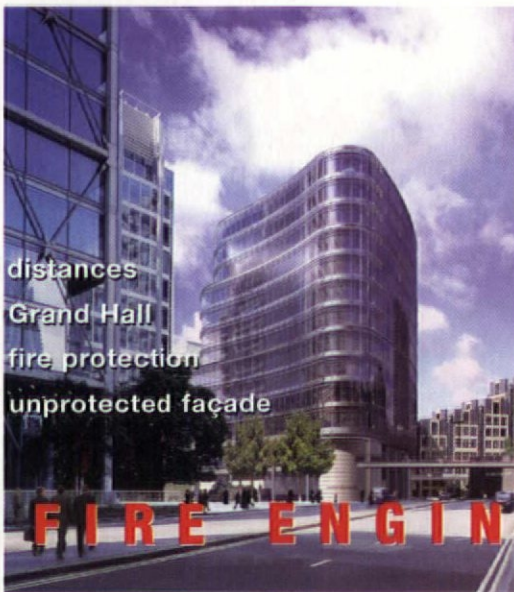
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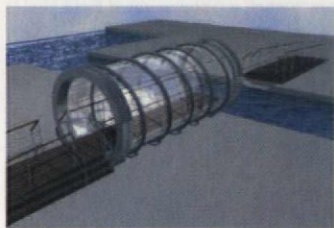
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Three new bridges have been unveiled for Paddington Basin, London. The largest, Station Bridge, is designed by Langlands & Bell and engineered by Atelier One. Thomas Heatherwick, who recently completed his artwork 'Blue Carpet' in Newcastle, will design the second bridge. It will connect two wings of the Richard Rogers Partnership-designed Waterside building. The East Bridge (pictured) will link Praed Street to Edgware Road and is designed by artist Marcus Taylor and engineered by Buro Happold. +

#### PICK EVERARD WINS AWARD

Leicester practice Pick Everard has won a Prestige Access Award and commendation for its Sainsbury's supermarkets in Ballymena and Craigavon in Northern Ireland. The William Keown Trust gives the award to recognise architectural vision in improving access to buildings for the disabled.

#### PRACTICES TAKE BATH

A consortium consisting of Geofrey Reid Associates, M3 Associates, Whitby Bird & Partners and Roger Preston & Partners has won the commission to refurbish part of the University of Bath campus. The team will redesign the 10,000m<sup>2</sup> 4 West building, which is home to the departments of chemistry, chemical engineering and physics.

#### NWDA ARTS FUND LAUNCHED

The Northwest Development Agency (NWDA) has launched a Public Arts Strategy with a fund of £565,000. The programme will aim to enhance the image of the area and aid urban regeneration. Further information is available from [www.nwda.co.uk](http://www.nwda.co.uk)

#### POWER HOUSE

London practice Forge Llewellyn has unveiled its prototype 'Energy House' for the West Kent Housing Association. The brief for the three-bedroom house in Kemsing, Kent was to tackle the costs of day-to-day living for tenants. The £112,000 design is expected to guarantee residents' heating and water bills at no more than £160 per year. +

## Architects scoop £8.8bn rail design work bonanza

WS Atkins, Acanthus Lawrence & Wrightson, Pascall + Watson, Ruddle Wilkinson, and Design Research Unit have won huge transport infrastructure deals following landmark decisions on the future of the London Underground and Crossrail.

Stephen Byers cleared the Public Private Partnership (PPP) deal for the London Underground last week. The part privatisation of the network promises £16 billion of investment in the creaking system over 15 years. The operation of the trains will remain in the public sector, but the maintenance and refurbishment of the rest of the system will be carried out by the private sector. Two consortia will be responsible for this – Tube Lines and Metronet. Some £3.5 billion has been earmarked for station development.

WS Atkins – the UK's second largest practice in last year's AJ100 – will deal with most of the design work for Metronet. The group will be responsible for the Circle and District, Metropolitan, Bakerloo, Victoria and Central lines. A spokesperson for WS Atkins told the AJ: 'We have a huge level of design experience in this area and will deal with a significant amount of the design.'

Tube Lines has appointed Acanthus Lawrence & Wrightson to deal with the design for the Piccadilly line; Pascall + Watson for the Jubilee line; and Ruddle Wilkinson for the Northern line. A spokesperson for Tube Lines said the total value of the design work for the three lines is expected to be in the region of £450 million.

Meanwhile, Lambeth practice Design Research Unit has won the commission to design the Crossrail Line 2 scheme, formerly known as the Chelsea-Hackney Line. The cost of implementing the scheme is projected at around £5.3 billion.

The practice has been briefed to come up with designs for 15 'innovative stations' on the line. The project will improve transport links between north London and south-west London and is intended to act as a catalyst to aid urban regeneration throughout the area. +

Steven Palmer



Wilkinson Eyre Architects has won planning permission for this £100m mixed-use scheme in Aldgate, London. The 47,000m<sup>2</sup> project involves a remodelling of an existing 1980s building to provide an extra floor, extended floor plates and retail space at ground level. There will also be a 16-storey new build block to the east of the site. A glazed skin will unify the existing and new build portions.

## Top practices battle for St Thomas' Hospital scheme

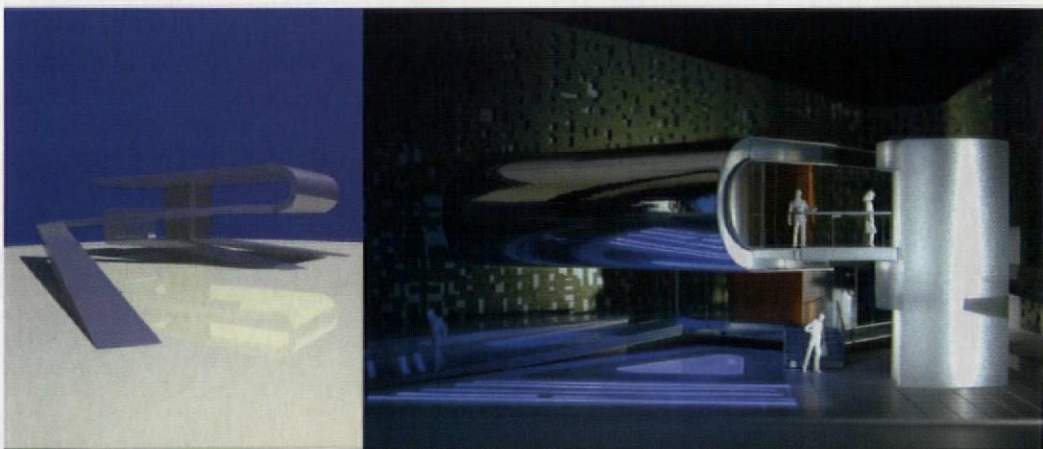
Four architectural heavyweights are competing to design a signature building for St Thomas' Hospital in London. Guy's and St Thomas' Charitable Foundation has drawn up the shortlist from submissions to a competition launched last year.

The identity of the four 'extremely well-known internationally and well-respected' architects will not be announced until the autumn.

The trust hopes the scheme – for a key 1.2ha site at Founder's Place opposite the main hospital building – will use 'statement architecture' to 'set new standards for key worker accommodation'.

The scheme will provide 400 key worker units with additional private residential units to help finance the project. There will be a 22-bed facility for the families of sick children visiting the Evelina Children's Hospital by Michael Hopkins and Partners, and a day nursery for children of NHS staff.

St Thomas' hopes to announce the winning bid in October.



Sheppard Robson has won planning permission from the London Borough of Camden for this 'amenity module' on the 4 ha Regent's Place scheme. The module is a freestanding Z-shaped structure with a metallic surface. It sits between new office buildings on the site providing eating, drinking and service facilities for the growing local business community. It is split over two levels – on the lower level there is a bar and on the upper level a restaurant. The architects have designed a cantilevered canopy suspended over the entrance. Links between floors are provided internally by a spiral staircase and externally by a multi-purpose lift, housed in a drum-shaped structure clad in a perforated metal screen. +



# REVITALIZING THE EUROPEAN CITY

Cities are in crisis, some collapsing, others exploding. The AR's conference on Revitalizing The European City will provide a wide range of ideas and projects from some of today's most creative and provocative urban thinkers: architects, planners and landscape designers. Distinguished speakers will come from both the Continent and the UK to focus on the crises that face almost all European cities: pollution, deracination, decay, congestion, disintegration, destruction. Discussion will reveal the remarkable variety of built and unbuilt proposals for healing urban sores and scars. And how to make the city a wondrous place to live in again. As Europeans, we can share experiences and ideas, and learn from the masters. Find out more at [www.arplus.com](http://www.arplus.com)

*Speakers will include:*

**RENZO PIANO** (Genoa and Paris)

Piano has designed an astonishing range of buildings from Kansai, the vast airport in Osaka Bay, Japan, to Potsdamer Platz, Berlin, landmark of the reunited city.

**DAVID MACKAY** (Barcelona)

David Mackay is partner of MBM, Barcelona, the practice that showed how a run-down city could become an example of urban regeneration to all of Europe.

**MEINHARD VON GERKAN** (Hamburg)

Partner in von Gerkan & Marg, with great experience in inner-city building. At the moment, the firm is working on the mighty Lehrter Bahnhof in Berlin.

**NIELS TORP** (Oslo)

Torp's work ranges from sensitive housing to reconstruction of a major city centre quarter, Akerbrygge, perhaps the most successful mixed-use urban development of the last quarter century.

**NICHOLAS GRIMSHAW** (London)

Grimshaw has a record of innovative urban building ranging from Sainsbury's in Camden, to the controversial high-rise Paddington Basin scheme in central London.

**GERT WINGÅRDH** (Stockholm)

Wingårdh is perhaps the most brilliant of the young Swedes who are trying to lead the country's architecture out of the dark pit into which it had been dragged for quarter of a century by the domination of bureaucrats and contractors.

**LOUISA HUTTON** (Berlin and London)

A partner in Sauerbruch & Hutton, Louisa Hutton is one of the most dynamic architects of her generation. The practice has made important urban contributions to Berlin and other German cities.

**ADRIAAN GEUZE** (Rotterdam)

Geuze is a partner in West 8, a remarkable urban design and landscape practice that has already made imaginative impacts on European townscapes.

**JOHN MCASLAN** (London)

McAslan combines experience of working with historic urban structures, like the De La Warr Pavilion in Bexhill, with new work. Projects like the Yapi Kredi Bank in Turkey are underpinned by technological invention and sensitivity to place.

**DAVID CHIPPERFIELD** (London)

David Chipperfield Architects has worked on urban schemes worldwide. Among their projects is the Neues Museum on Museumsinsel, Berlin. They are working on Venice's San Michele Cemetery extension and the Palace of Justice in Salerno.

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# competitions

## RIBA-APPROVED

Details of RIBA-approved competitions are available from the RIBA Competitions Office, 6 Melbourne Street, Leeds LS2 7PS, tel 0113 234 1335, fax 0113 246 0744, e-mail [riba.competitions@mail.riba.org](mailto:riba.competitions@mail.riba.org)

## OTHERS

### SCHOOLS AND HOUSING

The National Assembly for Wales requires the provision of architectural, quantity surveying and building surveying services. Contact the National Assembly for Wales, Procurement Unit, Cathays Park, Cardiff CF10 3NQ, tel (029) 20 80 14 06, fax (029) 20 82 56 38. Application by 27.2.02.

### SPORTS CENTRE IN LEICESTER

Braunstone Leisure Centre is a proposed new sports and leisure centre including swimming pools, sports hall and fitness suite with all ancillary facilities. Leicester City Council, c/o Mace Ltd, 12th Floor, Block A, New Walk Centre, Welford Place, Leicester LE1 6ZG. Peter Gibson-Leitch, tel (0116) 252 73 14, e-mail: [ccoake@mace.co.uk](mailto:ccoake@mace.co.uk), fax (0116) 252 73 32. Application by 4.3.02 (12.00pm).

### BBC CONSTRUCTION MANAGER

Construction manager for a major project (80,000m<sup>2</sup>) including extensive new build plus refurbishment to a listed building. The construction manager will undertake the works acting as principal contractor as defined under the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 1994. Contact BBC, Broadcasting House, Portland Place, London W1A 1AA. Application to Miss H Dawtrey, BBC Property, BBC, Room 404, 16 Langham Street, London W1A 1AA, tel 020 7765 1014, fax 020 7765 0726. Application by 4.3.02.

● Richard Haut operates the weekly 'competitions' e-mail service – telling architects about thousands of projects that they can apply for across Britain, Ireland and Europe. Tel 0033 6 73 75 02 76, e-mail [hautrichard@hotmail.com](mailto:hautrichard@hotmail.com). Web: [communities.msn.com/RichardHautcompetitions](http://communities.msn.com/RichardHautcompetitions)



SOM has won detailed planning permission for its New Providence Wharf scheme. The project consists of a crescent of 550 apartments facing the river and flanked by a block of 130 key worker homes, a 50,000m<sup>2</sup> office block and a 400-room hotel. The site is located opposite the Millennium Dome, Greenwich, London.

## Interpreters slam £22m Fosters building as 'pointless'

Interpreters have labelled their working conditions in Foster and Partners' Congress Centre in Valencia, Spain, as among the worst in the world.

The £22 million Congress Centre, completed in 1998 and known locally as 'The Titanic', has been billed as a state-of-the-art international conference facility.

But experienced interpreter Tore Fauske told the AJ that fellow workers agree the building is flawed: 'If any professional interpreter was consulted in connection with the design,' he said, 'their advice was certainly totally disregarded.'

Fauske, who worked in the building for the first time last year, compared it to the 'abysmally awful' conditions at the National Conference Centre in Birmingham.

'Sitting in the meeting hall in Valencia, the design may look good, but it's pretty pointless from our point of view,' he said. 'If good looks is all that matters, fine. But is not good architecture about more than just good looks?'

Fauske claims the orientation of the interpreters' booths, which are positioned sideways on, restricts crucial views of the delegates speaking on the stage below.

However, Foster's project architect Juan Vieira-Pardo claimed he was unaware of any complaints. He said he had consulted the International Association of Conference Interpreters and the arrangement of the booths was 'completely normal' and responded to the function of the building.

He added that the International Association of Congress Centres had named the structure as the third best conference building in the world.

Zoë Blackler

## Fired RIBA director awarded honorary fellowship

The RIBA has awarded Peter Gibbs-Kennet, the ex-RIBA director of education, an honorary fellowship – despite his dismissal from the post of director of education and practice in 1995.

Gibbs-Kennet was given the elbow following an ill-fated restructure of departments suggested by the then director general Dr Alex Reid. The affair led to Gibbs-Kennet leaving the post at two weeks' notice. However, the honour was to acknowledge his overall services to education. He was responsible for reforming and extending the RIBA's examination system and the validation of

architectural courses in the UK and overseas.

An honorary fellowship also went to English Heritage chairman Sir Neil Cossons, for his work on key UK arts, museum and heritage projects.

The not-so-wobbly Millennium Bridge is also highlighted in the honours, with fellowships going to some of the structure's Arup engineering team – Arup directors Tony Fitzpatrick and Cecil Balmond and ex-Arup director Professor Chris Wise.

David Nelson, partner at Foster and Partners, Paul Williams, partner at Stanton Williams, and Frances and John Sorrell are nominated for services to design and architecture. The Sorrells were the clients for The Lawns – Eldridge Smerin's £1.1 million reworking of a 1950s Leonard Manasseh house which was shortlisted for last year's Stirling Prize.

The nominations will be confirmed at RIBA council this week. President Paul Hyett said: 'This profession's work is heavily dependent on those whose belief and interest in architecture enriches its outcomes. We enjoy their loyalty, courage and commitment and it is a privilege to be able to award honorary fellowships to a wide range of people who've each contributed in a very special way.'

This year's jury was made up of Sir Terry Farrell, Piers Gough, Eva Jiricna, Rick Mather, Moshen Mostafavi and Lord Rogers.

The full list of honorary fellowships and citations can be seen online at [www.ajplus.co.uk](http://www.ajplus.co.uk) +



Panter Hudspith Architects has won detailed planning consent for its £8.2 million new build City and County Museum in Lincoln. The 3,700m<sup>2</sup> archaeological museum project will be constructed from roughfaced limestone. The museum will be located on the site of an existing 1960s multi-storey car park. The scheme includes an audiovisual theatre, a permanent exhibition gallery for the city's extensive archaeology collection, a temporary gallery space, cafe and museum shop. Work will start in the autumn.



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## Archigram honour is timely reminder of today's shortcomings

### WHAT'S NEW ON THE WEB?



The AJ's award-winning website is bristling with new features. Visit [ajplus.co.uk](http://ajplus.co.uk) now and you can:

Read all about the RIBA's award of the Royal Gold Medal to Archigram – set to be ratified by RIBA council yesterday. The site includes more pictures, the full citation and a list of some of the illustrious past winners.

## editorial

Archigram as Royal Gold Medallist. It's a prospect to relish, not least for the image of the Queen nodding sagely as she thumbs through comic-book images of plug-in cities and buildings on stilts. (Did she consult her eldest son before granting royal consent?) In offering the perfect excuse to revive much-loved media-friendly images, the choice secures the double whammy of upping the profile of the Gold Medal and rewarding home-grown talent. But it is a mistake to dismiss the move as an easy bid for publicity or a triumph of paper architecture over built work. Archigram's impact on the work of 'real' superstar architects has been well documented, but in challenging fundamental shortcomings of architectural education it has influenced countless others who have gone on to shape our built environment.

Archigram's oeuvre epitomises some of the very skills which are deemed to be lacking in education but essential in the workplace – notably outstanding communication skills and technical competence. Engaging, witty, and instantly accessible, Archigram drawings are an immediate and comprehensive statement of Archigram ideas. There is no truck with the notion that some concepts are too difficult to explain: if an idea cannot be communicated it may as well not exist. The approach is profoundly egalitarian, but also commercially shrewd – effort spent in seducing the client is time well spent. By taking delight in the potential offered by technology, Archigram made it cool to get excited about materials or to be caught swotting up on structures – a crucial step in the bid to counteract the polarisation between students who are imaginative designers and those who are competent technicians.

It is particularly appropriate that Archigram has been awarded the honour in the year that the RIBA has decided to combine the Gold Medal ceremony with the ceremony for the Silver and Bronze Medals awarded to student work. Boggled down in the interminable debate as to the extent to which architectural education should mimic paid employment, it is easy to forget that practice can be at its best when it most resembles student work.

Isabel Allen

## letters

### PII 'medicine' will harm healthy architects

The Architects Registration Board is intent on Professional Indemnity Insurance (AJ 31.1.02), with the aim of protecting the pockets of the public and increasing confidence in using an architect. The status of architects will be bolstered by this 'failsafe' device, but at a price. Further thought is necessary before ARB's instant PII medicine cures one known sick patient but kills off thousands of unknown healthy ones.

Architects are asked to take out PII to protect the public, their clients and themselves. This extra cost hits the smallest and poorest practice and client hardest, especially as the larger practice and client will be more familiar with contract and legal matters. Nor can the errant professional be relied upon to maintain the insurance – a recently reported case of a RICS surveyor who let his indemnity lapse resulted in a client being unable to get financial redress. Direct comparisons can be made as RICS requires its surveyors to carry PII.

Charging higher premiums for uneconomic projects, reports and advice will drive architects and small clients out of each other's markets.

But there is a simple solution. Using a master policy held by ARB for all architects, (including principals of large firms), all projects up to a value of £100,000 would be covered, but larger projects would require separate individual cover. Making the ARB responsible for this would:

- allow the registration fee to automatically include a sum for this;
- be more economical than thousands of individual negotiations;
- ensure cover and run-off periods;

- show how few cases there are overall; and

- increase the standing and knowledge of the ARB as it would have the data it lacks but comments upon.

Status for having PII could be enhanced by the addition of the letters ARB after all registered architects' names.

Peter Somers, London SE26

### Minority must accept the view of majority

I would question George Ferguson's defence of the Bristol Civic Society as being 'well-informed' and 'part of the democratic process' (AJ 31.1.02).

The society objected to our development proposal primarily on the grounds that it is too high and would damage the setting of the nearby SS *Great Britain*, but it suffered a convenient loss of memory about an objection written some 10 years ago by the society's current secretary to a previous planning application on this site for a development of a similar height on the grounds that it was not high or robust enough.

At the inquiry the society's same representatives were unaware of the number of objections to our scheme which had been sent in by the public at the time the planning committee resolved to grant consent for it. Over the past three years, immediately adjoining redevelopment proposals have generated 500, 160, 300 and 100 objections respectively. I still fail to understand what sort of mandate allows the society to support a government call-in for our proposal.

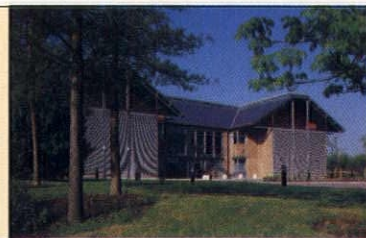
Democracy is certainly about tolerating and respecting minority views, and to that extent I can't argue with Ferguson's assertion that the society is part of the democratic process. However, it has always been my understanding that the necessary *quid*



Check out our new, 360 degree photographs of Liverpool's new airport by Leach Rhodes Walker. They and others – such as the unwobbly bridge – are at [www.ajplus.co.uk/b\\_bank/photo\\_gallery/](http://www.ajplus.co.uk/b_bank/photo_gallery/)

Read Astragal's views on the architectural stories making the weekend newspapers in Mediawatch, which now appears in the news section and drops down after Monday to the Mediawatch archive.

We've added more schemes to [ajspecification.com](http://ajspecification.com) such as Richard Partington Architects' Office in Kings Hill Business Park, right. Over 9,000 have registered, with ajplus – you can use one password for both



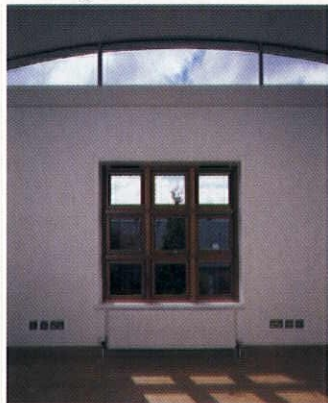
The Architects' Journal welcomes your letters, which should preferably be typed double-spaced. Please address them to the editor at 151 Rosebery Avenue, London EC1R 4GB, fax them on 020 7505 6701, or e-mail them to [angela.newton@construct.emap.com](mailto:angela.newton@construct.emap.com) to arrive by 10am on the Monday before publication. Letters intended for publication should include a daytime telephone number. The editor reserves the right to shorten letters.

YOU CAN ALSO AIR YOUR VIEWS ON OUR ONLINE DISCUSSION FORUM AT: [WWW.AJPLUS.CO.UK](http://WWW.AJPLUS.CO.UK)

*pro quo* of the process does require the same minority views in turn to tolerate and respect those of the majority once these have been properly expressed. I hope Ferguson endorses this principle during his presidential candidature for the RIBA.

**Richard Bellman, director, QuADA (Harbourside)**

## Curtain call for house at Pilgrims Lane



I liked the house at Pilgrims Lane, London (AJ Focus, January 2002). However, with all that attention to detail, is the master bedroom really going to be without blinds or curtains? And if not, how will they work under the curved ceiling?

**Richard Toosey, Bucks**

## David Guy's views are made for television

Instead of writing long rambling letters on Terry Farrell, Secular Republicanism et al, why doesn't David Guy just make a television programme?

I'm sure his polemic views, if a little foam-flecked, could easily be condensed into a punchy half-hour prime-time docu-drama. I'll be watching the TV listings.

**Martin Selig, London NW5**

## Clarity vital for success of contract negotiation

Claims for extension of time and extra payment are certainly a tricky area of contract adminis-

tration, as Andrew Bartlett points out in his article (Legal Matters AJ 31.1.02).

Clients and the contract administrator may decide to use the SCL protocol as an aid to interpretation, but they will need to be absolutely clear what that means. Will it become a contract document? If not, what status does it have? If it is a contract document, does it take precedence over the standard conditions of contract? (Many of its provisions, for example on the contract administrator's power to award extensions on his/her own initiative, are inconsistent with contracts such as the JCT forms.) Does it take precedence over existing case law on this subject?

Contract administrators will find the draft protocol an interesting read, but should work out the implications before applying it to construction contracts they administer.

**Gillian Birkby, Mayer, Brown, Rowe & Maw, London**

## Planning Green Paper is the important issue

The story 'Planning Charter Call' (AJ 31.1.02) mischievously misrepresents my letter to the government in response to consultations on the Planning Green Paper 'Planning – Delivering a Fundamental Change'. In so doing your journalist has sought to compromise my professional reputation.

Your article implies I have expressed concern over planning committee members in Camden taking money for influencing decisions. This is a gross misrepresentation. There is nothing in my letter to suggest this, and I made it unequivocally clear to the journalist who phoned me to check the story that this was untrue, and that it would be wrong to misrepresent me in this way.

Camden's planning commit-

tee's reputation is not the issue. Indeed, Camden is fortunate in having two former architects on its committee whose integrity is beyond question. The architectural community of Camden is indebted to their tireless support for good architecture.

Anecdotal evidence may suggest corruption exists within the planning system nationwide. However, there is nothing in my letter to the government, or in my experience, to suggest corruption exists within Camden.

The proposed Planning Charter for Camden seeks to improve the planning process. If it was to be adopted nationwide it could help eliminate corruption, be it intellectual, political or financial.

I urge you to publish this letter to make amends for corrosive journalism and to draw attention to the important issue which is the Government Green Paper. Architects can find out more, and make their views known, by visiting the website: [www.planning.dtlr.gov.uk/consult/greenpap/index.htm](http://www.planning.dtlr.gov.uk/consult/greenpap/index.htm)  
**Chris Roche, former chair, Camden Architects Forum London N1**

## Members benefit from improved performance

I was interested to read your support (AJ 7.2.02) for the new services to be introduced by RIBA Client Services (formerly CAS), which were presented in outline to Council in 2001. The inaugural Client Services Task Group meets in early April 2002 to sign off the scheme.

It was also pleasing to see that David Thorp supports an increase in marketing expenditure. Client Services had traditionally averaged 6,000 enquiries per year. In 2001, we have succeeded in growing client enquiries to 11,000 and saved members £90,000 in reduced operating costs.

It is reassuring to see our performance so publicly acknowledged.

**Paul Newman, head of Membership and Client Services RIBA**

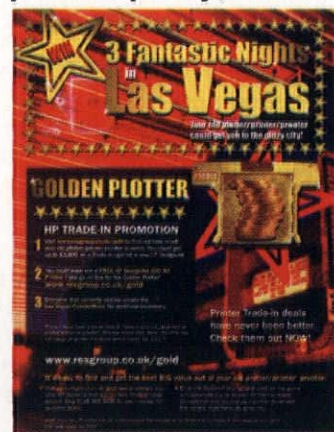
## Lucky to be on Will's list for lunch date

I was reading our office copy of AJ and noticed that Will Alsop had mentioned my name on his 'to do' list (AJ10.01.02).

Lunch on the Monday was a delight, and I'm sorry if I was the cause of him abandoning his list. I should point out though, that I'm not in fact an architect, only a lowly interior designer.

**Caroline Robbie-Montgomery, via e-mail**

## Advertisement has no place in quality journal



Professionalism, aesthetic sensibility... qualities one would expect in a professional journal. What then explains the abomination which manifested itself in the form of a cheap and tacky full-page advertisement (AJ 10.1.02 and 07.2.02)? Quality please!

**Colin Eaton, MRIA, via e-mail**

## Correction

Wordsearch's Carlton Club at the Salon Californie, Carlton International Hotel, takes place during MIPIM and is open from Tuesday 12 to Thursday 14 March, 10pm-3am.





will also

## Housing associations must allow architects freedom

Last night I met with 10 people from St Paul's Church in Rotterdam. I am designing a new series of buildings within the city which includes the demolition and rebuilding of the church. The meeting was my first with them, and therefore laced with a little nervousness on my part and scepticism on theirs. Both these conditions were partially eased by the presence of red wine.

Their first question to me was to enquire whether or not a 'church' had any special meaning to me. Did this amount to interrogation of my attitude towards religion – in which case, which religion? Or were they referring to the materiality of the building? I took it as the second point. I said that a church is one of the building types where it is expected that the architect will create a space that will elevate the spirit and that it was a pity that this was not so for other building types such as hospitals. 'Ah – you mean a place of hope,' replied one of the 10. I said yes.

It was only later, lying in bed, that I thought about the implication of the word hope. Embedded within it is an assumption that people require hope, because all around them is hopelessness; an assumed condition from the perspective of someone in the church.

We should not confuse the Rotterdam church with a typical country parish church in England. St Paul's deals with refugees (illegal entrants to Holland) and drug addicts. In fact, in Rotterdam the addicts and psychotics would be out on the street; there is nowhere for them to go. The word 'hope' for the people in this particular church is measured against the nature of the congregation and in this case 'hope' means what it suggests. It emerged that they would like the whole cross section of society to come to the church but the presence of the addicts frightened 'ordinary' people away, particularly those

with children who do not want to contaminate their offspring with exposure to addiction. Ironically, the traditional 'good' people turn their backs on the needy. I was asked if I could help with this and I replied that I did not know.

As I write this, I am sitting on a plane from Rotterdam to Manchester where I will walk the site of the card room in the east of the city, which is the subject of a current project for Urban Splash, relating to the urban regeneration of a run down part of the city that people do not want to live in. There will be a number of workshops – painting and drawing and talking and drinking – my favourite form of public consultation.

This process is based on exercising people's imagination and also on hope. As with the church, once areas of cities become associated with a particular section of society they become ignored by 'good' people, ie those with relatively secure lifestyles, children and annual holidays recorded on video tape. These people insulate themselves from undesirables and create a suburban culture that is all too often misinterpreted by house providers as the market that conditions the phrase 'market led'. To me this phrase falls into the same category as 'well, business is business', as though that legitimises unethical behaviour.

Sadly, at the Aylesbury Estate, the housing association would not allow me to work with the people. It insisted that everyone wanted a brick building with a pitched roof. It failed to obtain the support of the estate. Housing associations must allow architects to build relationships and discover what an area could be and not to give them their own preconception of what 'housing' is. *WA, from seat 2A, flight VG701, Rotterdam to Manchester*

'As with the church, once areas of cities become associated with a particular section of society they become ignored by "good" people'

people

Four years ago, sat astride his tractor in a Tuscan olive grove, Tim Hamilton had a flashing insight. The boss of Hamilton Associates needed to change his practice.

'I realised that we had to do something dramatic' he says. 'Five years ago, Foster had come to the UK – he hadn't been allowed in before. Suddenly he was back and he was towing behind him a lot of bright young talent, home-grown talents who were riding in his wake. And I realised we were going to be yesterday's people if we didn't claim our place at the table.'

Hamilton, a well-preserved, friendly 61 year old who started his own practice in an undertaker's loft at 26, had seen in his tractor moment that the market had changed. It had suddenly become design-led, as he puts it.

So, after his Italian summer holiday, South African-born Hamilton set down to his task to totally transform his firm. His aim – that it should go after new markets, embrace a higher degree of design rigour, and be in a strong position if and when he felt like retiring, or at least like stepping back from the frontline. And for that, Hamilton needed 'another whole level of skill'. 'I persuaded my team,' Hamilton recalls, 'and they were jolly good about it. Then, whenever I went out, I just asked people for names of talented people.'

So, like Yul Brynner in *The Magnificent Seven*, Hamilton got his first name, through an AJ/Bovis awards event at which Foster was speaking. Roy Collado, 'a very good, young 35-year-old architect' formerly of Chetwood Associates, was duly recruited and is one of the firm's magnificent eight project directors.

'So that was one. Then a mutual friend said: "There's only one person for you, and that's Robin"', recalls Hamilton, meaning Robin Partington, who had been at Foster and Partners, latterly as a director, and with an impressive portfolio of projects, for the past 17 years. 'We met and had nine months of happy chats,' Hamilton smiles.

After the happy chats, just before Christmas, Partington said yes. And since his arrival, he has moved to instil a new philosophy. He wants more drawings on walls, more informal cross-fertilisation of ideas, more presentations, different work for his 'fantastic team' to get involved with, for their own benefit as much as for the practice. And, importantly, he has just established a new model-making studio to get people to think in three dimensions.

'It took a long time to get used to it,'



# Hamilton Associates boss Tim Hamilton is looking to the future with some changes in mind. And one of the biggest is Robin Partington, who 'left to join him from Foster and Partners – after 17 years there

by david taylor. photograph by charles glover

## paving the way

Hamilton Associates boss  
Tim Hamilton (right) and his  
latest recruit, Robin Partington



Partington says of his new role. 'If you'd asked me before, I'd have said I was an absolutely dyed-in-the-wool, 'til-you-drop-Foster person. I'd never heard of anything like this that had happened before. But what fascinates me is that I can take everything that I have learned from 17 years at Fosters and apply it to all of the work that this practice does. My philosophy in life and my ambition is to give the client that magical something extra – more than they ever could dream they could have on a project, while remaining on budget and on a programme that's both predictable for the client and works for the client.'

If that sounds gushing, or a bit like sales patter, 41-year-old Partington's portfolio backs up what he says. At Fosters he worked on Commerzbank, ITN, the Barcelona telecommunications tower, Carré d'Art in Nîmes, Swiss Re ('that was hard to let go'), the Glasgow 'armadillo', Duxford, ARAG – a just-finished Düsseldorf tower which cannily uses cheap electricity at night to make ice to cool the building – Selfridges in London and Chek Lap Kok.

On this last airport project, Hamilton, like

a proud father, relates that Fosters won the job on the basis of one Partington sketch, one concept. Partington modestly adds that an awful lot of others contributed to the scheme.

Partington is fascinated with the idea of an organisation 'where it's not just dependent on one sole individual – it doesn't matter if you get run over by a bus, the practice goes from strength to strength'. He says he would love to be in the same position when he is 61 – watching a practice grow in a new direction 'from strength to strength'; from being 'the ultimate in a safe pair of hands', but where 'design has not been at the forefront' to one with a strong delivery method and innovative design.

The firm is large, though perhaps without the expected public profile. Its 110 staff are based in two offices on the King's Road, the larger one a light and airy building spread over three floors which Partington is particularly enthusiastic about. Here there is a full-height window doubling as a presentation screen area for internal project crits, and a bank of computers primed for people waiting for meetings to use up spare minutes

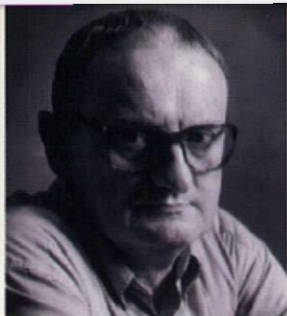
working or surfing. However, the new locale has not been without its problems – a flood and a mouse presenting what you'd imagine to be two mutually exclusive headaches.

Hamilton Associates' work has mainly been in offices, residential and the like, including an overhaul of Fulham Broadway, though Partington hopes to expand into cultural buildings, for example, through competitions. Already, it has entered one for the new Birmingham library – the longlist for which is expected soon. 'It's like being handed a new Ferrari,' says Partington of his new home, 'but with no petrol.'

Succession is a difficult subject not handled brilliantly by architectural practices, and not often aided by egos getting in the way. But Hamilton Associates appears to have put the wheels in motion, with Partington the last piece in the jigsaw, although both agree that the final product is only 75 per cent there.

'It's an incredibly fortunate position for us, and I think an interesting one for Robin,' says Hamilton. 'You've got a good, old trusty warhorse – but someone needed to hop on top and ride it.'





**martin pawley**

## Dramatised demolition is the only answer for the Grimshaw ice rink

A dozen years ago, I advanced the theory that dramatised demolition was a better fate than blanket conservation for superannuated modern buildings – citing *Memento Mori*, Peter Mitchell's poignant record of the demolition of Quarry Hill flats as proof.

I had only one opportunity to film the demolition of a modern masterpiece. The star of this modest TV epic was the Reliance Controls building in Swindon, designed by Norman Foster, Richard Rogers and Anthony Hunt, a pioneer industrial structure of historical importance that was nonetheless known to its occupants as 'The biscuit tin', in recognition of the temperatures it attained in the summer months. Having already chronicled my unsuccessful attempt to get this building listed, I mention it again as way of an introduction, for less than 20 miles from the former industrial estate where Reliance Controls stood is another pioneering modern structure in a very bad way indeed. Bad enough perhaps to justify its own TV drama.

Oxford Ice Rink was designed by Nicholas Grimshaw & Partners in 1984 and opened the following year. It was unorthodox in appearance, one of the first generation of mast-supported and long span structures to exploit the corrosion-resistant coatings developed for off-shore structures in the North Sea, but it was also very cheap. As the architect notes (in *The Early Work of Nicholas Grimshaw & Partners*, Phaidon 1995), the client for the building, Oxford City Council, wanted an ice rink but did not have enough money to build one. The practice helped out by producing a very economical twin mast, suspended boom design clad with standard cold store panels except for its front elevation, which was largely glazed.

Like Reliance Controls before it, on completion Oxford Ice Rink was hailed as a great architectural

achievement. Not only because it fulfilled its brief with economy and ingenuity but because it was exceedingly popular with young people. As Grimshaw noted in his aforementioned practice book: 'The building is a social centre for all ages and we have heard from the city engineer that vandalism has reduced dramatically in the city since this project was completed.'

That, of course, was written some seven years ago. Nonetheless it will strike an ironic note for any

visitor to the ice rink today, who must ask him or herself how bad Oxford's vandalism can possibly have been before, if it is now 'reduced dramatically'. Nowadays, the building presents a woeful aspect from all directions. Its car park is filled with threatening notices, a lived-in caravan and smashed-up entrance and exit gates. Its front elevation shows 10 large glass cladding panels replaced with sheets of chipboard and another five with bullet or other missile holes and cracks in them. The freezer store cladding panels are a dark, uneven grey colour with green algae growing on them, while the escape doors and stairs, and the concrete ground anchors carry a heavy load of graffiti. Indoors, the building is in daily use despite its run-down condition – the formerly glazed north

wall is barricaded off with incongruous traffic cones on the ice.

What will become of the Oxford Ice Rink? Some fear the worst. The city council is strapped for cash and has resorted to selling off its properties, and the site allocated to the rink does seem large and empty. At the same time, there has been talk of the need for a new railway station. In any case, the uncompromising low-cost functionality of the building belongs to a different age and a different class to such recent additions to the city's architecture as the Said Business School.

**'The building presents a woeful aspect from all directions. Its car park is filled with threatening notices, a lived-in caravan and smashed-up gates'**

## a life in architecture

**tristram mylius**

Furniture designer Tristram Mylius of Hitch Mylius is fascinated by mixtures of styles, 'the old and the new'. He enjoys observing the way buildings and cities have developed and being able to detect the history of a building in its fabric. 'I like trying to spot the effect of changing uses and influences,' he says.

One particular building crystallises this mix of styles and changing uses for him, 'an absolutely beautiful museum in Verona, the Castelvecchio'. The museum was restored and rearranged by Carlo Scarpa between 1956-64 and for Mylius, Scarpa's work blends absolutely fluently with the original. 'I love the ruggedness of the 14th-century structure alongside the bend in the River Adige, and I admire the way that Scarpa's new elements and the detailing of everything he has inserted is so totally modern and crisp in style, although he worked on the museum almost half a century ago.'

He finds that this subtle marriage of old and new continues outside as well as inside – in the courtyard with the playful drinking fountain and the little exhibition chamber that projects through the ancient castle wall, like a bejewelled container.



Apart from his love of 'time-warp' buildings, Mylius confesses to being 'an absolute sucker for anything Modern Movement'. His favourite? 'Lubetkin's Penguin Pool [above] has to be my little classic. I love it for the delicacy of the concrete, the fluid shape – I'm sure it's all been said before.'

Deborah Singmaster



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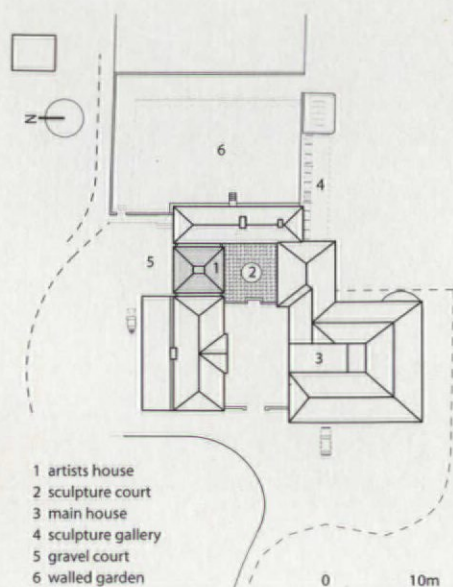




# Art of living

Following on the success of its gallery at Roche Court, near Salisbury, Munkenbeck + Marshall has added an artist's house to display art in a domestic context



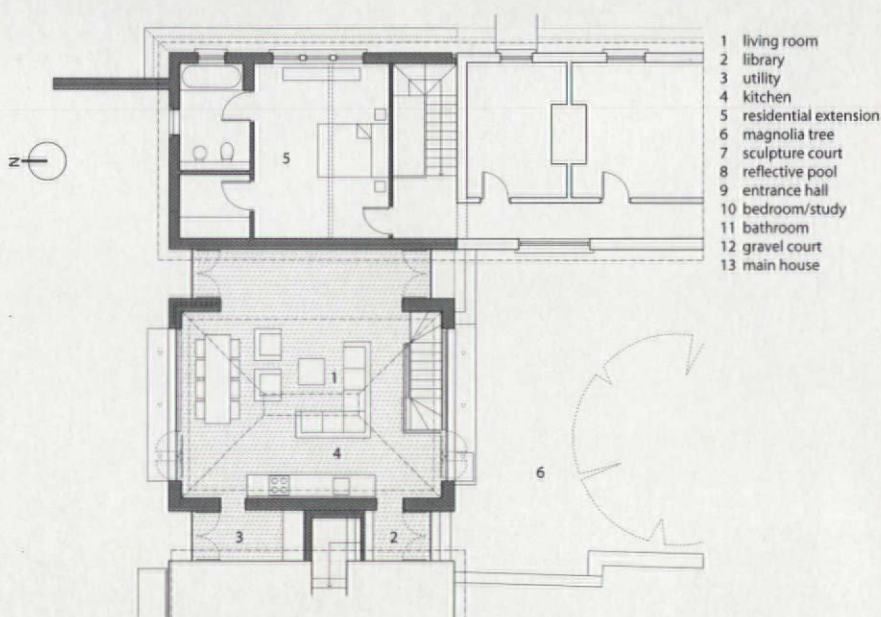


Not so many years ago, the country house was widely seen as a preserve of traditional architectural values – new buildings commissioned by country house owners, whether of aristocratic or more *parvenu* origins, could generally be relied on to be firmly, and often dimly, historicist in style. On occasions, intelligent and literate traditionalist work was the result – the stables complex at Ascot, designed by Demetri Porphyrios for Galen Weston, was a good example. But there was generally little chance of the Prince of Wales being shocked, should he decide to call by for the weekend. And little evidence that the country house any longer had a creative cultural role, beyond catering for heritage-obsessed tourists.

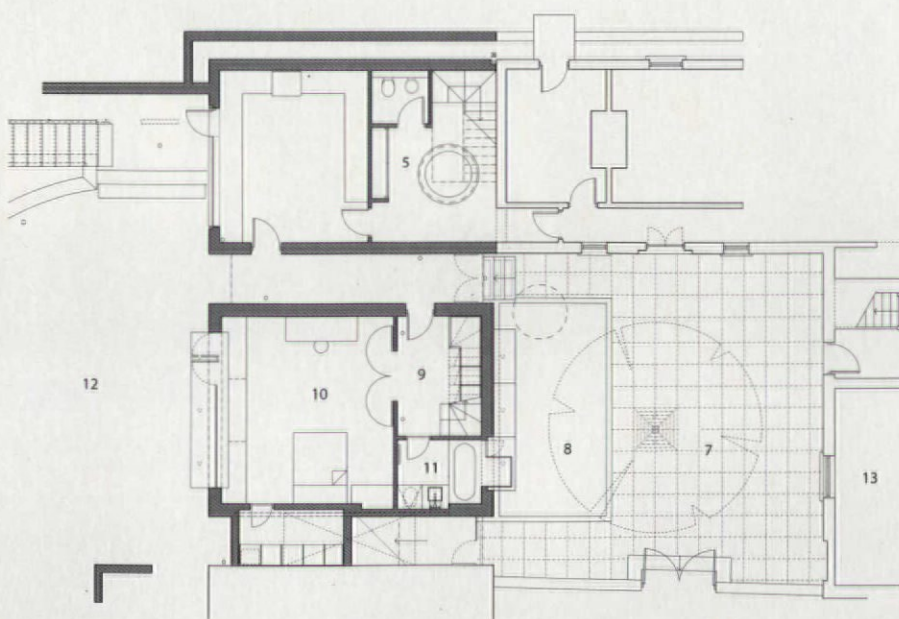
As Munkenbeck + Marshall, and its client Johnny Bute, recently demonstrated at Mount Stuart in Scotland (AJ 4.10.01), innovative new design has a place in the renaissance of the country house. For Madeleine Bessborough, founder of the New Art Centre at Roche Court, near Salisbury, the issue of style never arose. Lady Bessborough has been a major figure on the contemporary art scene since the late 1950s, when she launched a gallery on London's Sloane Street. Driven out of London by redevelopment, she opened the New Art Centre (NAC) at Roche Court in 1993. The house is a fine Regency structure (completed in 1805 to designs by C H Tatham), impressively porticoed but not dauntingly large. It remains a private family home: the art is in the open-air, a changing display of sculpture by all the big names – from Moore and Hepworth to Whiteread and Woodrow.

Some come here to buy – this is as much a commercial operation as any gallery on Cork Street. But anyone can come simply to look – if you have not been, a visit is strongly recommended. There is no admission charge, no cafe, no shop – just the art and the landscape.

Munkenbeck + Marshall's acclaimed gallery at Roche Court was completed in 1999 – it forms a link between the house and



first floor plan



ground floor plan

0 5m



Left: the Regency House is still a family home; the art is in the open air. This page: the proportions are as classical as those of Corbusier's Villa Savoye, with principal living spaces on a first-floor piano nobile and bedroom/bathroom below





Freestanding furniture, designed by the architect, has the right balance of sturdiness and delicacy. The kitchen is neatly contained within well crafted cupboards



an elegant early 19th-century conservatory. Structurally ingenious, exquisitely detailed and beautifully built, it is one of the best new buildings seen in Wiltshire for decades and is used to display smaller sculptures and works on paper.

The recently completed artist's house, the second building at Roche Court by Munkenbeck + Marshall, is, says Madeleine Bessborough, 'on one level, a really beautiful modern house, which you could live in, which, unlike most private houses, anyone

can come and see. At the same time, it's a place to show art in a domestic context'.

The initial inspiration, says partner-in-charge Steve Marshall, was Kettle's Yard, the famous Cambridge institution established by Jim Ede (1895-1990) in the 1950s as a 'beautiful house full of beautiful things'; it was later extended by Leslie Martin and others, and is now one of the most beguiling small art museums in the world. The artist's house, the client insisted, must be domestic in scale and fully habitable – you should be

able to take a bath or make a meal there. It could be a place where Richard Long, for example, might stay while setting up a new work in the sculpture park. Equally, the building should form an attractive showcase for works of art – 'I don't see anything wrong with putting art in the bathroom,' says Madeleine Bessborough. 'Art has to be part of real life.'

The site was a gap, occupied by nothing more than a decrepit single-storey shed, in the stable yard, alongside the main house,





where several members of the NAC staff have homes – the brief included extending and improving one of these units as well as rationalising the yard itself. The strategy was that the house would form part of a new visitor route around the centre, with a connection to the walled garden where letter-cutting and other small works are shown. (The first concession to ‘visitor facilities’ – a WC – was also included in the brief.) At the rear of the house, the earth bank was boldly cut away to create a grassy amphitheatre

where people can sit and perhaps listen to music or talks on fine summer days.

There had to be a sense of continuity between all the buildings around the courtyard, with their mix of materials, brick, flint and render, with slate roofs, reflected in the new work – the artist’s house has a low-pitched roof, covered in slates recycled from Salisbury Cathedral. As with the gallery, the contractor for the project was locally-based Mark Price – his concern for quality of workmanship and detail was fundamental

to the success of the scheme, says Marshall.

The proportions of the house are as classical as those of Corbusier’s Villa Savoye, with the principle living spaces on a first-floor piano nobile, as it were, and sleeping and bathroom accommodation below. The bathroom fittings include a modern reinterpretation of the classic Victorian ‘thunderbox’ and a monumental hand-basin made of Chilmark stone. While the adjacent residential extension is done as an unselfconscious copy of the existing build-

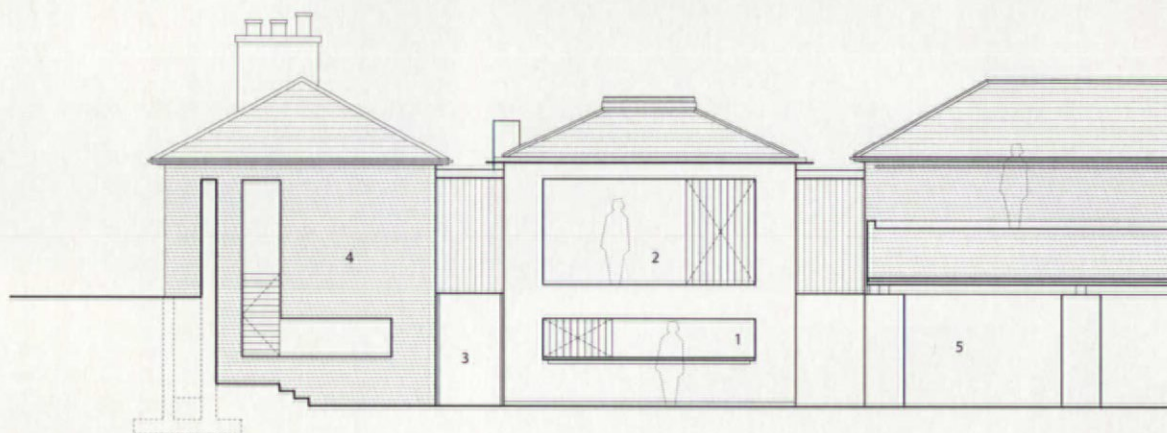


- KEY**
- 1 artist's house
  - 2 residential extension
  - 3 stables
  - 4 reflective pool



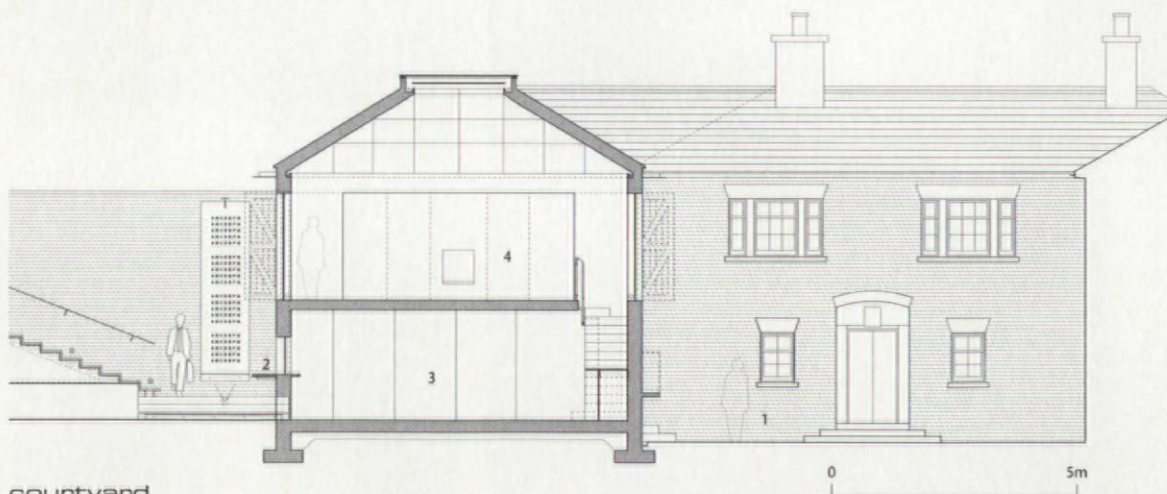
courtyard elevation

- KEY**
- 1 sculpture shelf to bedroom
  - 2 living/exhibit
  - 3 through to courtyard
  - 4 residential extension
  - 5 log store/stable block



rear elevation

- KEY**
- 1 sculpture court
  - 2 sculpture shelf
  - 3 bedroom
  - 4 living room



section through courtyard

ing, the artist's house has a more formal modern dignity. The great first-floor living room, with its dramatically coved ceiling and full-height frameless glazing, is the heart of the house. The use of timber boarding for flooring, and the full-height timber doors – an echo of those in the earlier gallery – provide warmth and texture in what is essentially a monochrome space.

The opening event at the house was a striking, and highly architectural, installation by Ben Langlands and Nikki Bell which added strong elements of colour to the interiors. More typically, they will contain sculpture and drawings – though there is no guarantee that these will be polite and recessive works.

Marshall's commission extended beyond the architectural setting to the entire fit-out of the house. His freestanding furniture (including a bed) has the right balance of sturdiness and delicacy – specially made locally, its cost represented a remarkable bargain compared with items of this quality available on the market. The kitchen – which cannot be seriously intended to be used very often – is neatly contained within a series of cupboards, again very well crafted.

Madeleine Bessborough is, of course, exaggerating when she says: 'I want it to look lived in.' Imagine a Francis Bacon daubing his colours all over the scrubbed boards. The idea of the building as a house is something of a conceit, since domestic and gallery use

are virtually incompatible. Nor will this ever become a Kettle's Yard – the point about the latter was that Jim Ede and his family, to the amazement of many visitors, actually lived there. Yet, as Steve Marshall points out, the house is 'very straightforward and economical, with a simple structure, using ordinary materials'. He compares it to the residential spaces which the practice is designing, for example, at Gainsborough Studios in north London. The point is, of course, that in rural England, modern design is still seen by housing developers as unsaleable, though the artist's house, minus some of the more extravagant trimmings, could be the prototype for a new generation of village houses.





The dramatic first-floor living room, with its imposing covered ceiling, is at the heart of the artist's house





The opening event was a striking installation by Ben Langlands and Nikki Bell which added strong elements of colour to the interiors





## Structure

The structure is based on simple blockwork cavity walls with returns to give stability. There is no vertical steel frame and additional stability is provided by the adjacent stable buildings and residential extension. The roof structure was originally envisaged as glue laminated with a trimmed central opening for the skylight, but the omission of internal walls and increased central opening led to a structural steel pyramid. The hips of this pyramid are formed from 152 x 52 x 23 uc sections with the ring beam formed from 150 x 75 x 18 uc. Floors are formed in mesh-reinforced concrete at ground level and timber joists at the first-floor level.

Within this simple volume, a series of large opening and cantilevered shelves are formed. Custom lintels allow for structural glass. The external cantilevered shelves are designed to support large pieces of sculpture. Concern was expressed that the render envisaged for the external finish to the building would crack due to possible movement. The solution was to form a series of gallows brackets sitting on the strip foundation to the main enclosure walls. The vertical elements of the brackets are tied to the ground-floor slab to avoid rotation.

The front shelf supports the frameless glass cube for showing sculpture behind glass. The cube is formed from 19mm frameless annealed glass supported on one edge. The top surface cantilevers out from the main wall and is supported on a series of polished perspex cubes.

## Costs

Cost analysis based on final account

### SUBSTRUCTURE

**FOUNDATIONS/SLABS** 130.40m<sup>2</sup>

Includes steel brackets for stone shelves to two elevations

### SUPERSTRUCTURE

**FRAME** 33.13m<sup>2</sup>

Load-bearing masonry supporting steel frame to roof

**UPPER FLOORS** 26.70m<sup>2</sup>

Timber joists with plywood deck

**ROOF** 69.47m<sup>2</sup>

Plywood-clad timber joists finished in traditional large slates (originally from Salisbury Cathedral)

**ROOFLIGHTS** 21.37m<sup>2</sup>

Single flat double-glazed unit

**STAIRCASES** 20.30m<sup>2</sup>

Solid English oak planks on sprayed MDF carcass; handrail 31mm stainless-steel tube

**EXTERNAL WALLS** 75.89m<sup>2</sup>

Rendered block and face brickwork. Block rendered and finished in Keim paint

**WINDOWS** 66.27m<sup>2</sup>

Structural frameless glass. Cube held on polished Perspex coasters

**EXTERNAL DOORS** 20.30m<sup>2</sup>

Solid ledged and braced English oak planks on pivots

**INTERNAL WALLS AND PARTITIONS** 25.65m<sup>2</sup>

Skimmed block and stud walls

**INTERNAL DOORS** 16.03m<sup>2</sup>

Solid ledged and braced English oak

### INTERNAL FINISHES

**WALL FINISHES** 40.61m<sup>2</sup>

Plaster painted with Keim paint

**FLOOR FINISHES** 114.37m<sup>2</sup>

Local 30mm limestone slabs and 'vee' jointed solid oak planks

**CEILING FINISHES** 125.06m<sup>2</sup>

Painted plaster ceilings with perimeter lighting shelf

### FITTINGS AND FURNISHINGS

**FURNITURE** 54.51m<sup>2</sup>

Designed by architect. Solid oak planks

### SERVICES

**SANITARY APPLIANCES** 10.15m<sup>2</sup>

CP Hart, Vola

**SERVICES EQUIPMENT** 5.34m<sup>2</sup>

WATER INSTALLATIONS 63.06m<sup>2</sup>

ELECTRICAL SERVICES 74.82m<sup>2</sup>

**BUILDERS' WORK IN CONNECTION** 12.82m<sup>2</sup>

### PRELIMINARIES AND INSURANCES

**PRELIMINARIES, OVERHEADS AND PROFIT** 52.37m<sup>2</sup>

**EXTERNAL WORKS** Total £31,500

Landscaping, ancillary buildings

## Cost summary

	Cost per m <sup>2</sup> (£)	Percentage of total
<b>SUBSTRUCTURE</b>	<b>130.40</b>	<b>12.20</b>
<b>SUPERSTRUCTURE</b>		
Frame	33.13	3.1
Upper floors	26.70	2.5
Roof	69.47	6.5
Rooflights	21.37	2.0
Staircases	20.30	1.9
External walls	75.89	7.1
Windows	66.27	6.2
External doors	20.30	1.9
Internal walls and partitions	25.65	2.4
Internal doors	16.03	1.5
<b>Group element total</b>	<b>375.11</b>	<b>35.1</b>

### INTERNAL FINISHES

Wall finishes	40.61	3.8
Floor finishes	114.37	10.7
Ceiling finishes	125.06	11.7
<b>Group element total</b>	<b>280.04</b>	<b>26.2</b>

**FITTINGS AND FURNITURE** 54.51 5.1

### SERVICES

Sanitary appliances	10.15	0.95
Services equipment	5.34	0.5
Water installations	10.15	0.95
Space heating and air treatment	63.06	5.9
Electrical services	74.82	7.0
Builders' work in connection	12.82	1.2
<b>Group element total</b>	<b>176.34</b>	<b>16.5</b>

**PRELIMINARIES** 52.37 4.9

### AND INSURANCE

**TOTAL** 1,068.77 100

### CREDITS

<b>TENDER DATE</b>	Stephen Marshall, Stuart Cameron, Sam Coley
<b>START ON SITE DATE</b>	Harley & Snowdon
<b>CONTRACT DURATION</b>	13 months
<b>GROSS EXTERNAL FLOOR AREA</b>	198m <sup>2</sup>
<b>FORM OF CONTRACT</b>	JCT Intermediate
<b>TOTAL COST</b>	£211,650, plus £31,500 on landscape
<b>CLIENT</b>	Lady Bessborough
<b>ARCHITECT</b>	Munkenbeck + Marshall
<b>STRUCTURAL ENGINEER</b>	Harley & Snowdon
<b>CONTRACTOR</b>	Period Renovation & Construction
<b>SUBCONTRACTORS AND SUPPLIERS</b>	glass & skylight Solaglas; ironmongery D'Line; light fittings Louis Poulsen; sanitary appliances C P Hart, Vola; roller blinds Tidmarsh, paints Keim Paints; other components by Martin Price, builder

### WEBLINKS

Roche Court  
www.sculpture.uk.com



# working details

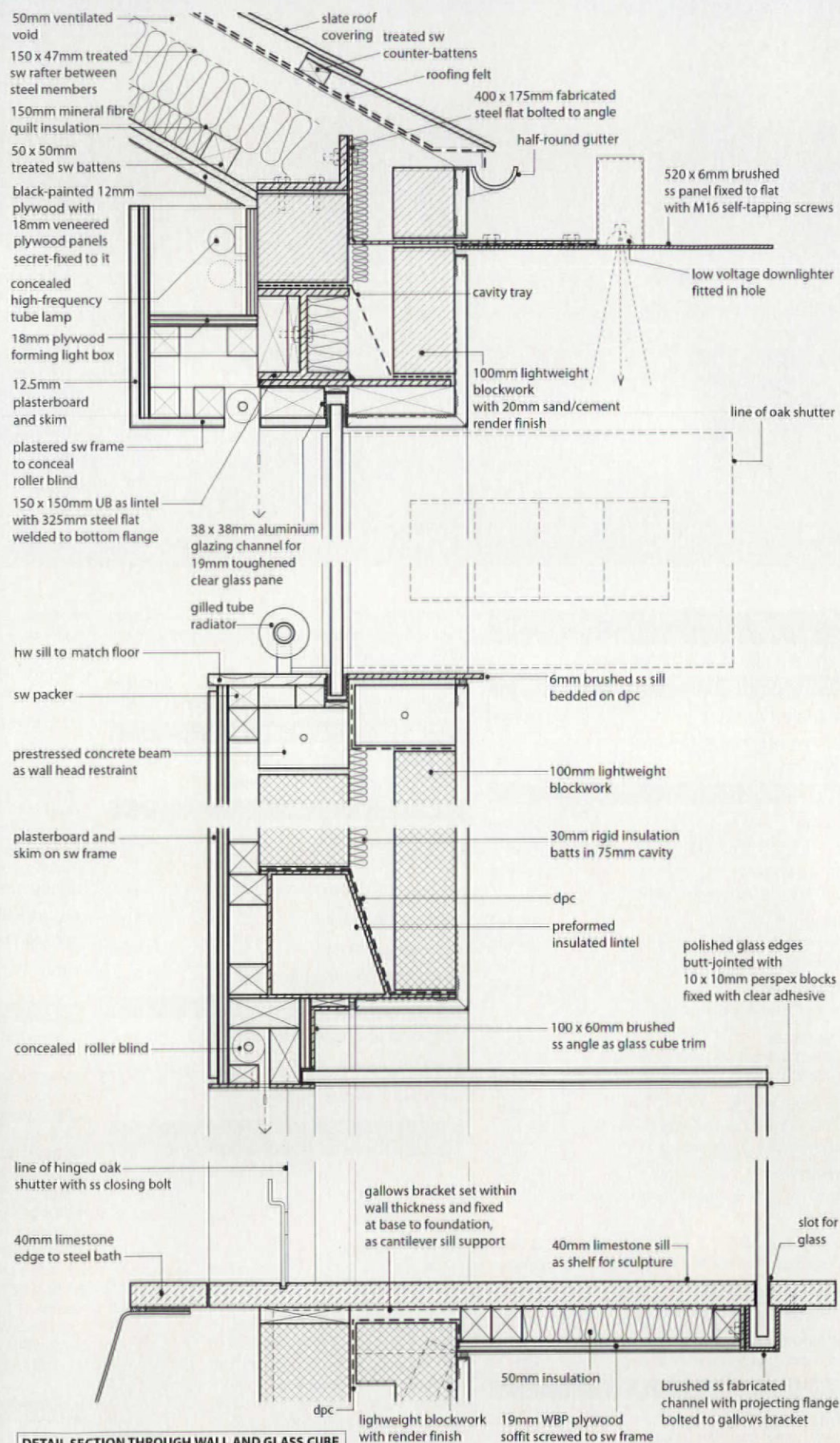
The house is designed as a residence for visiting artists and a gallery for the exhibition in a domestic setting of small sculptures and works on paper.

The two-storey structure is relatively conventional; a blockwork-insulated cavity wall with a sand/cement render finish on the outside, and a steel-framed roof in the shape of a truncated pyramid with a central skylight. The roof is stabilised by a 150 x 150mm UB ring beam which runs at the eaves and acts as a lintel to the first-floor windows. 'Gutter clutter' at the eaves is concealed by a projecting ledge of 520 x 6mm-thick brushed stainless-steel panels which also house downlighters. The panels are fixed to steel angles bolted back to the beam.

The floor-to-ceiling windows to the first floor living room/gallery can be screened by internal roller blinds and by external ledged and braced oak shutters. The window to the ground-floor bathroom is a projecting 500mm frameless glass cube which acts as an enclosure for delicate works of art; it rests on a 600mm-wide and 3m-long Wiltshire limestone sill which is a platform for small sculptures. An oak shutter adjacent to the cube can be opened to ventilate the bathroom.

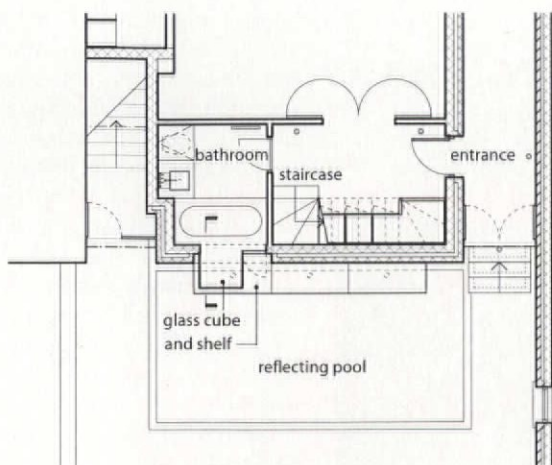
The glass cube, framed with stainless-steel angles, is formed of 19mm toughened glass panels clamped in aluminium channels. At the corners, the glass edges are butt-jointed with 10 x 10mm acrylic blocks adhesive-fixed between them to create ventilation gaps. The 30mm-thick stone sill is supported by a series of gallows brackets concealed within the wall thickness and bolted to the foundations. Below the stone sill lies a shallow light-reflecting pool.

Susan Dawson

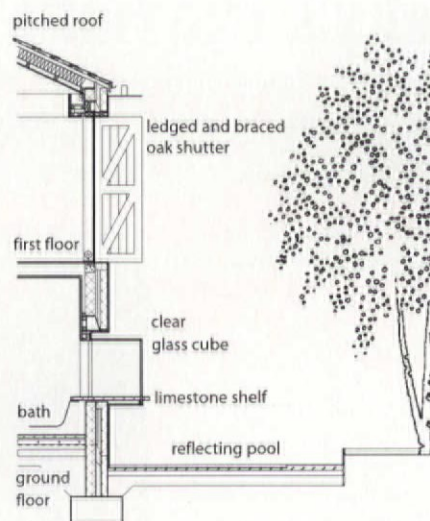


DETAIL SECTION THROUGH WALL AND GLASS CUBE

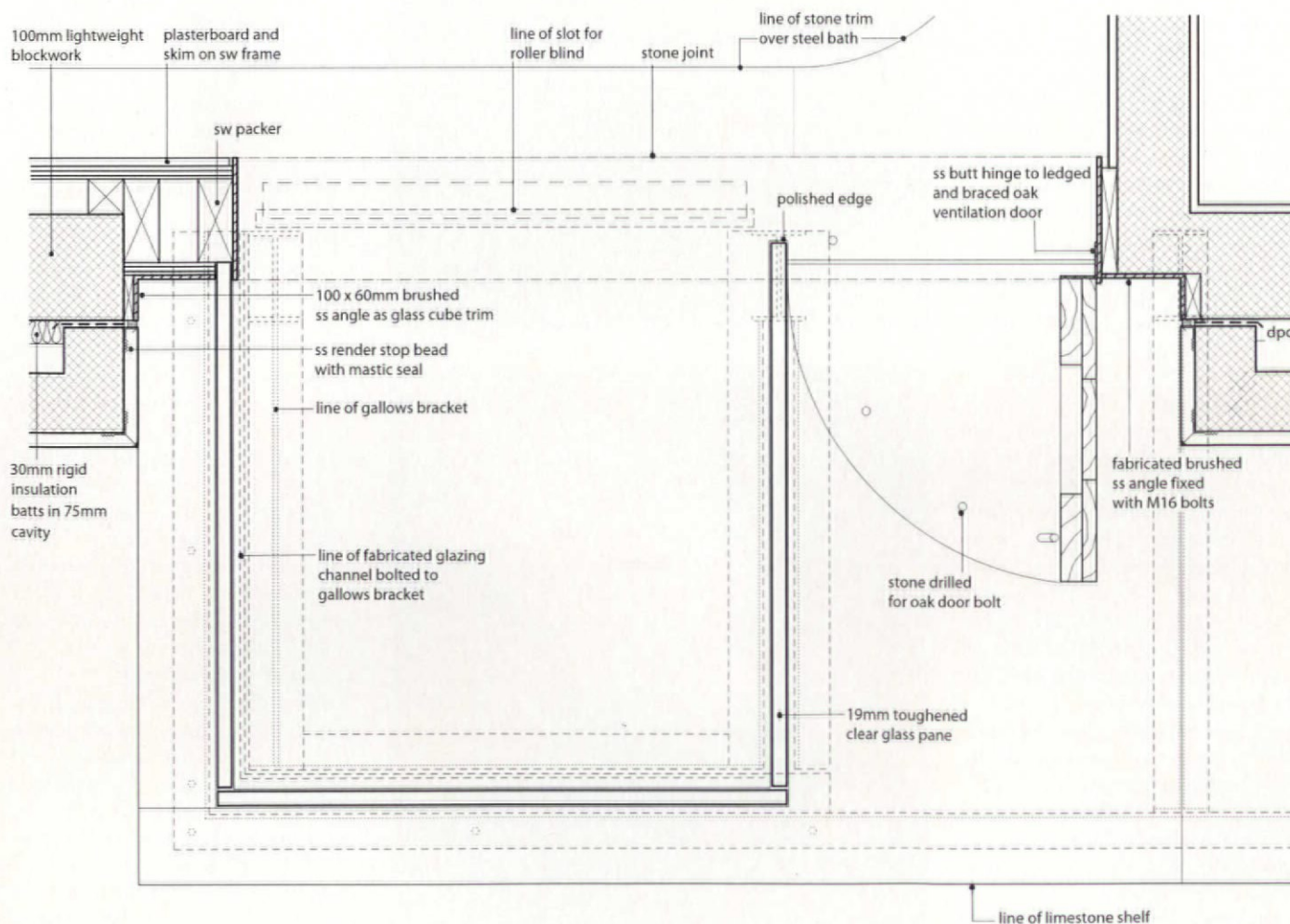




KEY PART GROUND FLOOR PLAN



KEY SECTION THROUGH WALL



DETAIL PLAN OF GLASS CUBE AND SHUTTER



## The sky's the limit

Inflatable roofs have finally come of age. Now Texlon provides energy- and material-efficient coverage at very low cost

BY AUSTIN WILLIAMS

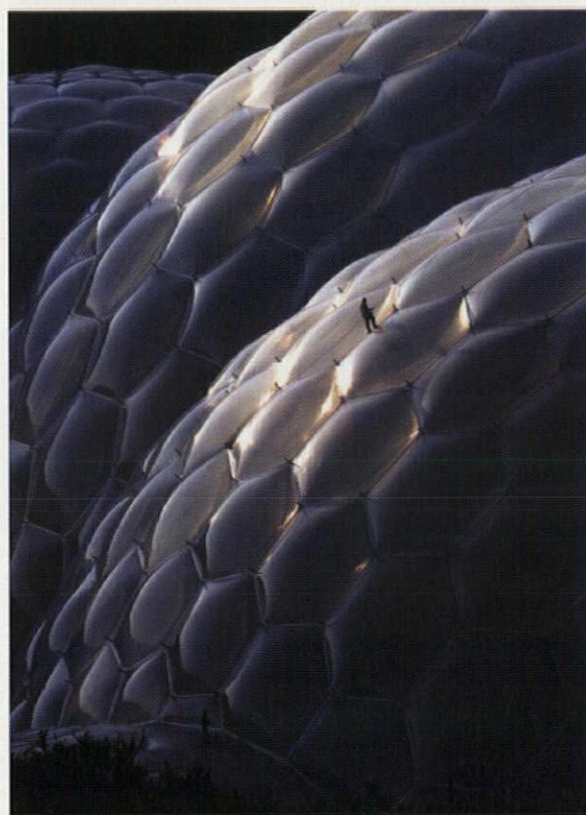
The image of the lone abseiler lowering himself down the biomes at the Eden Project (right), is a dramatic picture which emphasises the scale of the engineering technology involved in the project.

The abseiler is an employee of Vector Special Projects, the designer, manufacturer, supplier and installer of the ETFE inflatable roofing solution, carrying out the final checks on the foil roof. As far as Ben Morris, the founder of the company, is concerned, the project could not have happened without the material. Modesty aside, the material, known as Texlon, certainly has the potential to revolutionise the way large-span roofs are put together. The sizes of the structural members at Eden, for example, would have been prohibitively large to support a traditional glazing solution and transparent plastics would have degraded and could not have supported the geometries involved. It is its geometric flexibility and lightness which are just some of the keys to the material's future.

### Foiled again

Traditional rigid-edge roofing or cladding has its weak points at the edges. Whether it is patent glazing systems at its frames, or composite panels and their gaskets, the movement inherent in any building causes these boundary edges to fail over time. In essence, the structure moves, the glass panels expand and contract within the frame, and this differential movement is experienced as a frictional force at the interface between the two. The unique feature of the Texlon panel system is that the movement is taken up within the ETFE material itself. Morris calls this a 'soft-tech', rather than hi-tech, solution to movement joints.

Each panel comprises three layers of ETFE (although higher specifications can include up to five layers), an extruded film of about 10<sup>-3</sup>m



Top: final inspection at the Eden Project. Bottom: slender structures at the Wild Walk @ Bristol

thickness. The three layers are not bonded together but are wrapped around a kader (rod) which then slots loosely into an aluminium extrusion. When the capping extrusion is fitted, it clamps down, compressing the three layers between gaskets to make an airtight seal and the composite aluminium extrusion thus forms a frame around the three-layer foil panel. A plastic plenum feed from a small generator or similar, delivers air to inflate the panel, hence the description of the panels as 'cushions'.

The system can be designed to be anything up to 35m in any one direction, spanning 3.5m in the other (although Eden used 11.5m-diameter panels so many variations on a theme are possible). The aluminium frame is fixed to the structure of the building and because the cushion is built up of a flexible material under a small amount of pressure (220Pa), any movement in the frame or sub-frame can be accommodated in the inherent flex of the material and the 'give' in its inflated curvature. Morris states that 'no differential movement is taken up in the frame'.

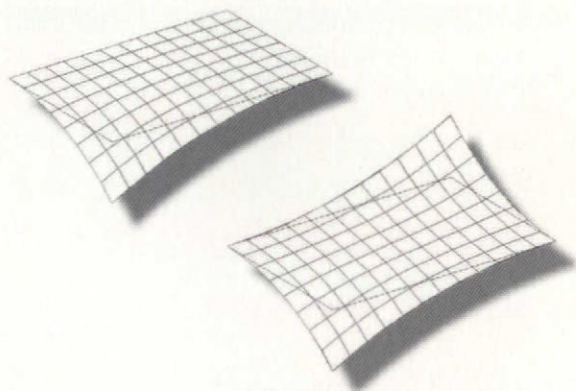
### Wind cheater

A three-layer cushion has a U-value of 0.96W/m<sup>2</sup>K (five-layer cushions have a U-value of 0.18W/m<sup>2</sup>K) and together, the three layers have a light transmission of 97 per cent through the material. The taut material is designed to have a structural stability sufficient to be self-supporting and to accommodate snow and wind loads.

However, given the unique nature of the product, there are no relevant regulations to apply to this product and engineering methods and design concepts are having to be reinvented to deal with the novel circumstances embodied in the cushions.

For instance, calculations for wind loads are totally inappropriate for Texlon, given that, as Morris says, we are 'moving into the realms of symbiotic structures', whereby the wind energy is taken up in the skin, and only a proportion is transferred to the aluminium frame. In fact, in tests, the viscosity of the air-filled cushions actually dampens the wind effect. 'This is a new language,' says Morris, 'it is totally different from the



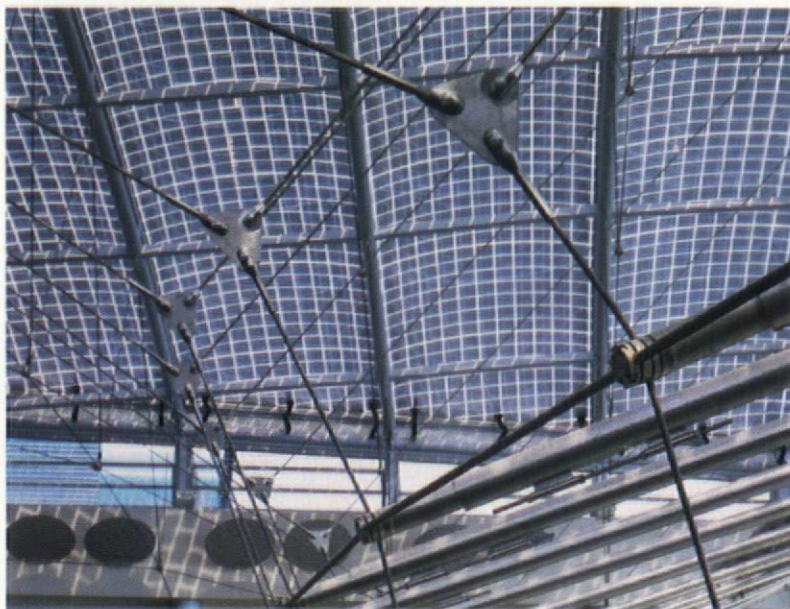


#### TECHNICAL INFORMATION

- ETFE stands for Ethylene Tetra Fluoro Ethylene, referred to as in the text, as 'foil'.
- Texlon comprises pneumatic cushions of modified co-polymer ETFE, contained by an aluminium extrusion and gasket rigidly fixed to the main building frame.
- A three-layer cushion system has a U-value of  $1.96 \text{ W/m}^2\text{K}$ , which is better than horizontal triple glazing.
- The cushions have low flammability and are self-extinguishing. They self-vent in the event of a fire and do not produce molten drips or give off quantities of dangerous fumes.
- Texlon is an extruded product, so the ETFE surface is extremely smooth and is said to be self-cleaning in wet weather.
- The material is 90-150 microns thick and a standard cushion weighs approximately  $2\text{-}3.5 \text{ kg/m}^2$ .



Left: the new atrium roof of the HM Treasury building in the City of London. Right: variable roof patterns enable the solar gain to be controlled at the Festo building in Stuttgart



physics and appearance of tensile structures and we can only learn by listening to the material.'

There is nominal diffusion of air through the material and at the welded seal between the plenum and the cushion, such that the top-up air pump requires only  $100 \text{ W}/1,000 \text{ m}^2$  running for 50 per cent of the day. Also, it is recommended that in extraordinarily humid conditions, the supply air be de-humidified.

The other significant advance offered by Texlon is a reduction in the size and quantity of material used for the roof support structure. Commonly, about 10 times the amount of steel is used in columns and beams than is needed for support purposes, primarily just to provide stiffness. With Texlon, however, given that the cushions have inherent flexibility to cope with structural movement, and that their weight is nominally

$3 \text{ kg/m}^2$ , then the requirement for self-support effectively becomes the only criterion for structural members.

Thus a completed Texlon roof costs about 30 to 50 per cent less than traditional steel and glazing systems. As an example, Morris says the British Museum's roof cost in the region of  $\text{£}2,000/\text{m}^2$ , whereas he could have done it for around  $\text{£}600/\text{m}^2$  (including design fees). In this way, structure can become light in all senses of the word and materials can be used to their optimum effect.

#### Now you see it

The requirement for atria to be self-venting in the event of fire inspired Morris to create new styles of openable roofscapes. On one scheme, the entire  $100 \text{ m}^2$  roof structure hinges open at one edge; on another, the roof is centrally pivoted and both

sides release and drop down in a fire. Morris is proud of the fact that these release mechanisms are straightforward pulley and weight technologies – combining the soft-tech of Texlon cushions with low-tech movable parts.

The latest development to come out of Vector's office is screen printing and body tint foils. These can vary from the opaque to translucent, and printed screens can accommodate almost any pattern. By printing alternating chequerboard patterns on the outer and inner foils in a three-layer system, the light passing through (and solar gain) can be reduced.

By the use of intelligent pneumatics, different layers of the foil can be closed up, and in this example, the alternating chequerboard patterns come together to block off 90 per cent of the light. By reducing the air



on one side of the central foil layer, the U-value also changes. This ability to alter the climatic conditions at the flick of a switch, using simple technological devices, will undoubtedly prove to be a major advance for building management systems.

And the prestige projects keep coming. Rem Koolhaas' winning scheme for Los Angeles County Museum of Art incorporates Texlon over tension wires, a new design concept from Vector which incorporates an arrangement of steel arches held up by tension wires. The wires fall to nodes which are held up by wires passing over the arches and held down by wires from the ground. A structure inspired by the spokes of a bicycle wheel.

Morris is not happy to stand still, and his office is constantly challenging the material to do bigger and better things. Lateral thinking is as good a generator of ideas as any other for such a challenging material, and Morris tells of how one of his staff noticed that, at home, his baby was banging a toy drum, but when jelly was dropped on the drum surface, the irritating noise was muffled. The next day, Morris and his staff were in the workshop exploring the acoustic merits of jelly on the ETFE panels. They are now developing gel dampers.

There are many more weird and wonderful ideas in the pipeline, some I am not allowed to talk about here, but which take the idea of self-supporting structure and energy efficiency to even higher levels. Two more embryonic lateral ideas – that are just part of Morris blue-sky thinking at the moment – include running heat recovery pipes through the cushions (Morris sees the day when there will be goldfish swimming about in the roof structure) and a development inspired by the fluorescent tube – filling the cushions with gas and applying a charge, to create a totally fluorescent roof.

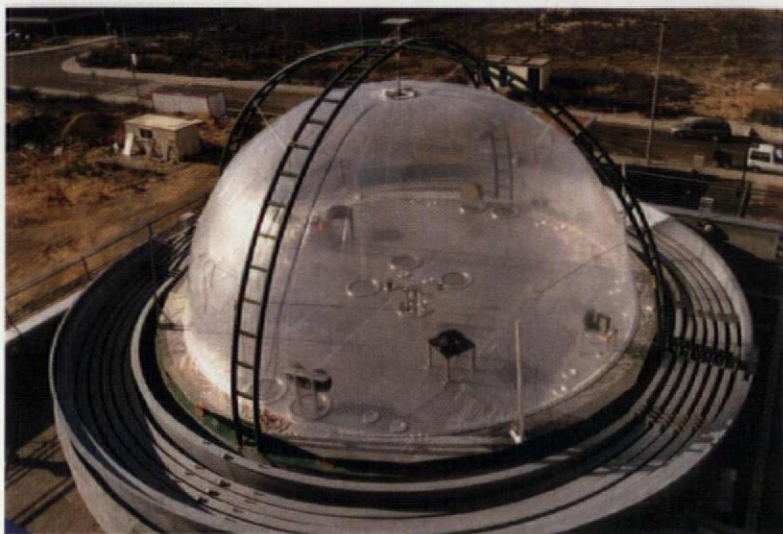
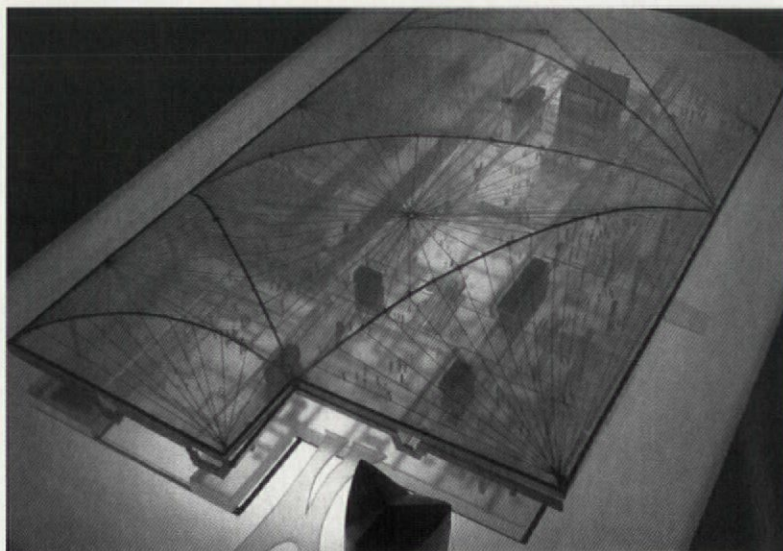
As the knowledge of the material's possibilities improves, the scope for creating fun, efficient, flexible structures seem to be endless. It would seem that with transparent roofing, the sky's the limit.

*Vector Special Projects can be contacted on 020 7375 2756*

#### FOIL CHARACTERISTICS

PROPERTY	UNIT	VALUE	TEST METHOD
DENSITY	G/Cm <sup>3</sup>	1.75±0.05	DIN 53479 at 23°C
ULTIMATE TENSILE STRENGTH			
Longitudinal	N/mm <sup>2</sup>	40-50	DIN 53455 test specimen
Transverse	40-50	5, 23C	
ELONGATION AT BREAK			
Longitudinal	%	300-400	Film strip 15 x 170mm clamping length 40mm, test rate 100mm/min
Transverse		300-400	
YIELD STRESS			
Longitudinal	N/mm <sup>2</sup>	20-30	
Transverse		20-30	
ELONGATIONS AT YIELD			
Longitudinal	%	15-20	
Transverse		15-20	
COLD FRACTURE TEMPERATURE			
Longitudinal	°C	-180	DIN 53372
Transverse		-180	
TEAR PROPAGATION WITH TRAPEZOIDAL NOTCH			
Longitudinal	N/mm	400-500	DIN 53363. 23°C
Transverse		400-500	

**Right: Rem Koolhaas' scheme for its Los Angeles County Museum of Art. Bottom right: the delicate covering of the Valencia Ozone Laboratory in Spain**





# Healthy practice

Does specialisation have a place in architectural education and could it be a help or a hindrance in the job market?

BY MIKE NIGHTINGALE

The world of architecture is becoming more sophisticated in terms of building types, delivery systems (eg Private Finance Initiative) and building contexts (urban renewal).

So are British schools of architecture, with their almost universal 'general practitioner' approach, serving their students well in this complex and competitive environment?

I wholeheartedly support the notion that a BA or BSc in architecture is an enormously valuable general degree, equipping participants for a wide variety of future careers. Heaven knows, the public awareness of the key role that architecture plays in the shaping and quality of our lives is so low in this country, that the idea that RIBA Part 1 students may end up as key players in all sorts of walks of life outside architecture, can only be a plus.

However, I believe the commitment to an additional two years' academic study, with the specific objective of obtaining the RIBA Part 2 architectural qualification, merits further examination in a different light.

## Speedy recovery

At the end of the day, the practice of architecture and, therefore, the education of architects, has a vocational base and therefore, the latter should equip students for the real world, without watering down quality.

Government initiatives to improve design quality present wonderful opportunities (somewhat marred by the obsession with PFI) which need to be rigorously and imaginatively exploited in the schools of architecture. One way to do this is for universities to increase the amount of research they carry out at the cutting edge of issues concerning public buildings. For example, there is growing evidence that design excellence in healthcare buildings can produce measurable improvements in patient outcomes by speeding recovery and cure rates.



**Liverpool University student Matthew Hird's pop art visulation of the ward of the future**

As a practice specialising in health-care, we attract students and architects from around the world. With 22 different nationalities in the practice, it is a shame more British students do not show the same level of enthusiasm.

Notable exceptions last year were Matthew Hird and Keven Lester, students who chose a healthcare building for their thesis project at Liverpool University. Wacky some of their ideas may be, such as their all-glass operating theatres, but the freshness and imagination displayed in their approach was a tonic.

Liverpool is to be congratulated because, although initially sceptical about having them specialise early, the tutors were very supportive and encouraging. OK, they were not able to provide the level of specialised support they needed, but this was obtained from the Medical Architectural Research Unit (MARU). Sadly, many other schools do not provide any real level of encouragement to students wishing to explore specialist thesis subjects.

## Opportunities abroad

More dynamic ways of promoting worthwhile interaction between practice and schools merits attention. I recently presented a 30-minute synopsis of UK healthcare architecture,

alongside presentations from 20 other countries, at an American Institute of Architects conference in Vancouver.

One of my duties during the three-day period was to act as an advisor and juror to five groups of students (two American, one Canadian, one Mexican and one Japanese) designing 'a mobile disaster hospital'. This 'charette' produced some intriguing solutions and acted as an excellent forum for exchange of ideas. Perhaps the RIBA could act more as a catalyst between practices and students with relevant interests; in parallel to the work it does bringing practices and clients together.\*

Schools of architecture should reflect the needs of society and, undoubtedly, the design of excellent public buildings deserves more emphasis and attention in the curricula and choice of design projects offered by most schools. More design competitions open to both practices and students would increase opportunities for collaboration between the real world and academia.

## Charlie's angels

In conclusion, I am not advocating specific specialisation in the Part 2 course. However, I do think that students could be much better prepared and motivated to face the challenges of a rapidly growing body of public sector work.

Some training (role playing?) in responding to and obtaining the best out of highly sophisticated multifaceted clients, such as hospital consultants and university professors, combined with encouragement to look beyond popular stereotypical final thesis subjects, would be a good start.

Prince Charles has recently been appointed as a design champion for health buildings. He could do a lot worse than to concentrate his efforts on promoting interest and enthusiasm in innovative healthcare design at the schools of architecture.

*Mike Nightingale is a senior partner of Nightingale Associates, tel 01235 820222*

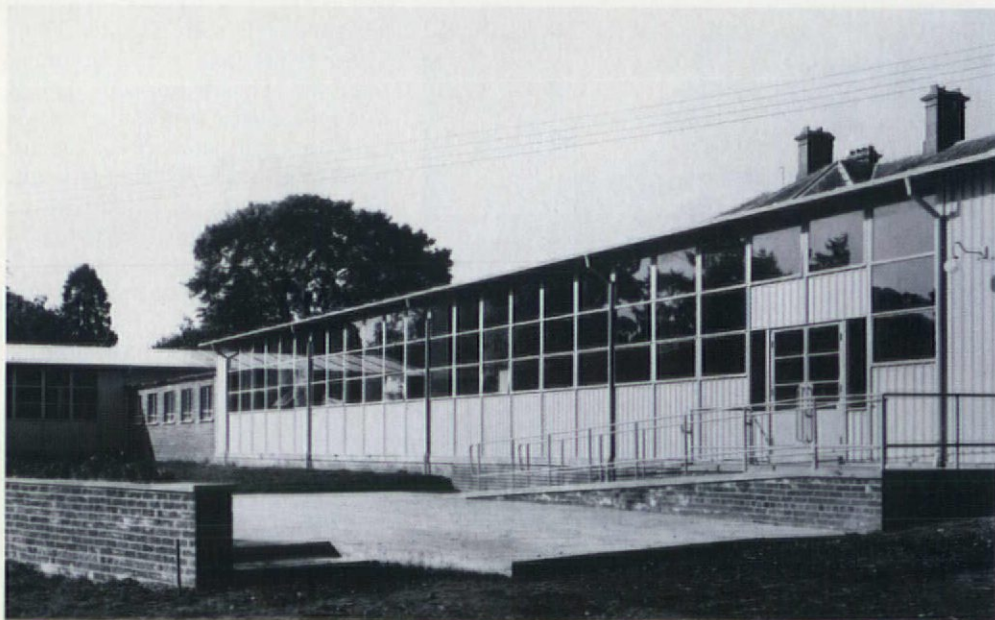
\*Architects for Health, affiliated to the RIBA, holds a series of annual events including foreign study tours. One of its key aims is to promote interest in healthcare design in the schools of architecture.



# An emergency case

Rather than specialising in impersonal, utilitarian modern health buildings, perhaps architects should leave well alone

BY DR MARTIN GABA



There are numerous features of hospitals built since the 1960s that make them profoundly enervating and alienating to work in.

Right from the time of arrival, one is stressed by the draconian charges for parking. I find it quite immoral that visitors, called to an emergency, have to pay to visit relatives. I have yet to see a hospital that offers a discount or free parking.

It is a major task to find one's way around hospitals. Despite the recent introduction of help desks, there may be no signpost to one's destination or it might be highly ambiguous. The lifts cause huge queues at visiting times which dislocate hospital life as well. What about elderly people or those with disabilities? Why not install escalators?

My particular *bête noir* in modern hospital designs are the long, alienating corridors, straight out of Kafka, painted stark white (is white paint cheaper than any other?), with no decorative or directional variation to break the utter monotony. One can only speculate about the impact that such visual tedium has on the mood of staff and visitors alike.

**Those were the days... An invigorating 'unobtrusive' 1950s extension to the Muckamore Abbey Hospital in Northern Ireland**

There is a well-advertised national agency which lends paintings to hospitals; to hire a few would be an act of compassion towards those who have to traverse such corridors of disempowerment.

Of course, long corridors allow horizontal development, but they cut off departments from each other. It is noticeable that in modern hospitals there is much less interdepartmental contact. As a consequence, I believe that patient care, professional life and the bonhomie that oils the working day suffer as departments become more isolated and introspective.

My particular opprobrium is reserved for the architects at one hospital where I worked, who designed some of the secretaries' rooms looking out against blank walls – and some without windows at all!

In contrast, anyone who has worked in one of the extant Victorian, or 'war' hospitals could teach today's architects a thing or two about how to create a pleasant working ambience. For a start, there is a helpful, symbiotic staff culture which seems to be produced by a work milieu that is not scrupulously

uniform or authoritarian. With the erosion of professional boundaries comes interdepartmental intercourse – then the consultants knew the first names of the staff right down to the kitchen ladies.

The whole spatial environment in old-time hospitals facilitates contact between staff, with unpretentious cafeterias where the staff can mix. In modern hospitals the consultants often eat separately.

The contours of corridors in these antediluvian institutions are broken by little alcoves of haphazard passages. The decoration might be askew pictures of the 'Monarch of the Glen', but somehow these enhance, rather than detract from, the informal ambience.

One may get soaked when commuting between blocks but this permits the taste of invigorating fresh air, which attenuates the stress. The wind blowing into the blocks regulates their temperature in stark contrast to the modern hospital's temperamental temperature controls. Somehow, it all seems to contribute to a delightful informality.

In a generation's time, when a few architects have been prosecuted for inducing sick building syndrome by the design of their hospitals, I predict that they are going to rediscover 'the therapeutic wheel':

- Patients prefer 'Nightingale wards' where they feel more observed and where they have more privacy during clinical consultations.

- Staff prefer a working environment that is comfortable, rather than that resembling a submarine ready for action. The barren, utilitarian, internal desecration beloved of contemporary architects is shown to be bad for sentient life.

- Patients eminently prefer a homely, reassuring hospital environment rather than an impersonal, antiseptic ambience.

There are 22 hospitals in England and Wales that are currently completed (or nearing completion) under the Private Finance Initiative. Early intelligence indicates that these edifices, driven by the monetarism of private enterprise, have not taken on board the self-evident truths that I have spelled out above.

*Dr Martin Gaba is a psychiatrist*





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# It would be foolish to disregard the dangers of determination

Determining a building contract, that is, bringing the contractor's employment to a premature end, is a high-risk strategy, particularly if this is done on the grounds of delay. It is risky for the following reasons:

- It is the employer who decides whether to determine the contract. Such a decision can only be taken with the benefit of the contract administrator's opinion of the contractor's performance. That opinion may not be right.

- The date by which the works ought to have been finished can usually only be decided after the works are completed and responsibility for the delaying events considered. Were the contractors slow or were they held up by late information and employer interference? During the course of the contract, it is not so easy to investigate the delay fully.

- The contractors may have claimed an extension of time for completing. But, even if they have not, the contract administrator has an obligation to consider whether they are entitled to more time anyway, before deciding that they are in delay.

- Building contracts, particularly those which incorporate standard terms and conditions, cannot be brought to an end with a jerk of the thumb in the 'off-site' direction. They provide for a regime of notices specifying the default complained of, a period in which the contractor may rectify the position and a final notice. Care has to be taken to get it right.

- The consequences of getting it wrong can be expensive. Seeking to determine a contract when there are no grounds for doing so, is, in itself, a breach of contract entitling the wronged contractors to pull off site and claim, as damages, the profit they would have earned had they completed the job.

These difficulties were considered in the case of *Sindal Ltd v Solland* (judgment 15.6.01) which concerned a contract for the renovation of a Mayfair property that fell into delay. The contractor's extension of time claim had been referred to an adjudicator, but before the decision was available the contract administrator's patience ran out and the contractor was given notice of its default for failing to proceed regularly and

diligently with the works. Thereafter the employer determined the contractor's employment under the contract.

The contractor disputed both the original complaints about delay and the subsequent determination. Although its position was improved subsequently when the adjudicator decided that it was entitled to an extension of time of 28 weeks, the contractor determined its own employment, claimed yet more time and started a second adjudication. The adjudicator found that the determination had been wrongful and that the contractor was entitled to another 13-week extension.

The employer challenged the decision on the basis that the dispute referred to by the adjudicator related to the determination issue only, saying that the second adjudicator had no jurisdiction to give an extension of time.

The judge held that the dispute about determination was underpinned by the question as to whether the contractor was entitled to a further extension and that, accordingly, the adjudicator did have jurisdiction

to decide the point. He made the following observations:

- Before issuing a default notice, the contract administrator has to decide whether the completion date should be extended, even if the contractor has not requested an extension of time. The true date for completion is the objective yardstick by which the contractor's performance is to be measured.

- It is artificial to say that the completion date is the contractual date, as extended, current at the time. Until the matter is finally decided, the position is constantly open to review.

- An employer who wishes to rely on a contract administrator's opinion as to responsibility for delay must be satisfied that opinion is justifiable on the facts available at the time.

This case is a further warning of the dangers of determination. Contract administrators should investigate all the facts before deciding the contractor's default. Employers should be very careful before relying upon that decision.

Kim Franklin

'Building contracts cannot be brought to an end with a jerk of the thumb in the "off-site" direction'

## The end of the office worker may well be nigh

You make recommendations about sites and when you revisit them a year later you wonder why. One such is About Architecture at [architecture.about.com](http://architecture.about.com), a division of the much bigger About site and run by one Jackie Craven. In the spotlight a few weeks ago was Casa Mila, Barcelona, and here I quote: 'The final civil design of the Dada surrealist Antoni Gaudí. A social, misogynist, seriously and unpleasantly weird certainly, but a mate of Duchamp and Dali? I've just unsubscribed.'

Office? Home? Which is the best for the one-person practice? You've probably tried them both – plus space sharing and the odd dodgy deal with a bloke who takes your rent in used tenners and who you suspect is really squatting somebody's unclaimed inheritance. But there is now a site for the home office person. It is titled eGrindstone at [www.egrindstone.co.uk](http://www.egrindstone.co.uk). The latter dot-bits indicate that it is local, and therefore of some potential use.

As you might expect, it runs features on such topics as 'The advantages and disadvantages of working from home – eGrindstone tells it like it is'. I always argue, and this always loses me lots of brownie points with office-bound AJ staff, that the big thing about working at home is that you can have a snooze after lunch – or indeed any old time. I have to say that in the old days of this very organ the management rather approved of you taking a nap in the office – it was a sign of being comfortable with yourself and your role. No mention of that here, although there are sections on law, marketing, technology and so on, plus a monthly artist feature and, this month, a review of terrific office chairs including the Aeron.

There is also some wonderfully weird stuff including webcams. No not that sort but of equally exotic sites such as Oxford Circus, Junction 30 on the M5 and the Kremlin, Moscow. The list of links to other homeworker sites suggests it could be the end for the office. [sutherland.lyall@btinternet.com](mailto:sutherland.lyall@btinternet.com)





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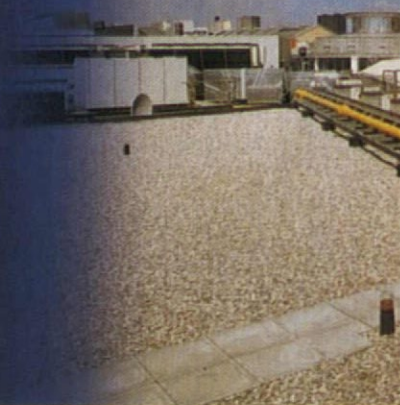


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## An epic ruin

ALEX WRIGHT

### Market Complex

At the Guildhall, Gloucester, until 28 February

In May 1956, *The Architects' Journal* published a building study describing Gloucester's new market complex. Almost 50 years later, the city's Guildhall is the venue for an exhibition documenting the same building, immediately prior to its demolition.

In 1956, the complex represented optimism about the county's rural economy, and was a Modernist manifestation of civic pride. The city architect produced a building of elegance and thoroughbred Modernist credentials. Its fate since then reflects a far broader picture of changing circumstances and attitudes. The cattle market is now functionally obsolete as livestock auctions have moved from provincial sites to large regional centres. A traditional meeting place between town and country has gone with it.

The building itself, initially lauded, has

rapidly become a ruinous backdrop to the weekend car-boot sale. With the demise of the Modernist consensus, and with local Princely ramblings fuelling the hate campaign, a building of architectural quality, utterly distinct from its mediocre context, assumed the pariah status of many of its contemporaries. But the received wisdom that a good building makes a good ruin was never truer than here. This is an epic ruin.

Photolanguage is a collaboration between Nigel Green and Robin Wilson. Together they share a fascination with the ruins of Modernity rather than antiquity. Following similar studies based in Rouen and Calais (AJ 28.9.00), Gloucester provided an irresistible subject.

The show itself is small: photographs, texts and remnants of the building fabric in a

single room; the archival record of which it is a part, will be more complete. But the building itself, a mile away, is the main attraction. A visit confirms the impression that this is a strangely heroic structure. Like a young Brando, its heroism is allied to the sort of dignity only possible when you have been beaten to within an inch of your life, and emerge upright, disfigured, but still impossibly good looking.

There might still be some last-minute reprieve or partial listing – the merits of the complex could justify it – but this would miss the point. Buildings have a life, and a death. To subject Modernist works like this to zombification, in the name of the new conservationist cult, insults the ambition and faith of those who created them.

It is surely better to let Photolanguage make its exhibits and its archive and let entropy take its course. The surviving architects, such as AJ Ault, deserve our recognition; as for the market complex, let it return to dust, and let Gloucester measure itself today by what replaces it.

Alex Wright is an architect in Bath



# Soft options

JOHN MCKEAN

## Architecture: The Subject is Matter

Edited by Jonathan Hill. Routledge, 2001. £19.99

When Le Corbusier was introduced to Salvador Dalí, he asked: 'What do you think is the future of architecture?' 'It will be soft and hairy,' came the unexpected reply. This book opens with the hairy (Till & Wigglesworth's 'straw-bale' house) and closes with the soft (Rachel Armstrong's 'wet architecture'). Sadly, though, it is on the level of ideas and inspiration that too much of this volume is soft, and not a little is extremely hairy.

Collections of essays appear from Routledge with extraordinary rapidity, at times appearing more like a new edition of *Architectural Design* than a book: excerpts of ongoing conversations and not yet secure arguments, grossly over-validated in footnote and reference; bizarre juxtapositions and in-talk (in this case Bartlett-centric), with a fair smattering of gobbledegook to keep us amused. The contrast between this, quite valid but journal-like format, and a book of essays is seen in another new Routledge product, *What is Architecture?* (edited by Andrew Ballantyne), in which very varied, often key recent texts are subtly chosen and valuably re-aired.

What, indeed, is architecture? 'Architectural matter,' Hill tells us, 'is whatever architecture is made of, whether words, bricks, blood cells, sounds or pixels. Architecture can be found in the incisions of a surgeon. Architecture can be made of anything and by anyone.' Appetites whetted, we await insights. But they are hard to find, and the logic of the collection is not substantiated.

David Sibley never scratches far below the obvious; Mark Dorrian tries to say too much with his mouth full; Hill's own paper is unexceptional, his point being – as he says near the end – to argue that 'the building that is most suggestive and open to appropriation is the one we do not immediately know how to occupy.' Or, as the old sage said: 'Don't understand me too quickly.'

While some contributors clearly aim their text at colleagues within 'such ongoing theoretical disputes' (Jane Rendell's words), Hill's goal is wider. Unlike 'the obvious aim of architects and architectural historians... to exclude outsiders from the conversation,' this book 'aims to present ideas in a seductive and accessible manner.'

At least, for the exhausted reader, the

final pages are enlivened by their manifesto style: 'We have at last sensed that we are nearly at the end of the tyranny of formal inertia!' shouts Neil Spiller, as he announces 'the battle to make nature ours'. Such archaic Modernism (and its masculinist imperialism) is continued by Armstrong: 'Architects are already starting to redesign the human body as an architectural project!'

Her writing takes the bizarre form of a blurb for Extropia. The goal is 'a technologised change in our species known as post-humanism... Extropians use technologies to improve their internal character'. Comic and darkly surreal as all this appears, I fear that is far from the author's intent – so it lacks the insight, say, of Haruki Murakami's extraordinary novel, *Hard-Boiled Wonderland and The End of the World*.

However, unlike the curate's egg, there are some uncontaminated and tasty bites. These include Iain Borden's pleasant meditation on the inhabitation of his stair, Till & Wigglesworth's perceptive, witty and original musings which question Flaubert's '*Le bon Dieu est dans le détail*', and Katerina Rüedi Ray's insightful study of the way Bauhaus education (after the First World War) constructed a new masculine identity. A bouquet of short and original essays like these is exactly what a book like this could offer the inquisitive reader.

John McKean is a professor at Brighton School of Architecture

## Beyond Shelter: Anatolian Indigenous Buildings

By Kemal Aran. Tepe Architectural Culture Centre, 2000. 224pp. £14 & £5p&p. (Orders to [dergi21@superonline.com](mailto:dergi21@superonline.com))

Anatolia has many remaining settlements of indigenous housing, writes Barrie Evans. The region is also very varied climatically, from arid plains to steep, wet hillsides. And the buildings reflect this: the heavyweight and the lightweight, sheltering from the heat and the rain – some timber, some stone, some earth.

This book – mainly in photographs, often with dwelling plans – is a labour of love. Aran records the buildings' typology and the often-elaborate marks of individuality and tradition. His text draws on Christopher Alexander's pattern language to record how parts are habitually used and related.

Aran has obviously been inside many of these houses, but people very rarely appear in the photographs and their voices are not heard in the text. Taken together, the pictures have some of the eerie silence of the Marie Celeste.

The author is content to make a record. He does not speculate on whether this tradition can survive or on the potential for today's professional designers to learn from it.

Clearly times are changing. Some of the carefully framed shots of settlements do show the incursion of more modern orthogonal shapes, larger developments, and materials such as corrugated iron. This collection, started in the 1950s, is a valuable, timely record.





# Perpetual revolutions

MARTIN PAWLEY

## Architecture in the Age of Printing: Orality, Writing, Typography and Printed Images in the History of Architectural Theory

By Mario Carpo. Translated by Sarah Benson. MIT Press, 2001. 246pp. £23.95

Mario Carpo, associate professor of the school of architecture of Saint Etienne in France, is also a scholar at the J Paul Getty Center in California. He wrote this unusual book in 1995-96 and it first appeared in Italy before being revised and translated into English. However, its original message – that there is a powerful link between architectural theory and the mechanics of drawing – remains unchanged, along with its implicit threat to the conventional view of the chronology and causality of architectural design.

Carpo begins his study with a discussion of the oral and mnemonic methods by which architectural ideas were communicated before mechanical reproduction, and then moves on to the shift from script to print, and from hand-made drawing to mechanically reproduced image, that took place in the 16th century.

This change, which Carpo sees as the substantive beginning of the industrial revolution, had of course a tremendous long-term impact on the whole of European civilisation, but in architecture its

effects were particularly dramatic. Graphic reproduction led to a more systematic use of the Classical orders and the increasing adoption of mechanically repeating elements in design.

The bulk of Carpo's book consists of chapter and verse in support of his challenging hypothesis that the printing press was the engine of the architectural Renaissance. But its most fascinating pages deal with the extension of this idea both back in time and forward into the future when – as a result of the digital revolution – he speculates that architecture will have to learn to survive without printing for the first time in 500 years.

In a tour de force of rational argument and illustration, he goes on to show that the most 'modern' consequence of tracing the origin of modern architecture back to Gutenberg and the invention of moveable type, has been the rediscovery of the difference between publishing and printing. There was publishing of architecture before printing, he says, and now, through the digital revolution, we face the prospect of publish-

ing architecture after printing as well.

Carpo uses this unusual insight to open many doors. He claims that, while the whole of modern machine production grew out of the 500-year alliance of publishing and printing that stretches from Gutenberg to ASCII, only a small part of it involved the evolution of a modern architecture of interchangeable parts; but that was enough to stand art history on its head, by making the 'Modernism' of the Crystal Palace not the first but the last flowering of the idea of design through repetition.

The rest of Carpo's analysis confronts us with the huge changes that are coming about because of the growing obsolescence of print. He cites, for example, the vulnerability of the motor industry, another industrial behemoth born out of the development of the printing machine, whose mass-produced vehicles once seemed destined to complete the destruction of the city as the pre-Gutenberg era knew it – but only until the digital revolution (in the shape of the tiny personal computer) began to challenge the automobile itself.

No sooner had the high-rise office building overwhelmed the Renaissance city, than the computer has begun to remove the need for large concentrations of employees in central locations. 'This small thing,' as Carpo says of the motor vehicle, 'destroyed the city.' To which he adds that this tiny thing, the computer, will destroy the motor car as well.

## Why Architecture Matters

By Blair Kamin. University of Chicago Press, 2001. 386pp. £24

Blair Kamin is architecture critic for the *Chicago Tribune* and this book collects some 60 of his columns since 1992, writes Andrew Mead. The *Tribune*, he points out, remains an exception to the increasing tendency of US newspapers just to treat architecture as real estate. Naturally Chicago itself dominates his writings but not in a parochial sense. 'The city and its suburbs are an astonishingly accurate barometer of the fortunes and misfortunes of American architecture and urban planning,' he says, which the collection substantiates.

Kamin clearly gets a great buzz still from his city but laments its fate during the 1990s, when it 'lost its architectural nerve' and became a place of 'blandness, not boldness.' He claims to practise 'activist criticism' – 'you whack at the offending party with the journalistic equivalent of a two-by-four'.

Kamin's prose is not as pugilistic as this implies but – just as in the 1930s 'Skyline' columns which Lewis Mumford wrote for *The New Yorker* – there is the sense of someone critically engaged with the development of a city on a day-to-day basis. It may be only a shopfront, it may be a proposal for the world's tallest building, but Kamin picks it apart, considering what it means for the public realm and what more general tendency it might represent. Postscripts to some pieces bring the story up to date and allow us to judge whether his 'activist' role has had any effect; certainly sometimes it has.

Kamin approves of Mies and of much that Mies' disciples built in Chicago. SOM's John Hancock Tower (pictured left), with its 'blue-collar directness,' is on the cover of the book, confirming it as one of his touchstones. 'It elevates pragmatism into poetry,' he says. 'This is rational architecture that transcends rationalism.' Why he thinks the Guggenheim Bilbao is 'superbly crafted' remains a mystery.





# THE NEW OFFICE VALUE NOT COST!

## ADDING VALUE IN THE PROCUREMENT CHAIN FROM SITE ACQUISITION TO OCCUPATION

British Council of Offices Spring Conference, 7 March 2002,  
The Institution of Civil Engineers, 1 Great George Street, Westminster, London SW1P 3AA

New commercial workspace over the next economic cycle will have to respond to market supply and demand, and this will place an increasing emphasis on value rather than cost. 'More will equal less' as poor quality space languishes in a tighter market.

Each of the conference sessions will examine a different part of the procurement cycle to see where value can be gained by considering new ideas, techniques or just doing the same things, but better.

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### 9.15 Welcome

Tim Battle  
Timothy Battle Associates, Conference Chairman

### 9.25 Opening

Roger Fidge, BCO President

### 9.35 Keynote The Importance of Commercial Offices to the Real Economy

Michael Roberts, Director, Business Environment, CBI

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### 9.55 Securing the Deal - feasibility, concept & site acquisition

Chair: Richard Clare, EC Harris  
Planning Issues: Malcolm Kerr, Montagu Evans  
Finance: Martin Moore, Prudential  
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### 10.55 Coffee

### 11.10 Pushing the Envelope - New ways of establishing what's feasible and what's possible in the design of commercial workspace.

Chair: Ziona Strelitz, ZZA  
Architect: Larry Malcic, HOK  
Val Lehr: Valentine Lehr & Associates  
Occupier: Simon Ward, Deutsch Bank  
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### 12.10 The Vision Bit - Two architectural practices' plans for two 300,000 sqft Development Securities buildings at Paddington Central: is there an Atlantic divide in how they develop out the schemes? Does the culture of a practice influence and inform the design solutions?

Chair: Andrew Murdoch, Fitzroy Robinson  
Graham Anthony, Sheppard Robson  
Paul Morrell DL&E  
Lee Polzano, KPF

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### 1.10 Lunch

### 2.10 Technology in the Workplace - can emerging technology add value by cutting costs?

Chair: Tony Thomson, DEGW  
New Materials: Tom Smith, WSP  
Underfloor VAV: Les Smith, Cudd Bentley  
Wireless Telecomms: Philip Ross, Unwired

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### 3.10 Coffee

### 3.25 Best Deals and Best Practice - PFI, outsourcing or traditional procurement?

Chair: Anne Minogue, Linklaters  
Stephen Hockaday, Bovis Lend Lease  
Paul Lewis, Stanhope  
Ian Gibson, Gleeds

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### 4.25 Don't Forget the Occupier - what at the end of the day do workspace users really want?

Chair: Tim Caiger, Oracle  
Guy Holden, Johnson Controls Ltd  
Paul Pierce, CSC  
Alastair Elliott, Knight Frank

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### 5.25 Conference Conclusion - A CIBE perspective Design: Value versus Cost

Paul Finch, CIBE

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## London

**Barbican: This was Tomorrow 14 February-14 April.** An exhibition at the Barbican Centre, Silk St, EC2. Details 020 7638 4141.

**Eric Parry Wednesday 20 February, 18.30.** A lecture at the AA, 36 Bedford Sq, WC1 (020 7887 4000).

**Wandel Hofer Lorch + Hirsch: Synagogue in Dresden Until 22 February.** An exhibition at the AA, 36 Bedford Sq, WC1 (020 7887 4000).

**The City as Sculpture: From Skyline to Plinth Monday 25 February, 18.30.** A forum at the Royal Academy with Eric Parry, Gordon Benson and Kathryn Findlay (020 7300 5839).

**Priceless Objects Wednesday 27 February.** A conference on object modelling technology at the RIBA. Details 020 7505 8614.

**Sustainable Urban Design Thursday 28 February.** A conference, introduced by Eva Jiricna, at Kingston University. Details 020 8547 7192.

**Contemporary Czech Architecture Until 28 February.** An exhibition at the Czech Centre, 95 Gt Portland St, W1. Details 020 7291 9920.

**Marketing, Selling and Sustainability in the Construction Products Industry Tuesday 5 March.** A seminar at the Building Centre, Store St, WC1. Details 020 7692 4000.

**The New Office: Value not Cost Thursday 7 March.** A BCO conference at the Institution of Civil Engineers, SW1. Details 020 7505 6813.

**Linda Karshan Until 16 March.** An exhibition at Sir John Soane's Museum, 13 Lincoln's Inn Fields, WC2. Details 020 7405 2107.

**Revitalizing the European City Thursday 21 March.** An Architectural Review conference at the RIBA. Details 020 7505 6613 and [www.arplus.com](http://www.arplus.com)

**William Beckford 1760-1844 Until 14 April.** An exhibition at Dulwich Picture Gallery, Gallery Rd, SE21. Details 020 8693 5254.

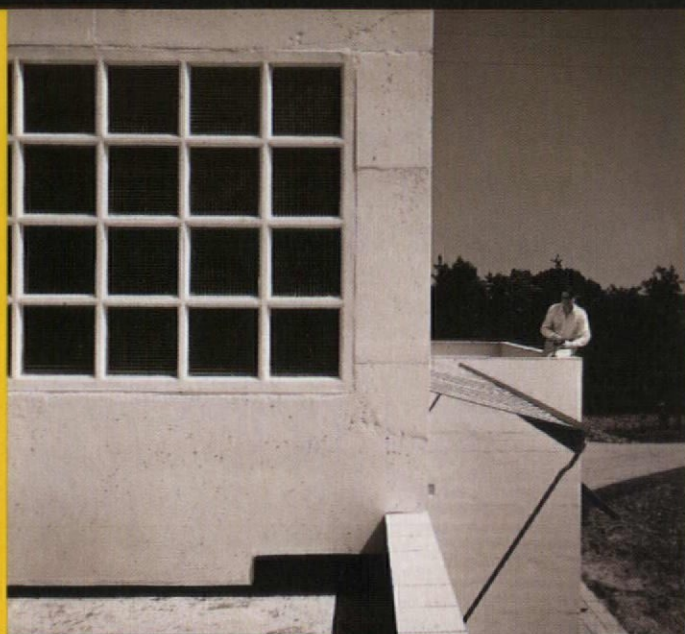
## Eastern

**Listed Building & Conservation Show 2-3 March.** At the Riding Stables, Hatfield House, Hatfield. Details 01992 504331.

**Flights of Reality Until 3 March.** An exhibition at Kettle's Yard, Cambridge. Details 01223 352124.

**The Route to Sustainable Resource Use in Construction Wednesday 13 March, 16.00.** A CIEF seminar in Norwich. Details 020 7222 8891.

**Landmarks Until 28 April.** Photographs by Fay Godwin at the Sainsbury Centre, UEA, Norwich. Details 01603 593199.



## MASTERS AND PUPILS

The Twentieth Century Society's spring lecture series begins this evening with Michael Grice talking about Erik Gunnar Asplund – Grice worked with him in the 1930s. Later speakers include Brian Henderson on FRS Yorke (Yorke's Torilla at Hatfield is pictured above), Anthony Blee on Basil Spence, and Richard Burton on Powell & Moya. All lectures start at 18.30 at The Gallery, 70 Cowcross Street, London EC1. Details 020 7250 3857.

## East Midlands

**Patrick Bellew (Atelier Ten) Thursday 21 February, 19.00.** A lecture at the Angela Marmont Theatre, University of Nottingham (0115 978 9680).

**Art for Circulation Spaces Sundays 14.00-18.00 until 25 March.** At Fermyn Woods Contemporary Art, Fermyn Woods, Brigstock, Kettering. Details 01536 373469.

**House Work: Domestic Spaces as Sites for Artists Until 2 March.** An exhibition at the Angel Row Gallery, Nottingham. Details 0115 915 2869.

**RIBA CPD Event: Part 1 - The Hard Facts Thursday 14 March, 14.00.** Details of venue 0121 233 2321.

## Northern

**Slow Glass: Naoya Hatakeyama Until 23 March.** An exhibition at the Northern Gallery for Contemporary Art, Sunderland (0191 514 1235).

## North West

**Roger Stephenson Thursday 28 February, 19.30.** A lecture at the Foster Building, University of Central Lancashire, Preston. Details Peter Trebilcock 0161 973 1505.

**Commodity, Firmness and Delight/ New German Architecture Until 19 March.** Two exhibitions at CUBE, 113 Portland St, Manchester. Details 0161 237 5525.

## South Eastern

**RIBA CPD Event: Contracts Update Thursday 21 February, 16.00.** At Le Meridien Hotel, Gatwick. Details 01892 515878.

**Conservation and Repair of Masonry Ruins 12-15 March.** A masterclass at West Dean College, near Chichester. Details 01243 811301.

## Southern

**Delivering Health and Safety Performance Improvement Wednesday 20 February.** A Construction Productivity Network workshop at Southampton. Details 020 7222 8891.

**Richard Cottrell Thursday 21 February, 18.00.** A lecture at the Lloyd Lecture Theatre, Oxford Brookes University. Details Inga Taylor 01865 483200.

**Sir Colin St John Wilson Thursday 21 February, 18.00.** A lecture at the Portland Building, Portsmouth School of Architecture. Details 02392 842086.

**Come to Light: Martin Richman Until 23 February.** New light installations at the Aspex Gallery, 27 Brougham Rd, Southsea. Details 023 9281 2121.

**Advanced Certificate in Environmental Design & Crime Prevention 18-22 March.** At Oxford Brookes University. Details 01268 799244.

## Wessex

**Barbara Hepworth / Josephine Pryde Until 24 February.** Two exhibitions at the New Art Centre, Roche Court, East Winterslow, near Salisbury. Details 01980 862244.

**Market Complex Until 28 February.** A photo-text installation on Gloucester Cattle Market (1955) at the Guildhall, 23 Eastgate St, Gloucester. Details 01452 505089.

## West Midlands

**RIBA CPD Event: Access Consultancy 26-27 February.** At Birmingham. Details 0121 233 2321.

**RIBA CPD Event: PPC 2000 - Standard Form of Contract for Project Partnering Thursday 7 March.** A seminar at Birmingham. Details 0121 233 2321.

**Becoming a Planning Supervisor 12-14 March.** A Construction Study Centre course at Birmingham. Details 0121 434 3337.

## Yorkshire

**Adrian Leaman Wednesday 27 February, 17.00.** A lecture on post-occupancy evaluation at Leeds Metropolitan University (Brunswick Building). Details 0113 283 1724.

**Richard Wilson Until 7 April.** Works by the installation artist at the Mappin Gallery, Sheffield. Details 0114 272 6281.

**Caro at Longside Until 30 April.** Sculpture by Sir Anthony Caro at the Yorkshire Sculpture Park, West Bretton. Details 01924 830302.

## Scotland

**Andrew Clegg Thursday 21 February, 17.30.** A lecture on bricks at the Scottish Centre for Conservation Studies, Edinburgh College of Art. Tickets 0131 221 6072.

**Space Relations Until 1 March.** Photographs by Daisy Dylan Watson at the RIAS, 15 Rutland Sq, Edinburgh. Details 0131 229 7545.

## Wales

**Neil Taylor (FaulknerBrowns) Thursday 21 February, 18.30.** A lecture at the WSA, Bute Building, Cardiff. Details 029 2087 4753.

**Ian Brebner (Austin-Smith: Lord) Thursday 21 February, 19.30.** A lecture at the Faenol Fawr Hotel, Bodelwyddan, St Asaph. Details 01745 815600.

## International

**UDG Study Tour to Paris 19-21 April.** Concentrating on new open spaces. Cost £280 approx. For details, e-mail [udsl@udg.org.uk](mailto:udsl@udg.org.uk)



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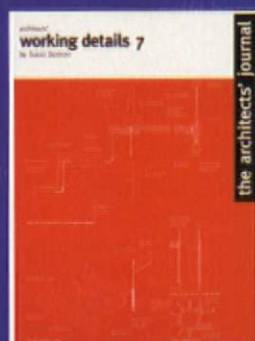
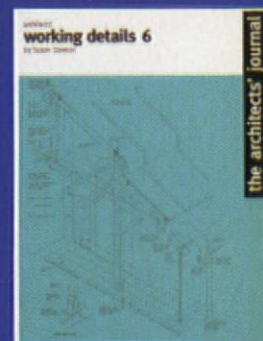
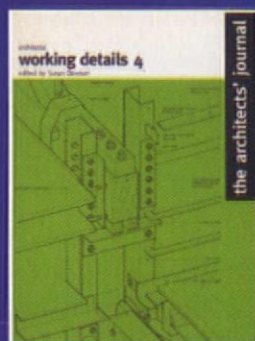
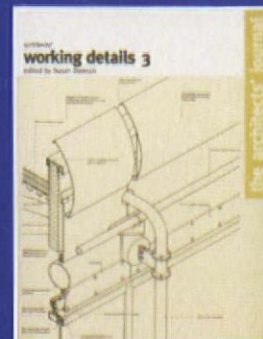
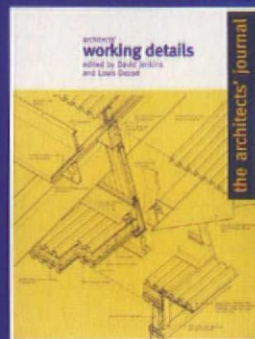
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## jobspot

### Amorous japes among colleagues

It is likely that if you are reading this column, then you have not received many Valentine cards, else you would be reading those instead. So allow me to act as a Valentine's substitute, if you will, an Eros for the unErosed, a Cupid for the stupid.

All Valentine's cards are, by their very nature, stupid and pink. However, all Valentine's cards, even though they are utterly cheap, have a power wielded on the receiver which is exponentially larger than the pennies spent. Men underestimate this to their cost. I once acted as an adviser to a would-be suitor to a female friend of mine. Said suitor wanted to know what sort of flowers my friend would like. I suggested orchids, and the reaction was favourable. However, not so favourable to dislodge me and my sudden interest in my friend. I'm still with her today.

So flowers are good. Flowers from M&S are less good. Flowers plucked from a graveyard less good still. But worst are flowers bought through car windows in traffic jams from men in woolly hats blackened by exhaust fumes. Six red (and black) roses for a fiver does not a romantic evening make. Best is 'unusual' flowers delivered in the middle of the day so all in the office witness said floral influx.

Chocolates are rubbish. Weekends away are a good idea but have to be well judged not to throw up 'where does he think he's sleeping?' thought-bubbles. Notices in newspapers: effective if well done, tacky if not. Sustained e-mail contact can be flirtatious but anonymity is tough. But watch colleagues today being overattentive with their in-boxes and more curious than usual with their post.

So, Jobspot's tip for tonight? Oysters, champagne and AJ. Amorous japes, that is.

Dirk Lombard

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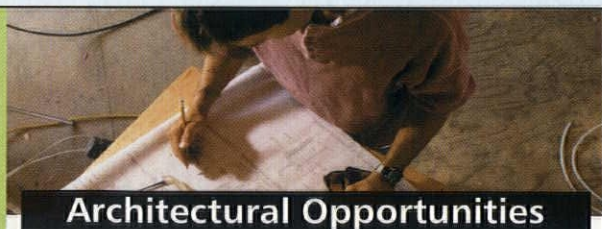
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**TK Architects** has closed its London operations in Boswell Street, London WC1 due to changes in economic climate. The US office remains open for business.

**IKM Consulting** has moved to new offices at Park House, 39 Bo'ness Road, Grangemouth, FK3 8AN.

**Anne Thorne Architects Partnership** has moved to 110 Elmore Street, London N1 3AH. Tel 020 7704 1391.

**Pyle Associates** has been renamed as **Pyle Boyd Architects**. Its new e-mail address is [info@pyleboyd.co.uk](mailto:info@pyleboyd.co.uk) and the website is [www.pyleboyd.co.uk](http://www.pyleboyd.co.uk). All other details will remain the same.

**Church Lukas Architecture and Design** along with **Principa Property** have opened new offices in Birmingham headed by **Phil Rushton**.

**Whitby Bird & Partners** has opened an office at 3 Clements Yard, Winchester, SO23 9DR, tel 01962 842478.

● Send details of changes and appointments to Victoria Nowell, *The Architects' Journal*, 151 Rosebery Avenue, London EC1R 4GB, or e-mail [victoria.nowell@construct.emap.com](mailto:victoria.nowell@construct.emap.com)

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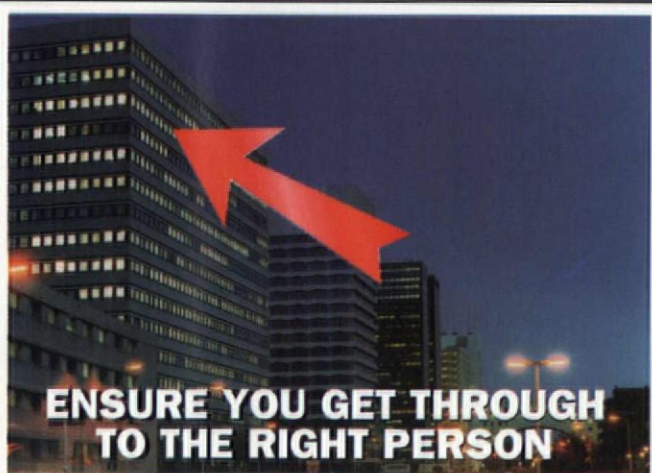
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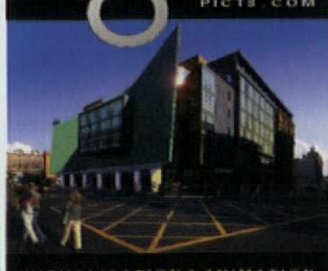
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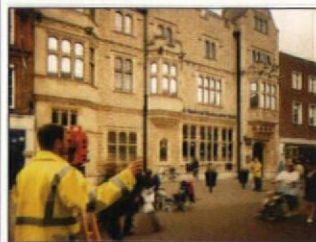
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## archicharades



Champagne goes to Grace Kenny from west London, who correctly identified Zaha Hadid from the clues in our 'archicharades' competition last week. Can you identify the famous architect from this week's clues? Send your answers on a postcard please, by first thing Monday morning, to: AJ Astragal, 151 Rosebery Avenue, London EC1R 4GB, or fax your entry on 020 7505 6701. The first correct entry pulled out of the hat wins a bottle of bubbly.

### Pure gold

**T**he RIBA's decision to award the Royal Gold Medal to **Archigram** is a welcome acknowledgement, all too rare in British architecture, of the power of ideas. Archigram built little, but the influence of the group has been immense, both as a result of the hundreds of projects produced in the 1960s/70s, and by the subsequent teaching careers of all the group, but in particular **Herron, Cooke and Greene**. After a period in the fashion doldrums, the work of the group, with its brilliant graphic presentation, won new (young) fans in the 1990s, not least because of the exhibition, which has been trundling round the world for several years. It looks like it is coming London, where the iconic power of the work can be properly displayed. But rather than show it at the Institute, the Hayward Gallery is an obvious suggestion; like Archigram, it has an enduring quality. Incidentally, **David Rock** was the right person to write the encomium for the group. He funded the printing of its first magazine.

### Academic rumpus

**N**o sooner had overtures started in respect of the Royal Academy and the RIBA Drawings Collection than the Academy's chief executive, **David Gordon**, announces he is leaving. A former Architecture Foundation trustee and chief executive of the Economist Group, Gordon managed to pull the RA round from a disastrous financial situation to something

approaching respectability. According to the *Telegraph* last Saturday, he knew how to stand up for himself in more ways than one, having been involved in a 'scuffle' with exhibitions secretary **Norman Rosenthal** following a heated exchange of views. Disagreements with RA president **Philip King** never came to that, but the *Telegraph* claims that the president once told a meeting of the RA council: 'Either he [Gordon] goes or I do.' These artistic types!

### Hubbub factor

**B**uilding services engineers are a talkative lot, judging by their performance at the CIBSE annual dinner last week. Environment minister **Michael Meacher**, presented with an honorary fellowship by president Max Fordham, made a brief speech against a background of conversation from half the large audience. Guest speaker **Piers Gough** stood up well to noise, sprinkling his speech with his customary bon mots. He had asked a quantity surveyor how he should open his speech. 'Does it have to open?' He recalled working on 'scissor-plan' flats with Fordham, and suggested that 'no-one ever got the right electricity bills'. Some gentle chiding at the coordination skills of the assembled company seemed in order: 'An electrical socket behind a radiator is really rather difficult to get at.' The final guest speaker, **Sheridan Morley**, had a neat way of dealing with rude talkers. If the audience remained quiet he would speak for 20 minutes. Any

noise and he would spin it out for an hour and a half!

### Custom standard

**A**splendid seminar at the Building Centre saw **Michael Stacey, Rab Bennetts** and **Alex de Rijke** discussing component design, and their attitudes to customisation/standardisation. It was followed by the opening of the excellent small exhibition on the subject on the ground floor of the BC. All the exhibits are covered in Perspex or firmly nailed down. This follows the recent theft from the Foster exhibition at the British Museum of a big section of handrail showing what had been designed for the Millennium bridge. Rather flattering in its way.

### Patron wanted

**P**rinces Margaret's death leaves a vacancy in, among other places, the **Architects' Benevolent Society**. One of the princess's last public engagements was to attend the 150th anniversary celebrations of the society in November 2000 at the Banqueting House. Possible candidates would include the **Duke of Gloucester** (an architect already involved with the ABS) or perhaps **Viscount Linley**, the furniture designer. For some reason **Prince Charles** has not been mentioned.

### Sitting comfortably

**W**e hear a lot of depressing news about how Britons are getting fatter. The latest comes from furniture company Vitra, which is introducing a new edition of its

Meda chair – the Meda 2XL, that 'responds to a growing market need for more generous proportions'. Why don't they just call it 'Fat-boy'?

### Mental change

**O**ne of **Richard Meier's** most admired works, his Bronx Developmental Center of 1977, is getting a makeover. 'Architectural purists are aghast, but are helpless to stop it,' says the *New York Times*. Its new owner plans to turn Meier's former centre for the mentally handicapped into the Bronx's biggest office building – partly demolishing it but tripling it in size. As the centre is less than 30 years old, New York's Landmarks Preservation Commission cannot act. Robert Stern says the news is 'a shocker'. Meier adds: 'I hope that what's he's replacing it with has the quality of what we built.'

### Fellow traveller

**W**hat will **Alex Reid** make of an RIBA honorary fellowship going to **Peter Gibbs-Kennet**? The well-regarded former education director at the institute, responsible for many overseas schools seeking RIBA validation, fell foul of Reid (now a councillor) while the latter was director-general. The fellowship award will be a piquant moment.

### Artistic link

**T**he *Weakest Link* has caught up with architecture. Anne Robinson: 'Which art gallery won the first Prime Minister's Award for Better Public Building?' Contestant: 'Modern Tate'. Right almost.

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AccentHansen has won its third Canary Wharf contract, securing plot DS1, to supply and install 350 steel doors worth £337k. A combination of FireShield, MultiShield and SoundShield doors will finish the 25-storey building. AccentHansen has also won contracts for plots DS8 and DS5, supplying a staggering 1,300 doors in total.



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Birmingham's Waterhall Gallery, which houses this Henry Moore sculpture, has benefited from sympathetic lighting, custom made by Concord:marlin. Based on a concept by Bob Venning of Arup Light, the structure forms a raft with a central T5 uplighter and outriggers formed out of Concord track carrying the Torus 100 and Torus 50 spotlights, with integral dimmers and transformers.

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The very impressive design of the new Fullarton Computer Industries building in Irvine, Scotland, reflects the architectural intent and outstanding design possibilities of the Luxalon Insulated Cladding and Glazing 'Total Wall' concept. The designer was able to use Luxalon Bi-Modular special-shaped panels for the columns, soffits and corners.

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