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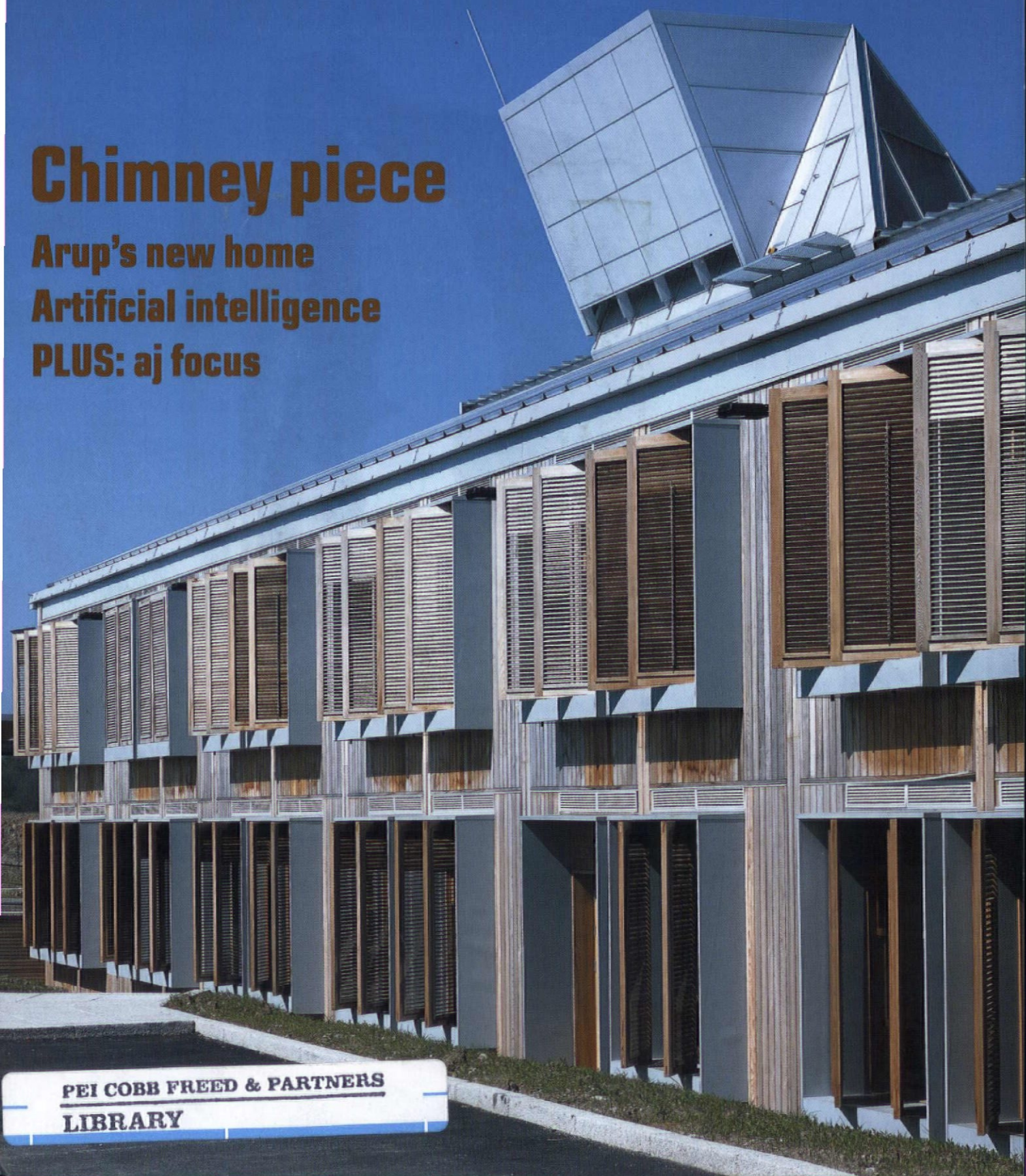
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MAX ALEXANDER

CZWG's Bankside Central scheme was completed last week. The £21 million project, designed by Piers Gough, will provide 5,300m² of office space behind Tate Modern in Southwark, London. A fifth floor was added to the structure, which was originally a Victorian warehouse. The building is the first commercial project from Manhattan Loft Corporation.

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COVER

Arup's new home in Solihull, West Midlands
Photographs by Peter Cook/VIEW

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'Archigram's power lay in its search for visions and wonderment... It prompts a question: are architecture students today being taught to think in a free, conceptual way?'

Jay Merrick. *Independent*, 14.2.02

'I would like to think I have been chosen because of the skills I have developed over a lifetime of business.'

New South Bank Centre chairman Lord Hollick on accusations of 'cronyism'. *Times*, 19.2.02



news

WOT, NO WOBBLE?

Foster and Partners' Millennium Bridge is to finally reopen to the public tomorrow after the successful completion of remedial work to remove its wobble. The opening will take place without celebration at 10am. Engineer Arup will hold a private concert on 6 March to thank those involved with the bridge, which will feature a specially composed piece of music by Sir Peter Maxwell Davies.

HYETT IN THE FIRING LINE

RIBA president Paul Hyett will meet Barry Sheerman MP on Thursday 18 April. Sheerman launched a scathing attack on the profession last December, when he claimed some architects deserved to be shot. They will discuss improving the design quality of new school buildings. Sheerman is chair of the Education Select Committee. In addition to an informal lunch, Hyett will show him examples of good British architecture in the City of London on an hour's walkabout of the City.

HOLICK TAKES SOUTH BANK

Lord Hollick has taken over as chair of the South Bank. The appointment by culture secretary Tessa Jowell has been met with accusations of cronyism and complaints from London mayor Ken Livingstone that he was not consulted. Hollick, media executive and former government advisor, takes over responsibility for the implementation of Rick Mather's masterplan for the South Bank. He will begin by appointing a new chief executive for the centre.

Welsh rocked by new Rogers row

The future of Welsh finance minister Edwina Hart was uncertain this week following accusations from Richard Rogers Partnership that she misled the assembly over the outcome of a legal dispute about unpaid fees. Hart and RRP have offered conflicting reports of the legal adjudication finding, which the finance minister finally made available to disgruntled assembly members on Friday.

Hart had told the assembly earlier in the week that the findings clearly pointed the finger at Lord Rogers, who 'effectively got it wrong' in his handling of the assembly project. However, the adjudicator's report, seen by the AJ, clears RRP of accusations of negligence. And in the latest twist to 'Edwinagate', Hart's office was denying suggestions, as the AJ went to press, that first minister Rhodri Morgan had asked her to give up the post of finance minister and take over the economic development portfolio – considered a demotion. If true, it indicates a change of heart from Morgan who earlier in the week had dismissed Hart's critics within the assembly as 'headless chickens coming home to roost'.

The adjudication, initiated by RRP in December and concluded on 7 February, awarded the practice £448,086 in fees outstanding after it was unceremoniously sacked from the Assembly building project. The adjudicator also dismissed Hart's £6.9 million negligence counterclaim against the practice. The adjudicator stated: 'I am satisfied that NAW's case on misrepresentation is not proven in any respect.'

News of the adjudication decision only emerged last week when Hart was forced to respond to ques-

tions from the assembly. In a statement, Hart persisted with the claim that fault remained with RRP, despite the adjudicator's decision to award in favour of the architect. In response, RRP responded with an e-mail to assembly members disputing the claims. 'The statement made by Edwina Hart to the assembly members this morning does not fairly and accurately represent the findings of the adjudicator,' the e-mail stated. 'RRP are completely satisfied with the adjudicator's decision.'

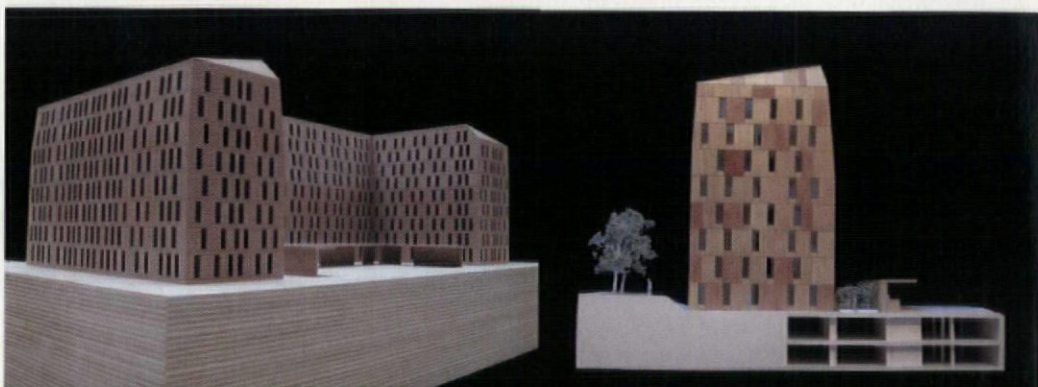
Hart now faces calls from Tory members to resign her ministerial position over her 'blatant and misleading comments'. The leader of the Welsh Conservative party, Nick Bourne AM, said: 'Edwina Hart's position as minister for finance is now truly untenable. It is now time she did the decent thing and resign her ministerial position.'

Director of the Royal Society of Architects in Wales Mary Wrenn said she hoped the result of the incident would be the reinstatement of Lord Rogers to the project. 'We have got to hope this situation will end up with Rogers building the building he designed,' she said, 'which would be the best outcome for everyone.'

The adjudication also established the assembly's copyright to the design of the building. It is currently choosing between a number of bids from consortia hoping to take over the project. RRP has teamed up with Taylor Woodrow and Arup to enter the race in a final attempt to remain involved.

See AJ Plus for the full adjudication. +

Zoë Blackler



David Chipperfield Architects has won a competition to design this housing scheme for the Empresa Municipal de la Vivienda in Madrid. The eight-storey building contains 176 apartments. The structure is composed of smaller panels of varying earthy/pink coloured concrete which relate to the individual dwellings. The solid mass of the building is carved with deep openings in an irregular pattern. The courtyard to the centre of the U-shaped block forms the entrance to the scheme. An open portico in front of the structure unifies the various entrances and provides a transition to the large scale of the project.

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The professional elite have taken a philosophy of approving extraordinary and radical designs. I say they are predictable designs.'

Robert Adam. *Times*, 13.2.02

'Well into the 1980s, housing was still a big issue at elections. But try to imagine a politician today telling us that his three priorities were "housing, housing, and housing".'

John Humphrys. *Sunday Times*, 17.2.02

'The c/Plex building should be even more colourful than the impressions suggest – but the Arts Council has lopped £3 million off, so it won't have the external bobs and globs we would have liked.'

Will Alsop. *Guardian*, 18.2.02

FOR A DAILY NEWS FEED ON THE LATEST ARCHITECTURAL STORIES GO TO AJPLUS.CO.UK

Croydon reaches for the sky with £500m towers vision

Croydon councillors have launched an ambitious £500 million scheme to redevelop the town's Fairfield Halls site. It includes plans for a 64-storey skyscraper flanked by two 40-storey towers. Meanwhile, another 40-storey tower is planned for the nearby Suffolk House site.

Consultant Gerald Eve has completed a feasibility study and councillors are now seeking proposals from developers and architects to turn the plan into reality. The projects will mark the birth of the town as a tower cluster, as envisioned by London mayor Ken Livingstone.

The plans call for the demolition of the Fairfield Halls, which will be replaced with a new Fairfield arts complex. The main tower will then be built along with the two smaller towers. The larger tower will contain office space, while the smaller ones will be mixed use and include affordable housing.

Croydon council's cabinet member for planning and regeneration Adrian Dennis told the AJ he was seeking an 'iconographic' building for the town, not 'just another grey shoe box'.

'We don't have problems with strategic views or people living in the shadows of this building – this is an ideal location for such a structure,' he said.

He added that he hoped for a building comparable in height and aesthetics to Renzo Piano's London Bridge Tower, although 'I'm not sure if Mr Piano will be rushing to Croydon'.

However, the plan has already come in for criticism. Opposition councillor and director of the Fairfield Halls Dudley Mead told the AJ that the plan was 'pie in the sky'.

'It looks great on paper, but personally I don't think a scheme like this can go ahead – it's just too huge. We all want to put Croydon on the map, but not like this,' he said.

Chair of the planning scrutiny committee Tony Arbour said that he believed the council was 'taking advantage' of Ken Livingstone's comments regarding the area as a potential tower cluster.

And he added: 'In the conservative group's submission to the select committee on tall buildings we highlighted Croydon as a potential area for tower developments – but nothing in the 40- to 60-storey range. I would imagine this could stir up a lot of resentment in the local community.'

A spokesperson for Ken Livingstone said: 'Croydon was highlighted as an area that could support a tall building. The mayor has clearly not seen these proposals but subject to a high quality



Designer Thomas Heatherwick has unveiled these two 11m-high sculptures in Paternoster Square. The artworks, which have been likened to 'angel's wings', also act as cooling vents for a London Electricity substation. Heatherwick developed the design through experimenting with the repetition of isosceles triangles to form a complex helical form. The 'wings' are constructed from stainless steel which has been blasted with tiny glass beads to create a satin finish. Stanhope and Mitsubishi Estates commissioned the sculpture as a new focus for Bishop's Court, at the western end of the square.

of design he would look favourably on such a development.'

An additional 40-storey tower is also planned for the nearby Suffolk House site. Councillor Dennis said that originally this site was earmarked for a 50-storey tower but it has been scaled back. Pringle Richards Sharratt is currently developing designs for the scheme.

Director of Pringle Richards Sharratt Ian Sharatt said: 'It will be mixed use at ground level, but mostly office space. We are putting together a team to put forward a planning application by the end of the year.'

A spokesperson for English Heritage told the AJ it would not have 'strong objections' to either project, while CABE declined to comment.

Steven Palmer

QUAY TO SOUTHAMPTON

Southampton city council is inviting developers and architects to bid for the chance to complete the redevelopment of the central retail area. The planning brief for West Quay phase three – a 5.27ha site – proposes a multi-purpose conference and leisure centre including an ice skating rink and public open space. The full brief is available on the council's website at www.southampton.gov.uk/west_quay_phase_3

WHITBY CENTRE UNVEILED

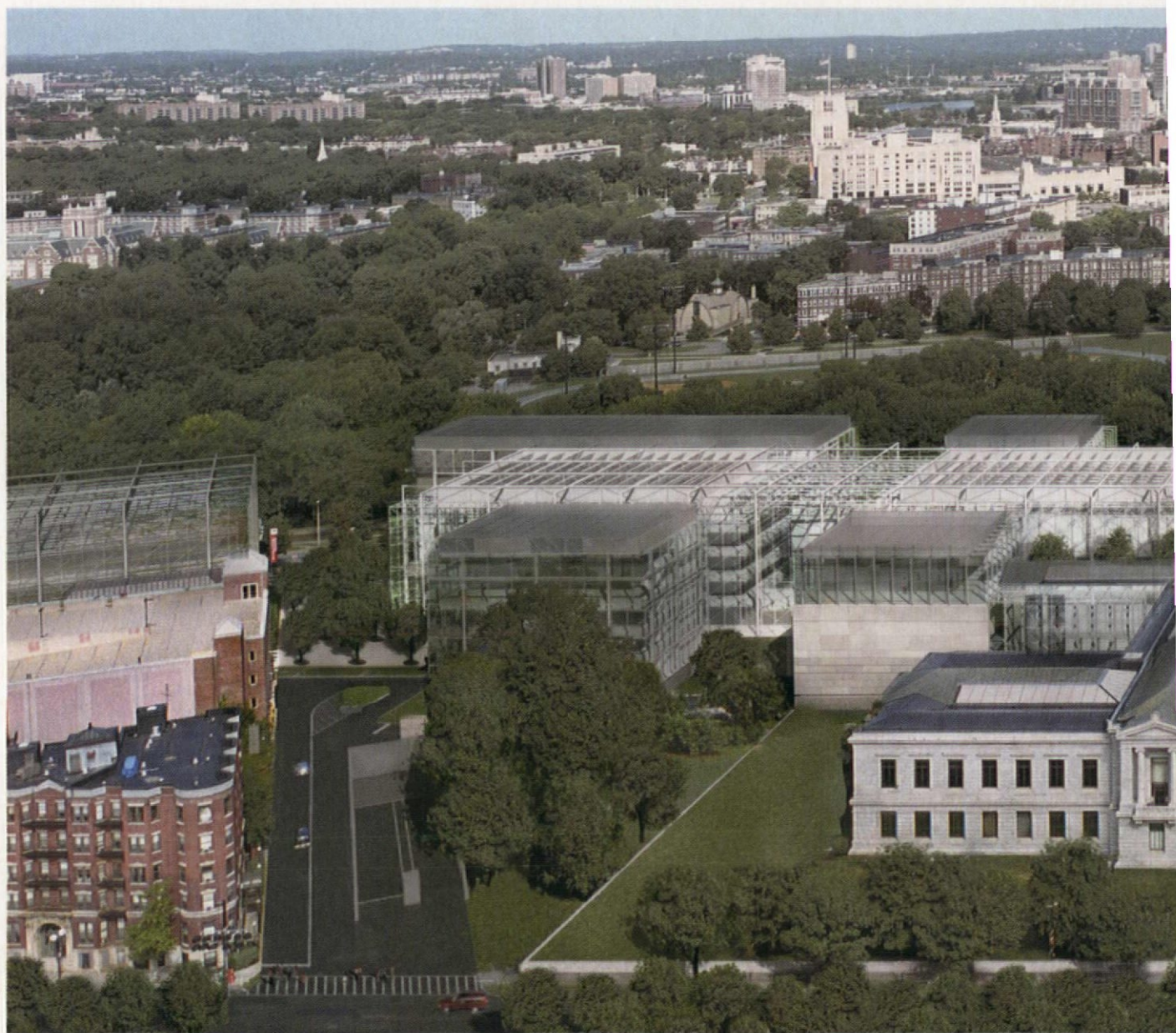
English Heritage will open its Stanton Williams-designed visitor centre in Whitby, North Yorkshire, at Easter. The £5.6 million restoration project is in the ruins of the medieval Whitby Abbey. It marks the completion of the Whitby Abbey Headland Project and the restoration of the rare 17th century cobbled garden courts and abbey. The new visitor centre contains galleries and a shop which have been integrated into two floors within the remains of the ruins. The visitor centre combines modern technology with displays of artefacts excavated from the headland. It will open on March 30. ➤

Q&A

28%

... of voters in a poll on the AJ's website think Alvaro Siza should win next year's Royal Gold Medal, followed by Nicholas Grimshaw with 20.4 per cent of the vote and then Frei Otto with 14 per cent. The poll has remained so close during the past week that we will be continuing it for another week. Respondents so far: 142

➤ Register your view at www.ajplus.co.uk



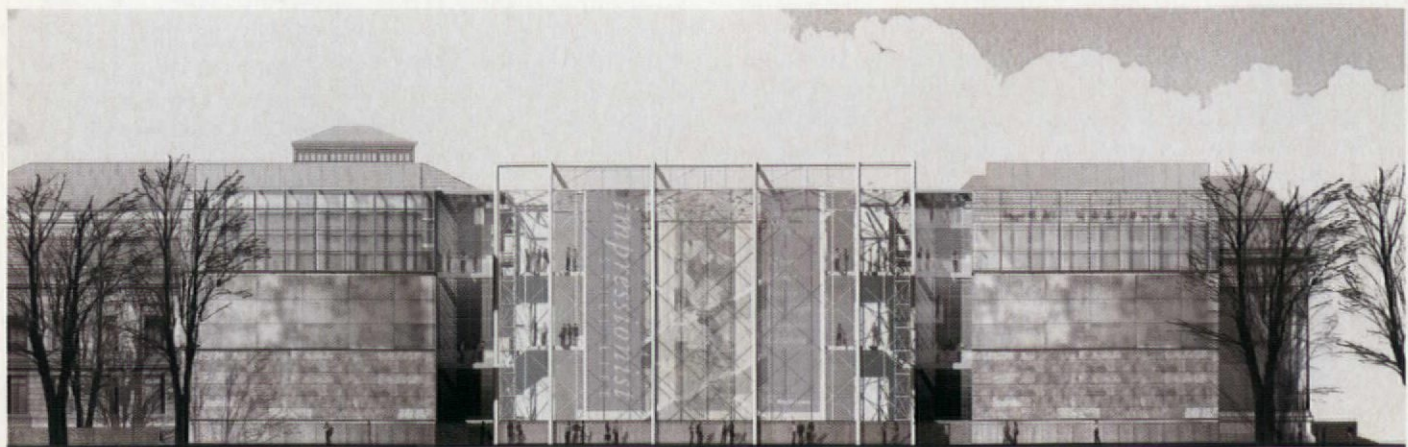
Foster reveals 'crystal jewel box' for Boston

Foster and Partners has unveiled its £297 million design for the Boston Museum of Fine Art. The plan will result in a 'crystal spine' running the full east/west axis of the building. The architect has also designed a further wing on the western edge of the museum and a study centre. Conservation studios and scientific research labs will be expanded and relocated to the study centre, as well as the museum's library and curatorial offices.

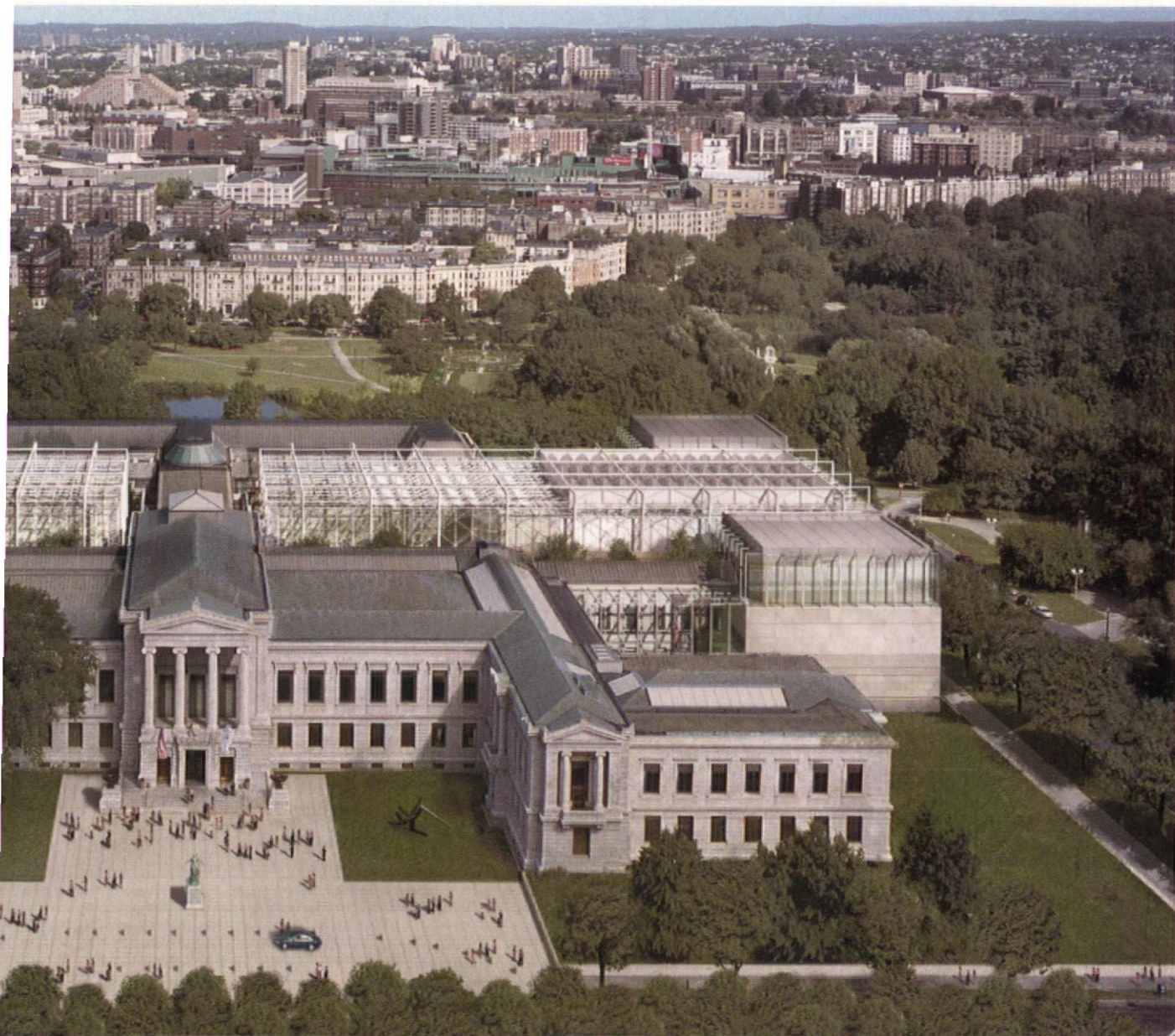
Lord Foster said: 'The "crystal spine" will delicately unite courtyards and

galleries both old and new, improving orientation for visitors and strengthening the museum's ties to its surrounding communities through an open and transparent structure.'

The eastern Phase I of the project (facing page, top) will start immediately. It consists of a 'jewel box' of steel and glass which will enclose the Richard and Helen Fraser Garden Court. It will link the main structure of the museum to the new East Wing. The 'jewel box' will house



Elevation: the 'jewel box' will provide orientation and breathing space to break down the vast scale of the museum and give access to surrounding galleries



sculpture from the museum's collection and will serve as a venue for special events. The three-storey glass and granite East Wing will consist of a central building within the 'jewel box', flanked by two smaller pavilions. These will be used to exhibit the Art of the Americas and contemporary art collections. The wing will also include additional educational facilities, including a 150-seat film theatre, seminar rooms, studio arts classrooms and a workshop.

The scheme will also include a new glazed restaurant on the top floor of the north pavilion of the East Wing overlooking parkland called the Fenway's Emerald Necklace and the Boston skyline.

Later phases will result in an additional western 'jewel box' which will mirror the eastern structure. It will be created in the Norma-Jean Calderwood Courtyard. The Art of Europe, Art of the Ancient World, Art of Asia, Oceania and Africa galleries will also be refurbished.

At the museum's central north/south axis, a new 'Jean and Frederic A Sharf information centre' will be created.

The museum is currently raising US\$425 million (£297 million) to fund the project. Architect Guy Lowell originally designed the museum in 1907.

Steven Palmer



Phase I (above and right) of the scheme will result in the museum growing from 50,000m² to 63,000m² – 7,000m² of the building will be refurbished

CABE GOES IRELAND HOPPING

CABE's Jon Rouse is travelling to Belfast this week to advise on the creation of a commission-style organisation for the city. Rouse and regional coordinator Annie Hollobone will meet with city councillors inspired by the recent creation of a design commission for Wales. CABE is holding a seminar with representatives from Dublin and Rotterdam to discuss their experiences. The session will be chaired by John Worthington of DEGW and attended by CABE deputy chairman Paul Finch and chair of the design review committee Peter Stewart.

AF COMPETITION CALL

The Architecture Foundation has announced its European Prize for Public Space. The AF has joined forces with the award's originators, the Barcelona Centre of Contemporary Culture and the Institut Français de l'Architecture, to support the competition, which awards architects who demonstrate a significant improvement to open public spaces. The deadline for entries is 31 March. Entries should be sent to CCCB, Montalegre 5, 08001 Barcelona, Spain. For details call 020 7253 3334.



Etienne Clément's 'BALTIC: A Vision On Emulsion' photography exhibition launches this week. It witnesses the transformation of a derelict 1950s grain warehouse in Gateshead into the BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art. The building, designed by Ellis Williams Architects, will open this summer. The exhibition runs from 23 February-14 March at the RIBA Gallery.

ARCHITECTURAL FUTURE

Allen Tod Architecture and the Yorkshire and Leeds sections of the RIBA are running a series of seminars on the transformation of Yorkshire's towns and cities. '4x4 2002 making our cities' will run for four weeks beginning on 28 February at Leeds Metropolitan University school of architecture. For details tel 0113 245 6250. +

North London practices are targeted in crime rampage

A rash of break-ins has hit architectural practices in Camden, north London – one office being the target of armed raiders.

A female member of staff at Curl La Tourelle Architects was threatened by two teenagers as she left the practice's offices last week. The youths produced a pistol and forced her back into the office where she was held with the gun to her head, while the raiders plundered the office. The thieves escaped with a laptop computer and personal belongings.

Ushida Findlay Architects was also the target of thieves last Wednesday – the day after the practice unveiled its Grafton New Hall Scheme. The project was the winner of the RIBA Modern Country House Competition (AJ 14.2.02).

A source close to the practice told the AJ: 'It's the third time this has happened, and the second time in four months. They took all of the PCs – everything. It's so crap, timing wise. They were on a real up because of the competition and then this.'

The practice had fitted iron bars to the windows prior to this latest break-in to discourage local gangs from targeting the office.

Another practice in the Camden area, which asked not to be named, told the AJ: 'To be honest, we are hit periodically. The last time was in September. We now have a security guard on the premises. The problem is the inconvenience.'

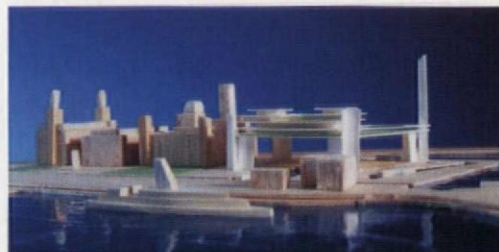
Camden crime prevention officer Dave King has often visited this unnamed practice. 'I've been to their offices regularly over the years. They've tried everything and they still get broken into on average three times a year. They've got security guards, video, alarms – the lot. But they are in a dream of a spot for villains – tucked away and quiet.'

Architectural practices are 'hot targets' for 'repeat victimisation' according to King. 'They have a lot of valuable kit on their premises – and it's kit that will be replaced fast – which makes for an easy return visit for nice new computers,' he said.

RIBA vice-president for small practices Elspeth Clements told the AJ: 'It can be tremendously damaging. We were broken into twice in two weeks. Bars on the window can help – but in our case they just smashed the door in.'

Clements added that the best defence was to have a good alarm system, ensure all information was backed up regularly and that the insurance was adequate. Local police stations have a crime prevention officer who can offer advice on security.

King added that an excellent deterrent was to ensure that all computers and valuables were



Architect Peter Hunter has produced this concept design for a Fourth Grace to sit next to the existing iconic Edwardian Three Graces in Liverpool. The city launches an international competition next month to find an architect for a new landmark building (AJ 14.2.02). Hunter's concept, inspired by Canary Wharf, connects the underground tunnels below the site with a six storey-height structure to act as a podium for 'interesting, sculptural' buildings above.

clearly and visibly marked. 'You'd be amazed at how much that cuts crime – if it's marked they can't sell it, so they won't nick it.'

Steven Palmer

Hodder drives off with £23 million Mercedes prize

Hodder Associates has scooped a commission to design a brand centre for car giant Daimler-Chrysler. The £23 million building will be for the manufacturer's Mercedes-Benz brand and is one of only five that will be built around the world. So far, only UK and US centres have been confirmed. A local firm will work in collaboration with the car company's own Stuttgart-based architects' department on each project.

Stephen Hodder told the AJ: 'We expect to receive our letter of appointment this week. It's a huge project for us. At the moment, there are some basic concept designs. We will work these up with the guys in Stuttgart. The brief calls for a landmark structure that will contain extensive exhibition space.'

A site for the scheme has not been finalised, although the Brooklands Motor Speedway in Weybridge is in pole position. The 30ha site is currently the location of a landscaping masterplan by Derek Lovejoy Partnership. This has not been submitted for planning yet but it is understood that there is an option to include the centre within the design.

However, problems are foreseen due to the site's historic links. It was the world's first purpose-built racetrack and the location of land speed records by Sir Malcolm Campbell. Planning difficulties are expected as part of the site is Grade II-listed and an area extends into green belt land.

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.

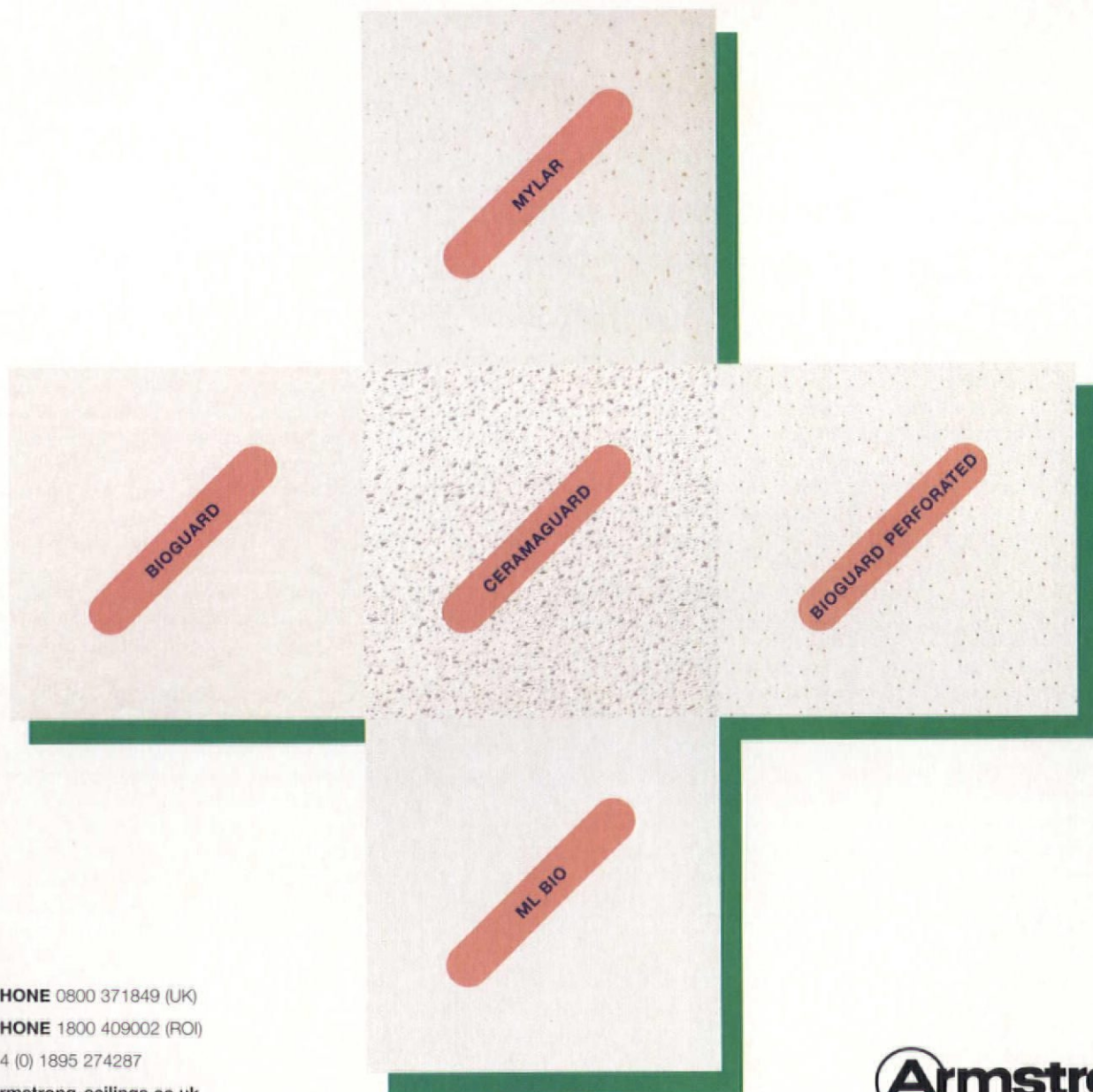
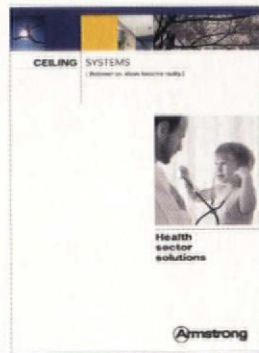
All work appearing in the RA show is considered by the award judges. Entry forms for inclusion in the show are available from: Summer Exhibition Office, Royal Academy, Burlington Gardens, Piccadilly, London W1V 0DS. A stamped-addressed envelope is required. The deadline for completed entry forms is 28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

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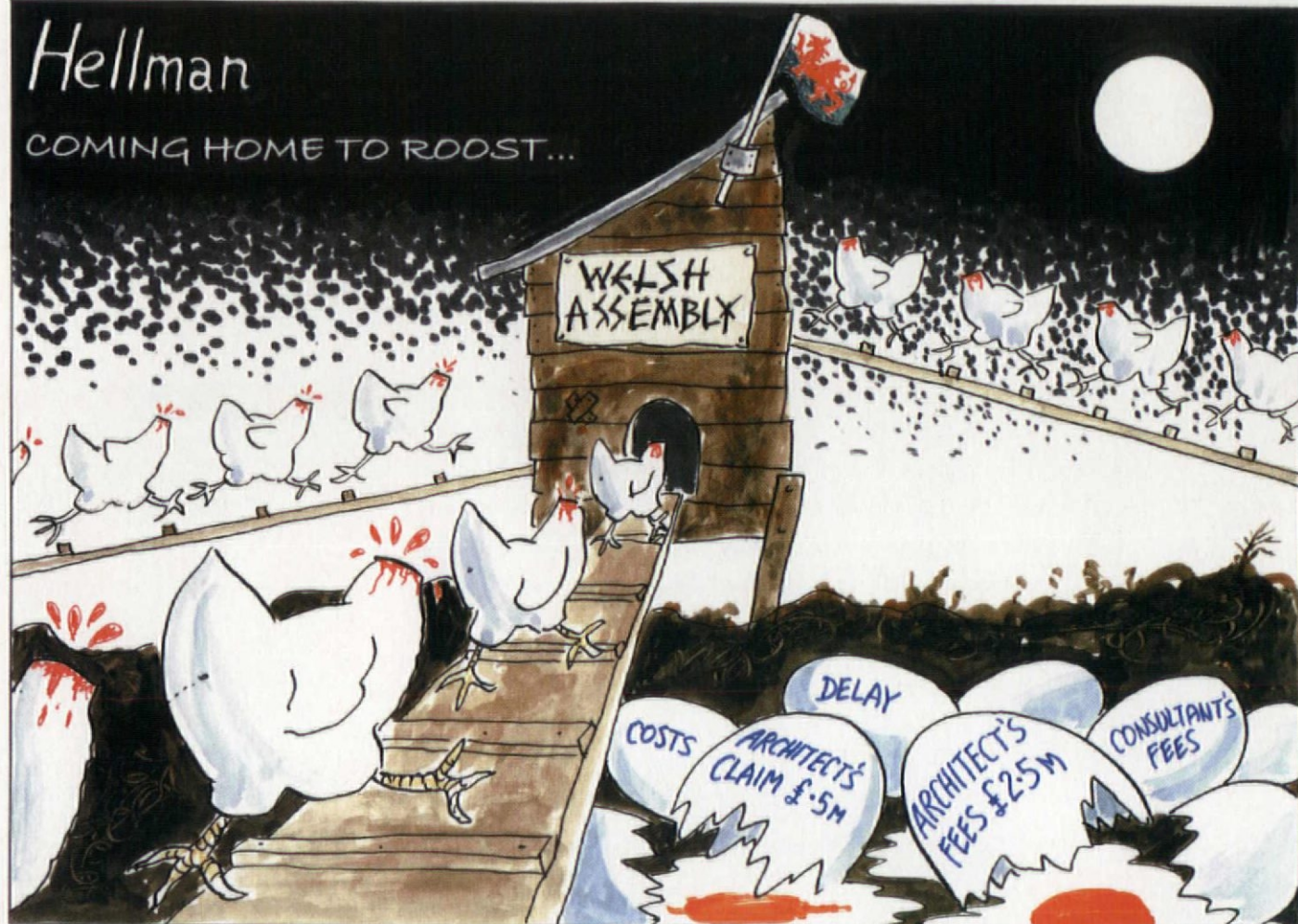
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vital statistics

- The number of visitors to the V&A is set to increase by 20 per cent in the current financial year – taking visitor numbers to more than 1.63 million. As a result of the surge, the DCMS and the V&A have upped visitor targets for next year to 1.65 million.
- From the Thames Barrier's unveiling in 1982 to 1999, there were 65 emergency closures. In 2000, the barrier closed 24 times.
- The A889 is the most dangerous road in the UK, according to the AA. On average 62 serious or fatal accidents occurred for every 1 billion km travelled between 1997 and 1999 – the eight-mile road in the Scottish Highlands racked up a total 14 times that average.
- The number of UK millionaires soared in the second half of the 1990s, according to research from analysts at Datamonitor. By the end of the decade, there were 180,000 millionaires compared with just 80,000 in 1995.

Clare Melhuish reviews...

Joseph Rykwert and... the pursuit of the Utopian city

Joseph Rykwert's third and final lecture in the Jane Jacobs series concluded with the somewhat startling assertion that 'unless we configure our cities towards a Utopia, we are not doing our job'. The scanty nature of the subsequent debate suggested there were more than a few people in the audience who were somewhat mystified by the thrust of his discussion. Contemporary debates about the city and Jacobs' ideas – whose position was premised on a belief in the primacy of urban processes and communities – are pitched against Utopian formal images.

Rykwert's lecture encompassed a historical survey of the development of formal city planning. It ranged through L'Enfant's Washington, to Haussmann's Paris, Emperor Franz Josef's Vienna, and the Garden City and City Beautiful movements of the UK and US respectively in the early part of the 20th century. He summed up the major point of contrast in urban planning over that period to current thinking about the city, as: 'Spoiling the vista was a major consideration in 1900,' but is 'no longer relevant.'

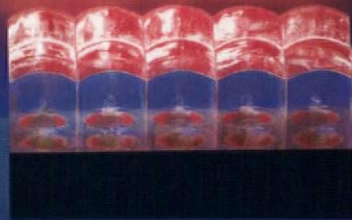
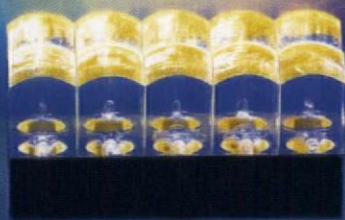
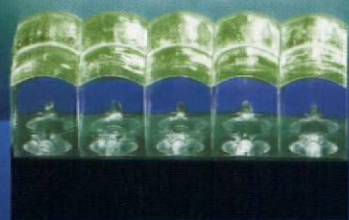
However, one might argue that one recent case, the public inquiry into the Heron Tower, shows this is not exactly true. Rykwert's uncritical implication that 'spoiling the vista' ought to be a major planning consideration today, for the sake of the city as image, was strange.

His account of the building programmes imposed on Paris and Vienna, in the name of 'visual ordering', made it quite clear these initiatives were driven by motives of political control, and the desire to establish 'world city' status in an increasingly competitive, globalising capitalist economy. Yet there was no explicit discussion of this dimension, and certainly no reference to the plight of the grass-roots communities who not only had no say in the matter but also suffered directly from the surgery carried out on the city fabric. Such sufferings were examined in the anthropological research of Felicity Edholm and her study into the fate of working-class women in Haussmann's Paris.

Likewise, the remarkable claim for the British new towns in the 20th century as 'an unqualified success', seemed to be made entirely without reference to anthropological research into the alienation experienced by people who were relocated to those settlements.

It was hard, then, to square Rykwert's apparent endorsement of Kevin Lynch's 'urban imaging'. This process encourages ordinary people to describe verbally and in drawings their own individualised or collective images of the city they know through everyday inhabitation. This can then be compared to the city of unspoiled vistas, boulevards and public buildings which appears to represent the basis of the 'model' which Rykwert believes planners need to 'do their job properly'. Unfortunately, the former may, demonstrably, bear very little relationship to the latter.

Joseph Rykwert's 'Anthropology and the City' lecture series took place at the London School of Economics



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Land Design Studio has unveiled its project for the British Film Institute's Moving Pictures exhibition. The touring display (above) opened at Sheffield's Millennium Galleries this week.

STRIDE STEAMS AHEAD

Bristol practice Stride Treglown has won a commission to design the £1.9 million refurbishment of Harvey's Foundry in Hayle, Cornwall. The Grade II-listed building played a key part in the industrial revolution due to its production of steam engines. It will be converted into an archive research and training centre for the county's record office.

PPG17 REVISION DEMANDED

A government select committee report has called for further revisions to PPG17 on sport, open space and recreation. The urban affairs subcommittee said the guidelines needed to recognise the fundamental importance of open space to the government's wider objectives for urban renaissance. It called for an emphasis on the link between planning and management of open space, and clearer guidance on the use of planning obligations to bring about the enhancement of existing open space. In response to criticisms, the government has agreed to revise PPG17 and to wait for the report of the Urban Green Spaces Task Force before it does so.

CAREY JONES RICS DOUBLE

Carey Jones Architects has won a double at the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors' awards. Its scheme for Central Square in Newcastle won both the regeneration and energy efficiency categories. +

FIRE AND CONCRETE

The Concrete Society will host a seminar, 'Fire and Concrete', on 12 March. It will cover topics including the effect of high temperatures on concrete and will be held at the Institution of Structural Engineers, 11 Upper Belgrave Street, London SW1. For further details call 020 8997 3215.

Green RIBA chief savages 'shortsighted' energy targets

RIBA vice-president for sustainable development Professor Peter Smith has slammed the government's latest energy review – for not being ambitious enough.

The review sets a target of raising energy efficiency by 20 per cent by 2010 and a further 20 per cent by 2020. The aim is to achieve this largely through better insulation in homes. The document also calls for 20 per cent of the UK's power to be produced from renewable sources by 2020.

However, Professor Smith rubbished last week's document as 'shortsighted' and 'lacking in ambition'. In a stinging attack, he told the AJ that the targets could easily be met in a shorter period, but that in the UK 'there just isn't the political will. Even [US President] Bush is making moves to encourage sustainability through tax incentives. And compared with the rest of Europe, our targets are derisory'.

'The UK is the richest in Europe where renewable resources are concerned. There are truly robust levels of power available – just look at our tidal opportunities – but this government is just ignoring them,' said Smith.

He added said he believed the traditional energy lobby had managed to influence the government on its approach to sustainability and that it is 'in hock to the fossil fuel lobby'.

Smith said that government claims that the UK was outperforming the rest of Europe in the setting of such 'aggressive targets' was 'simply outrageous and totally untrue'.

The document also suggests removing planning constraints on renewable power sources – a move that would free the construction of wind turbines. It also leaves open the option of building further nuclear power stations – a suggestion that angered environmental groups. The document also calls for the setting up of a sustainable energy policy unit.

An energy white paper will be produced in October. Professor Smith will launch his book, *Sustainability at the cutting edge*, this summer.

● The London Assembly attacked Ken Livingstone last week for delaying his draft energy

strategy for London. Samantha Heath, the assembly's environment committee chair, claimed that Livingstone's 'constant procrastination' would reduce the period that the assembly had to complete its scrutiny of the strategy.

Steven Palmer

Straw Bale House makes Civic Trust 2002 shortlist



The Civic Trust has revealed the shortlist for its 2002 special awards. Buildings featured across the seven categories include the National Portrait Gallery in London by Jeremy Dixon, Edward Jones; 9/10 Stock Orchard Street in London, known as the Straw Bale House (pictured) by Sarah Wigglesworth Architects; and The Lowry in Salford by Michael Wilford and Partners.

The awards aim to reward outstanding examples of architecture and environmental design that take into account the benefit each project brings to its local area and community.

Categories include the Access Award for a scheme that best reconciles the access needs of people with disabilities within the conservation requirements of an historic site or building. Short-listed are the National Portrait Gallery and Howarth Tompkins' Royal Court.

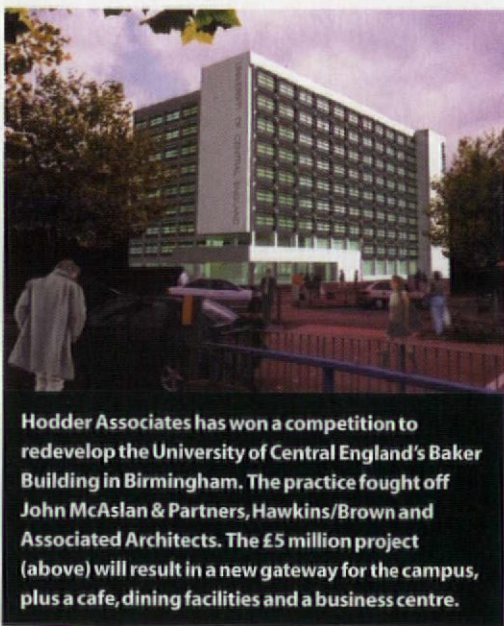
The Sustainability Award rewards the best application of the principles of sustainable design and construction. Competing with 9/10 Stock Orchard Street are Bill Dunster Architects' conference building at the Earth Centre in Doncaster, Croydon's Tramlink, and Michael Hopkins and Partners' Jubilee Campus at the University of Nottingham, as well as its Portcullis House/Westminster Underground Station.

The shortlist for the Urban Design Award for the best contribution to the local environment includes The Lowry, Alec French and Acanthus Ferguson Mann's @Bristol in Bristol, and Donald Insall Associates/Jeremy Dixon, Edward Jones' Somerset House in London.

Other categories are the Centre Vision Award, the Exterior Lighting Award, the Landscape Award and the Partnership Award.

Wigglesworth was delighted to be nominated: 'We're really pleased to get this far. The Civic Trust judging panel really understood the spirit of the project, which is about incorporating change into the life of the building.'

The winners will be announced at a ceremony at the Royal College of Physicians in London on Thursday 18 April. +



Hodder Associates has won a competition to redevelop the University of Central England's Baker Building in Birmingham. The practice fought off John McAslan & Partners, Hawkins/Brown and Associated Architects. The £5 million project (above) will result in a new gateway for the campus, plus a cafe, dining facilities and a business centre.

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competitions

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Competitive interview to select a management architect for a key regeneration scheme in the Sheffield area. The architect will be required to work closely with the Montenevy Project Team to develop a feasibility and building study for the whole area, as well as assisting with funding applications and consultation exercises. Deadline for expression of interest 14.3.02.

HOMES FOR LEARNING

Open ideas competition to explore the provision of learning space within the home in the 'Becontree-type cottages' located in the Fanshawe Ward of the London Borough of Barking & Dagenham. Submission deadline 16.4.02.

IDEAS ON SUSTAINABILITY

The government's Energy Efficiency Best Practice Programme has launched its fourth open ideas competition. The theme of the competition is urban sustainability. The 5ha site is the Lochend Butterfly and its surrounds, about a mile from the eastern end of Princes Street in Edinburgh. A prize fund of £17.5k is on offer. Submission deadline is 28.2.02.

OTHERS

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

Transport to bear the brunt of London's £67m budget cuts

Investment in the Crossrail link, Thames river crossings and flagship town centre schemes may be shelved following the decision by the London Assembly to block mayor Ken Livingstone's full budget.

The Assembly's decision to limit the mayor's 2002/3 budget has forced him to find swingeing cuts. Livingstone has decided that his Transport for London body will bear the brunt of the £67.5 million of savings that must be made.

Londoners' council tax bills will climb by 15.2 per cent this year, instead of the mayor's proposed 35 per cent hike. The revised budget will total more than £4 billion. Sally Hamwee, chairwoman of the London Assembly, said: 'The mayor's spending has had a brake put on it. It's a victory for common sense. There will still be considerable investment.'

A list of the potential cuts seen by the AJ includes the delay of development work for Thames road crossings between Barking and Thamesmead and between North Greenwich and Silvertown. Funding for the modernisation of Victoria bus station is also threatened.

The suggested cuts also include an option for a 'delay by one year and reduced funding for flagship walking, cycling, town centre and area-based schemes.'

Crossrail is also understood to be on the list. However, David Taylor, project manager for Crossrail line 1, told the AJ he was optimistic: 'Obviously we rely on government money, but I don't think we will be affected. I believe most of our funding is ring fenced, so I don't see how they could now cut it.'

A mayoral spokesperson told the AJ: 'Ken Livingstone and Bob Kiley are now looking at which projects can be deferred or reigned in. The list of projects is clearly one that includes many desirable proposals. It'll be a difficult choice.' A decision on which projects are jettisoned is due by the end of the month.

Steven Palmer

European Parliament gets tough on energy efficiency

The European Parliament is to force through a sharp increase in the number of new and renovated buildings that will have to comply with EU rules on energy efficiency. It has decided to lower the size threshold from a minimum of 1,000m² to 500m².

MEP's stressed that the previous limit would

exclude the bulk of residential buildings, dramatically weakening the directive's effect on saving energy and cutting pollution. Labour MEP Eryl McNally even claimed that 'this directive is insufficiently ambitious and that it should also apply to much smaller areas'.

However, the European Commission opposes the amendments. European Commissioner for the internal market Frits Bolkestein said that the amendments went too far. 'For many member States it represents a new area of endeavour which will require new performance standards, new resources and substantial investment. We feel that the proposed threshold of 1,000m² is the best possible compromise attainable at this early stage.'

Bolkestein was enthusiastic about other amendments agreed by MEPs, though. A tighter system of checks is proposed. It will use numeric formulae matching energy consumption with projected needs and will cover heating, water heating, cooling, ventilation and lighting. MEPs also voted for these inspections to be carried out under a common European certification system.

And the parliament also voted to insist that regular inspections of both boiler and central air conditioning systems would have to take place every five years, while the original proposal included no deadlines.

● The 'Low Energy Housing 2002' conference will be held at the JJB Stadium in Wigan on 14 March. It will examine government policy on energy use and will include seminars on 'Achieving Affordable Warmth: Reducing Fuel Poverty' and 'Real Live Solutions' which will cover the new Part L regulations. The one day conference costs £110+VAT. For further details call 01603 700999.

RIBA/ARB schools validation still faces further obstacles

RIBA chief executive Richard Hastilow has admitted there is still some way to go in negotiations with the ARB over schools validation. Hastilow said there were 'challenges' to be overcome as a result of the 'strict requirements' of the ARB, the RIBA and the schools.

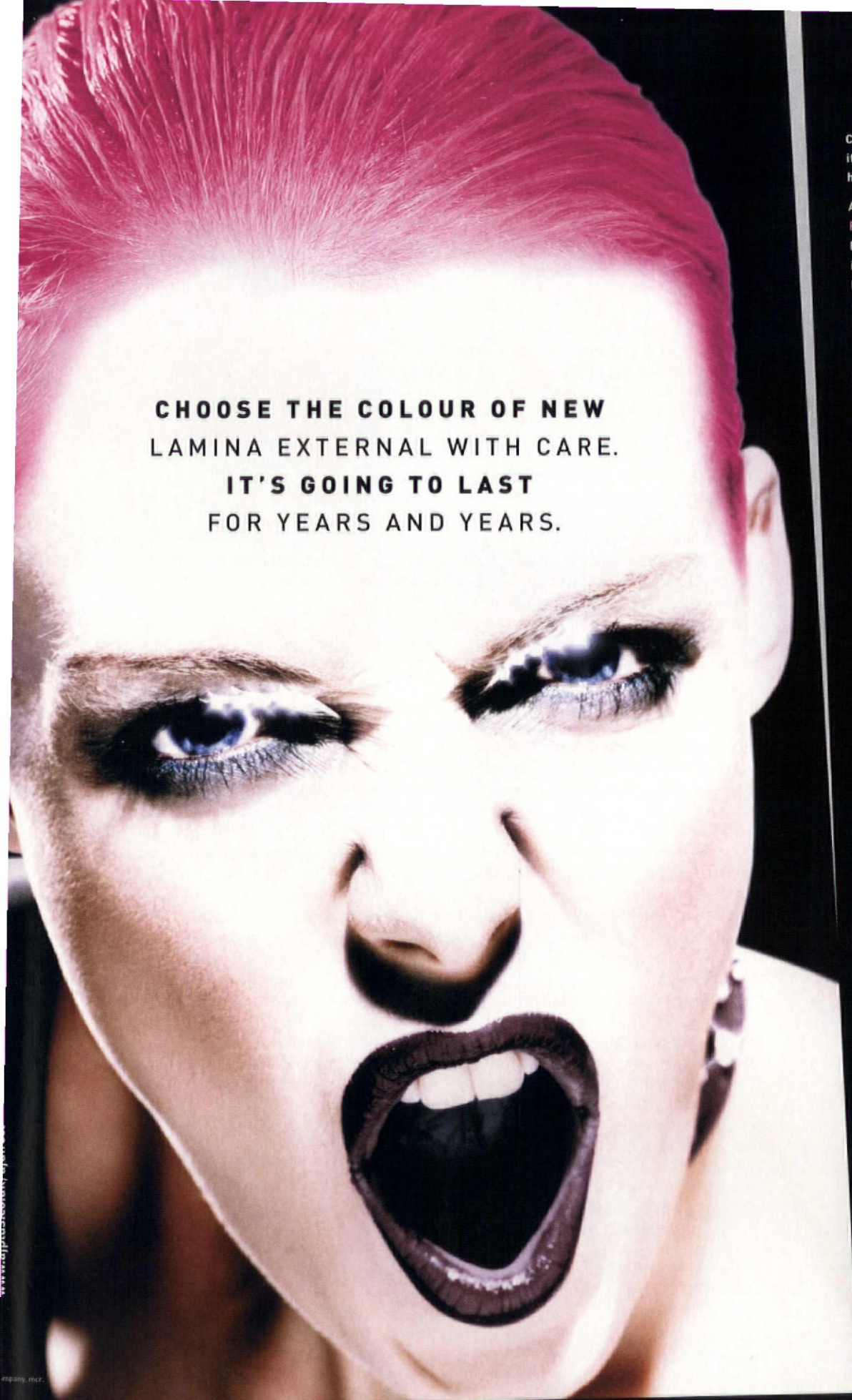
He added that while clear progress had been made towards a joint set of validation criteria, other areas under discussion were 'more challenging'.

'If we are going to come up with a better process that wouldn't be a tiny thing to do. If we are going to make a significant change, that's quite a challenge,' Hastilow said.

And while the two parties were working 'quietly' towards an agreement he refused to speculate about when this might be achieved.



Sheppard Robson has won a PFI contract to design a £25 million ambulatory care centre in Birmingham. The 10,000m² project will be a new facility for Birmingham's City Hospital. The brief from the City Hospital NHS Trust was to provide a 'statement building' which is environmentally sustainable, non-institutional and will contribute to the healing and treatment of patients. +



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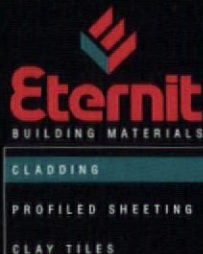
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PII ROW RUMBLES ON

The institute has resolved to get its act together over its response to the ARB's public indemnity insurance proposals. In an ongoing row between the two bodies about minimum levels of insurance cover, the ARB has put the onus on the RIBA to produce evidence that underinsurance among architects is not a problem. Ex-president Marco Goldschmied said it was time 'to stop whingeing' and to respond quickly and professionally – and to spend money if necessary – on a response to the ARB's demands. And he added: 'The ARB isn't vindictive but it is very consumer oriented.'

GODFREY'S FREEZE BLOCKED

An attempt from council member Brian Godfrey to block further appointments to the fledgling management board has been dismissed. Godfrey asked for a freeze on the appointment of additional lay members in order to give council the opportunity to review the board's function. The move follows extensive discussion at earlier meetings about whether the new board is usurping the role of council. But council members followed Paul Hyett's advice to throw out the 'retrograde' suggestion and to allow the board to become fully functional.

NAMES TO BE SHAMED

Details of disciplinary cases that carry a clear message to the profession will be made public, council has agreed. The anonymity of participants will be protected but other details will be presented to council.

NOT SO MEEK

RIBA councillor Iain Meek has suggested an alternative to the proposed restructuring arrangements. Meek proposes either the reduction of council to 14 regionally elected members or a 'rapid-response solution' – whereby council members use the latest tele-conferencing facilities to meet remotely when a policy decision is needed urgently. A third suggestion involves the creation of an alternative organisation – the Republican Institute of British Architects. Meek has offered to be its first director general with a salary of £100,000.

Council refuses to relinquish trustee status in shake-up ...

RIBA chief executive Richard Hastilow has been forced to modify his plans to shake up the institute (AJ 7.2.02). Council members supported the principles of structural change but refused to hand over their responsibility as trustees to the newly created management board. At a tense session last Wednesday, Hastilow attempted to reassure members that council would remain sovereign – even if the 65 elected members give up their trustee status.

But vice-president for sustainability Peter Smith, who led opposition to the move, renounced Hastilow's 'hollow assurances'. And he dismissed claims that the shift was integral to the entire restructuring project and necessary to make the changes work.

Support for Hastilow came from Roger Zogolovitch, who helped draw up the proposals. Zogolovitch claimed it was 'crystal clear' that changes in charity law would force the RIBA to adopt a smaller trustee body.

His argument was supported by legal advisor Richard Fairburn, who told council: 'The duties of trustees are increasingly onerous. It's not my intention to frighten anyone but in the regulated world we live in, trustees must be aware of their duties and the draconian measures that can be taken if something goes wrong.'

Fairburn was given a hostile reception from some council members, with Rod Hackney accusing him of lecturing and patronising council.

And John Wright argued that he took his responsibilities seriously when he was elected. 'These scare tactics haven't altered my view in any way at all,' he said. Wright added that, if it came to it, he would refuse to resign his trusteeship. 'I am going to remain a trustee until I come off council.'

He told Hastilow he had made a 'serious political mistake'. The restructuring plans would have 'had a smooth ride' if they had been separated from the controversial proposal to move trusteeship, Wright said.

Speaking later, RIBA president Paul Hyett said: 'The issue of trusteeship will no doubt be reviewed in the future but at this stage the case was clearly made in a persuasive manner. Yet again architects have shown themselves to be of extraordinary independence of mind and spirit. Council members just weren't going to be frightened into such a step. And that is hardly surprising – those who inevitably take risks and responsibility in their professional careers are not impressed by the apparently very minor risk that complements responsibility in their careers as trustees.'

The executive will continue to develop the restructuring plan, which aims to clarify the RIBA's two distinct roles – on the one hand to support architecture in its widest sense and on the other to support its architect members. It will involve the reorganisation of the institute into three elements – a charitable arm, a professional services body and a commercial company.

Despite general support for the plans, some members continued to resist change. Clarence Daly claimed there had been a lack of consultation: 'This is rebranding all over again,' he said. 'You cannot treat council as if it was yesmen and yeswomen.'

The executive will present modified proposals to the next session of council in April.

Zoë Blackler

... as institute pledges its drawings collection to V&A ...



The RIBA's drawings collection is set to move in 2004

The RIBA has restated its commitment to house its drawings collection at the Victoria and Albert Museum. Council voted unanimously to press ahead with the plans, which had been brought into doubt following calls from a group of eminent architects to consider an alternative home at the Royal Academy (AJ 31.1.02).

Councillors granted president Paul Hyett and chief executive Richard Hastilow the authority to sign a contract with the museum.

Hyett told council that the V&A was still committed to the move and that funding remained in place. There had been fears that further quibbling over the arrangements could threaten the project's Heritage Lottery Funding. Hyett added that the RA had written to show support for the RIBA/V&A arrangement and he pointed out that the V&A would be making no further offers.

Rod Hackney, supporting the plans, said: 'The little episode of enthusiasts trying to get us to the RA has shown the strength of the marriage between the RIBA and the V&A.' Hyett and Hastilow expect to sign a contract with the V&A within the month.

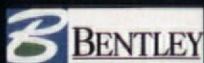
... while 'Scots-only' category snag threatens RIAS joint deal

A joint RIBA/RIAS agreement could run into difficulties after council refused to accept one of two last-minute amendments to the document.

Council approved the agreement that aims for a greater integration of the two bodies and the promotion of joint RIAS/RIBA membership. But it rejected a proposal from the RIAS to retain a Scottish-only membership category with the money raised used solely for work in Scotland. A further amendment that the RIAS should be free to raise its side of the joint subscription fee was approved.

Hyett, supporting the changes, said he feared the Scottish body would not accept the agreement without them. But ex-director general Alex Reid said the changes were a cause for considerable concern. RIAS will consider the agreement at its next council meeting in March.

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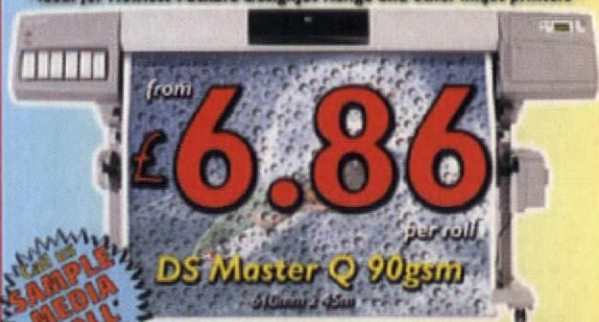
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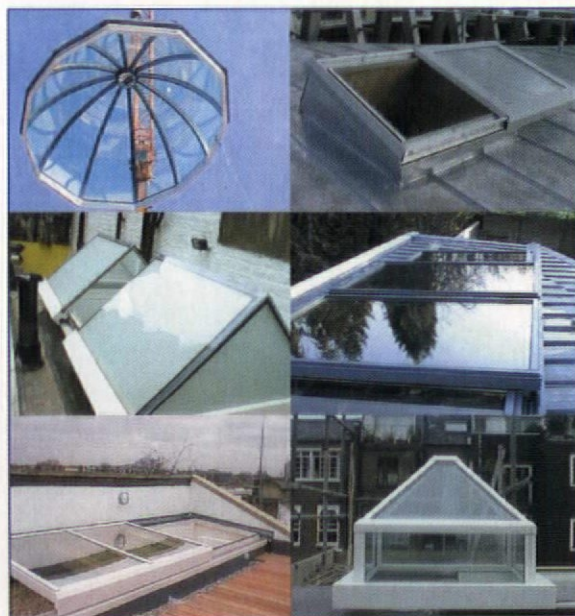
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Catch up on the latest news and read the big stories FIRST. Last week AJ Plus carried news of the RIBA giving its Royal Gold Medal to Archigram, with pictures, full citation and more, just hours after it was made.

editorial

On this week's letters page, Phil Summers of the Irwell Valley Housing Association applauds Will Alsop's quest to revolutionise social housing, but takes issue with his dismissal of housing associations as unimaginative and reactionary. Still licking his wounds from the Aylesbury Estate fiasco, Alsop has accused housing associations of aesthetic and cultural conservatism. While there are notable exceptions, too many new housing projects exemplify the familiar domestic mediocrity which is deemed to be the benchmark of public taste.

Alsop's contempt derives from his belief that people are excited by the outlandish and receptive to the new. There is no doubting his idealism, or his commitment to public participation. Just as there is no doubting that, in Alsop's hands, any amount of public consultation would result in the inevitable conclusion that residents' needs and desires would best be met by a design which was recognisably and quintessentially Alsop. But does this undermine his status as a community architect? Is the architect who simply aspires to translate others' aspirations into three-dimensional form somehow more public-spirited? While the former may be a stylistic bully, the latter jettisons any obligation to demonstrate expertise, talent – even genius – suggesting that years of experience and study leave the professional equipped to be little more than a conduit for reaching an acceptable compromise between collective desires.

Alsop's ability to combine public consultation with his own, very personal, aesthetic is easily dismissed as a means of manipulating a sceptical public into believing that his brand of architecture is what they wanted all along. Certainly, he is convinced that, given sufficient opportunity, he could have gained the support of the tenants of the Aylesbury Estate. And he probably could. Not because of his ability to 'trick' an unsuspecting public, but because residents expect to be convinced before embracing the unknown. Communities which end up with an Alsop building are aware that, while they may have influenced the brief, the building reflects Alsop's vision rather than their own – giving it the X-factor which they have every right to expect from a talented architect.

Isabel Allen

letters

Don't tar us all with the same housing brush

Will Alsop's vision on the best mechanisms for exciting and enthusing residents to get involved in the redesign and regeneration of their estates should be applauded and become an essential prerequisite for any housing association wishing to succeed in wholesale urban regeneration. While not knowing the full facts of the Aylesbury Estate tenant rejection, I have every sympathy with Alsop's difficulties in trying to promote a contemporary solution to residents via a housing association which has not the courage to promote radical solutions to its residents.

Too often housing associations adopt the role of advocate for the tenants against the architect's more imaginative ideas, as opposed to that of working in partnership with the architect to promote good contemporary design. The problem for housing associations' development staff is that they tend not to understand or appreciate the issues and solutions that the architect is promoting, and therefore fall back into that safety zone of design. Perhaps it is because they do not know any different, or that they are paralysed by the design malaise that has afflicted public housing in Britain throughout the 1990s. At Irwell Valley, we are continually trying to push the boundaries of our thinking on urban design by sending our staff to cities in Europe that have implemented radical design. We will not accept mediocre thinking, and therefore are more able to promote modern ideas to our tenants.

My only criticism of Alsop is the labelling of housing associations based on his bad experience at Aylesbury. If we took the same perspective and labelled all British architects through one bad experience, or public hous-

ing designs produced in the 80s and 90s, we wouldn't employ any architect that didn't have an office in Barcelona or Rotterdam.

Phil Summers, Irwell Valley Housing Association, Manchester

Let's not skate over the question of money



Martin Pawley says that the now apparently doomed ice rink in Oxford was built for a client who did not have enough money to build one (AJ 14.2.02). Clever design is referred to as the saving device. When the ice rink was built, I was working at Nicholas Grimshaw & Partners as a kind of project architect on another ice rink in Gillingham, Kent. This ice rink, admittedly not a 'cleverly mastered' structure but a glorified red clad portal frame shed, cost some £900K to build and kit out. It has been making money ever since, and still is, without a major face-lift. The Oxford Ice Rink, if I recall, cost some £3.4 million. An economic structure? Let's get real.

Cezary M Bednarski, Studio Bednarski, London W10

There's no education blocking on our part

We were surprised at your article 'ARB blocks new educational deal' (AJ 7.2.02). The ARB and the RIBA are working together to develop proposals considered at the meeting you reported. Discussions to agree a way forward continue. No deal has been blocked.

Robin Vaughan, chief executive, ARB, Richard Hastilow, chief executive, RIBA

Check out our new IPIX 360° photos of schemes featured in AJ building studies. These will be selected schemes, but start this week with the Arup campus – 'look round' it using your mouse.

Read up all the latest news about Interbuild – yes, it's that time again – including plans for the RIBA's national conference. The biennial show is only four months away – visit the homepage's In Focus section.

And we've added yet more buildings to AJ Specification, our inspirational website. They include Richard Rogers' C4 HQ and Hampshire County Architects' Colden Common Primary School (right).



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 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.

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Apologies for my lack of rudeness, Mr Holden

Thank you for publishing Robert Holden's review of my recent book *Great City Parks* (AJ 31.1.02). Most of his comments were reassuringly positive. I would, however, like to comment on a few of the more personal points that he made. In particular:

- The late Martin Jones did, indeed, take many of the photographs of the parks in Hamburg, London, Paris and New York. The majority of the photographs in the book, however, were taken by Dr Marcella Eaton or myself.

- The suggestion that Gasworks Park in Seattle was a precedent for the Landschaftspark Duisburg-Nord came from (and was attributed in my end notes to) John Fleming, Hugh Honour and Nikolaus Pevsner in their *Penguin Dictionary of Architecture and Landscape Architecture*.

- Holden's view that this suggestion represents a bid for 'North American academic street cred' (a fine oxymoron) therefore seems somewhat bizarre – even if it is consistent with his gratuitous snipes at (the 'reasonableness and civility' of) Canadians and the 'seriousness' of the book.

I am really sorry that it was neither rude enough nor frivolous enough to entirely satisfy Holden's tastes.

Alan Tate, head of department of Landscape Architecture, Faculty of Architecture, University of Manitoba, Canada

A new spirit is abroad and we must embrace it

What a restless age we live in. George Bush rapidly leading us into a third world war, empire building on a grand scale, and on the architectural scene dissension, and empire building in microcosm, abound. And of course the AJ, in its inimitable

way with sharp reportage and comment, keeps us all on our toes. The issue a fortnight ago was no exception.

Disappointingly, Clare Melhuish felt lukewarm about Ian Buruma's splendid, inspiring talk at the Architectural Association the previous week. First class though she normally is, she clearly failed to cotton on to the essential humanity of Buruma's message, expecting I feel something rather more commonplace. What he said was far more subtle and important to planners and architects – it should be monumentalised in letters 10 metres high – PEOPLE WITH ALL THEIR IDIOSYNCRASIES, NON CONFORMITIES – IN; UNNECESSARY INHIBITION, STRAIT-JACKET CONTROL – OUT. I came away on cloud nine.

His clear condemnation of tower building, symbolic of exploitative big business and oppression, was so salutary. This listener came away with joy in his heart and a sense of freedom, reminded of Blake's gateway to Hell with above the portal 'Thou shalt not...'

Will Alsop has never disappointed this reader. Like Buruma, he is essentially concerned with freedom and vitality with students. He, perhaps, unlike many of the RIBA establishment, sees the need to encourage the possibly fanciful vision of those with feet on lower rungs of the ladder.

All our best architectural schools nurture the spirit which, feeding on enthusiasm for the Mistress Art, is so often disillusioned when faced with the realities of the rude world. Architectural education, like architecture herself, is a difficult and skilled job.

Elsewhere we read of a tussle between the RIBA and ARB. The latter clearly in its own estimation with too little to do in

administering the Architects Registration Act, seeks to extend its empire by meddling in others' legitimate realms. Possibly a look is due into how well it carries out its proper function and, importantly, its value for money. Its latest inquiry of members requiring returns concerning insurance cover not only raises the question of the basic necessity, but of where the practitioner stands if his or her insurance company goes to the wall, a likely event in the present climate.

Now we are left with dear old Auntie RIBA. I have great confidence in President Paul. We read of yet another proposed reorganisation. Having spent a most considerable sum of members' money on a dubious and unnecessary redesign of the logo and stationery without prior consultation, the reorganisation is to be put 'democratically' to the membership at a meeting to be held at Portland Place. The Jarvis Hall, scene of many previous historic battles, holds a minuscule and not necessarily representative selection of the far-flung membership. So what else in the way of consultation if anything is to take place?

All the points in this omnibus letter add up to one thing. A new spirit is abroad in the wide world and none of us, however humble, will any longer be satisfied with undemocratic behaviour and disregard of our views. No human enterprise large or small is exempt. In this we must all rejoice.

John Bancroft, Haywards Heath

Don't forget us – we're also on track

Your news item on architects involved with new station modernisations in London (AJ 14.2.02) failed to mention ourselves. John Lyall Architects is working in association with Ruddle Wilkinson on the

upgrade of the Northern Line for the next seven-and-a-half years.

John Lyall, London EC2

How to build your own Garden of Eden



I am an architect/engineer and am looking for a site to rent for my latest design project, an affordable weekend holiday retreat.

The concept is simple: site a caravan in a spot with lovely views and cover it with a geodesic dome trellis. Train climbing plants over the dome, thus camouflaging the caravan and forming your own Eden. The plants keep the caravan cool in summer and give shelter from the winds in the winter. A geodesic dome trellis does not need concrete foundations, it can be pegged down to the ground like a tent. Generally, for this project there is no need to apply for planning permission, as the structure is temporary and easy to dismantle.

As far as I know, no one in the UK has built this kind of project. Being an architect/engineer and a plant lover, I am keen to build in order to demonstrate its utility. If any readers can help with the location for a site, I would be very pleased to hear from them.

John Zerning, London W2

Speaking from past experience, perhaps?

Book review (AJ 7.2.02) – A guide to *Keeping out of Trouble* by Owen Luder – an oxymoron perhaps?

Dr Anthony Tollast, general practitioner, Portsmouth, sitting in my Volvo admiring the Tricorn



will also

The issue of the ordinary is never far under the surface

My son Piers has always shown a mistrust of the new. As a consequence, the computer is regarded more as a potential enemy than a friend. For 17 years, he has managed to skirt around technology without apparent loss.

To my surprise, he arrived in my studio and started to manipulate photos of himself using Photoshop. With no experience, he produced some extraordinary images as part of a school project on self-identity. The results will be changed further by his preferred hand-held technique of paintbrush and pen. I enquired if he had enjoyed his experience, to which he replied that it was interesting. As yet, Piers does not see himself as having an identity which is associated with machines. Our behaviour is moulded in subtle ways and, as yet, mouse-moving is not an item which 'fits' with his own sense of himself.

To an extent we are what surrounds us. There is an art movement called Fluxus that over the years has acquired a variety of rules, which may or may not be important to its originator, George Maciunas. In part, the work consists of creating a topography of what surrounds you and exploring the associations they evoke, which in turn might give rise to further anecdotes and memories. The process, when done in association with others, creates an almost endless list of possible and unpredictable results, which tends to suggest an infinite world created from a few simple objects that surround you.

This process can be compared to some examples in writing – Laurence Sterne's *Tristram Shandy*, Vladimir Nabokov's *Pale Fire* and Italo Calvino's *If On A Winter's Night A Traveller*. In these examples, the common features are humour, precision (to the point of nausea) and the banal. It is about the everyday. Everyday in some senses is what we all deal with continually.

In Britain, the Independent Group, kitchen sink drama and Team 10 dealt with a stark reality that raised the ordinary to the level of the extraordinary. To those not in the know, it often appeared relevant but ugly. In some ways, this is the point; reality has been allowed to become ugly, and 'beauty' is seen as an embarrassment to the art and architecture protagonist. It is as though we are embarrassed to make decisions beyond the pragmatic. As though the God of squander and frivolity will descend, resulting in severe criticism among the chattering classes. Inevitably, minimalism becomes a useful ploy. Minimalism is banal – banality is not.

The issue of the ordinary is never far under the surface for artists and architects. There is a fascination with an idea that all that is possible exists within that which is known. If this idea is correct, then the everyday represents what is known and can be exploited. Architects developed a functionalist approach to their work, which was more able to be connected to the everyday. An accusation that a work might be frivolous was damnation indeed. Expressionism is still a crime punishable by the architectural mafia. There is no virtue in being boring, as even its most well-intentioned subtleties remain invisible to the person in the street. This mythical person is keen to experience the new and different.

Piers enjoyed the pictures because the machine allowed him to do a few things he had not done before. As architects we can allow people a similar experience in helping to create something new, surprising and joyous, if we accept that we are the catalyst of change and accept what we collectively discover, without subjecting the results to the test of 'architectural' critics.

WA from a Sheringham garden hut

'There is no virtue in being boring, as even its most well-intentioned subtleties remain invisible to the person in the street'

people

'It's not easy being an architect at Arup Associates,' explains Nick Suslak. 'You can't just say "because I say so".' The practice consists of architects, engineers, quantity surveyors, urban designers and product designers. Of the 14 practice principals, only half are architects, the other half are engineers. When I met three of the principals, Nick Suslak, Mike Beaven and John Roberts, they were keen to emphasise this unusual set-up.

The multidisciplinary approach allows for an environment which is genuinely cooperative and non-confrontational, where professionals collaborate from the inception stage of any scheme. Suslak explains: 'We want our work to be characterised by the quality of the ideas and are trying to create an atmosphere in which those ideas can be generated. Every issue is considered holistically from the outset. It's not a series of different thought processes joined together. Because we all sit in one room and have shared experience and shared responsibility you can't say, "well that was the architect's bit and that was the engineer's bit". We have a shared responsibility for the idea. From a client's point of view, the whole team owns the problem. From a design point of view, no one can just walk away.'

This multidisciplinary approach allows Arup Associates to take full responsibility for large, complex projects. The practice is incredibly proud of its achievement, for instance, in successfully taking on and completing a building for a G8 conference in Birmingham (1998) in just six weeks from being given the job to completion on site. The building, characterised by a dramatically mono-pitched solar roof, utilised the latest photovoltaic technology to be self-sufficient in power and even redirect surplus electricity to the local grid. A model of the project is currently on display at the Science Museum. 'That is the kind of project which could only have been delivered by a set-up like Arup Associates, and which greatly exceeded the client's expectations,' says Beaven.

If the G8 pavilion presents one end of the scale – the SWAT-style rapid response end of architecture – then the City of Manchester Stadium, venue for this year's Commonwealth Games, is at the other. The principals use an example from this building to describe how the holistic design process kicks in. The roof support contains the plant rooms and access ramps, and is an expression of the way people enter the stadium. Roberts explains: 'The

One of the few practices to make an international success story out of the multidisciplinary office, Arup Associates thrives on the cross-fertilisation of ideas, creating a cooperative, non-confrontational working environment by edwin heathcote. photograph by gautier deblonde

shared responsibility



Standing (l-r): Robert Pugh, Tony Broomhead, Roger Wood, Dick Lee, Malcolm Smith, Jonathan Rose. Sitting (l-r): Mike Beaven, David Hymas, Michael Lowe, Mick Brundle, Terry Raggett, John Roberts, Kenny Fraser, Declan O'Carroll. Front (l-r): Dipesh Patel, Daniel Jang Wong, Nick Suslak

support for the roof structure is not necessarily in the most efficient place from a structural point of view but the engineers can see why it should be there and why it's the right answer.' These spiral supports are the most characteristic elements of a building which is a testament to how the multidisciplinary practice works – few offices could have so fully provided for such a scheme.

Arup Associates was formed in the 1960s, when it was heavily involved in the then fashionable game of integrating the construction process into the design process. Now, the practice is once again exploring the possibilities of volumetric design as an alternative to the appalling (aesthetic and spatial) standard of contemporary housing.

It has been commissioned by the Peabody Trust to design a scheme in East Acton which attempts to show the validity of an approach embracing mixed-tenure, improved space standards, low-energy design and the advantages of a concrete volumetric prefabrication system. Suslak says: 'We're looking to be involved in actually designing the construction process and managing that process for our client. We're looking at new ways of delivering projects.' The practice prides itself on constant research and on

using experience gained over decades. 'Having a past and being able to look back on yourself allows a constant evolution of ideas, and having a broad base allows us to engage a problem from a number of different viewpoints,' adds Suslak.

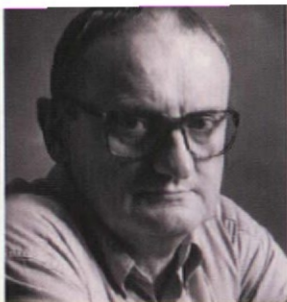
The breadth of experience has attracted gargantuan commissions of the kind usually only undertaken by the large US commercial practices. Plantation Place in the City of London is a good example – an entire urban block built up in two stages; a seven-storey city masonry base and a pair of skyline-glazed cubes above, set back so as to be glimpsed from the tight streets below. It draws on re-bored wells for water and there is potential for natural ventilation at the upper levels. Arup Campus in Solihull, Arup's new regional office (see *Building Study*, pages 24-33), is an unassuming set of elegant barns, embodying the environmental solutions which preoccupy the practice and a pragmatic, democratic Modernism which is refreshingly self-effacing.

The practice is also involved in the rebuilding of Bermondsey Square, where a mix of uses will surround a replacement market site and oval piazza. Buildings are supported on a complex network of

knitting-needle struts which waltz around the remains of an 11th-century Benedictine abbey beneath the site. Further afield, it has been involved with a ground-hugging school in Ladakh in the dramatic setting of the northern Himalayas, an advanced appropriate-technology structure of timber and masonry, surviving with no imported energy or water, and no export of waste.

The practice principals are keen to point out that the office provides opportunities for everyone to achieve tangible results quickly. 'Half of the leadership are younger than the actual practice,' Roberts points out. Suslak continues: 'What excites young designers is that they can see that they could be leading a project rather than there always being someone telling them how to do it. When you come into this multidisciplinary environment, you can learn really quickly and there are fantastic opportunities.'

As one of the few practices to make an international success story out of the multidisciplinary office, Roberts sums up their way of working: 'We have a range of age and experience and a range of disciplines which means that when a spark of an idea flies across the room, there's always someone there to catch it.'



martin pawley

EH and CABE come out fighting as tall buildings debate rumbles on

Visiting the Houses of Parliament is rather like boarding an airliner for a long flight. Strict security at every turn and a seven-mile trudge down a long passageway before you get to the departure lounge – or rather the committee room, as was the case in last week's winding up of the urban affairs subcommittee inquiry into tall buildings.

This was a session that quickly devolved into a contest between Jon Rouse and Paul Finch of CABE and Sir Neil Cossons and Philip Davies of English Heritage to see whose organisation could attract the fewest disparaging comments while inflicting the most. The arbiters of the contest were the sceptical members of the subcommittee who – as experienced politicians will – maintained an attitude of amused tolerance. They variously dismissed CABE as 'a club for modern architects', denounced English Heritage's notorious MORI poll as 'useless' and, finally, savoured the 'irresponsible' status of both organisations as exemplified by English Heritage's discomfiture at a recital of its own inconsistency over current towers – supporting Swiss Re one minute, dismissing Heron the next. Why not the other way round?

Through most of the hour-long encounter, English Heritage was on the defensive. A defence, it must be admitted, that was capably handled by its two unflappable representatives who refused to concede that tall buildings were just small buildings only taller (so their fate could be left in the hands of local authority planners); and who stonewalled doggedly while their notorious MORI poll was treated as a joke; and who straightfacedly proposed a new year-long study to produce 'draft national guidelines for tall buildings'.

Inevitably neither the subcommittee nor the CABE men were satisfied with this, and English Heritage was steadily beaten back to its reserve position, clinging to its self-assumed role as final

arbiter of where tall buildings should go and how high they should be – both these powers depending upon acceptance of the legitimacy of the doctrine of strategic views which, added English Heritage, should also be applied to all cities without further delay.

After a time, the argument settled on the surprising subject of what people look at when seated in a pavement cafe – looking up and to the right made you an effete EH person, sensitive to the presence of ill-placed towers. Looking down and to the left made you a tough-minded CABE supporter, gulping down scalding coffee as quickly as possible before hurrying back to work, glancing at tall buildings, if at all, as if they were barometers of the economy (and thus by implication the more of them and the taller they were, the better).

Soon it was time for summing up and the two bodies prepared to deliver their heaviest blows. In a powerful unscripted address, CABE's Paul Finch stressed that today's tall building proposals were overwhelmingly private-sector commercial projects driven not by religious, art historical or social welfare considerations but by demand in the property market for up-to-date working buildings. He felt that too little attention was paid to the risk and cost of delay that dogged the development of advanced technology high-rise structures, citing the early vicissitudes of Canary Wharf in this context.

For its own part, English Heritage grudgingly conceded that there was such a thing as a private sector property market, but argued that it could not be allowed to be a free for all. Instead, it must be required to 'play out' its creative acts of entrepreneurial competition within the framework of clear local plans derived from national tall buildings policy guidelines. Whether the idea of such a framework will be deemed necessary by the subcommittee remains to be seen.

'After a time, the argument settled on the surprising subject of what people look at when seated in a pavement cafe'

a life in architecture

david
austin



'Roses are so untidy, all over the shop. It's part of their charm but it means that they need a very severe framework to grow in,' says rose grower David Austin, whose own garden in Wolverhampton is loosely modelled on the garden created by Vita Sackville-West at Sissinghurst in Kent.

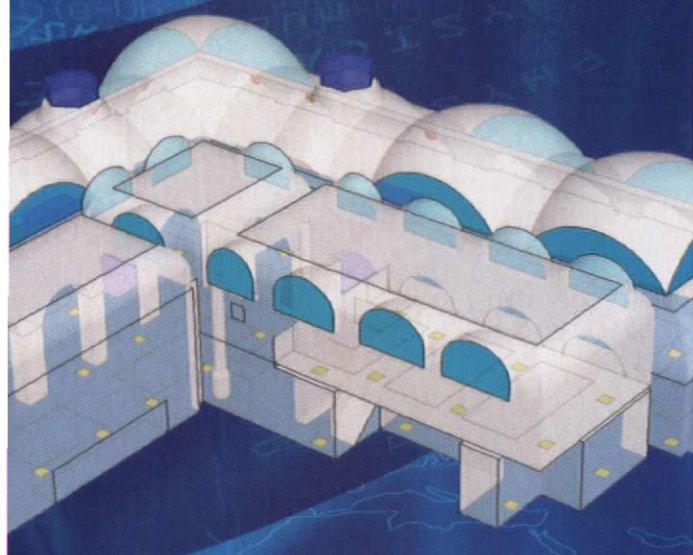
'I once went there when I was in my 20s and met the great lady. We walked around and she talked at length and Harold Nicholson walked behind us like a sort of naughty boy. He got so tired in the end that he said, "Well, I think I'll go and do some weeding."' As at Sissinghurst, David Austin's roses are cultivated in garden 'rooms' separated by yew and box hedges.

He mentions his own house briefly, 'a beautifully proportioned William and Mary front but the back is appalling, the worst type of Victorian architecture'. Then it's back to gardens. Powys Castle in north Wales is another favourite. The castle sits at the top of a hill while the actual gardens cascade down a cliff-like slope in front of it, in a series of steps or terraces, each one with its own herbaceous border against a retaining wall. At the bottom of the slope, the terraces open out into a large, flat grassed area. 'Rather Italianate and very effective,' says the man who has done so much to make a wide range of old-fashioned and species roses readily available to amateur gardeners in the UK and abroad.

Deborah Singmaster

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CFD Geometry of the Bank of England,
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Candid Campus

Arup's new base in Solihull draws on the practice's history of radical traditionalism. Its clarity of structure and environmental credentials set a new standard for office and business park architecture in the UK



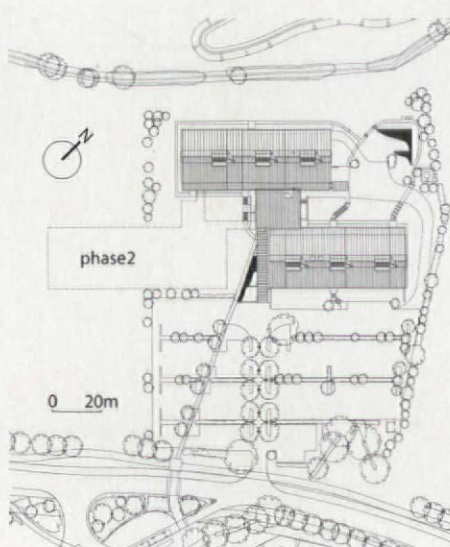


By Kenneth Powell. Photographs by Peter Cook/VIEW

Arup Associates was formally established as a practice in 1963 – ‘a laboratory inside our organisation in which we hope to develop new ideas’, as Ove Arup described it at the time. But the architectural arm of the Arup engineering empire had really been launched a decade earlier, when two newly qualified architects from the AA, Philip Dowson and Francis Pym, were recruited to work for an organisation which had already played a leading role in the emergence of modern architecture in Britain.

Arup Associates’ Campus at Solihull, near Birmingham, designed to house 350 Arup staff working in a variety of disciplines from structural engineering to car design, is a building firmly within the Arup tradition, and is significant as a progressive exemplar for office and business park design in the UK.

Over half a century, British architecture has come to expect two qualities in Arup Associates’ buildings: innovation and seriousness, the latter reflecting a concern for the social impact of design. The firm’s reputation was built initially on the virtuoso use of precast concrete, largely for university projects – the mining and metallurgy building at Birmingham University, now listed, is an important example, notable for the strongly Kahnian expression of the services programme. The instinctive rationalism of Arup

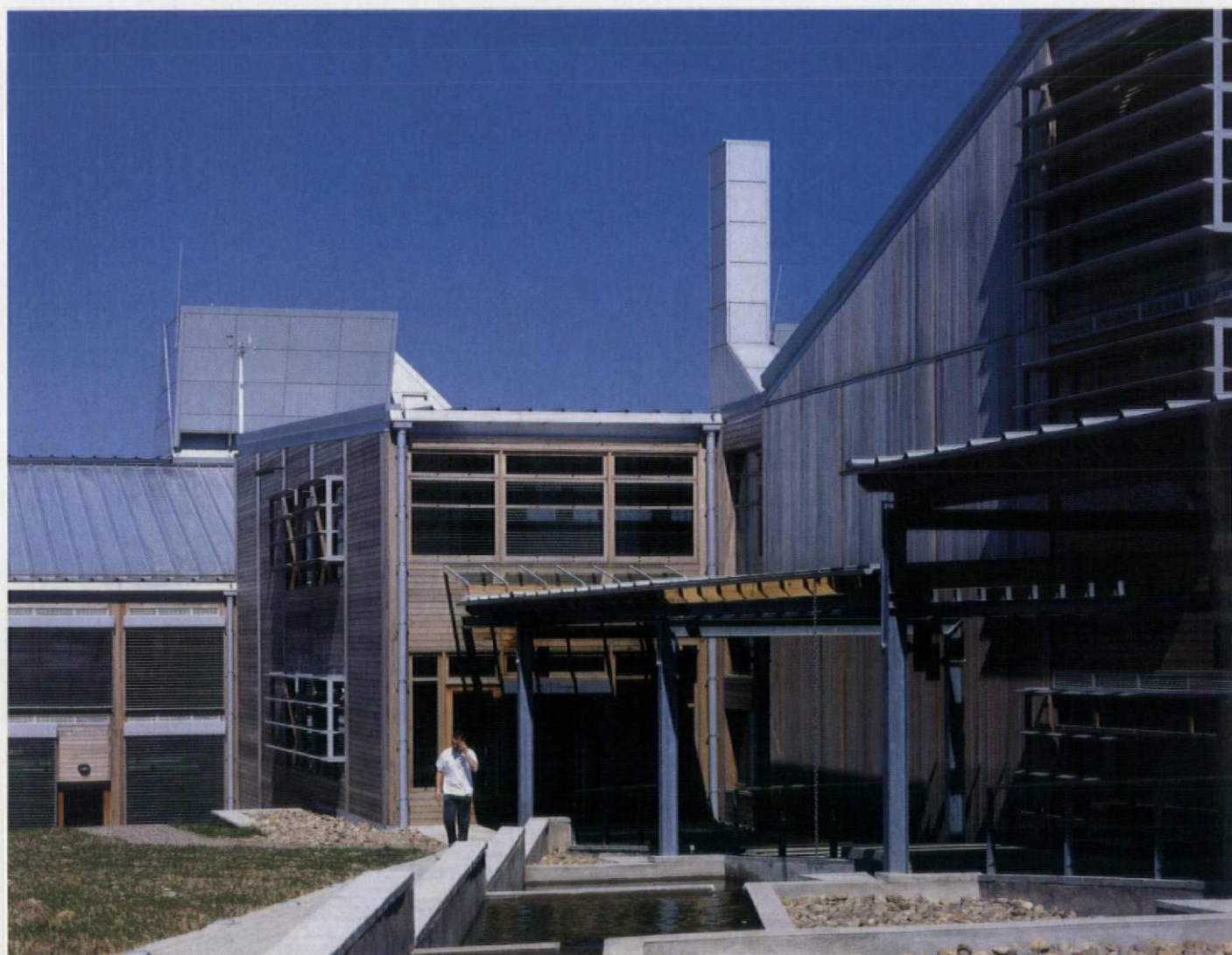


Associates’ work survived the practice’s transformation into a big player on the commercial scene. Under the late Peter Foggo, it made the Broadgate ‘office city’ (with Stockley Park, the defining Arup Associates project of the 1980s) into a bold restatement of Modernist principles in a period of stylistic confusion.

However, there was another side to Arup Associates – a feeling for the vernacular and for the rural context, with its roots in the Modernist response to the ‘functional tradi-

tion’, seen in Philip Dowson’s early houses and, most vividly, in the Maltings concert hall at Snape (1965–67). Daniel Wong, the Arup Associates director responsible for the Campus project, finds inspiration in the ‘radical traditionalism’ of Snape. ‘There is a wonderful understatement about it – what you see is what you get,’ he says. (Wong, incidentally, is Australian by birth and sympathetic to another version of ‘radical traditionalism’, seen in the work of Glenn Murcutt and his school.)

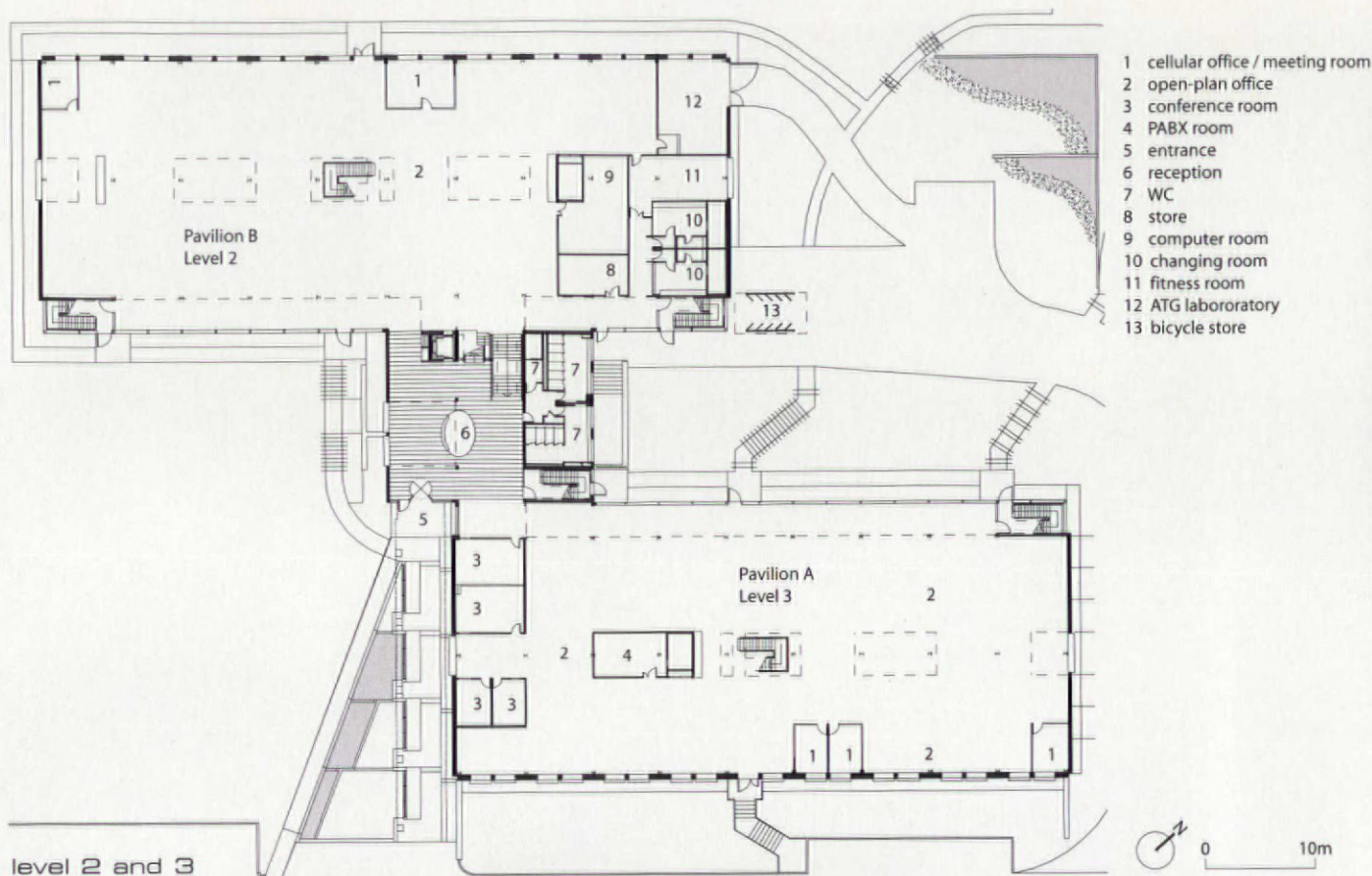
The site for the Campus was considerably less appealing than that at Snape. The new Blythe Valley Business Park, located just off the M42 and within easy reach of Birmingham International Airport, is still a bleak place, with the landscaping still to emerge, though proximity to a country park ensures that its setting will remain green. Other buildings there – the largest, let to British Gas, houses 1,700 employees – are typically slick and faceless. Arup had two offices in the West Midlands, one in the suburbs of Coventry, the other in central Birmingham, which it wanted to merge. According to John Harvey, who heads the new combined office, ‘the location was critical: although most people here live around Birmingham and Coventry, we have a few who commute from as far as Northampton and Hereford. The rivalries between



The main entrance. The campus is in keeping with Arup’s history of ‘radical traditionalism’, characterised by a feeling for the vernacular



The external timber cladding is untreated and intended to weather – it has already acquired a suitably mellow look



Birmingham and Coventry were resolved by having the new office in Solihull. The Campus is now Arup's third largest office, second only to those in London and Hong Kong.

Arup initially considered acquiring the site from the park's developers and constructing its own building, but eventually decided to rent the new headquarters on a 20-year lease – the budget and overall form of the building had to be agreed with the developer. The design team was responsible for the fit-out and furnishings. Arup specified a development with a high degree of flexibility and connectivity to encourage interaction between the teams working there. Natural ventilation was specified, with a high degree of user control over the working environment. 'The other big issue, predictably, was parking,' says Daniel Wong. 'We got more than 200 spaces, whereas British Gas, which came along later, was allowed only 300 for a far greater office population.'

The layout of the development responds to the gentle contours of the site. There are effectively four levels (or half-levels) within the two pavilions constructed so far (a third is planned), which makes for interesting vistas through the working spaces. There is none of the enclosure usually created by central service cores. The pavilions, linked by a reception area (with the quite modest services area beneath), are constructed on a steel frame with pre-cast concrete floors and ceiling panels (which provide necessary thermal mass for the low-energy ventilation strategy). Glazing is concentrated on north (actually north-west) facades.

The 'what you see is what you get' philosophy pervades the Campus. The pavilions are



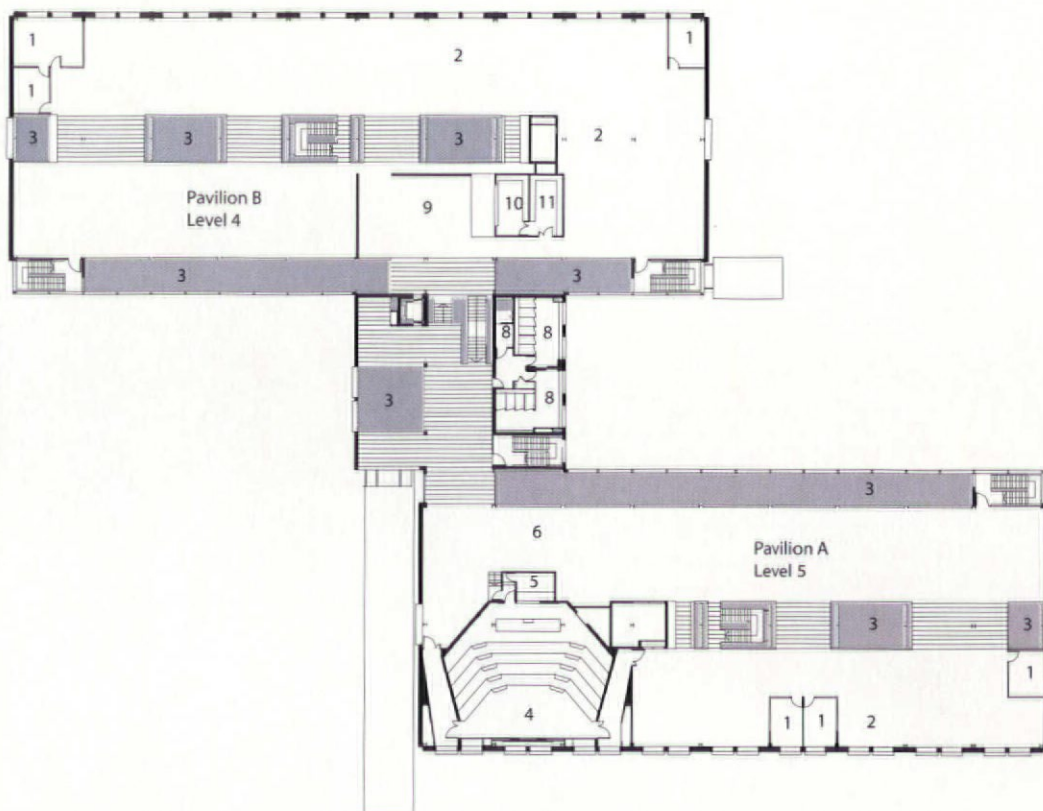
Top: the reception area links the two pavilions. Above: manually controlled windows and shutters

quite straightforward sheds with pitched roofs. Internally the structure is supported on Y-columns which are a conscious memory, Daniel Wong says, of Arup Associates' maintenance building at Duxford, dating from the late 1950s. The plan of the pavilions is relatively deep (24m) but the floors are eroded by means of voids cut into the centre of the slabs, where there are connecting staircases, and continuously along one edge of each building.

The cladding system is very much bespoke, with the louvred timber shutters, which control solar gain and glare and form a defining element of the building's exterior appearance, specially made to the architects' designs. Users have manual control of the shutters and the opening windows, allowing the internal environment to be tempered to their preferences. 'Our aim was to give everyone fresh air and plenty of daylight,' says Wong. In summer – the building opened early in 2001 – artificial light is rarely needed and John Harvey cannot recall a single complaint about the working environment in the past year. A potential problem with sound absorption was resolved by fitting specially made light fittings with spreading 'wings', which act as sound dampers.

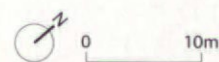
The Campus has all the appropriate Arup qualities of seriousness and responsibility, but it is hardly a dull building. Externally and internally, the combined light scoops/chimneys – a definite echo of Snape here – are a highly distinctive feature. As well as extracting stale air by the chimney effect, they serve as smoke vents, but they are equally the defining features in the aesthetic of the scheme.

The external timber cladding is untreated and intended to weather – it has already



- 1 cellular office / meeting room
- 2 open-plan office
- 3 void
- 4 auditorium
- 5 projection room
- 6 auditorium break-out area
- 7 informal meeting area
- 8 WC
- 9 cafe

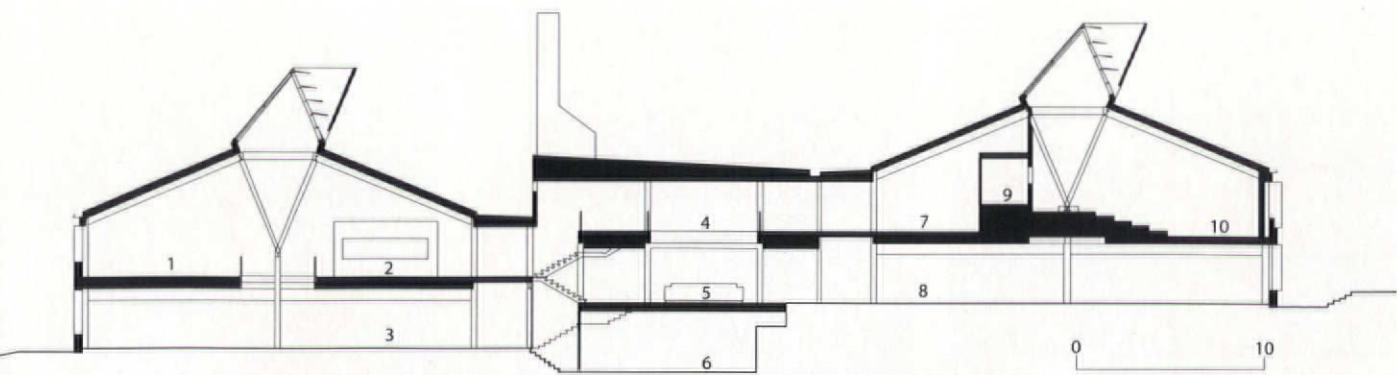
level 4 and 5



The space above the reception area serves as an extension of the cafe at lunchtime



The pavilions are straightforward sheds with pitched roofs. Internally, the structure is supported on Y-columns



- | | |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 level 4 open-plan office | 6 basement |
| 2 cafe | 7 auditorium break-out area |
| 3 level 2 open-plan office | 8 level 3 open-plan office |
| 4 informal meeting areas | 9 projection room |
| 5 reception | 10 auditorium |

section

Structure

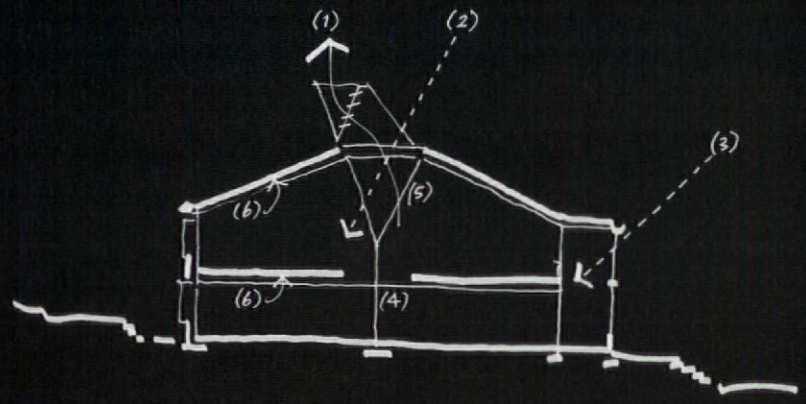
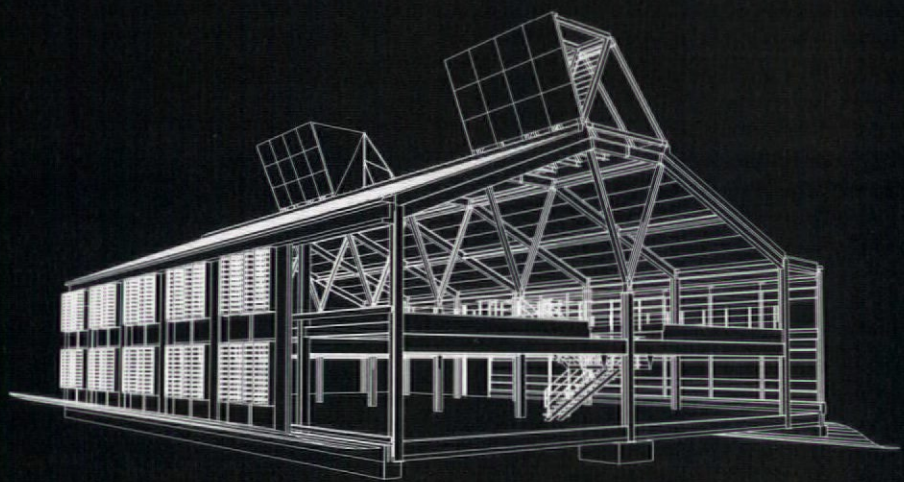
The principal structural aims were to provide a visually articulate light and airy workspace; optimise the penetration of natural daylight and the quality of artificial light; assist the natural ventilation strategy and energy-in-use targets; design for de-construction and re-use of components as part of the overall sustainability approach; and to exploit the contours and orientation of the site.

These aims led to the following structural approach to the main pavilion wings:

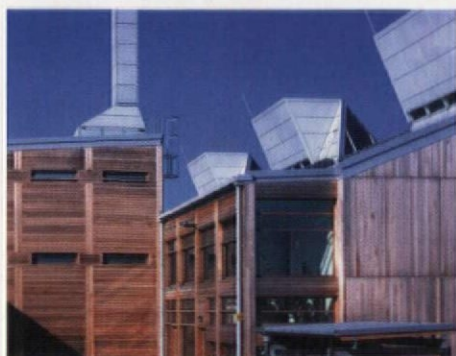
- A 'linear' arrangement of double-storey transverse frames supporting simple longitudinal concrete floor and roof planes.
- Visually and thermally exposed structures throughout (the steelwork is intumescently painted where appropriate).
- Standard structural steelwork components with site-bolted connections.
- Proprietary pre-cast hollow core floor units installed without an in situ structural concrete topping. This approach minimises structural costs, depth, weight and site activities to a practical minimum while being consistent with the principle of de-construction for re-use.
- Transverse stability provided by the floor diaphragm and roof plane bracing to frame-works within the gable walls. Longitudinal stability provided by multi-bay portal action. The column flange orientation follows this principle.

The two pavilion wings are orientated along the contours to take advantage of the outlook and minimise the excavation. The central link block provides both vertical and horizontal connection between the wings and, with various enclosed functions, its structure and construction are not visually expressed.

Variable ground conditions led to the use of precast driven piles to support the main frame and perimeter walls with ground-bearing, ground-floor slabs. A lime-based soil stabilisation technique was used to construct the building base and landscape plateaux in the soft upper clays, thereby avoiding the need for either imported fill or exported excavated material.



- Sectional geometry encourages air flow (1) and light penetration (2).
- Thin floor plates with flush longitudinal framing maximises light penetration (3)
- Semi-continuous frame construction (4) reduces transverse beam depth and avoids the need for composite construction.
- Central 'Y' frames (5) define light/vent roof pod zone.
- Exposed concrete units (6) assist comfort conditions through exposed thermal mass.
- General floor to ceiling dimension and smooth painted soffit provides good uplighting conditions.



Left to right: light scoops/chimneys extract stale air; 'winged' light fittings act as sound dampers; and louvered shutters control solar gain

acquired a suitably mellow look.

There are currently about 380 staff working in the Campus and the pressure on space shows in places – first-floor bridge links, intended to house nothing more than faxes and copiers, are being colonised by desks. Contrary to the spirit of the scheme, some directors have insisted on enclosed offices, which means that clumsy cabins (like those that used to stand on factory floors) intrude into the open spaces – surely a firm corporate line could have been taken on that issue. Some enclosed meeting rooms were essential, but most meetings tend to take place in open-plan areas, like that above the recep-

tion, which also serves as an extension of the cafe at lunchtime. 'Visitors seem to want to feel involved in the activity of the place,' says John Harvey.

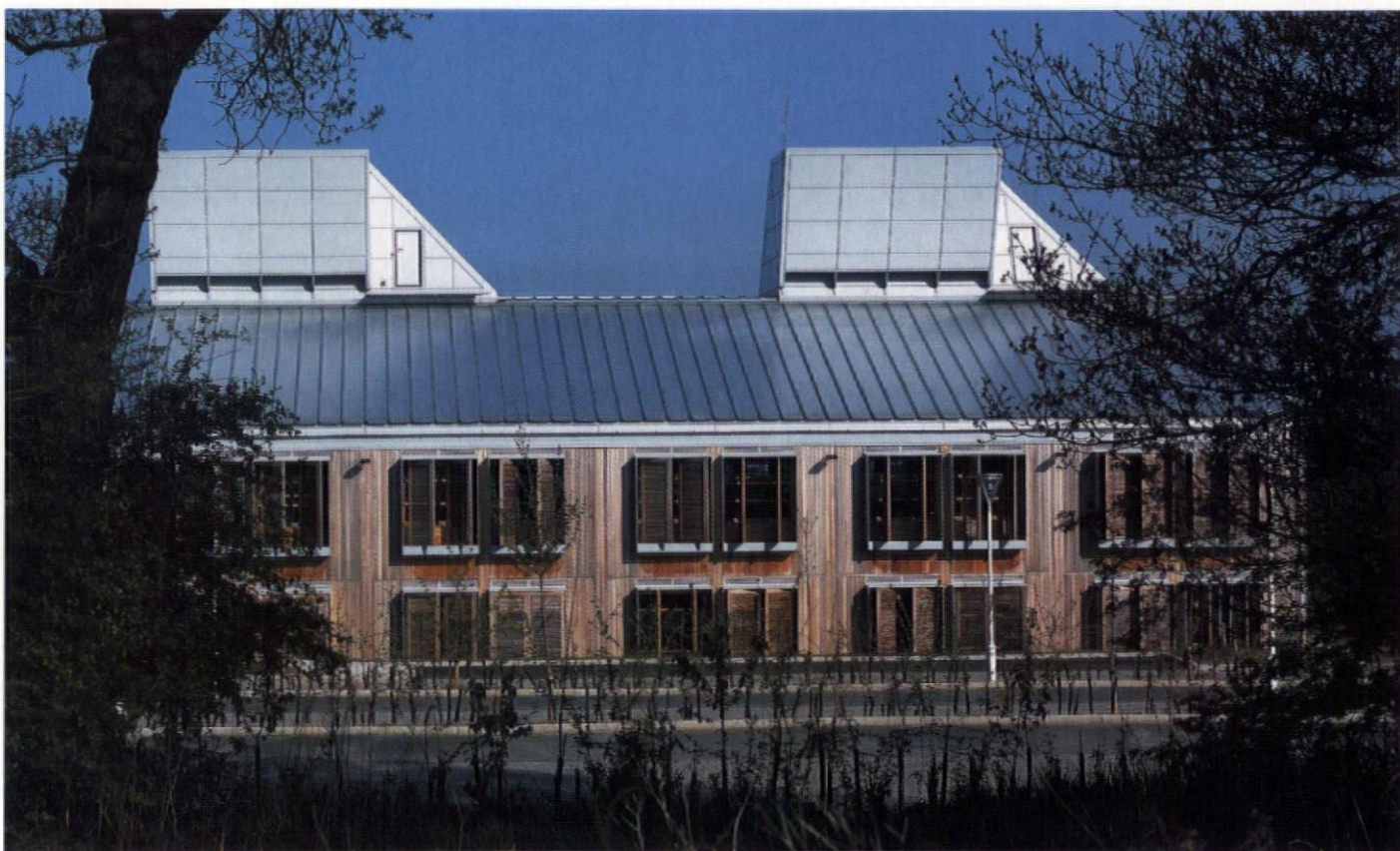
The business park setting inevitably constrains the scheme. The intended landscape around the Campus has so far, thanks largely to the very wet conditions of past winter, failed to materialise, but another landscape campaign is imminent. Though the majority of staff travel to the site by car, the bicycle parking area has proved too small and is about to be doubled, while a bus service is also increasingly used.

The Campus deserves critical acclaim,

though Arup Associates hopes equally that it will generate new commissions. The firm's current workload is dominated by two jobs, the Manchester Stadium (about to finish) and the Plantation House office project in the City of London. Yet the Campus provides a more obvious reflection of Ove Arup's ambitions for the practice. It highlights the aesthetic and environmental failings of so much of the new business park architecture which is the vernacular of the new motorway/urban fringe Britain and has a significance beyond its apparently adroit response to the requirements of one, very critical, set of users.



Although some enclosed meeting rooms were essential, most meetings take place in open-plan areas



Costs

Costs are based on the contract sum and include shell & core, developer's fit-out and Arup's Category B fit-out.

EARTHWORKS

SITE EXCAVATION, SOIL (LIME) STABILISATION	16.60m ²
--	---------------------

SUBSTRUCTURE

BASEMENT RAFT AND WALLS, PERIMETER GROUND BEAMS	78.85m ²
---	---------------------

PILING

PRECAST DRIVEN PILES	6.17m ²
----------------------	--------------------

SUPERSTRUCTURE

STEEL FRAME, PRECAST CONCRETE UPPER FLOOR AND ROOF SLABS	79.85m ²
--	---------------------

ROOFING Zinc-coated steel pan with mineral wool insulation	47.70m ²
---	---------------------

ROOF VENT PODS Roof lights and motorised opening vents	56.13m ²
---	---------------------

METALWORK Stairs and balustrading	17.34m ²
--------------------------------------	---------------------

CLADDING Western red-cedar facade incorporating opening vents, shading devices	255.57m ²
---	----------------------

JOINERY/FIT-OUT Floors, doors, walls and partitions, acoustic treatment, fittings and fixtures	47.50m ²
---	---------------------

DRYLINING Walls and ceilings, tapered and skimmed	20.10m ²
--	---------------------

RAISED FLOORS Encapsulated chipboard panels on pedestals	16.08m ²
---	---------------------

FLOOR COVERINGS Carpets and linoleum	12.27m ²
---	---------------------

DECORATION Painting	4.68m ²
------------------------	--------------------

FIT-OUT (CATEGORY B) Auditorium, cafe, cellular offices, conference and meeting rooms	42.33m ²
--	---------------------

MECHANICAL, ELECTRICAL AND PLUMBING	215.46m ²
-------------------------------------	----------------------

DATA AND COMMUNICATIONS Underfloor IT and telecoms installation	15.49m ²
--	---------------------

LIFT Hydraulic type for disabled access and general goods	8.53m ²
--	--------------------

BMS Supply, installation, and controls commissioning	23.31m ²
---	---------------------

PRELIMINARIES AND INSURANCES

PRELIMINARIES	105.24m ²
---------------	----------------------

CONTINGENCIES	41.28m ²
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EXTERNAL WORKS	£323,500
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Cost summary

	Cost per m ² (£)	Percentage of total
EARTHWORKS	16.60	1.49
SUBSTRUCTURE	78.85	7.10
PILING	6.17	0.56
SUPERSTRUCTURE		
Steel frame	79.85	7.19
Roofing	47.70	4.30
Roof vent pods	56.13	5.05
Metalwork	17.34	1.56
Cladding	255.57	23.01
Joinery/fit-out	47.50	4.28
Dry lining	20.10	1.81
Raised floors	16.08	1.45
Floor coverings	12.27	1.11
Decoration	4.68	0.42
Fit-out (Category B)	42.33	3.81
Mechanical, electrical and plumbing	215.46	19.40
Data and communications	15.49	1.39
Lift	8.53	0.77
BMS	23.31	2.10
Group element total	862.34	77.65
PRELIMINARIES & INSURANCES	105.24	9.48
CONTINGENCIES	41.28	3.72
TOTAL	1,110.48	100.00

The light scoops/chimneys and the louvered timber shutters are the defining features of the aesthetic of the scheme

CREDITS

TENDER DATE

July 1999

START ON SITE DATE

December 1999

CONTRACT DURATION

13 months

GROSS EXTERNAL FLOOR AREA

6,056m²

FORM OF CONTRACT

JCT 98 without quantities

TOTAL COST

£7.2 million, including

tenant fit-out,

Shell & Core Category A

fit-out, externals

£5,860,768.

Category B fit-out

£1,187,847

CLIENT

Arup

ARCHITECT

Arup Associates

QUANTITY SURVEYOR

Arup Associates

STRUCTURAL ENGINEER

Arup Associates

SERVICES ENGINEER

Arup Associates

CONTRACTOR

Tilbury Douglas

LANDSCAPE

Roger Griffiths

Associates, Bernard Ede

Associates (concept)

SUBCONTRACTORS & SUPPLIERS

steelwork DA Green & Sons; metal decking

Richard Lees Steel

Decking; precast concrete

Tarmac Topfloor; glazing

Solaglas; zinc-aluminium

coated roofing CA

Profiles; external cladding

Swift Horsman; roof pods

Lanbeuf; roofing Sharkey

& Company; mechanical,

electrical and plumbing

Haden Young; lifts Express

Evans; revolving door

Boon Eda; architectural

metalwork Down &

Francis; joinery Joinery

Shoppes; ironmongery

Evsenwarcswann; soft

landscape English

Landscapes; entrance

ponds Water Techniques;

raised floor Hewetson;

security system Atec;

auditorium seating

Audience Systems; audio

visual AVC; furniture

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working details

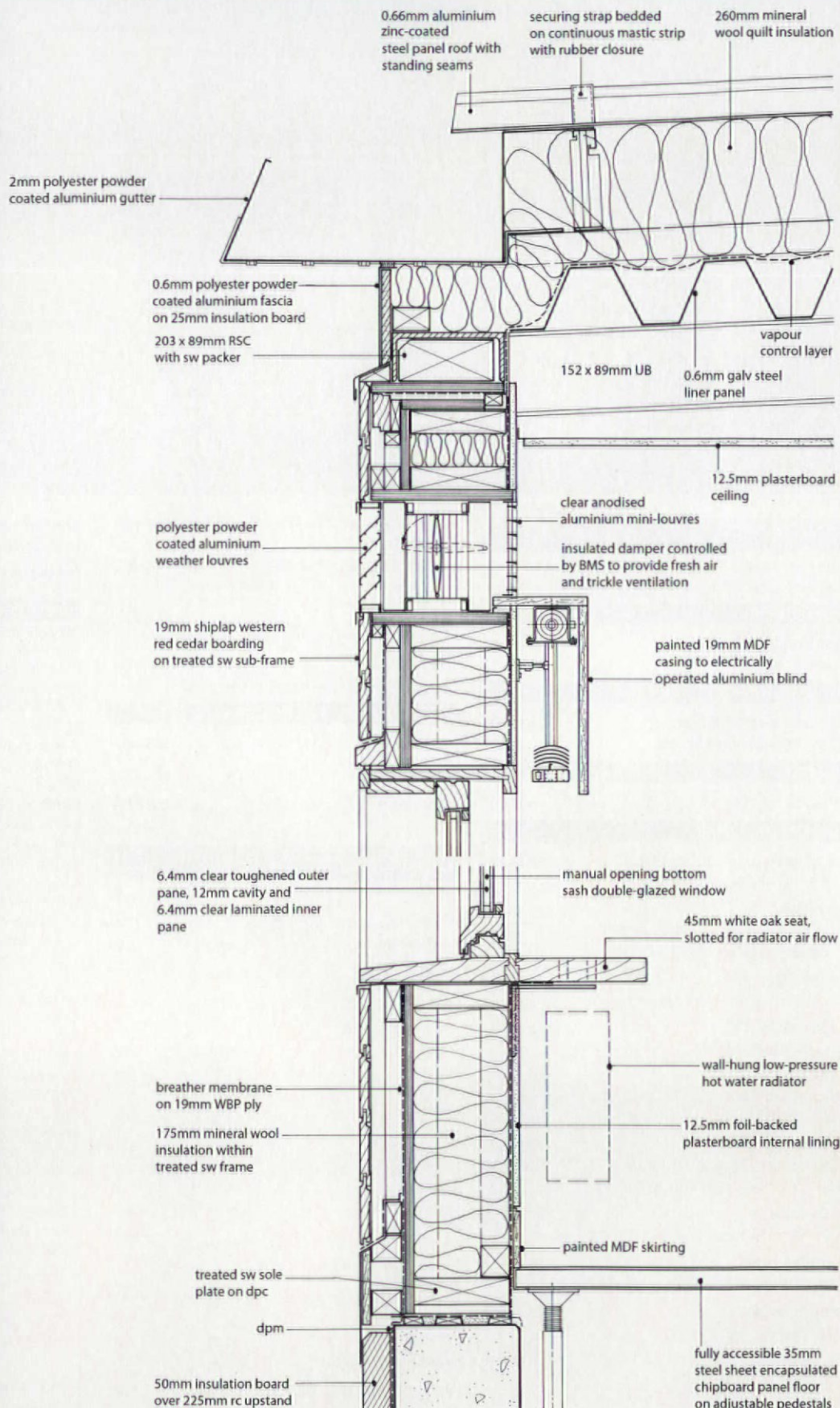
The structure and layout of the two-storey pavilion is integrated with the environmental strategy. It is naturally ventilated with double-height perimeter spaces to allow air to circulate and the steel-frame structure supports a first floor and roof of precast concrete planks, of which the soffits are exposed to contribute to thermal mass.

The roof is covered with self-supporting aluminium/zinc-coated steel panels with standing seams at 600mm centres; it acts as a load-bearing deck which can be walked on for maintenance. The facades are supported by 203 x 203mm universal columns at 6m centres and a secondary support system at 3m centres. They are clad with western red cedar boarding and glazing, arranged in a variety of dispositions to suit orientation; the north-west facing facade, shown right, is less affected by solar gain and is glazed with sash windows.

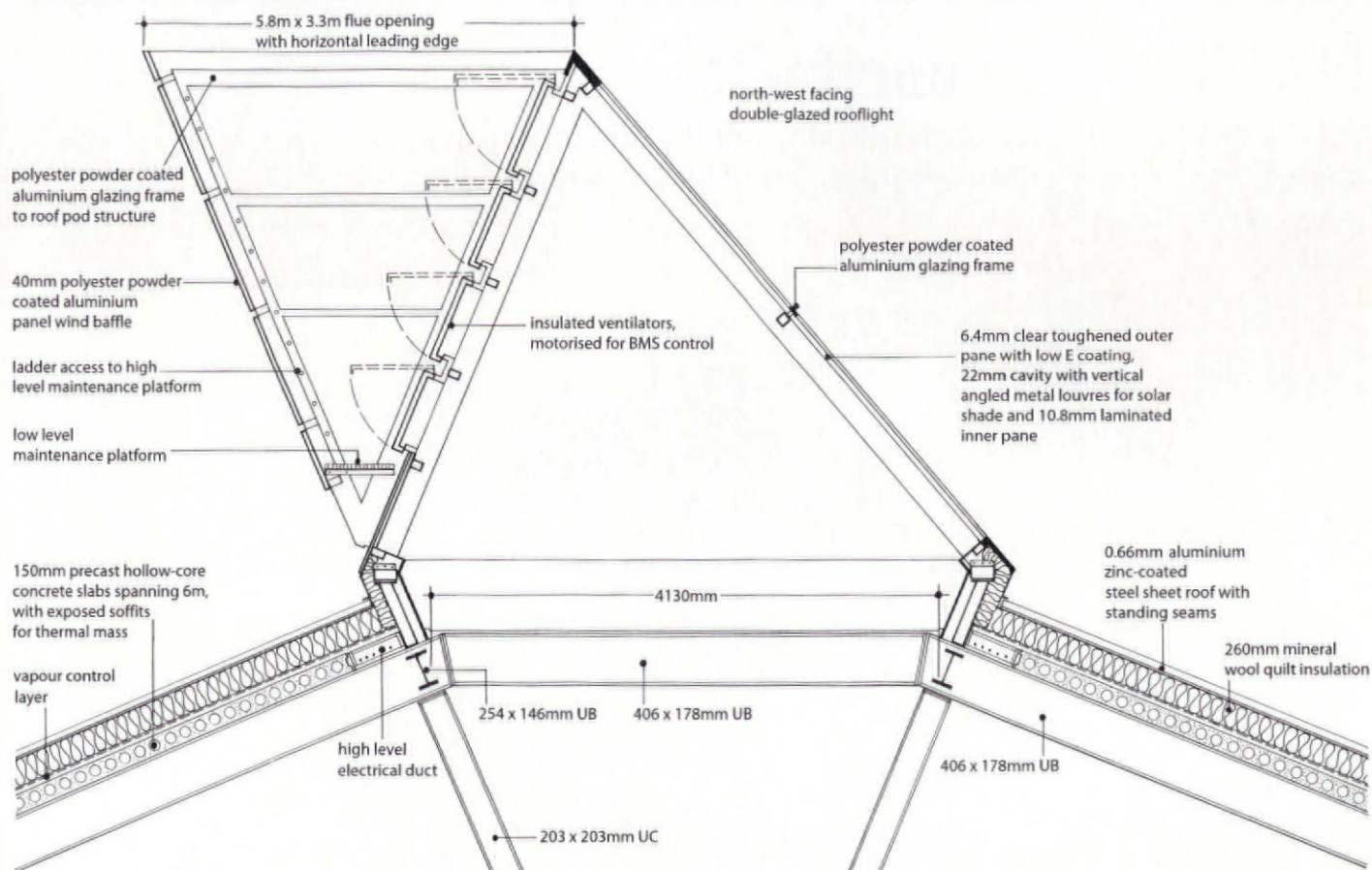
A row of louvre blinds on the inside prevents the transmission of glare from low sun in winter (on south-east facades the blinds are on the outside to reduce solar gain). A row of high-level dampers faced with mini-louvres are set above the windows and linked via the building management system (BMS) to internal temperature sensors in the workplace. The dampers provide fresh air, trickle ventilation in winter and in summer they open at night to cool the precast floor slabs.

At the ridge a series of 'roof pods' – a combination of chimney and rooflight – induces stack-effect and cross ventilation. Top-hung vents operated by the BMS act as smoke vents in the event of fire. The north-west-facing rooflight has fixed louvres in the glazed cavity to reduce glare and solar gain from the setting sun in summer.

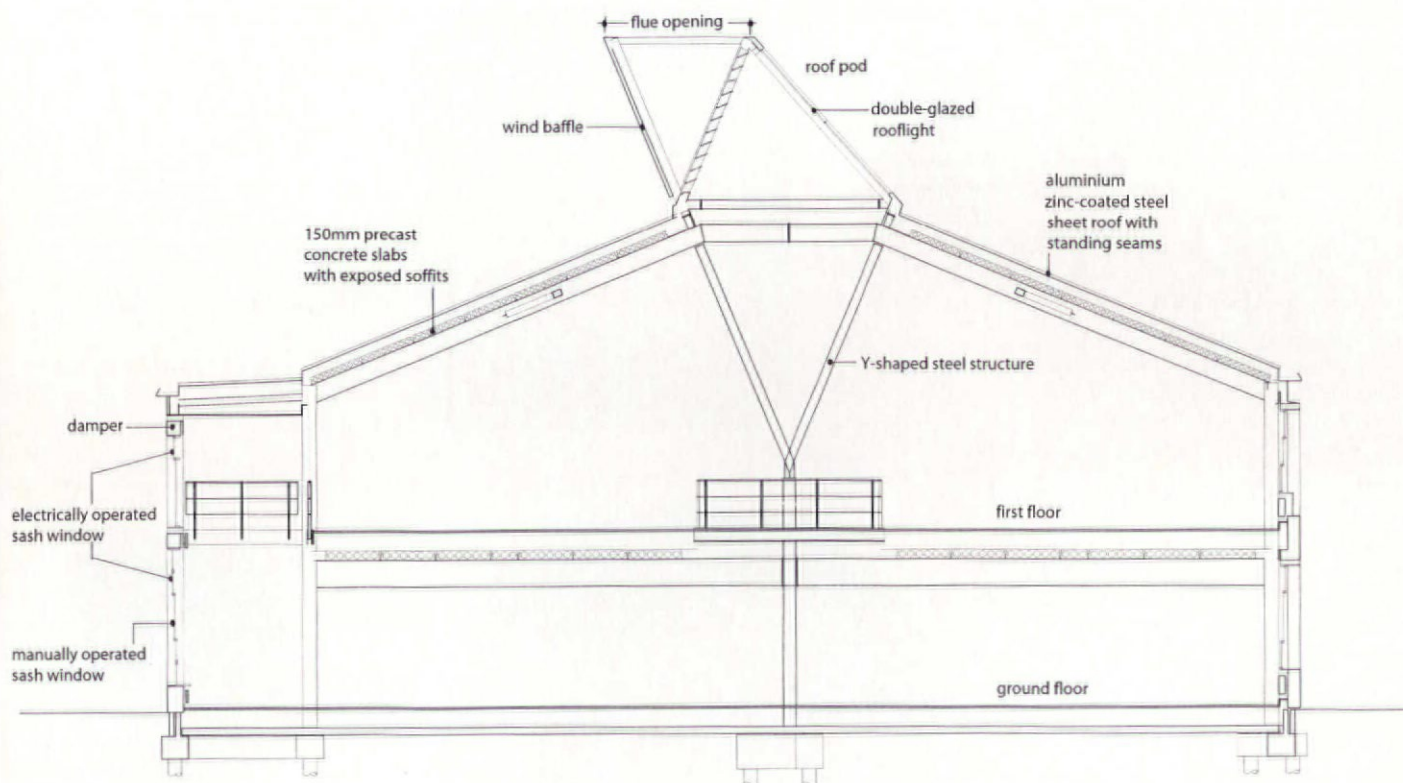
Susan Dawson



DETAIL SECTION THROUGH EAVES AND GROUND FLOOR SILL



DETAIL SECTION THROUGH ROOF POD

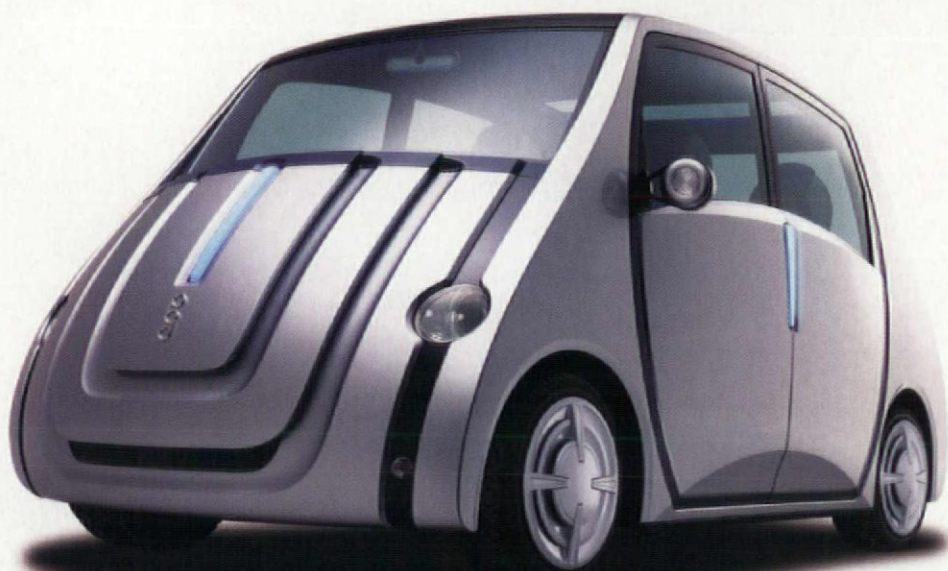


KEY SECTION THROUGH PAVILION

Mobile home comforts

Individual profiling technology will soon enable an automatic correlation between home life and personal transport

BY LIZ BAILEY



Driving might one day become the most expressive of all human-machine interactions, if Japanese giants Toyota and Sony have their way. The two companies joined forces to launch a concept emoticar, p.o.d (personalisation on demand), at the recent Tokyo motor show.

A car that expresses and solicits emotion? Scoff ye not; even cynical western journalists liked it, says Toyota chief engineer Naoto Kitagawa.

'The idea behind it – a commonplace reference in Japanese culture – is that of an emotional connection between machine and human being, so it's easier for Japanese people to relate to this type of concept,' says Kitagawa. 'We were a little worried whether overseas journalists would understand it, but we were actually overwhelmed by the positive responses.'

No wonder, as p.o.d makes ingenious use of 'smart' technologies both in the car and in the home, and uses the understanding it gains about its human family to make driving fun. The p.o.d has liquid-crystal eyes

Driving test: the p.o.d, the new emoticar collaboration between Toyota and Sony, plans to integrate home life and travel



that light up when its driver approaches and a colour-coded face. Low fuel makes it 'sad' and turn blue; torrential rain makes it 'frightened' (green). Red is for anger. The vehicle is also fitted with a horn that asks if it can overtake and it even has a tail.

Home learning

The p.o.d monitors position, speed, acceleration, road and weather conditions, fuel consumption and even unexpected pedestrian or cyclist behaviour, and uses an array of ITC (information and communications technologies) to do this such as GPS (global positioning system) satellite navigation; signals from brakes, wipers and fuel gauge; and exterior peripheral cameras.

What really sets p.o.d apart is its relationship to its human drivers. Each p.o.d has a 'minipod', a portable data terminal that learns both the media preferences, lifestyle choices and driving habits of individual family members. The minipod accompanies the family into the home, where it interfaces with a PC to record what websites you access and how often. It also communicates with the TV's EPG (electronic programme guide) to keep track of the shows you watch and assimilate all the information.

Every time a driver takes the minipod into the p.o.d, the minipod automatically updates p.o.d's preferences database. A display screen lets an individual log into his or her seat so it becomes their 'unique entertainment centre'. Toyota designer Simon Humphries (from Chester) explains: 'Each seat is its own environment, with virtual surround-sound speakers that focus in front of that person.'





Every move you make

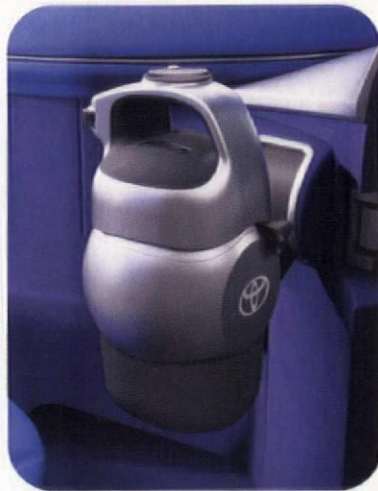
The car constantly monitors each family member's driving habits, using both its array of ITC and some biometric data it collects during driving. The p.o.d., which has no accelerator or brake pedals or steering wheel, is entirely controlled using a single drive-by-wire joystick. Electronic sensors in the drive controller check the driver's pulse and galvanic skin response to alter its feedback accordingly. Part of the p.o.d.'s database on each driver includes a profile of how that person drives customarily – on a regular route in moderate conditions – to which it assigns a series of numerical values representing 'normal'.

If you steer or brake too sharply, accelerate too quickly, or tailgate – 'p.o.d. compares that data and understands you are doing something abnormal. It deduces that you're irate, or hurried. The p.o.d. then acts on its understanding, to encourage a return to normal driving.'

'It's not artificial intelligence, exactly,' says Humphries. 'Fuzzy logic is the nearest thing you could say to this. The thing can think for itself; it can learn and make decisions, following a set of rules; it reacts to a situation in a certain way and that reaction is different depending on the person. Should the same situation occur, the answer is not necessarily the same for different people – it's not as simple as "if/then".'

How p.o.d. chooses to soothe you depends on its understanding of your preferences, says Kitagawa. 'It

Smart motor: each p.o.d. has a 'minipod', a portable data terminal that learns both the media preferences, lifestyle choices and driving habits of individual family members



reacts in a way that suits you based on your likes and dislikes,' – playing music, for instance, or offering to book a table at a favourite restaurant.

Does this really make p.o.d. an emotional machine? Engineer Akira Shinada, Sony's p.o.d. project leader, thinks so. 'The car is one of the best "emotion detectors" in existence,' he says. 'If you get angry you drive violently. Even now it is fairly easy to detect a driver's emotion when they are driving. All we have to do is col-



lect all this information via sensors and analyse the resulting data.'

But can it, for instance, detect nuances? 'This is really just a question of know-how in relation to analysing data,' argues Shinada. 'We would like to accumulate a lot of data – then we will be able to read even small changes in a driver's emotional state.' Already it can detect a patronising tone when the driver talks to it.

It can learn from your reactions to assess whether it is soothing you

correctly. If you get frustrated in a traffic jam and the computer plays classical music which makes you more irate, p.o.d. quickly adjusts its behaviour. Humphries uses the analogy of a pet to represent p.o.d.'s learning over time, because 'it grows from the day you own it'.

Design differences

The joint project team shows in its design. The symmetrical exterior resembles a Sony product; the seats are Sony blue, for example, but there was a clash of manufacturing cultures. 'The person who buys a car trusts it to save his life,' says Kitagawa, 'so we have to be quite logical and dispassionate in our design. Our product development cycle is around three years, whereas Sony's is three to six months. Sony has to hit fashion on the nose whereas we had to consider issues like safety.'

Communication in the team was not exactly straightforward. In Japanese, they have a word for 'useful' but Sony's and Toyota's perception of this word were quite different. For Toyota, it was a measurable commodity, but for Sony, it meant the ability to form emotional attachments to the product.

The project has managed to overcome these differences, though both firms largely stuck to their own area of expertise. Sony designed the minipod, the individual speakers, the interactivity and display screen; Toyota designed the car itself; and the two teams worked together on the joystick.

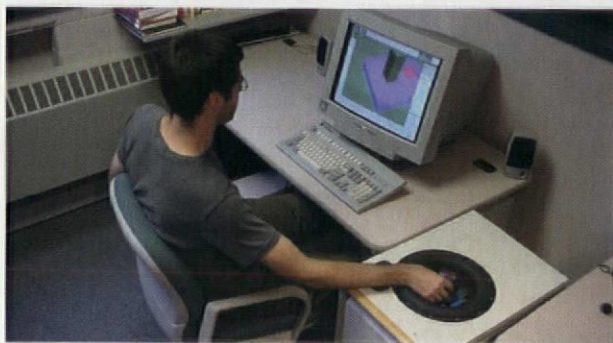
Will p.o.d. appear on UK roads sometime soon? Probably not, says Kitagawa. 'If we are honest, there are still a lot of challenges to overcome.' Local and global communications infrastructure are not yet up to it; current safety legislation prohibits a car varying its externals and lighting up; and driving by joystick is very difficult to handle.

However, with integrated components and a workable concept, it looks as if integrating home life and travel – liveability and mobility – may not be a science-fiction dream for much longer.

Liz Bailey is a freelance journalist who writes about technology, design and vehicles. Contact lizzie@lizzie.net

Robotics in mind

Intelligent and responsive technologies are being developed which are functional, frivolous or just plain fun



Only in America could you have a Robotics Institute. Established in 1979 at Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, it is a practical and theoretical research facility examining the potential for robotics, both for individual and societal use.

There are scores of innovative programmes analysing the growth of robotic technology in subjects as diverse as sensory feedback, office management and technology transfer.

Schemes range from a desktop robot able to perceive, navigate and manipulate objects; to haptic (finger touch and force information) feedback to ease manipulation of a remote or virtual object in space. In this way, a human operator can 'feel' what the remote or virtual hand is grabbing. At the moment, this entails the use of vibrotactile feedback (using vibration to convey information) in the form of a glove which uses miniature voice coils (for example, small audio speakers) to produce vibrations on the wearer's fingertips and palm.

The Maglev (magnetic levitation) haptic is a further variation. A user interacts with the computer by grasping a rigid tool to interact with

computed environments which are semantically meaningful in terms of the application. At the same time, the environment exerts realistic forces and torques on the tool's handle which are felt by the user (top left). The vision is of providing the computer user with immediate, high-fidelity and convincingly real interaction with computed environments.

For more everyday use, or as an executive toy, try the Palm Pilot Robot Kit. The software can be compiled on a Windows PC using the free Code Warrior Lite compiler and downloaded to the Palm. The robot can then drive itself around on flat surfaces, using optical range sensors to sense nearby obstacles and walls. The base uses three 'omni-wheels' which allow driving in any direction with independent control of rotation. What is it for? Who cares?

The licence to sell the PPRK has been taken up by Acroname Inc. They are selling a bare-bones kit with everything in it or a fast-build kit that just requires a screwdriver and an hour.

● For more information e-mail robotics@ri.cmu.edu or visit www.acroname.com

And you are...?

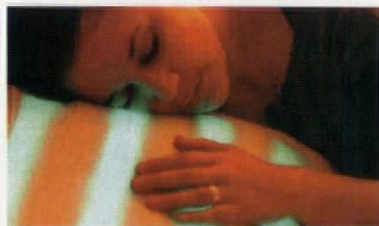
A great device has been invented for, what has become the bane of my life – the inability to remember names of people at conferences, writes Austin Williams. In the future, attendees, too embarrassed to stare at the breasts of delegates to read their name badges, will have the help of a new electronic device, called 'Spotme'.

Hand-held devices are given out at the start of an event, containing a database of all attendees. It displays, who the rest of the crowd is, their job, their company and, most importantly, what they look like. It can also record who you particularly want to meet (although this could be embarrassing if their database states that they do not want to meet you).

It is claimed that the device can be programmed to detect your prey and direct you to where they are by giving off vibrations when they are within 10m, getting progressively stronger the nearer you get to your catch.

If the device catches on, it could be the end for those who simply want to fall asleep while the speakers drone on.

Head and feet



In a recent Royal College of Art project, sponsored by Orange, students from the textiles, design products and computer-related design departments developed technology-based prototype ideas to enhance people's lives.

The work includes interactive technology and features a home floor tile (below) which lights up as you walk over it, designed by Natalie Woolf, who is researching a PHD in reactive surfaces; and a pillow that gently glows to wake you up, created by Rachel Wingfield (above) from North Yorkshire. She wanted to pursue the reduction of noise through light alternatives.



SMOKE GETS UP YOUR NOSE

It seems that these days, if there are social problems, the answer is to reduce the use of the thing that is allegedly causing the problem. Too much pollution? Why not reduce energy use? Too many road accidents? Why not reduce the number of cars on the road? Too many smokers? Why not ban smoking?

The idea that there are technical solutions to many issues seems to be a thing of the past, so it is nice to see that the makers of Honeywell air cleaners use the slogan, 'Banish the Smoke, Not the Smoker'. Honeywell offers a large range of electrostatic air cleaners for commercial use but which have applications on a domestic scale. Large smoke particles are caught in the front mesh filter, while the smaller particles are dealt with much more subtly. Particulates are given an intensive electrical charge and are then drawn onto aluminium plates, as if by a magnet. As there are no filter holes at this layer, all 'smoke, dust, bacteria, viruses, pollen and other pollutant airborne particles are caught'. The air which comes out of the machine is therefore cleaner than most non-smoking environments.

It is law in some parts of New York State that smokers who stand outside a non-smoking building in order to have a cigarette, are not allowed to stand within 7m of a doorway, lest anyone entering or leaving the building develops a lung disease through passive inhalation.

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All planned out

Lake District CAD 'expert' William Sutherland swears by the Allplan FT package, and is happy to share his knowledge

BY RUTH SLAVID

If an expert is simply somebody who knows more than you do, then in certain circumstances we could all find ourselves to be experts. Nevertheless, sole practitioner William Sutherland is taken aback to be treated as an expert in CAD and, in particular, in Allplan FT, the specific package that he uses.

'If architects using Allplan can't get through on the helplines,' he explains, 'they e-mail me.' A lot of this may be due to his website, where he has posted an enormous number of tips and comments. In addition to IT, Sutherland posts information on the planning system and on getting projects built in the Lake District, where he is based. He does not seem to realise how unusual his attitude is. 'There are so few people who give away information,' he says bemusedly.

The Lakes are hardly at the forefront of the employment of technology. Sutherland says of his fellow architects: 'Principals of practices are quite happy to let technicians run their CAD systems. Practices have been to me for advice, I have done demonstrations and they have paid me for it. Then they completely ignored my advice, bought the cheapest system they could find, and it sat in the corner and did nothing.'

How odd, then, that the area should be home to such a fearless pioneer. Sutherland, whose business is mostly the design of second homes in the Lake District National Park, has always been keen on IT. For years he used Drawing Express from Trial Systems ('the service is second to none') until he decided he wanted 3D. 'I went through everything I could think of,' he says. 'I tried to buy MicroStation but they weren't interested. I have never liked Autodesk products – I couldn't get to grips with them. I don't like ArchiCAD, it is clunky compared to Allplan.' With all the big players dismissed, and parent company Nemetschek launching in the US 'to rave reviews', Sutherland decided that Allplan was the platform for him. So

he signed up, and was unperturbed when he went on training courses to discover that he was doing so alongside the first of the UK dealers.

Setting off as somebody who knew as much as anybody in the UK, Sutherland started his learning process, adding material to his website as he went along. Indeed, if you search on Google for Allplan, the fourth and fifth English language websites to come up (after the US Allplan site, back issues of *CAD User* and Nemetschek world-wide) direct you to Sutherland's site. Still, he was

thought of 3D as purely a presentation tool, and expected he would continue to do all his drafting in 2D. Instead he found it is 'a complete environment'. He says: 'I spent about six months doing everything in 3D. Then I came back to 2D. And latterly I have come back to deciding that 3D is the best approach.' He admits that Revit is more three-dimensional but says: 'I don't care for it. It is a bit of a young package.'

He is under no illusions that learning to use 3D is easy. 'You have to acquire the skills to use it,' he says. 'It takes a year with any CAD package. It's a complete nightmare. It's complete hell.' The switch to 3D requires an entirely new way of thinking, he believes. 'I found it very painful. There is no easy way.'

He says that Allplan is focusing more towards the English-speaking

market. 'In the early days, there were all those DIN things. They have removed all that. We are now getting the package they use in America.'

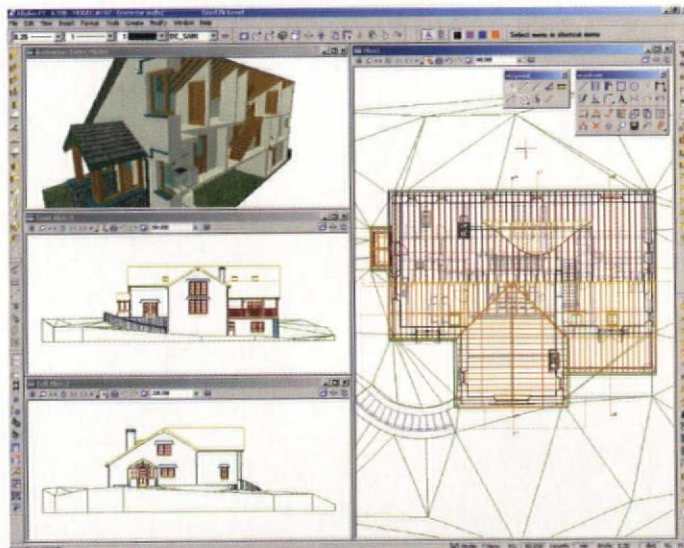
As a small practitioner, he has an unusual slant on certain issues. For instance, although he finds Allplan flexible in terms of exchanging information with other formats, he is not too bothered because he rarely works with other professionals. Conversely, he is keen on its ability to deal with curves and non-orthogonal design, not because he sees himself as

the next Frank Gehry but because it is helpful when dealing with the bowed walls of old cottages.

Sutherland's enthusiasm for Allplan will not be the answer for everybody. But if his attitude, a combination of research, enthusiasm, boldness and generosity of spirit, was more widespread, he would have less reason to be despondent: 'I feel we are getting left behind in the UK,' he says. 'The level of ignorance about basic computer issues is staggering.'

The first step to counteracting this would be to have a few more 'experts' like Sutherland.

William Sutherland's website is at www.lakedistrict-architect.co.uk



Sutherland's website provides invaluable material on the Allplan FT

surprised to learn how closely his site was monitored. He posted up some dissatisfaction with the service he was receiving, and the next day was rung by Nemetschek's then dealer in the UK who said he had just received 'a bollocking' from Nemetschek. Apparently head office monitors Sutherland's site daily. Now, he says, 'I'm really careful what I write.'

Sutherland sees Allplan as a great selling point with his clients. 'It's the only package,' says Sutherland, 'where you can just pick an image up and turn it over. The reaction of clients is amazing, they love it.'

Originally, he says, he took on Allplan 'as a bit of a hobby'. He



Where do architects stand when it comes to duty of care?

Do architects owe a duty of care in tort to subsequent occupiers for latent defects in a building, built to their design, even though they have no contract with the occupier?

For those architects who qualified during the past decade, this question is likely to cause no more than the raise of an academic eyebrow along the lines of 'interesting question'. For those longer in the tooth, who can recall the heyday of tortious claims during the 1980s, it will probably send a shiver of horror down their spines.

In the years between the two, major House of Lords decisions on this point – *Anns v Merton* (1978) and *Murphy v Brentwood* (1991) – showed that anyone who had anything to do with the design or construction of a building could be sued by the ultimate occupier, if it subsequently transpired that the building was defective. Rarely was there a contract between the end user and the design and construction team. But in those days, it did not matter. The law lords had decided that designers, builders and the local authorities who approved the plans all owed a duty of care to the end user. Thus if the building subsequently failed the occupier could, and frequently did, claim against a long list of defendants, including, invariably, the designers.

All this came to an end in 1991 with the landmark decision of *Murphy v Brentwood* when the House of Lords reversed its previous decision and held that builders and local authorities did not owe a duty of care to subsequent purchasers in respect of latent defects. At a stroke, the ultimate occupier of a defective building had no claim against anyone involved in its design or construction unless they had a contract with them.

A device then rapidly emerged that gave occupiers some contractual redress – the collateral warranty. Otherwise the general rule for subsequent owners of dodgy buildings was 'no contract – no claim'. And for a while the pressure was off the designer, well, at least so far as claims by subsequent owners of defective buildings were concerned.

But the law does not stand still and two recent

cases have caused a ripple in these apparently calm waters. Last year, Technology and Construction Court (TCC) Judge Bowssher QC explored one of the exceptions to the 'no contract – no claim' rule, namely that designers could be liable for defects which the purchaser would not have had an opportunity of discovering before acquiring the building. That case, *Baxall Securities Ltd v Sheard Walshaw Partnership* (AJ 21.12.00), concerned a flood.

More recently, in *Bellefield Computer Services Ltd v E Turner & Sons Ltd* (judgment 9.11.01), the TCC considered architects' liability for damage caused by a fire at a commercial dairy. The defendant contractor had, contrary to the usual practice, itself engaged architect HD Watkins and Associates to provide partial architectural services. After the fire it was discovered that the compartment

walls and adjacent fire lining of the first floor had not been constructed in accordance with the specification. Importantly, the fire lining had not been taken up to the underside of the metal roof sheets, but only to the roof's polystyrene insulation.

The judge, adopting the decision in *Baxall Securities*, found that the architect did owe a duty of care to a subsequent owner for damage caused by these defects, which

the owner would not have been able to discover. In this case, however, the judge rejected the contractor's claim that the scope of the architect's duty extended to designing a two-hour fire rated compartment wall. He said the architect's position was an unusual one in that it was subcontracted to provide partial architectural services to the contractor, who in turn had agreed to carry out some design work. Thus the architect had not produced a detailed design for the construction of the fire-resistance detailing.

As it had not agreed to provide a complete design for the contractor, it could not owe such a duty to the owner. The contractor's claim failed. So, in the light of these authorities, the answer to the opening question is now 'maybe' but, happily for the architects, 'not in this case'.

Kim Franklin

'As the architect had not agreed to provide a complete design for the contractor, it could not owe such a duty to the owner'

The bug that is trying to steal your cookies

OK, I take back everything I said about Linux (AJ 7.2.01). Not because Linuxians have become less creepy but because 'the other side' is not looking too good either. Microsoft boss Bill Gates recently announced that security was going to be the company's preoccupation for the future. Naively everybody in the trade assumed he meant that his monopoly would start the checking and rewriting of MS codes which allowed security breaches. The first thing MS did was to appoint a bloke who is a security and cybercrime specialist at PricewaterhouseCoopers – and a lawyer, reports that excellent newsletter *The Register* at www.the-register.co.uk. So now we know whose security Gates was really talking about.

Let's be fair, the Evil Empire has done something about our security as well. It has revealed a 'critical severity' bug in Internet Explorer which allows rival practices and stalkers to harvest your cookies via MSN Messenger and read your documents. Or as MS put it, 'the most serious [vulnerability] could allow an attacker to run code on another user's system. You can see a demo of how the bug can be used to steal cookies at www.osioniusx.com/. Cookie stealing can result in impersonation, stealing of credit card numbers, etc,' warns the site. Read the full story at www.theregister.co.uk/content/4/24004.html

Explanation of the install-immediately patch for all versions of Internet Explorer from 5.01 to 6, and the link to the patch site itself are at www.microsoft.com/technet/treeview/default.asp?url=/technet/security/bulletin/MS02-005.asp

Once at the site, select English below the Download box and click on the version of Explorer you have installed. Don't know? Click on Help in the top bar of the Explorer screen and then About Internet Explorer. You will find the version number at the top of the box and about four lines down the update version which will be an SP1 or SP2. Download to a folder, then run the file and restart your computer. Safe and sound – maybe. sutherland.lyall@btinternet.com

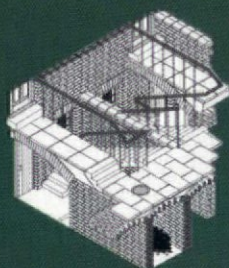
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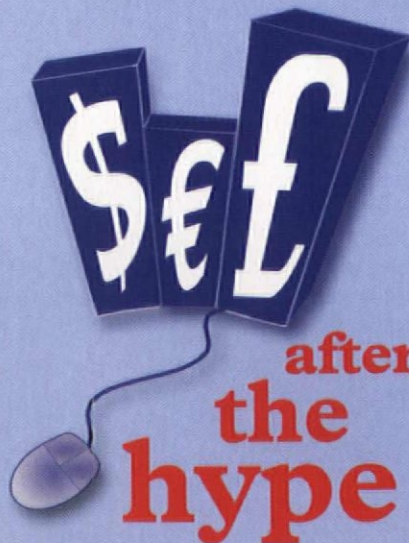
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JEREMY MELVIN

You Have to Pay for the Public Life: Selected Essays of Charles W Moore

MIT Press, 2001. 395pp. £30.95

Not many architects could fill nearly 400 pages with their selected essays, and even fewer would be readable. But this selection of the great Post-Modernist Charles Moore's writings between 1952 and 1993 (when he died) maintains its interest. It is both a testament to a highly individual, rich and varied intellectual path, and an insight into American architectural history in the second half of the 20th century.

These two themes are interwoven. Moore taught in Utah, moved to graduate study at Princeton, and then combined practice in various partnerships with more teaching at Berkeley, Yale, and Austin, Texas, where he died. Not surprisingly, he touched on an unusually wide part of the American architectural spectrum. And where these places take him from the particular to the general (a connection he often looked for in his own work), it is that 'general' in American architecture that disturbs opinion here.

The very title, taken from the perceptively argued essay 'You Have to Pay for the Public Life', will rattle opinion-formers in Portland Place and Camden. In an interview with Drexel Turner, Moore said: 'I'm especially fascinated by this business that many architectural critics – they seem mostly to be British – have developed: a passionate fear of

kitsch.' If you happened to like it, he added, you were somehow 'guilty' or 'unclean'.

Moore's 'guilt' was to search for origins and inspirations beyond the narrowly prescriptive Modernist canon, and given the length of his pursuit, the centres where he conducted it and the range of people influenced by it, he deserves serious attention.

Moore was a student in Michigan in the 1940s, where Modernism was presumably less all-pervasive than at Mies' IIT or at Gropius' Harvard. In any case, he consciously sought out the remaining Bay Region and Beaux Arts practitioners who started to give America an authentic architecture early in the 20th century.

Real and neo-Hispanic architectural influence fascinated him, and is most fully treated in the 'Hispanic Lecture', one of the last in the book. He is also prepared to be less than adulatory of Frank Lloyd Wright (whose *Testament* he reviewed in 1958) and even his erstwhile tutor Louis Kahn. Indeed, his clear-eyed treatment of these stellar figures contrasts with the mystical nonsense put about by their groupies, and gives one confidence in his judgement of less well-known themes.

Early essays such as 'Plaster in Architecture' and 'The Architecture of Water' show a concern to incorporate materials and features that

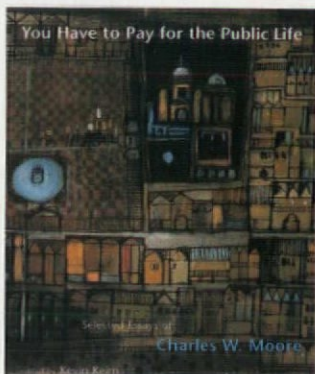
Modernism found, at best, awkward. The first, published in 1960, writes evocatively about Bavarian baroque and describes the potential of going beyond 'truth to materials'. In the second, he outlines how water can help to make 'place' – one of the strongest recurring themes in his work – as even the smallest stretch of it may evoke oceans, rivers or lakes; that is, open the portal from particular to general.

Another recurring theme comes from Harold Bloom's book *The Anxiety of Influence*. As Moore writes: 'His model is an arrangement wherein the young poet (read architect) seizes on the work of an older poet he extravagantly admires. He heads toward that body of work with his own, and then at the very last second, in a poetic game of chicken, swerves slightly to the side and hits some other target.' To an extent this describes Moore's relationship to Kahn, perhaps. It certainly gives an academic respectability to the host of ideas which he devoured.

However, for all his erudition and his position within elite academies, Moore was an observer rather than a scholar. His essay on Hadrian's Villa, for example, lies closer to travel writing than academic archaeology. But it is this quality which allowed him to tie together influences from American landscape and history, to transcend the narrow confines of Modernism and, one would imagine, to be an inspiring teacher.

First and foremost, though, Moore was a designer, and his description of design in an essay called 'Eleven Agonies and One Euphoria' – 'that combination of research and understanding and intuition and improvisation which tries out solutions to problems in too many unknowns to be susceptible of solution by disciplines based on logic and words' – is as good as I have ever read.

Jeremy Melvin teaches at South Bank University



An Eames Primer

By Eames Demetrios. Thames & Hudson, 2001.

272pp. £15.95

This cannot count as a critical assessment of Charles and Ray Eames' achievements; the author, Eames Demetrios, is, after all, their grandson. But, comprehensive, well-illustrated, and drawing on interviews with members of the Eames office, it is an informative tribute to their output and creative interaction. 'They offer us the elegance of their happy rigourness' (sic), says Philippe Starck in his blurb on the back – whatever that means. Pictured is a detail of *Think*, the Eames' presentation in the IBM pavilion at the New York's World Fair in 1964-65. It dazzled viewers with images on 22 screens.

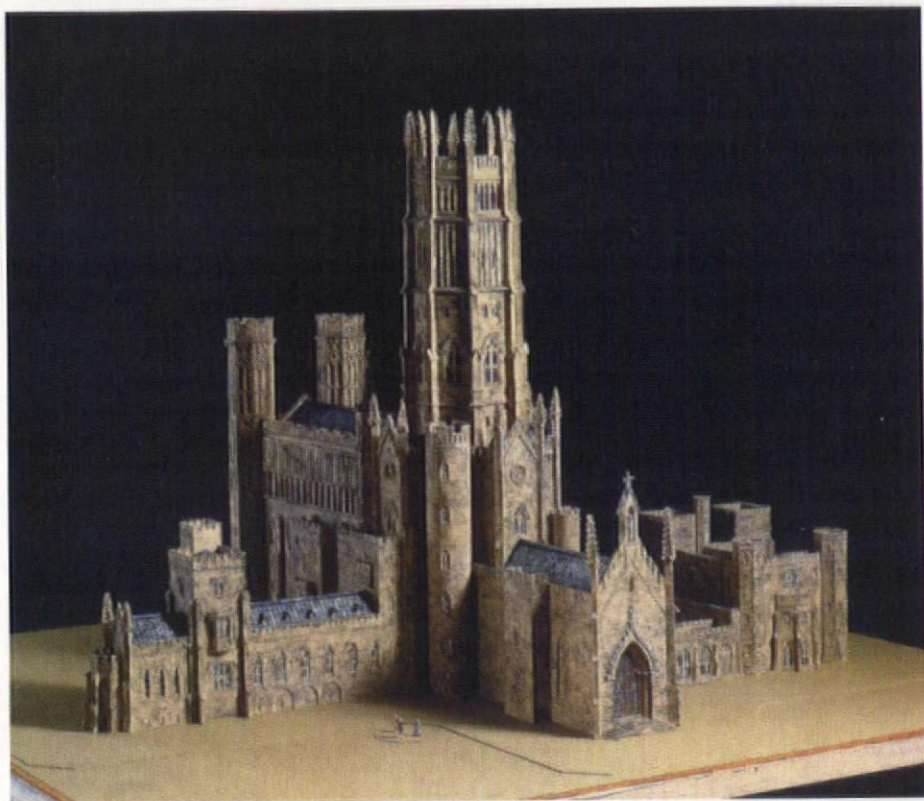


Shop till you drop

DEBORAH SINGMASTER

William Beckford, 1760-1844: An Eye for the Magnificent

Edited by Derek E Ostergard. Yale University Press, 2002. 448pp. £50. The exhibition it accompanies is at the Dulwich Picture Gallery, London SE21 until 14 April



Model of Fonthill Abbey, Wiltshire – the house James Wyatt designed for Beckford, 1795-1807

Dulwich Picture Gallery, designed by Sir John Soane, is a fit setting for an exhibition on William Beckford, the legendary 'Caliph of Fonthill', millionaire and polymath. In 1786 Beckford commissioned the 23-year-old Soane to design a picture gallery for his family seat, Fonthill Splendens in Wiltshire; it was never built but drawings show similarities to Soane's Dulwich masterpiece.

The exhibition concentrates on Beckford's fine arts collection. It fills the narrow west wing, arranged in a series of small rooms painted crimson and purple – colours favoured by Beckford for draperies at Fonthill.

George Romney's full-length portrait of Beckford ensures a sensational start, and narrative panels in each room take visitors through Beckford's life – the travels, his Gothic novel *Vathek*, written in French when he was 22, and the homosexual scandal which drove him into exile, putting an end to ambitions of a glittering political career.

Beckford had knowledge, taste and money – in auction houses he was known as 'Mr Pay-Well'. Beauty, skilful workmanship and illustrious provenance (particularly when Royal) were what mattered to him. He set no great store on antiquity per se and regularly commissioned new pieces from celebrated craftsmen of the time, or had antiques remounted to designs by himself and his gifted companion and agent Gregorio Franchi.

Connoisseurs will welcome the chance to see so much Beckfordiana grouped together, instead of scattered throughout museums and National Trust properties. Those new to Beckford will be carried along by the strong accompanying narrative and items of more general interest: charming water-colours by Beckford's drawing master John Robert Cozens, sketches of Fonthill by the young Turner, and rarities such as the occasional exquisitely carved spoon in hardstone or agate (witness to Beckford's insistence on perfection).

Lack of space, and difficulty in securing loans, may be responsible for a failure to convey the importance of Beckford's painting collection. The National Gallery has 28 major works once owned by Beckford; the artists include Raphael, Titian, and Perugino.

The catalogue is a magnificent book prefaced by 16 specially commissioned essays on Beckford and his collection. Timothy Mowl's biographical summary gives the flavour of the man in his opening paragraph: 'It is unlikely that as a result of "modulating" his voice "in the most opposite tones" Beckford endeared himself to a lioness in a Paris zoo to such an extent that the keeper invited him into the cage to play with her claws.'

True or false, Beckford lived unscathed in Paris during the bloodiest years of the French Revolution and departed on the warmest of terms with the ruling Jacobins, laden with treasures of guillotined aristocrats.

David Watkin illuminates the period by drawing intriguing comparisons between Beckford and his contemporaries, Soane and the furniture designer Thomas Hope: three complex, gifted individuals caught in the grip of collecting mania. But Soane and Hope, like Horace Walpole (loathed by Beckford), opened their houses to the public; Beckford was a recluse, and the public had no chance to gape at Fonthill Abbey until it was put up for sale in 1823, two years before it collapsed.

Bet McLeod on Beckford as a collector quotes generously from his letters: 'I see from the buying mania which dominates you that we are well on the way to ruin,' Beckford writes to Franchi. 'Oh my God, so many things! I trust to the Saint that they are not junk and unworthy of this sanctuary and refuge of good taste.' On the other hand, William Hauptman could have made more use of Beckford's writings in describing his visits to Switzerland when he was at his most impressionable – the prototypical Romantic hero intoxicated by Alpine sublimity.

Sidney Blackmore provides an excellent chapter on Beckford's various London houses, of which only 100 Harley Street is still standing. He ends with a reminder that the faithful Franchi is buried in St John's Wood but refrains from mentioning Beckford's neglect of his friend when he was dying.

Both the exhibition and the catalogue provide an illuminating encounter with an ever intriguing man, and it seems churlish to end on a negative note. But given the cost of the book, the careless proof reading is disappointing, and the consignment of the index to a website unpardonable. An ominous portent.



Past and present

ANDREW MEAD

Elger Esser: Vedutas and Landscapes 1996-2000

Schirmer / Mosel, 2001. 132pp. £49.95. (Available from Zwemmers 020 7240 4157)

The German photographer Elger Esser, whose first book this is, says: 'I grew up with the postcards of the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, and the world of images in my head today draws much from this vein. These postcards often have something supra-temporal to them, because some have acquired a patina over time, because others show something that is no longer to be seen today. I have always felt a strong affinity to the tranquillity they exude and their colours.'

Being typically 180cm x 240cm or thereabouts in size, Esser's photographs are at an opposite extreme to the postcard's miniaturisation but, nonetheless, have just the qualities that this statement suggests.

At Albi in France, Esser set up his camera on the bank of a river and looked across to a band of buildings in the middle-distance, stretched taut like a frieze between water and sky – his habitual approach to portraying a town (see picture). A long exposure has calmed the racing current, turning the chopiness below the weir to a placid whitish blur, and the sky is colourless, almost bleached, as if the photograph has started to

fade. A pale sepia cast to the image reinforces this sense of distance in time: it could have lain forgotten for years at the bottom of a drawer, yet was only taken in 1996.

Albi seems to be held in a trance, as do the other sites in this book. In this sense, Esser's photographs could not be more different from those seen last year in a show at Oxford's Museum of Modern Art, 'Open City' (AJ 31.5.01). Subtitled 'Fifty Years of Street Photography', it plunged viewers into the midst of post-Second World War cities – populous, chaotic, immediate. Many of its images were taken on the run; Esser's, by contrast, are contemplative.

Appearing at a time when the tall buildings debate has redirected attention to city skylines, Esser's views have echoes of those old engravings where a city was depicted from a distance, with its signature profile of towers and spires and roofs. In an essay called 'The Magic of Places', which accompanies the photographs, Rupert Pfab brings art history to bear in seeking such precursors.

Pfab makes plausible links to Vermeer's *View of Delft* and the paintings of Canaletto

– a connection which Esser confirms in an included interview. 'One of the first vedutas I took in Lyon in 1996 was an act of photographically capturing a Canaletto that somehow surfaced in my pictorial memories and which I recognised in the view I had of the Saône,' he says. But Esser's scenes are emptier than most Canalettos, shorn of superfluous incident.

It is a surprise to learn that Esser was a pupil of Bernd Becher who, with his wife Hilla, has spent nearly 40 years documenting industrial buildings in a sober, formulaic and 'objective' way. Esser talks of his interest in capturing 'poetry and mood', of his wish 'to champion a form of beauty which is no longer particularly in focus today'; not ambitions which, ostensibly, the Bechers share. Yet, just as the Bechers pursue every inflection of a particular building type, perhaps Esser too is making an inventory – an album of variations on the theme of place. Whatever feelings he has invested in these townscapes, they might pass as a dispassionate record.

There are landscapes and seascapes too in the book, and, while some of the latter – in a long Romantic tradition – are a little close to photographic cliché in their atmospheric harmonies of sea and sky, they are beautiful nonetheless. But it is the tranced towns to which you return, with their uncanny fusion of the present and the past. They can fill you with nostalgia for sights you have never seen.

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British Council of Offices Spring Conference, 7 March 2002,
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9.25 Opening, Roger Fidgeon, 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 Polisano, 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 CABE perspective Design: Value versus Cost Paul Finch, CABE

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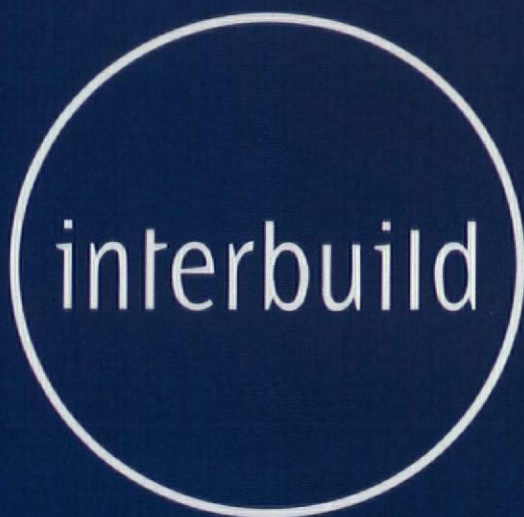
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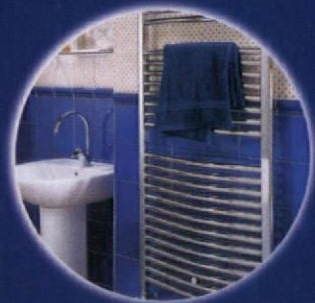
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Baltic: A Vision on Emulsion 23 February-15 March. Photographs by Etienne Clement at the RIBA, 66 Portland Place, W1 (0906 302 0400).

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).

Emerging Architecture Until 28 February. The ar+d awards exhibition at the RIBA, 66 Portland Place, W1. Details 0906 302 0400.

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

Masters and Pupils Thursday 28 February, 18.30. Ross Britain on Albert Richardson at The Gallery, 70 Cowcross St, EC1 (020 7250 3857).

Marketing, Selling and Sustainability in the Construction Products Industry Tuesday 5 March. A seminar at the Building Centre, Store St, WC1. Details 01604 811733.

Jacques Herzog Thursday 7 March, 18.00. A lecture at the New Theatre, LSE. Details 020 7955 6828.

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

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

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.



ART OF BUILDING

Ben Johnson, an honorary fellow of the RIBA, shows his latest architectural paintings – all executed with great precision – at Blains Fine Art, 23 Bruton Street, London W1 from 26 February-13 April. Details 020 7495 5050.

Landmarks

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

East Midlands

Simon Allford Thursday 28 February, 19.00. A lecture at the Angela Marmont Theatre, University of Nottingham (0115 978 9680).

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.

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

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: Building Regulations Update Tuesday 12 March, 16.00. At Wrotham Holiday Inn. Details 01892 515878.

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

Southern

Piers Gough Thursday 28 February, 18.00. A lecture at the Portland Building, Portsmouth School of Architecture. Details 02392 842086.

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.

Will Alsop Tuesday 26 February, 18.30. A lecture at the IMAX, Bristol. Tickets 0117 922 1540.

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: 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

David Kells (Union North) Friday 22 February, 13.00. A lecture at the University of Leeds, School of Civil Engineering, followed by a site visit. Reservations 0113 233 2308. Further events on the next three Fridays.

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

The Finance and Economics of Conservation 4-6 March. A course at the King's Manor, University of York. Details 01904 433963.

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

Ioana Irina Iamandescu Thursday 28 February, 17.30. A lecture 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

Glen Howells Thursday 28 February, 18.30. A lecture at the WSA, Bute Building, Cardiff. Details 029 2087 4753.

Kathryn Findlay Thursday 14 March, 19.30. A lecture at the Faenol Fawr Hotel, Bodelwyddan, St Asaph. Details 01745 815600.

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E-mail: tracey.hendle@construct.emap.com

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- Central Manchester

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Contact Tamsin Coxhill in Manchester on 0161 832 7577 or email tamsin.coxhill@AndersElite.com Quoting AJ01

Architectural Technician

- Up to £18.00 per hour
- North Yorkshire

Our client, one of the largest house builders in North Yorkshire, consisting of six multi-disciplinary team members focusing on residential schemes, is looking to recruit a Technician to complete bespoke residential projects using Microstation. The successful candidate will be confident and capable of completing schemes currently in progress. You must have excellent Microstation skills and be able to meet tight deadlines. Previous experience of residential schemes advantageous, but not essential.

Contact Sunshine Hallford in Leeds on 0113 242 0303 or email sunshine.hallford@AndersElite.com Quoting AJ02

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ARCHITECTS & TECHNICIANS: HERTFORDSHIRE £27K+

This highly respected practice requires Architects and Technicians preferably with Housing experience. A working knowledge of AutoCAD, R14 LT or Vector works would be advantageous.

Contract and permanent positions are available Ref. GC 57737

DESIGN ARCHITECTS: LONDON W1 £37k

This leading design practice that specialise in Hotel projects around the world, are looking for Design Architects and Technicians with 3-4yrs experience of HOTEL projects. The successful candidates will be fully conversant with AutoCAD and possess good presentation skills.

Contract and permanent positions are available Ref. GC 57738

ARCHITECTURAL TECHNICIAN: BYFLEET £35k + Car

Exciting opportunities exist at this expanding young practice involved with residential projects for major house builders. The ideal candidates would have at least 7 years experience in housing and possess a good knowledge of AutoCAD R14/2000. The ability to develop concept designs into comprehensive working drawings is essential.

Contract and permanent positions are available Ref. GC 57739

ARCHITECTURAL CAD TECHNICIAN: ISLE OF MAN

An Architectural Technician is required by this leading Architectural practice based in the Isle of Man. The Technician will be expected to deal with a wide range of technical problems having responsibility for any or all of the following: Providing technical support including, from time to time, assistance with the training of new staff using the CAD system. Undertaking the design (including detailed design), production information, specification and supervision of schemes of a largely technical nature, including works of alteration, extension and refurbishment.

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Contract and permanent positions are available Ref. GC 57740

Please forward your curriculum vitae and/or covering letter to:

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jobspot

The office – the worst place of all

A recent e-mail detailed at disgusting length the health hazards of travelling to work on the London Underground. But on reaching work, do not heave a giant sigh of relief – your working environment probably poses an even greater risk.

First there is the general penicillin/food bugs issue. Hands up anybody who has never left a cup on their desk to develop an amazing culture or, even worse, forgotten some succulent item in their desk drawer for several weeks. Add to this the contents of the fridge that would delight an expert in cheese production, and those foreign treats brought back by a colleague and never quite finished, and you will realise this is not a centre of food hygiene. Then you complain about a stomach upset and blame the sandwich, rather than the desk from which you ate it.

If your practice is fairly impecunious it is not going to waste money on fancy furnishings. But this could translate itself into curling carpet tiles and unstable chairs, which could result in nasty falls. However, fame can be equally dangerous. My friend Ellen has still not completely recovered from the time she fell over the trailing cables of the visiting television crew.

Then there are your colleagues – a dedicated bunch. Come into the office, well or ill – and bring all their revolting diseases with them. If they suffer from anything airborne, don't imagine you will escape. And then, of course, you will struggle into the office with the selfsame germs, kindly passing them on.

If all this is depressing you, you may want to pack up early and go for a consoling drink with your colleagues. Just remember – alcohol is definitely bad for the health.

Rachel Linnet

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Project Architect – Birmingham – Up to £30k per annum

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Architect – Portsmouth – to £29k + bens

Big south coast practice currently undertaking a fast track large scale retail project which has just passed planning stage requires a job running Architect to manage a small team in getting the project to site. Long term role for a good communicator and team player. Ref: 28



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Please reply in writing with CV and A3 samples of work to:

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Senior Architectural Project Manager - Hertfordshire

Ideal candidate will have experience of Fast track multi site projects preferably within the Leisure or food and Beverage sector. A knowledge of AutoCAD would be an advantage although not essential, however any Project Management software skills would be welcomed. A full UK driving License will be required to attend sites. This company has a highly stable workload and offers a fantastic working environment and a real long term career path.

(Ref: CE4283)

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people & practices

Redditch-based architect **Bolton Lomas Bradshaw** has promoted **Ed Baverstock** to partner. The practice has also changed its name to **BLB Architects**.

Structural engineer **Alan Conisbee and Associates** has merged with specialist energy company **XCO2** to form **XCO2 conisbee**, to provide energy and environmental design services.

Peabody Trust has appointed **Dinah Roke** as the new head of **Design and Property Services**.

Multidisciplinary contractor **Fitzpatrick** has opened a new satellite office in Birmingham.

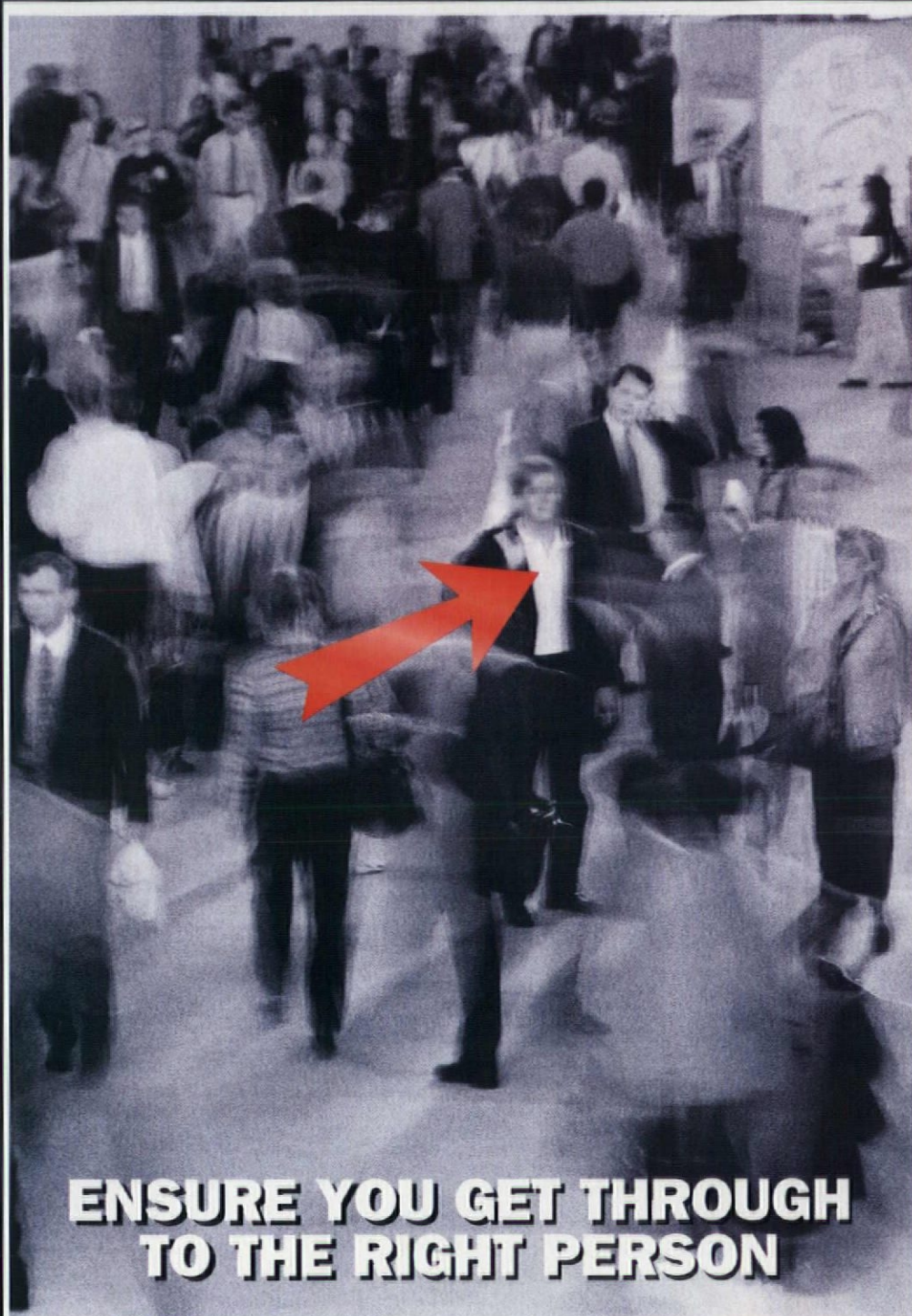
Andrew Faraday has been appointed a full-board member of the **NTN Partnership**.

Christopher Vickers CBE will take over as chairman of the **JCT Board** and **JCT Council** from 1 August. He will succeed **Roy Swanston**, who has held the position since 1995.

Chartered surveyor **Drivers Jonas** has appointed **Ben Fallows** to set up a team in the Manchester office. **Dominic Quigley** will establish a team in Glasgow. In London, **Stephen Peers** will head up the West End agency team and **Ben Thomson** will run the City team with **Matthew Elliott**. **Sam Boreham** has also been appointed to the City team.

EC Harris has appointed **Dr Colin Moore** and **Richard Ratcliffe** to work with **Graham Matthews** on developing a web-based information platform for facilities and property management.

● Send details of changes and appointments to Victoria Huttler, The Architects' Journal, 151 Rosebery Avenue, London EC1R 4GB, or e-mail victoria.huttler@construct.emap.com



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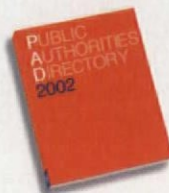
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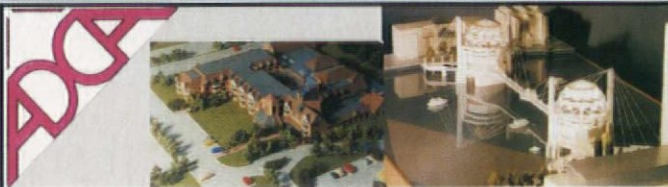
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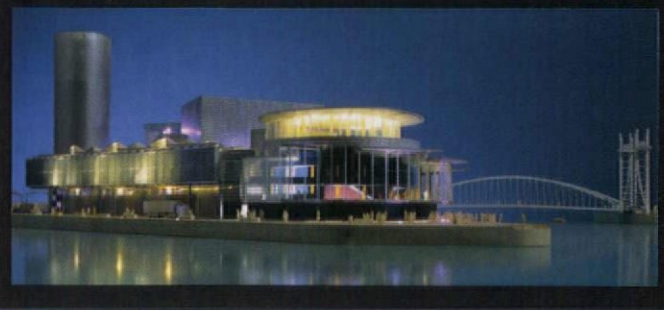
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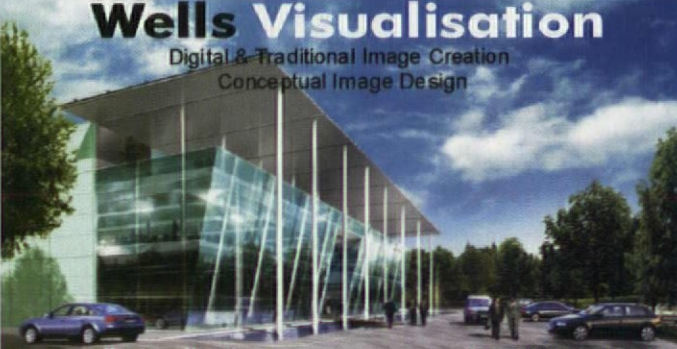
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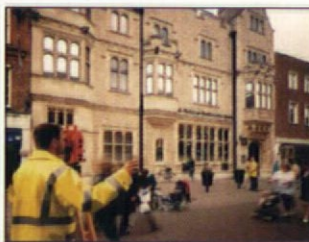
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Champagne goes to Reg Ellis & Associates from Chipping Campden in Gloucestershire who correctly identified Auguste Perret from the clues in our 'archicharades' competition last week. Can you identify the famous architect from this week's clues? Send 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.

Riotous assembly

Edwina Hart, the Welsh Assembly politician who cannot bear to be proved wrong, and has even greater difficulty apologising when she is, was on typical form last week. She was trying to play down the comprehensive rejection of most of the disgraceful legal claim brought by the assembly against **Richard Rogers Partnership** in respect of the firm's design for its new building. This was in response to the practice's claim for unpaid fees. You can read the details on the news pages (including a pretty dignified response from RRP). But it is the nastiness of the action and its timing brought by Hart and her officials which is particularly offensive. As Astragal hears it, the assembly claimed more than £6 million damages from the practice – and lodged the claim with the adjudicator on Christmas Eve last year, giving the firm a mere 10 days to mount a comprehensive response. It did so and won the bulk of its case. The assembly is having to pay most of the outstanding fees, and the vast majority of the adjudicator's costs. This proves that RIBA president **Paul Hyett** was correct to take up the cudgels on the practice's behalf, not least because the people of Wales have been badly let down by their politicians in general and Hart in particular. The case stinks. The piquant thing, if it were not so disgusting, is that the assembly is using the Rogers' designs as the basis for an OJEC competition. Is that a 'Dumbing Down' sign I see before me?

Of all he surveys

Lord Hollick, the chosen successor to **Elliott Bernerd** as chairman of the South Bank Centre, is an effective operator not without his critics. Naturally the Tories have jumped on a 'Tony crony' campaign, but they are probably barking up the wrong tree here. A shrewd businessman who sold the *Daily Express* newspaper title to pornographer and New Labour supporter **Richard Desmond**, Hollick has a dislike of alcohol on working premises, which has earned him the nickname 'Alco' Hollick. Actually anyone prepared to take on the South Bank deserves all our support. Apart from anything else, he will have to deal with Lambeth council. The speed at which this council works can be judged by what has happened to a simple application in respect of the Royal Festival Hall entrance. This has now been with Lambeth for two years without a result in sight. Perhaps it is because the development director is a librarian.

Stationary attitude

Brent council is another authority with no concept of time, if a story in the *Mail on Sunday* is to be believed. It is about **Wembley Stadium**, and the hoped-for improvements to Wembley Park Tube station which the council wants to see as planning gain. The only problem is that the cost of this is £90 million. The story quotes a Brent spokesman as saying that if the revamped Tube station is not in

the final proposal, the FA would have to re-apply for planning permission, a process 'which could take up to two years'. What is this two years thing? Astragal thought it was supposed to be eight weeks!

Natural habitat

Readers Giovanna Forte kindly sends me a recent article from the *Financial Times* that I would have taken for an April Fool were it not dated January. It concerns a Norfolk builder, **Malcolm Carrington**, who wants to replace a brick and cement building with unfired clay blocks, on grounds that they are greener. The best bit, however, is that he wants the cavity between the timber frame and the blocks insulated with... sheep's wool. Foundations of his homes for an organic future will be rammed chalk and flint or rammed rubble. Good luck to him, especially with his Part L negotiations. Actually the reaction to modern building methods is gathering pace elsewhere. Builder **Jeff Howell**, who writes in the *Sunday papers*, has just launched an all-out attack on chemical timber treatment companies and all their works, on the grounds that usually they are not necessary, and no one knows the damage that the poisons involved may be doing to you (or more likely your children).

Poetry please

My old friend **Jonathan Glancey** is one of the judges in an unusual and potentially hilarious open competition being run by the **Society for the Protection of**

Ancient Buildings, marking its 125th anniversary. Contestants are invited to write a poem about a 'beloved building', with prizes including a £1,000 John Piper print. The example of poetry SPAB gives on its press release is ominous: 'If in your life you get your kicks/From wattle, daub and crumbly bricks/If ancient buildings inspire your muse/Then here is some info for you to peruse!' You can do better. More information from sophie_britten@yahoo.com

Pauline conversion

Superstars are on hand to contribute to *Architects on Architects* (McGraw Hill, £24), billed as '24 essays on influence and inspiration'. Contributors include **Tadao Ando** on Le Corbusier, **Cesar Pelli** on Eero Saarinen, and **Richard Meier** on Frank Lloyd Wright. One surprise is that the runner-up to Corb in the number of citations is Paul Rudolph, subject of four essays by architects as diverse as **Lord Foster** and **Robert Stern**. Is this a sign of a long overdue revival in Rudolph's fortunes? Will any publisher reissue the wonderful big book of his drawings? Will anyone write a definitive monograph? Now is surely the time.

Slow movement

Arup has commissioned a new work from **Sir Peter Maxwell Davies**, to be performed at the Queen Elizabeth Hall on 6 March, commemorating the proper completion of the Millennium Bridge. Will the piece be marked 'Non troppo vibrato'?

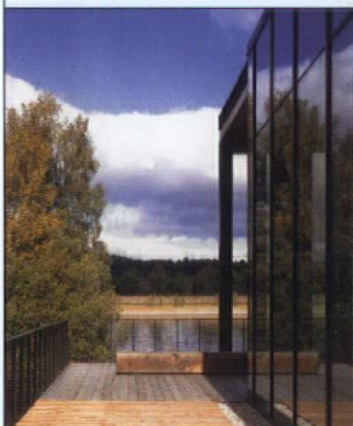
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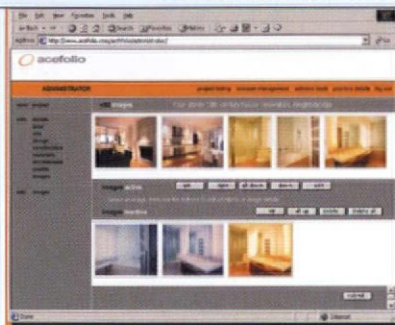


HansenGlass supplied an external graphite skin for the new £2.9 million Gateway and Orientation Centre in Loch Lomond. More than 500m² of HansenGlass' ThermoCool insulating glass units, comprising graphite Ceramallite, were used in the glazed facade of the two-storey building. Thermocool is available as single-, double- and triple-glazed units.

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STOAKES: PROJECT OF THE WEEK

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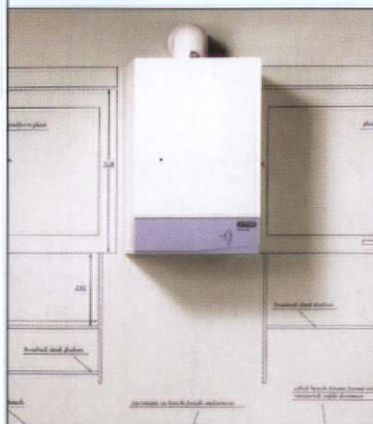
Shadow-free, glare-free and highly insulating, Kalwall floods this learner pool with evenly diffused natural daylight. For Lewisham Borough Council, this is one of the many cladding (and roofing) projects to benefit from Kalwall instead of glass. It creates a sparkling interior, even on cloudy days. Kalwall is supplied and fixed by Stoakes Systems, tel 020 8660 7667 or visit www.stoakes.co.uk



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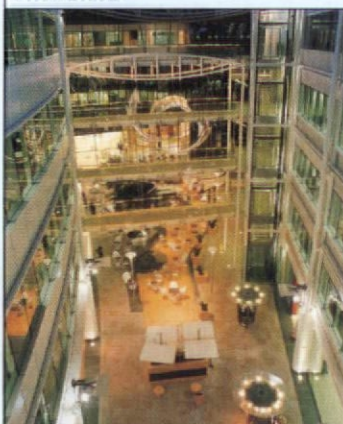
Signalling its intention to dominate the high-efficiency market sector, Baxi Potterton has launched two new Potterton-branded condensing products – the Powermax HE and the Promax HE. Both products have been designed to increase the company's total condensing offer and strategically fill a gap in the Potterton range.



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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)

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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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