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# Scarlet fever

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# REVITALIZING THE EUROPEAN CITY

Cities are in crisis, some collapsing. This conference will provide a wide range of ideas and inspiration from leading architects, planners and landscape designers. The focus will be on the crises that face almost all European cities: decay, congestion, disintegration, destruction. Discussion will reveal the solutions and the scars. And how to make the city a better place to live and learn from the masters. Find out how to make the city a better place to live and learn from the masters. Find out how to make the city a better place to live and learn from the masters.

#### Speakers will include:

##### RENZO PIANO (Genoa and Paris)

Piano has designed an astonishing range of buildings from the modern in Osaka Bay, Japan, to Potsdamer Platz, Berlin, landmark of the new Germany.

##### DAVID MACKAY (Barcelona)

David Mackay is partner of MBM, Barcelona, the practice that has turned a run-down city into an example of urban regeneration.

##### MEINHARD VON GERKAN (Hamburg)

Partner in von Gerkan & Marg, with great experience in the renovation of old cities. At the moment, the firm is working on the mighty Lehrsiedlung in Hamburg.

##### NIELS TORP (Oslo)

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

##### NICHOLAS GRIMSHAW (London)

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

##### GERT WINGÅRDH (Stockholm)

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

##### LOUISA HUTTON (Berlin and London)

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

##### ADRIAAN GEUZE (Rotterdam)

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

##### JOHN MCASLAN (London)

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

##### DAVID CHIPPERFIELD (London)

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

Joining The European City will be a series of provocative urban thinkers: architects, planners and landscape designers from across the Continent and the UK to discuss the crises that face almost all European cities: decay, congestion, disintegration, destruction. Discussion will reveal the solutions and the scars. And how to make the city a better place to live and learn from the masters. Find out how to make the city a better place to live and learn from the masters.

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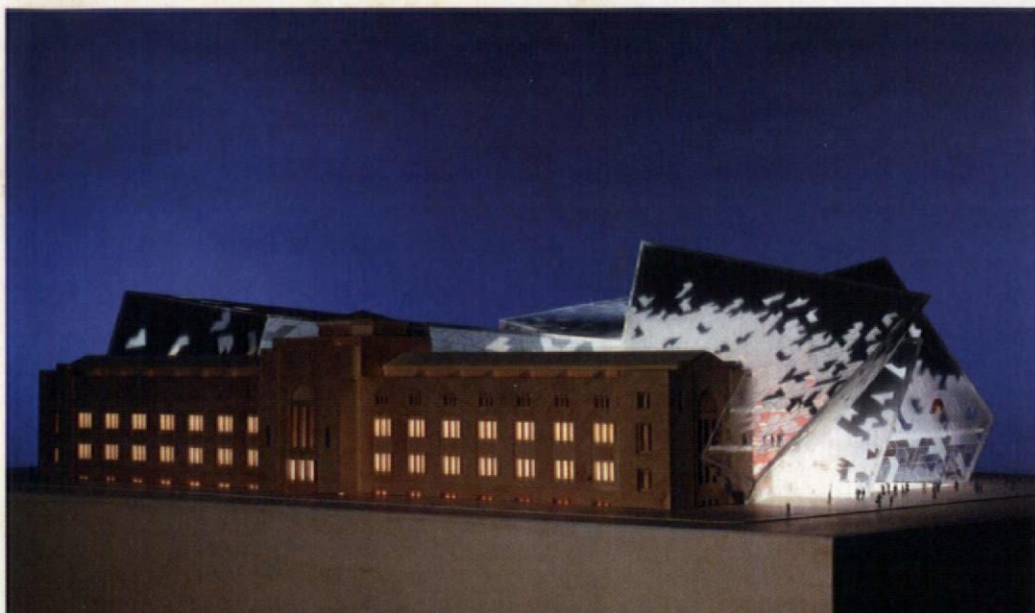
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Daniel Libeskind has won the £45 million commission for the Royal Ontario Museum, the largest museum in Canada. The scheme, called 'The Crystal', is inspired by the crystalline forms in the museum's mineralogy galleries. The structure is composed of organically interlocking prismatic forms and includes a central atrium to showcase the museum's two key themes – nature and culture. The museum's gallery spaces will be remodelled and a new restaurant and cafe added. Libeskind beat off competition from Italian practice Architetto Andrea Bruno and Canadian practice Bing Thom Architects. Work on site is expected to start by spring 2003. The museum is currently raising funds for the project. +

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'Those things that Foster can control, like a roof, he makes perfect. Those things that he cannot, like the messy ground level, he seeks to neutralise.'

Rowan Moore, *Prospect*, March 2002

'If ever there was a just indictment of English Heritage and the business of listing, it lies in this ugly, charmless, inefficient and indefensible relic of cheapjack post-war shoddiness.'

Brian Sewell on the Royal Festival Hall.  
*Evening Standard*, 26.2.02

## aj news



David Chipperfield Architects has won the commission to design a £5 million Museum of Modern Literature in Germany. The scheme includes environmentally controlled galleries to exhibit manuscripts. +

### THAT SINKING FEELING

The Glasgow Science Centre's £10 million rotating tower designed by BDP has sunk – forcing the temporary closure of the 120m-high attraction. The tower is likely to cost up to £75,000 to repair. A spokesman said: 'Basically one of the bearings seems to have been compressed and has moved out of alignment by about 15mm.' +

### HYETT'S BOSSOM

The RIBA president Paul Hyett will deliver this year's annual Faculty of Building Lord Bossom Lecture in the Houses of Parliament tomorrow. He will propose the establishment of a body to encourage architects to take political roles as MPs. Hyett will also call for a strengthening of Ministerial Design Champion roles and for planning and regeneration to become part of the Department of the Environment's remit.

### US FIRM BUYS HLM DESIGN

HLM Design (UK) has been acquired by a US practice – of the same name. The practices will become HLM Design Inc. +

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Foster and Partners has won the competition to design a £2.18 billion arts, cultural and entertainment district on 1.5km of reclaimed waterfront in west Kowloon, Hong Kong. The 40ha scheme includes a major performance venue, theatres, concert halls, a Modern Art museum, cinemas, shops and restaurants. Seventy per cent of the space will be used for parkland. The facilities sit under a flowing canopy inspired by the local landscape and traditional Chinese art forms and calligraphy. Foster and Partners received £270,000 for its winning entry, while the second prize of £135,000 went to a team of local architects led by Philip Liao. The first of the new facilities is expected to be completed in 2008. +



## Lots Road scheme faces blackout

Terry Farrell & Partners' plans for the £350 million redevelopment of Lots Road power station are facing a major setback as planners prepare for refusal.

Hammersmith and Fulham, and Kensington and Chelsea are both expected to refuse the scheme – which lies across the two London boroughs – within the next few weeks.

The timing of the refusals coincides with the run-up to local elections on 2 May, as residents press ahead with a large-scale campaign against the redevelopment. The site is surrounded by marginal wards in both boroughs.

Hammersmith and Fulham's planning committee was expected to reject the plans on Monday. But planners spotted a flaw in their handling of the application, and a decision was deferred until 4 April. The move shows the borough's determination to ensure its position is legally watertight should developers appeal.

A spokesperson for Hammersmith and Fulham said objections were based on the overdevelopment of the site, the traffic problems that would be created as a result of the high-density, 700-apartment residential scheme and the height of the two proposed 39-storey towers.

Meanwhile, neighbouring borough Kensington and Chelsea is also set to refuse on 20 March. Planning officers said the scheme would represent a 'major departure' from their UDP and said it would require considerable reworking before it could win their support. The borough's UDP prevents the construction of tall buildings above those in the neighbouring area, in this case the 20-storey World's End Estate.

A spokesperson for developer Circadian said it was surprised to discover Hammersmith and Fulham was set to refuse, since negotiations had 'appeared to be progressing well'.

But Kensington and Chelsea denied that it was in a hurry to refuse the scheme in the run up to elections. The Conservative-run borough denied it was keen

to prove its independence from powerful developers to win over the marginal Cremorne ward.

Councillor Barry Phelps, cabinet member for planning, said: 'The Royal borough council does not play politics with quasi-judicial decisions.'

Labour-led Hammersmith and Fulham also denied it was overly concerned over votes.

Zoë Blackler

7 March 2002



Farrell's Lots Road scheme



**'Let us have another clearance. English Heritage and its often idiotic listings be damned – bring in the wreckers and the dynamite, and let us smash the Festival Hall, blow the Hayward Gallery to smithereens, and start again.'**

Brian Sewell, *Evening Standard*, 26.2.02

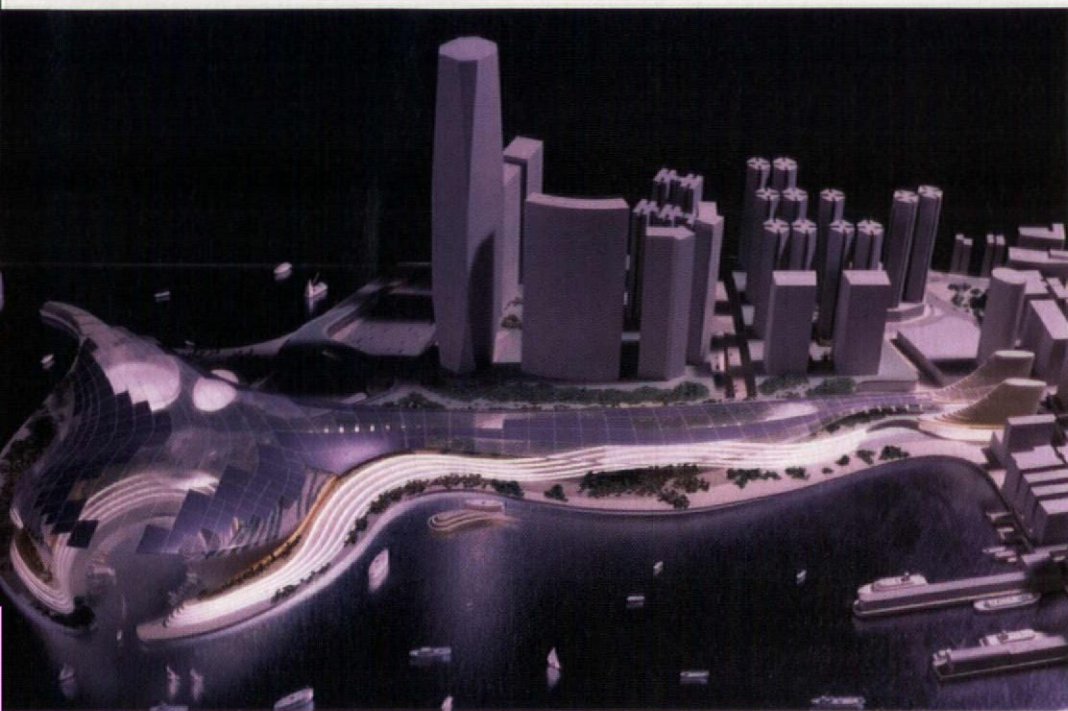
**'It is a fragment of a dream of what an ideal new city could be: cosmopolitan, smart, cultured, cared-for.'**

Hugh Pearman on the Barbican.  
*Sunday Times*, 3.3.02

**'Everyone said it would get better, that it would dig itself out of its problems, even though it was a bag of crap – but to get this far is quite remarkable.'**

Property developer Rob Noble on the regeneration of Leeds. *Guardian*, 5.3.02

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## ARB committee suspends architect in landmark case

The ARB found Welsh architect Llywd Edwards guilty of serious professional incompetence and unacceptable professional conduct at a Professional Conduct Committee last week. The case marks the first finding of serious professional incompetence by the ARB and means Edwards is suspended from practice for six months.

The two counts of serious professional incompetence were related to Edwards' failure to provide correct advice to his client, and his responsibility for serious technical errors. The counts of unacceptable professional conduct were due to his failure to respond to complaints from his client and approaches from the ARB.

Richard Coleman, ARB's head of regulation, said the verdict should warn architects of the perils of ignoring client correspondence. And he added: 'This case represents the first substantive finding of serious professional incompetence by the PCC. It will greatly assist the ARB's efforts to clarify to the profession and others – the meaning and extent of this disciplinary offence.'

The complaint was made by client William Ward, who engaged Edwards in January 2000 to carry out a barn conversion on his property in Gwent. The technical issues raised by the ARB's solicitor, Peter Cadman, were that Edwards failed to notice that the barn did not have a water supply

or an adequate electricity supply. A window was also incorrectly positioned and the material used to waterproof a basement bedroom was not of adequate quality.

Ward also claimed that the extent to which the bedroom was below ground level was not clearly explained to him at the outset of the job. 'It was dark and dingy, like a prison cell – I couldn't let guests stay in such a room,' said Ward. He also told the hearing that the room repeatedly flooded during construction due to the poor waterproofing.

Edwards said: 'I liked Mr Ward and I put some of my best work into that project. I was proud of some of the design elements and materials. But when it all started to go wrong, I was shattered. I was shocked when the water appeared.'

But he said that he did not intend to appeal against the decision: 'I've already changed my letterheads to 'architectural services'. It will affect my business, but I don't really have much time to dwell on this – I've just got to get on with the work I do have and hope the six months pass quickly.'

Vice chairman of ARB Owen Luder told the AJ: 'A number of issues mounted up in the case – the technical errors, failure to resolve problems, a lack of cost control – which formed a pattern of serious professional incompetence. It is simple – if errors do occur then they must be dealt with. And simply walking away is not an option.'

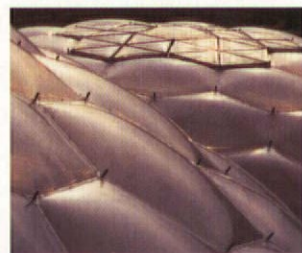
Steven Palmer

### 13 WEEKS TO GO

interbuild

9-13 June 2002,  
NEC, Birmingham, UK

A highlight of this year's Interbuild will be 50/50, an exhibition which presents the best buildings and products of the last 50 years and makes predictions for the next 50, based on interviews with experts. This week, on page 6, RIBA past president David Rock sings the praises of ETFE.



# 50 50

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### Q&A

# 48%

... of voters in a poll on the AJ's website chose Annette Fisher as their preferred future RIBA president. The late entrant easily outstripped her nearest rival, George Ferguson, who notched up 20 per cent. Only 10 per cent opted for David Thorp, while 22 per cent preferred Will Alsop's 'none of the above' protest. The AJ will continue the poll this week – so get voting.

+ Register your view at  
[www.ajplus.co.uk](http://www.ajplus.co.uk)



## What is the best building of the past 50 years?

Le Corbusier's Ronchamp. It's formally known as the Chapel Notre-Dame-du-Haut, and must be one of the greatest buildings of the 20th century. This tiny church's majestic, sculptured strangeness and power conveys a religious conviction and atmosphere of the highest order. Stunning both inside and out, its design transcended most architectural concepts of its time.

## What is the most significant innovation of the past 50 years?

The leak-less flat roof. Until relatively recently flat roofs tended to leak. Technical innovation and new materials – and probably better detailing – have consigned the leaking flat roof to history. No longer is it one of the public's classic conceptions, and criticisms, of modern architecture.

## And the best building product?

It has to be the extruded copolymer foil, ETFE, or ethyl tetra fluoro ethylene. ETFE pneumatic roofing solutions open up wondrous possibilities for large-scale roofs, at a third of the cost of conventional ones. The air-filled cushions of Texlon Foil can be clear, opaque or screen-printed; openable; flexible; easily replaceable; thermally better than triple glazing; self-cleaning; self-extinguishing in fires... the sky's the limit.

## What innovation do you expect to see in the next 50 years?

The government will realise that PFI, PPP, prime contracting and the rest is costing at least 20 per cent more than client-controlled procurement (and has not passed on cost risks anyway). It will set up government-financed and controlled offices with teams of building designers and contractors. They will be overseen by CABE, and future kings Charles and William, to fund, design and procure state-financed buildings.

These interviews by Sutherland Lyall will form the basis of the 50/50 exhibition at Interbuild 2002.

## Twigg Brown in hot water over celeb's £1.5m home

Twigg Brown Architects' designs for a £1.5 million mansion in East Sheen, London, for TV celebrity John Leslie have been slammed by Richmond Council and locals for flouting planning rules.

A spokesperson for the council told the AJ that the original planning permission was for a building of 656m<sup>2</sup>. However, the structure is currently 681.5m<sup>2</sup>. Its north-facing side is also one metre higher than stated in the application. The luxury timber and glass pad also breaches planning regulations as it has windows that overlook an adjoining property.

The three-storey building includes three bedrooms, kitchen, dressing room, games room, gym and sauna, a cinema, shower room, garage and a roof terrace.

Locals were incensed by the development, claiming it dominates the area and that parties on the roof terrace had disturbed neighbours. One local resident told the AJ: 'It's ugly, blocks the view of the common and it's huge. I don't think it is in keeping with the area. I don't see how he can get away with this.'

Richmond Council issued an enforcement order demanding that the *Wheel of Fortune* host either tears down the house or makes extensive alterations. Leslie appealed and the case went to public inquiry in January. A decision is due to be announced this week – and the outcome could bankrupt the TV star. While building his lavish home, Leslie told how he had sunk everything into the project: 'My wages now, my money from *Wheel of Fortune*, from *Survivor*, every penny.'

Richard Baker, a member of the RIBA planning policy group, said: 'A practice needs to ensure that drawings submitted to planning are 100 per cent accurate, and that if there are any variations post-planning then it's off back to consult with the planning authority. A case like this sounds like it could be down to a variation.'

Directors at Twigg Brown refused to comment. Steven Palmer

## Eric Parry scoops £20m St Martin-in-the-Fields job

Eric Parry Architects has won a commission to masterplan St Martin-in-the-Fields' historic Trafalgar Square site.

The practice beat off competition from Allies and Morrison Architects; Caruso St John Architects with Richard Griffiths; Jeremy Dixon. Edward Jones; Martin Stancliffe Architects; and Nicholas Hare Architects. The £20 million master-

plan will result in an upgrade of facilities for the Grade I-listed St Martin-in-the-Fields church, a Chinese day centre, a social care unit for the homeless, parish facilities, a cafe and shop. The church's crypt will be redesigned to create a sequence of 'uplifting suites' suitable for the church's diverse requirements.

Parry was commended for his response to a brief that called for a balance between the spiritual, social, commercial and public needs of the church.

Project director at Eric Parry Architects Robert Kennett told the AJ: 'We needed to make a more legible sequence of entrances and create a pleasant and caring space – quite an interesting task in a crypt. We will also increase the amount of shop space, which will allow the church to raise its funding of social care.'

Vicar of St Martin's Reverend Nicholas Holtam said that the new scheme would at last allow the church to 'carry out our work with dignity'.

The selection panel included representatives from the parish, The Prince's Foundation, CABE and Sir William Whitfield, who worked with Parry on Paternoster Square at St Paul's Cathedral.

A planning application will be lodged with Westminster council within the next 12 months.

## Ferguson throws down debate gauntlet to Alsop

RIBA presidential hopeful George Ferguson has challenged Will Alsop to a public debate to defend himself against the Stirling prizewinner's stinging criticisms in last week's AJ (28.2.02).

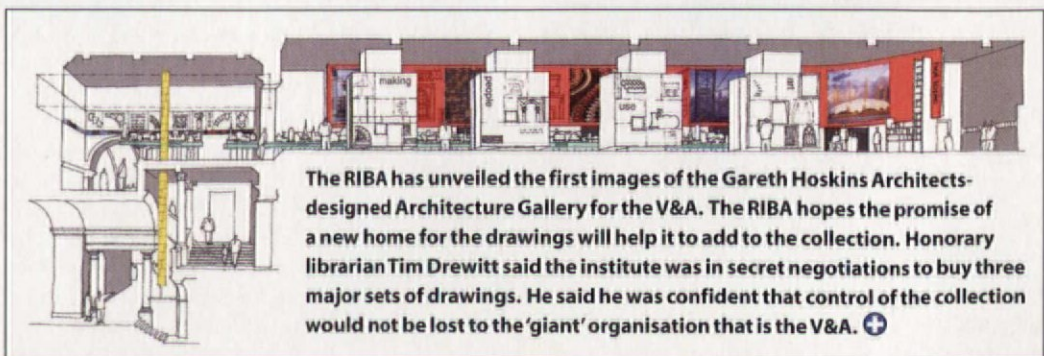
Alsop – who condemned the lack of quality candidates for the RIBA presidency, claiming his only option was not to vote – has agreed to the showdown, which could happen later this month.

Ferguson will defend the RIBA against accusations that it is irrelevant. And he will urge members to ignore Alsop's call to quit the institute and support the Architecture Foundation instead.

Bristol-based Ferguson said: 'I don't want Will to get away with rogue opinion and for it to become common currency. I want to force him to stop and think what is in the best interests of architecture. I don't think he will lead an exodus to the AE, but I'm trying to stop any likelihood of that happening.'

In a letter to the AJ, Ferguson defends regional architects against the belief of the 'arrogant few' that all talent migrates to London. And he reproaches Alsop for not standing for president himself: 'Will should have run – not run away.'

● See page 14 for Ferguson's defence and page 13 for Paul Hyett's response to Alsop.



The RIBA has unveiled the first images of the Gareth Hoskins Architects-designed Architecture Gallery for the V&A. The RIBA hopes the promise of a new home for the drawings will help it to add to the collection. Honorary librarian Tim Drewitt said the institute was in secret negotiations to buy three major sets of drawings. He said he was confident that control of the collection would not be lost to the 'giant' organisation that is the V&A. +

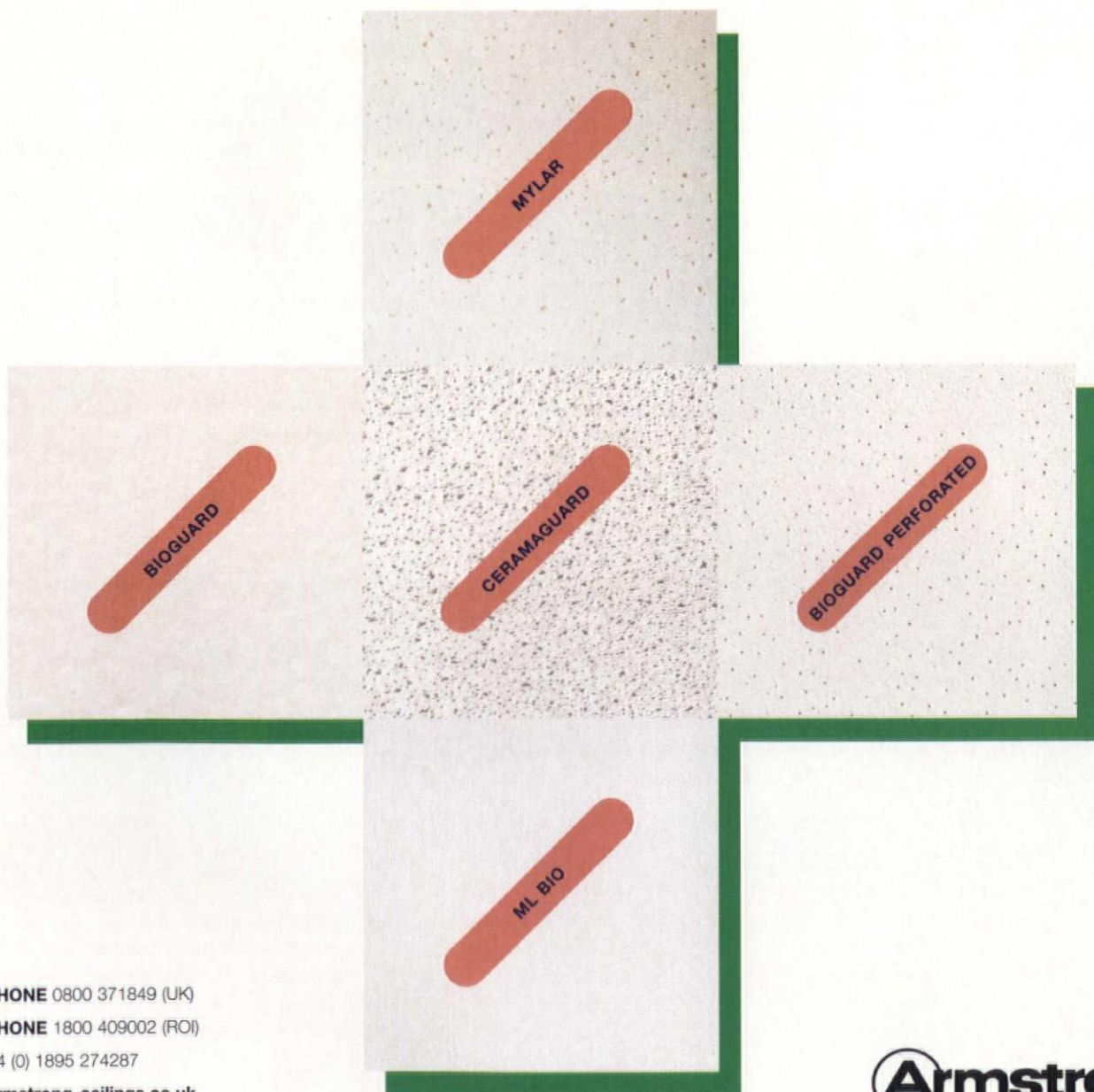
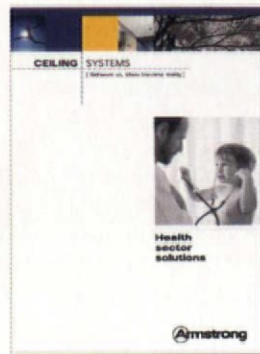


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PETER CLURMAN

London Mayor Ken Livingstone will open Lambeth's Coin Street housing scheme, designed by Haworth Tompkins Architects, on 12 March. The £14.5 million project comprises 59 affordable flats, maisonettes and large family houses on the old Coin Street car park site. It will provide housing for 300 people and include two local shops.

#### RYDER ON THE TYNE

Ryder has won a £14 million commission to design the conversion of Tyneside's Swan House from offices to 165 luxury flats. The scheme will include the addition of an extra floor to the building. The project has been submitted for planning, with completion set for summer 2003.

## BDP and BCSC chart the future of urban retail design

BDP and the British Council of Shopping Centres have unveiled their *Urban Design for Retail Environments* document, which aims to set design standards for shopping centres for the next decade.

The document and a sister paper, *Managing the Retail-led Development of the Future*, are responses to the government's Urban White Paper, which called for a shift from out-of-town shopping malls to better integrated urban shopping environments.

The report, which is backed by both CABI and English Heritage, outlines 10 key design targets for town centre shopping areas. They are character; continuity and enclosure; quality of public realm; ease of movement; legibility; adaptability; mix of uses; sustainability; value; and inclusivity. Each principle has a checklist of 10 associated questions that BDP director Peter Drummond claims will steer those involved in retail design to better practice. Drummond told the AJ: 'The last time a large out-of-town shopping centre was planned was in

the early 1990s. There is now a new generation of architects that are looking to create welcoming shopping environments in town centres that can also drive regeneration.'

He said the idea was to encourage 'more rounded schemes', which include various mixed-use options that are adaptable. 'If it's adaptable then the building can go through a number of different uses in its lifetime – over 200 years we don't know how shopping patterns will change, but we know that a flexible building will still be of use.'

However, BCSC president Neil Mitchenall said: 'There is no UK shopping centre that can be held up as an exemplar of all of these principles, although some excel in certain areas.' He said he hoped that in six or seven years such schemes may arrive, but that in the meantime the industry was looking to countries such as Holland for best practice. He said the BCSC still had to convince some of its own members of the merits of urban design.

The reports are available, free of charge, from the BCSC on 020 7222 1122.

Steven Palmer



The Boisot Waters Cohen Partnership has submitted a planning application for this £25 million mixed-use scheme and new pedestrian square for Greenwich, London. The 4,700m<sup>2</sup> site is the last part of the Greenwich World Heritage site available for development and is opposite Hawksmoor's Grade I-listed St Alfege church. The scheme will include retail, housing and office space. The project has been welcomed by CABI. +

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## Modern Movement architect Birkin Haward dies at 89



Birkin Haward (1912-2002) was connected with the heart of the Modern Movement through his early association with Erich Mendelsohn.

In 1934, soon after Mendelsohn came to England, he won the competition for the Bexhill Pavilion. This greatly excited Haward, then finishing his studies at the Bartlett. He soon found a berth with Mendelsohn and Chermayeff.

When Mendelsohn opened his office in Jerusalem soon afterwards, Haward went out to help start things off.

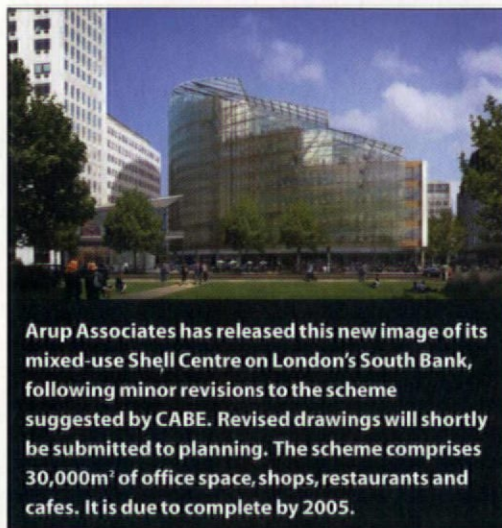
Haward was born in Ipswich, and it was to Ipswich he returned after war service. There he joined the firm of Johns and Slater, becoming in due course the senior partner. A staunch believer in a social and democratic architecture, he specialised in schools, and designed some of the very best English primary schools of the 1945-70 period, many of them in the neighbourhood of Ipswich. They range from Rushmere School in the austere prefabricated manner of the 1940s to Halifax School (1968-70), a rare example of an open-plan school carried through with thought and grace.

He was always interested in technique, and experimented for some years with timber domes. His last building was a handsome library block at Ipswich School.

After his retirement in 1982, Haward reinvented himself as a remarkable and original architect-scholar of an almost Victorian vintage. He wrote compendious books on 19th-century stained glass in Norfolk and Suffolk, and two big studies of medieval Suffolk churches. In the process he photographed, measured and drew out every single medieval church arcade and most of the older church roofs in the county.

A man of great personal modesty, Haward painted and drew beautifully and recorded all his work in meticulous photographs. He leaves two architect sons, the older being Birkin Haward of Van Heyningen and Haward Architects.

Andrew Saint



Arup Associates has released this new image of its mixed-use Shell Centre on London's South Bank, following minor revisions to the scheme suggested by CABE. Revised drawings will shortly be submitted to planning. The scheme comprises 30,000m<sup>2</sup> of office space, shops, restaurants and cafes. It is due to complete by 2005.

### REDUNDANCIES AT EPR

EPR Architects is to make 10 redundancies this month. Managing director Greg Craig told the AJ the cuts were necessary due to 'current market conditions'.

### RENEWABLES PROJECT BID

Minister for energy Brian Wilson has launched an initiative to help schools, offices and housing developments in England reduce the effects of climate change. The £1.6 million Community Renewables project will set up support teams to help local people and organisations devise renewable energy schemes for their areas. The aim of the scheme is to create environmentally friendly developments while enabling community groups to directly benefit from the income generated.

### NEW-LOOK LIBERTY OPENS

Liberty's Regent Street department store reopens today (Thursday). The Grade-II listed London shopping attraction will have a new entrance, created by Landmark Architecture, with the interiors remodelled by retail design specialists 20/20.



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## vital statistics

- House prices in Thames Ditton, Surrey, have risen 206 per cent over the last decade, says the Halifax. The average increase was 75 per cent. Other high climbers include Teddington, London, (194 per cent) and Shepton Mallet, Somerset (188 per cent).
- Pre-tax profits for George Wimpey soared 24 per cent to £181 million for the year ended 31 December 2001. Turnover was up 11 per cent to £1.89 billion.
- Microsoft's Bill Gates is the world's richest man for the eighth year in a row, says *Forbes Global* magazine. He is worth £37.4 billion – a drop of £4.2 billion from 2001. The UK's richest person is the Duke of Westminster, with £4.75 billion.
- Ten per cent of the world's population is 60 or over and this figure will double by 2050, according to a United Nations survey. It also claims that the number of people over 100 will climb from the current number of 210,000 to 3.2 million in the same period.

## Clare Melhuish reviews... Pollock's Freudian slip into real and mental excavation

The very idea of symbolic meaning in built culture has been marginalised by the processes of mass consumption to a more superficial notion of style. So Griselda Pollock's lecture at the AA was a valuable reminder of the rich veins of discourse latent in the forms and constructions through which cultures manifest their identities and values.

Professor of Social and Critical Histories of Art at the University of Leeds, Pollock presented a deconstruction of Freud's consulting room in Vienna, as recorded in an archive of photographs taken shortly before his departure and exile from Austria. The question she posed was why a man so intent on presenting his work as a significant new area of rigorous scientific thinking should have surrounded himself with artefacts drawn from 'mythico-poetic pagan thinking'.

Pollock suggests that Freud's collection of antique Egyptian, Greek, Roman, Chinese, and Jewish pieces speaks both of his character as a multidisciplinary scholar, and of a love of archaeology that represents 'a sublimation of childhood traumas'. She drew attention to the paradoxical relationship between archaeology and psychoanalysis. Both are focused on the operation of 'excavation' – of material artefacts in the first instance, and of memories in the second. Yet while the first is intent on a goal of preservation, that of the second is quite the reverse: a dissolution and

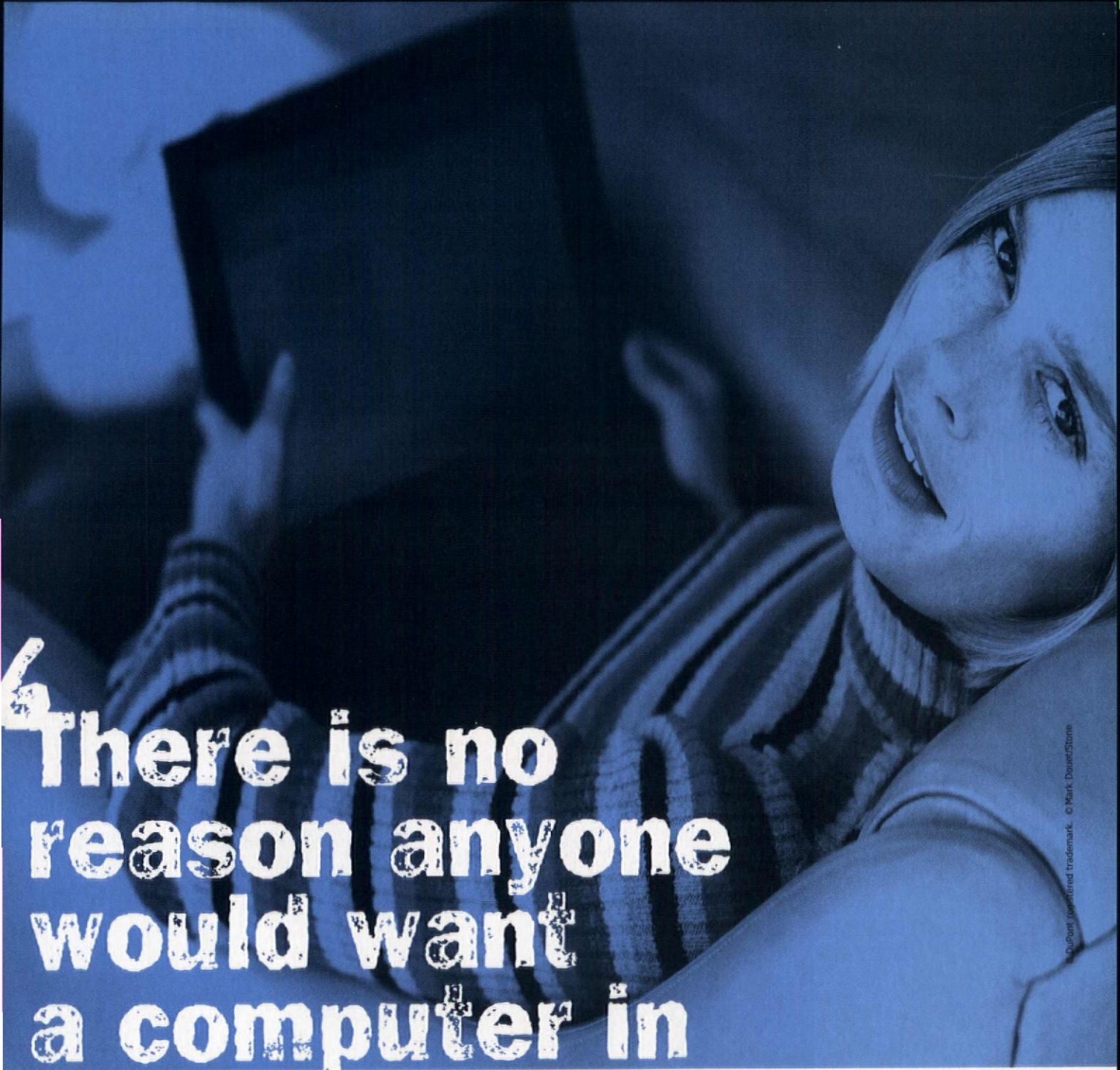
annihilation of 'tormenting ideas' through that same process of recovery. Thus, suggests Pollock, the 'archaic and the infantile' alike take on a spatial dimension – they 'fall not into time but into a psychic space'.

Pollock's lecture levelled clear criticism at the obsession of contemporary Western society with this process of excavation, recovery and preservation of the material past, closely guarded and surveyed by the new institutions of the museum and art historian which were created during the 20th century. Disappointingly, she had insufficient time to present the theories of anthropologist Mary Douglas on 'the value of forgetting' to enable cultures to move on and redefine their values and identities. But she identified the roots of this psychological malaise with the emergence of the archaeological discipline at the end of the 19th century.

She argued that its impact was fundamentally to change western self-perception in relation to issues of 'memory and oblivion'. She also suggested, in no uncertain terms, that our culture's present 'obsession to hold onto the past' was inextricably entangled with a desire to suppress alternative, prehistoric, 'feminine-maternal' cultural structures. Pollock claims such structures pose a perceived threat of 'alien destruction' in a contemporary world founded on 'the ideology of sexual difference' – an ideology constructed in no small part on the work of Freud himself, and inherent to the material built culture of the present.

*Griselda Pollock was speaking on Time, Space and the Archive: the Archaeological Metaphor in Freud, at the Architectural Association*





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would want  
a computer in  
their home.”**

— Ken Olson, Chairman and founder of Digital Equipment Corp., 1977.

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# Venice Biennale projects shortlist unveiled

The AJ can this week reveal the shortlisted schemes for the 8th Venice Biennale of Architecture competition, writes *Steven Palmer*.

The victorious practice will bring its design to life using the whole of the British Pavilion during the Biennale (7 September to 24 November). These images are from the five shortlisted practices: Alison Brooks Architects; Adjaye/Associates; de Rijke Marsh Morgan; East; and Foreign Office Architects.

The theme of this year's Biennale is 'Next' – chosen by director of the exhibition, critic Deyan Sudjic. Participants will showcase 'key international projects that will be taking shape in the next five years'.

East's proposal relates to a project for the improvement of street spaces in Southwark.

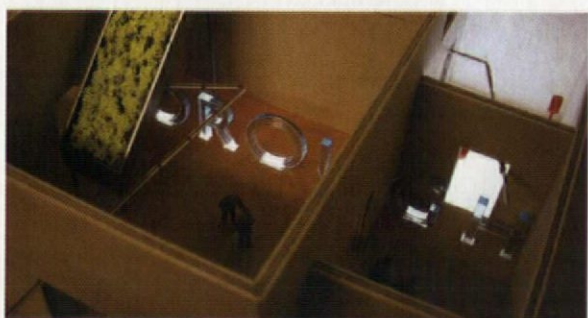
The practice will create a 'London space' in Venice where 'visitors will be able to buy fruit and vegetables, see hidden spaces, buy souvenirs of the pieces, and smell the flowers'. The de Rijke Marsh Morgan scheme will encapsulate the 19th-century British pavilion in a bubble, creating an inflatable enclosure – turning the building itself into a 'useful exhibit'.

Foreign Office Architects' proposal considers theoretical issues that will define buildings over the next 10 years. It explores ideas around five issues: landscape; borderlessness; non-organic growth; building complexity; and truth and technology. It will use the practice's Yokohama Port Terminal in Japan to illustrate some of the points.

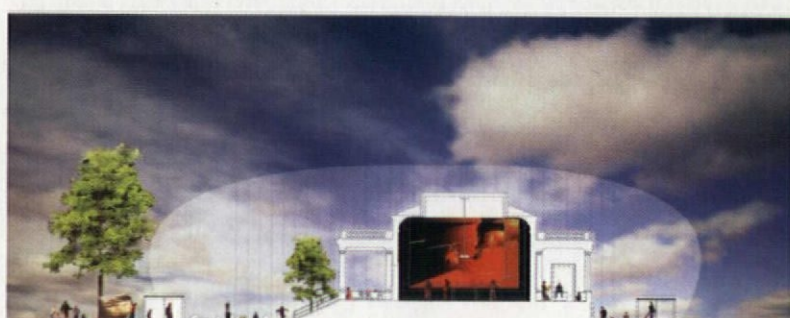
Thematic issues of architecture are also dealt with in the Adjaye/Associates proposal. London and Accra, Ghana, are compared and contrasted through the pavilion's rooms. The two cities are dealt with through themes of density; zoning and planning; landscape and manipulation; and light.

Alison Brooks Architects' entry deals with a 'potential architecture' that explores a 'free' area between architecture and furniture, shelter and surface, usefulness and pure speculation.

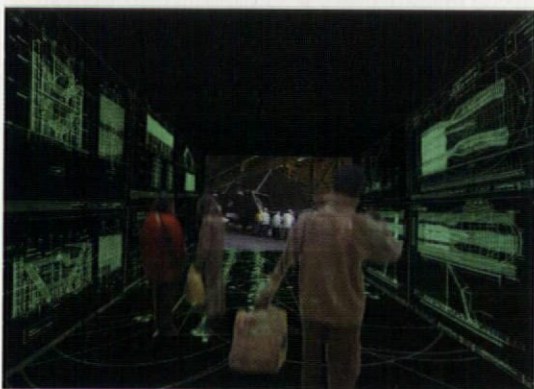
A British Council jury – Will Alsop, critic Rowan Moore and director of the Design Museum Alice Rawsthorn will select the winner. Visit [www.ajplus.co.uk](http://www.ajplus.co.uk) tomorrow to find out which practice is victorious. ➤



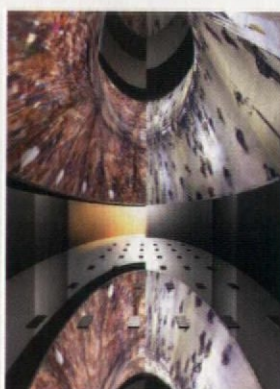
East's entry relates to an 'organic' plan for streets in the London Borough of Southwark



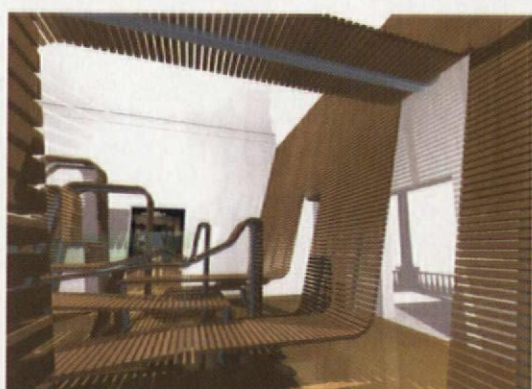
The de Rijke Marsh Morgan proposal will transform the British Pavilion by enclosing it in a 'bubble' with a gravel Union Jack floor



Foreign Office Architects will use five rooms to explore theoretical issues which will impact on architecture over the next decade



Adjaye/Associates' scheme includes a film documentary projected in a conical room



Alison Brooks Architects' entry includes a 180m' timber boardwalk and steel lattice which is a 'frozen, tactile, visual and structural instrument'

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# Hyett: Alsop's view 'selfish' and 'irresponsible'

Will Alsop caused a storm with his criticism of the candidates for the RIBA presidency (AJ 28.2.02). Here a 'disappointed' RIBA president Paul Hyett responds

Back in the early 1970s, as an employee in Cedric Price's office, Will Alsop showed all the early signs of what he has (perhaps inevitably) become: British architecture's punk. His work is loud, fast-moving and often aggressive: that said, his architecture pleases both his peers and the public, as evidenced by the success of the Peckham Library project.

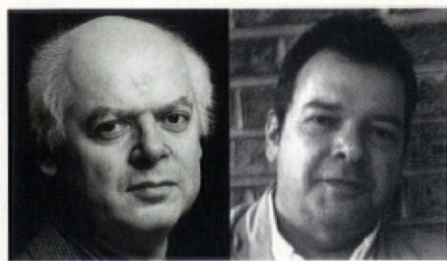
That's all good – in a profession that had been notably straight-laced and serious for far too long, the colour and vitality that Alsop brings to architecture has been a welcome relief.

For his role as a columnist, Will instinctively carries one of the essential qualities for the job: he doesn't mind being unpopular – by virtue of opinion expressed or lifestyle portrayed – and he is irreverent.

But, sadly, Alsop is becoming evermore bad-tempered, difficult and mean. And very ill-mannered to boot! All that, of course, is his right, but it is disappointing in one from whom so many expect so much.

In accepting the chairmanship of The Architecture Foundation, Alsop's implicit task is to continue to promote good architecture, building on the outstanding and generous work of Richard Rogers, preferably in effective collaboration with other organisations such as the RIBA and CABA. This is hardly commensurate with his call last week for members to leave the RIBA: such initiatives do nothing for our collective image as architects in the eyes of either government, industry or the public, and they do nothing to assist the promotion of architecture.

Will says he doesn't rate the current round of candidates for the next RIBA presidency. Well, that's the implicit price of democracy: anyone can stand – including Alsop himself. But neither that, nor persuading an alternative candidate to enter the race, will do for Will: he has to make a big



**'What Alsop needs so badly and urgently to learn is that with freedom of speech must come responsibility'**

event out of his dissatisfaction. Sadly, he does this in the selfish and irresponsible way that is his hallmark. Selfish, because it takes no account of the upsetting and hurtful consequences for candidates whose offer of service to their profession deserves consideration and respect, even if the electorate's support is not forthcoming. Irresponsible, because Alsop's action clearly signals an intended turf war. How else would you interpret a call to quit the RIBA and 'support The Architecture Foundation instead'?

Well, despite this potential setback in relationships, the RIBA will continue to support The Architecture Foundation which, under Will's chairmanship, recently asked for help on its apparently desperate funding problems. We will also carry on promoting architecture through the impartial granting of awards – the recent Stirling Prize, given to a then delighted but now apparently ungrateful Will Alsop, is a prime example.

Promoting sustainable architecture is also high on our agenda: are you signed up

to this, Will? And we will continue working in education, where the RIBA is involved in the validation of some 25 per cent of the world's architecture courses. (Will's ex-partner, John Lyall, finds both the time and the reason to give generously in this quarter.)

Establishing the 'architecture for all' project with the V&A is another big issue, designed to ensure proper custody and better use of the world's finest architectural drawings collection, as is supporting the work of the 800 or so elected members within our regions and branches, themselves representing some 25,000 corporate members who are the lifeblood of this profession.

Not everybody shares Alsop's view that it is upsetting to 'hear [Hyett] encourage regional participation', and not everyone is comfortable with the suggestion that the remedy to all of architecture's ills lies with the so-called stars. And then there is the conference that the RIBA is running with the AJ at Interbuild...

What Alsop needs so badly and urgently to learn is that with freedom of speech must come responsibility. It's what you say, the way you say it, and on whose behalf you say it that is crucial! In this latest piece of self-promoting publicity, Will issues an ill-considered and unsupportable criticism of the RIBA, and he comments on the current presidential candidates in an unpleasant and disrespectful way, all on behalf of an organisation – The Architecture Foundation – that neither shares his views nor wants the inevitable bad publicity that will result.

So Will wants to resign from the RIBA and I have his letter before me! I will, of course, wish him well. In the meantime, if he takes stock of the situation, he might just decide to stay – it's not too late. But does he have the magnanimity to change his mind?



## Will your envelope be in this one on July 9th?

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## Balance iniquities of planning system by sharing resources

### WHAT'S NEW ON THE WEB?



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See more images of schemes featured in the AJ. Check out more visuals of Daniel Libeskind's new museum in Ontario (see page 3) and news stories. Plus newspaper review Mediawatch, each Monday.

## editorial

In this week's *Architect*, Sutherland Lyall offers an insight into the tortuous process of producing the visualisations required as evidence in the Heron Tower planning enquiry. In addition to the endless computer images showing the building in a variety of different lighting conditions and from every conceivable angle, visualisation company Hayes Davidson produced a video depicting the view of the proposed tower as experienced by a pedestrian crossing Waterloo Bridge. (Opponents of the project claim those crossing the Thames at a certain point will be deprived of views of St Paul's.) Creating the video was time-consuming, but not as arduous as preparing the 120-page document which describes the methodology in order to demonstrate the video's veracity.

While the Heron Tower team may have been stunned at the resources it had to spend on visualisations, others might feel aggrieved at the implication that only those who can afford it should attempt to put forward such a contentious scheme. From either perspective, there is something inherently unjust in a system which channels such a high proportion of project cost away from design and construction. Having already created a three-dimensional model of the City of London, Hayes Davidson was able to produce images of the Heron Tower in context at reasonable expense. It is inevitable that the digital image will play an ever more crucial role in our planning system. And, in the interests of fairness, some of the resources that the Heron Tower team had to pay for should be made more universally available.

The Architecture Foundation has carried out valuable work in establishing a digital map of London as a public resource, but it is time for the initiative to go nationwide. A government-backed initiative could be at least partially self-funding if anyone interested could download part of a three-dimensional model of Britain for a fee based, say, on a unit cost per square of the Ordnance Survey map. Individual applicants would have to prove the accuracy of images of the proposed intervention, but the credibility of the context model could be taken as read.

Isabel Allen

## letters

### Safety neglected for the spectacular...



The Hammersmith house by Boyarsky Murphy Architects (AJ 28.2.02) features a spectacular staircase. But where was the building control officer? Perhaps there was nothing he could do about the vertiginous 33-tread flight.

Paragraph 1.13 of Document K limits the number of treads in a flight to 16 only if it is in a shop or place of assembly, and paragraph 1.14 requires a landing and change of direction only if there are more than 36 treads in consecutive flights. Should the architect be congratulated for designing to the limits of the regulations, or criticised for designing beyond the limits of reasonable safety? Should the regulations be changed, or is it unlikely that anyone else would be tempted to emulate? And finally – and here the regulations surely should apply – what about the non-existent guarding under the handrail?

I write as one who, in happy defiance of building regulations, ran up and down an unguarded spiral stair of my own at least half a dozen times a day for 17 years, before falling off it a month before selling the house. There was a handrail fitted before the new owners could do likewise, and I had only a few bruises to nurse and myself to blame.

I hope Mr Boyarsky's clients are impeccably sure-footed –

and prepare Building Regulations regularisation work when the times comes to sell.

Kenneth Lynn, Lowestoft

### ...and how did architect get around the regs?

The Boyarsky Murphy house in Hammersmith is truly elegant and worthy of the coverage you give it (AJ 28.2.02).

But (yawn, yawn) what about the Building Regulations? It seems that every other month the AJ holds up as excellent a residential project that pretty well flaunts what any local authority would require for passing. Is this not a three-storey dwelling (did they really buy the live/work line), and therefore in need of a protected escape for the top bedroom? And what about that handrail without protection and open-tread stair?

If the architects have successfully negotiated around the most fundamental principles of the Approved Documents, then they should write an article to help the rest of us do the same.

If they completed the project without a building control submission or did the old trick of removing doors and walls after the project was signed off, then the AJ is just printing more eye-candy and shouldn't be taken seriously as a professional journal.

John Onken, 3s Architects  
Kingston-upon-Thames, Surrey

### Shedding more light on Pilgrim's Lane house

We were glad to hear that Richard Toosey liked SHH's house at Pilgrim's Lane, London (AJ Focus 1.1.02). In answer to his question about light coming into the master bedroom (AJ 14.2.02), the photograph pre-dates occupation.

While the main window does now have curtains, the window beneath the curved roof does not. We did in fact leave a cavity



We've added last week's special feature on Part L of the Building Regulations to the website. Sponsored by Kingspan Insulated Roof and Wall Systems, the feature is at [www.ajplus.co.uk/regulations](http://www.ajplus.co.uk/regulations).

Check out our IPIX photographs of famous buildings. The pictures allow users to navigate around the buildings via special technology, using the computer mouse.

We've added more schemes to our inspirational sister site, [www.ajspecification.com](http://www.ajspecification.com) such as Grimshaw's Waterloo (right), Hopkins' Glyndebourne and Rick Mather's UEA Nelson Court and Constable Terrace.



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

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in the wall below, so a curved and motorised bespoke shutter could be installed, rising vertically on the switch of a button.

In the end, our developer client chose not to go ahead with this option, believing that the window afforded complete privacy because of its height and that the amount of light that would stream in would mean only a gentle awakening for the bedroom's incumbents – and a rather romantic starlit night view to boot.

*David Spence, SHH, London W6*

### Don't forget Outram's 'architectural telegram'

Now all the hoo-ha about Archigram and the RIBA Gold Medal has died down, we should not forget that, as well as Messrs Chalk, Cook, Crompton, Heron, Greene and Webb, John Outram was also a sender of the first 'architectural telegram'. He has built a few interesting things, too!

*Paul Notley, Chiswick, London*

### 'Pop idol' Will is singing in the wrong key

Will Alsop has made a major contribution to British architecture. Love him or hate him, his work is interesting.

However, it has to be said that some of his opinions do a disservice both to the profession and to himself. He has evidently jumped to conclusions about my qualities and opinions, based on false assumptions garnered from the press.

I shall never tire of London or of its great architecture, both new and old, but I do tire of the arrogant few – very few – who think that all architectural talent migrates to the capital.

I am proud of the city in which I have chosen to live and work, for all its faults, and I can recognise real talent within its architectural community. The same could be said of all the

UK's regions, where Alsop's views will be deeply resented. And they are not shared by many highly respected London-based architects, many of whom feel it is about time the RIBA had a President from another region.

However, what matters most is that we get the best leadership, and that those who feel strongly about it stand for election. I would have welcomed the challenge from Will, who should have run – not run away!

The Architecture Foundation adds a very important extra dimension to the London architectural scene, but it is ridiculous to advocate it as being any sort of alternative institute, or to write off the RIBA, which is internationally recognised as setting standards for architecture – a role it can always improve on – as some sort of trade union. To do so is simply to fall into the hands of those forces that militate against the status and function of chartered architects and against the quality of the built environment.

Alsop is, of course, free to make his own decisions, but he is misguided to think that his 'pop idol' status gives him license to encourage others to follow him. He has accepted my challenge to a debate on the future of the RIBA and I relish the opportunity to persuade him that we should bury our differences and unite in the promotion and advancement of architecture. It matters.

*George Ferguson, Acanthus Ferguson Mann*

### Disabled people failed by BSI basin guidance

At what level ought a wash basin be fixed to suit disabled people? To inform themselves, architects are now able to consult BS8300, Design of Buildings, and their approaches to meet the needs of disabled people, the long-awaited update of the BS5810 access

code issued in 1979. For both wheelchair users and ambulant disabled people, its recommendation is that the rim of a basin should be between 720 and 740mm above floor level, or about 2ft 5in.

I am an ambulant disabled person with a severe physical disability. My wife, too, is disabled, with spinal problems that can cause acute pain when she has to reach down to a low level.

Recently we wanted to take a weekend away, so my wife phoned a hotel in the east of England. Yes, she was told, they had a special room for disabled people, and in the bathroom it had a low-level basin for the benefit of wheelchair users.

That would not suit us – so how about adjoining rooms which, without grab rails or other special gadgetry for the disabled, were accessible? Yes, they had normal-height basins. Good, said my wife, we'll have one of those.

To be convenient, a wash basin would be higher than the normal 820mm; its rim would be at 950mm above floor, a level that would suit the generality of adult people and would be a great deal more convenient for ambulant disabled people than 720-740mm. The diagram below demonstrates how ill-suited a 720mm basin height is for tall men and average-height women.

The B/209/8 subcommittee which worked on the preparation of BS8300 had members who represented 38 different bodies. With the array of wisdom available to it, how was it

that BSI arrived at 720-740mm for the height of wash basins for people with disabilities? By what processes, on whose advice and with the benefit of what research findings did it suppose it was sensible?

Since the height of wash basins is vital for ambulant disabled people, might BSI now acknowledge the 720-740mm recommendation was a lamentable error, one that as a matter of urgency must be corrected?

*Selwyn Goldsmith, London SW11*

### Olympians inspire new approach to selection

Congratulations to Rhona Martin's gold medal winning curling team at the Winter Olympics. A building boom in curling rinks in the UK is now predicted! Will the OJEC notices request that architects submit details of three curling rinks they have built in England in the last three years?

Perhaps Rhona Martin and her team could inspire more than an expansion in curling. Perhaps their victory could result in a more appropriate and imaginative approach to the selection of architects.

*Michael Stacey, via e-mail*

### Arup's all-male line-up puts us in a bad light...

It is disappointing to see that the photograph of Arup Associates (AJ 21.2.02) is of 17 men. I imagine women play a part in the success of Arup Associates.

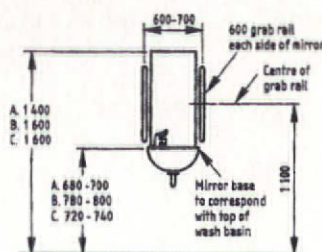
I can't help feel that this unbalanced representation is not good for the image of Arup Associates or the profession.

*A male architect, via e-mail*

### ...or is this a pregnant pause in a 'PC' office?

Are we to assume that the women employees at Arup Associates were all on maternity leave when the photo was taken?

*Amanda Haywood, Associated Architects, Birmingham*







will also

## We are ill-served by myopic, jaundiced powers-that-be

I am sitting on an Air New Zealand flight bound for Los Angeles. I boarded this flight in Sydney, Australia. When I reach Los Angeles, I will immediately travel on to Toronto. This brief trip around the world is what could be called the Empire tour.

When you visit Australia you can immediately observe an insecurity about their identity. The cry often goes up: 'Who are we?' Or: 'Is this piece of architecture Australian?' While in Melbourne I noticed that the newspaper *The Age* carried a series of letters asking whether the newly completed cultural complex at Federation Square can be described as Australian architecture.

This project, which was the product of an international competition, was won by Don Bates and Peter Davidson, a young American/Australian duo with a strong London pedigree who go by the name of LAB Architecture. The scheme is a brave and extraordinary attempt to drag the city of Melbourne into the 21st century. If the locals are worried about its credentials as a piece of Australian architecture then they should never have held an international competition.

The project is, as one would expect, an amalgam of varied architectural references and interests that span the globe. They do not belong to Australia any more or any less than they belong to anywhere else. Fractal geometry, low energy, multi-function, reduced budget, over managed and much maligned. These are all qualities that could be used to describe the work. And all of them are to be found anywhere in the world. The project in Federation Square is a global product in a parochial market. This parochialism forces the architects to invent stories about their product in order to appease their local critics. They talk at length about the use of local materials. They stress

the fact that the vegetation is Australian. They demonstrate their commitment to Australia and its culture by reminding their detractors that they live and work in Melbourne.

All of which serves to remind us that the efforts of the architect are often thwarted by the concerns of people who are ill-informed, myopic and jaundiced by their own lack of imagination. Architecture has never killed anyone, and it is usually made with the best intentions.

Mere buildings, by comparison, are made with no intention at all, yet never seem to incur anybody's wrath. Society gets what it deserves, and I wonder what the good people of Melbourne imagined they deserved when they announced the competition for Federation Square. They certainly did not deserve what they got.

This article was started a year ago and for some reason was never concluded. Having just re-read it, I feel that it is still relevant. We are still dogged by people who set themselves up as a filter in order to protect their own perception of the 'people's' wishes. At best, these people are a mixture of politicians, who distance themselves from projects in order to avoid being laughed at (a sad reflection on their own lack of confidence) or, at worst, other architects who are often jealous that they did not get the job themselves.

The whingers in Melbourne included both nervous politicians and embittered architects, but the ordinary 'people', as far as I know without exception, loved it – as did I. Who is protecting whom from what? People are desperate for more variation and individuality. Yet there are large parts of our society which are hell-bent on making sure they do not get it.

*WA, from a plane and my table at Parkgate Studio*

'We are still dogged by people who set themselves up as a filter in order to protect their own perception of the "people's" wishes'

people

Interviewers are notoriously nervous about being interviewed, and Madeleine Holt, *Newsnight's* arts and culture correspondent, was no exception.

Having just returned from Hollywood, where she had confronted awkward customers like David Lynch and Mark McKinnon, Holt was ill at ease during our meeting. Chatting in a fashionable London restaurant, she confessed that she did not like having the tables turned on her; and in a telling reference to her tenseness – given that she is a BBC reporter – at the end of our conversation, she almost paid the bill.

Holt's career is a classic case of starting at the bottom and rising through the ranks. An 'old hack of the traditional variety' (she began our interview by chastising me for my lack of shorthand), she began her career on the *Sidmouth Herald*, one of the oldest newspapers in Britain, founded in 1849. Before I could stop her, she was reminiscing about those early days, when she was given a 'patch' and told to go out and find five stories a day.

After day-release studies at the National Council for the Training of Journalists (NCTJ), learning about the media, law and public administration, she moved onto Radio Cornwall as a news hound. There, the editorial policy was to refuse to cover any story that had already been in the newspapers which, she said, forced her 'to be creative'. From there to local television; then presenting on News 24; and finally her current position with *Newsnight*.

Every now and again, Holt felt the heavy hand of BBC corporate loyalty weighing down on her as we spoke. 'I work on *Newsnight* because it's a rare programme with integrity,' she said out of the blue. 'Journalism has long had a bad press, but people now seem to want to get to the bottom of things. I sound like a zealot, but I really do believe that journalism is more important than it has ever been.'

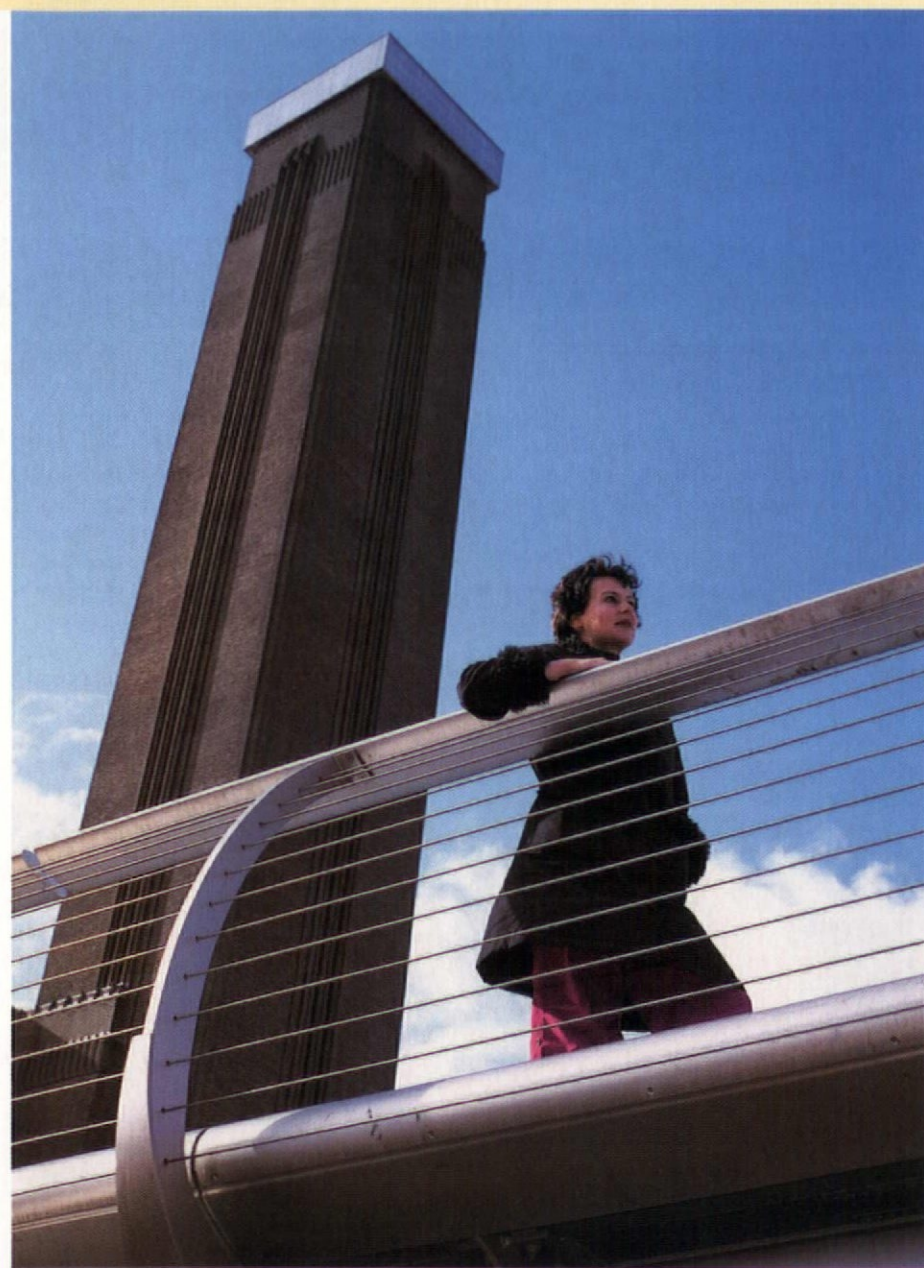
It is curious that journalists see themselves as crusaders given that, in last year's Mori poll, while politicians were the least trusted of all 'public servants' with 17 per cent of the vote; journalists fared only marginally better, finding favour with a mere 18 per cent of the public.

But as testimony to her efforts, *Newsnight* is featuring more and more cultural stories. News reporting has a history of 'machismo' about it, she says. 'It concentrates on hard-hitting stories (wars, violence, depression



**Arts and culture have a direct effect on people's lives beyond mere entertainment, says Madeleine Holt, Newsnight's correspondent. She aims to prove that the arts have a vital part to play in improving today's society**  
by austin williams. photograph by guy jordan

## cultural crusader



and the like), and in those terms "cultural" items were not thought of as newsworthy. Her role is to prove that there are enough 'serious' arts stories to cut it in the current affairs market.

'It has been a trend over the last decade for the broadsheets to expand their coverage of cultural stories. It is equally refreshing that *Newsnight* is treating these stories as important in their own right, and not just as fluffy stories to put at the end of main news bulletins,' she says.

She muses on my suggestion that the current political vacuum has left room for

cultural relativism to fill the void, but then disagrees. Hers is a more straightforward explanation. 'Cultural matters affect people's lives more directly than people think,' she says. 'It's not all about galleries – it's about public art and regeneration; housing and social exclusion; design and consumption.' Holt says that she 'cannot help believing that there must even be a direct link between design and crime'.

Unfortunately, we did not have time to question whether there should be a socially responsible aspect to art, or whether culture should ever be discussed in terms of crime

figures. But a belief that there are broader social implications to the arts is something that she returns to again and again.

Speaking of the demolition of the Brynmawr Rubber Factory, she emphasised the therapeutic benefits that would have accrued to the community had it been retained; as a sense of place and purpose in an otherwise derelict landscape.

Holt craves concrete examples of contemporary uplifting architecture and worries that, without them, people will cling to images of the past. 'Take Portcullis House. It is the most dreadful thing in London,' she says. 'The chimney effect is spooky and at odds with the rest of the building. It is a parody attempting to fit in.'

When she gets going, she doesn't pull any punches. 'The one building that makes my blood boil is Broadway Malyan's apartments in Vauxhall. It is an imitation of a gated city; dislocated from the rest of Vauxhall in the name of exclusivity. And why are we fed a diet of grim and austere public buildings – where is the colour?'

On a positive note, she is happy to champion Libeskind, partly because when she met him she was endeared by his enthusiasm for his subject and his project.

'He dealt with his family history with integrity and without bitterness. His personal story has infused his work with a sense of history, not literally, but morally.' She hopes that his 'Spiral' extension to the V&A Museum will have the same effect on architecture that Tate Modern has had on the visual arts. 'People will realise that you can stick a weird cube in a Victorian edifice and make it jaw-droppingly good.'

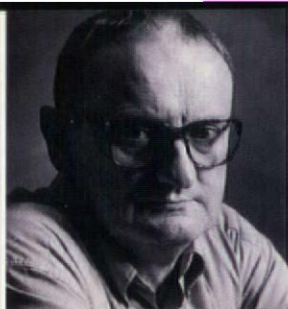
So what next for the BBC's arts and culture correspondent? A weekly arts slot? A book? An appearance on the *Late Review*? Surprisingly, Holt eschews all of these and says that she 'doesn't have goals' and would 'rather appreciate the moment'. She criticises 'our goal-dominated society, which only ever leads to disappointment'.

Her work continues to take her all over the world and her visits to Australia have indicated what a good, 'spontaneous and relaxed' urban quality of life should be.

'Sadly, the Australian model could never happen in London,' she says, 'partly because of the climate, but also because London has become too structured, too formal; we all work too much.'

In her contradictory way, though, she seems to thrive on it.





**martin pawley**

## Country living is destined to stay within the pages of *Country Life*

It is always riveting to leaf through the pages of *Country Life* in a doctor's waiting room, so much so that one often dreads the summons to see the doctor will come before one has finished the pages of houses for sale, let alone read the leader or rifled through the features.

Last week, had it not been for good old NHS lateness, I would have missed out on knowing that the unlucky Modernist Minoru Yamasaki – not only Pruitt Igoe destroyed but the WTC as well – was once in line to design Henbury Hall in Cheshire, the celebrated country house commission that went instead to Classical revivalist Julian Bicknell.

But if that switch shows you how drastically fashions can change in architecture it does not pack half the punch of *Country Life*, most of which is loaded into its double-barrelled advertising pages, which can soar to telephone book thickness with houses of a type that anyone can recognise as being neither of the Yamasaki nor the Bicknell school, but rather of the Alan Titchmarsh tendency: more an extension of their gardens than the other way around. In any case, the chief point about them is that they are immensely desirable dwellings – so desirable that their average price has shot from about £90,000 to just under a £1 million

in the past 10 years, and is still rising at a rate that puts the puny 150 per cent increase in the price of central London houses to shame.

There is no mystery about the attraction of these houses. It is a function of the most elementary laws of economics. They are sought-after not only because they are comparatively rare detached houses in the countryside, but more importantly because they don't make them any more. On the contrary, with an obtuseness that is hard to credit, the government has decreed that more than half of all new houses shall be built on urban land, not in

the vacant countryside. The intention here, as we all know, is that London and other already congested cities should become Fritz Lang Metropolis-style human ant hills, while the countryside reverts to a primeval state ruled over by wild animals.

That was the 'vision' of 1999, but now, like the drastic change in the architectural style of Henbury Hall, there has been a change in the housing situation. Nothing so fruitful as a U-turn to low-density, low-cost settlements on greenfield land of course,

but something just as subversive as the Pol-Pot-in-reverse politics of 'densification'. It came to light with the discovery that most of the brownfield land earmarked for new urbanites was uneconomic to develop without a liberal sprinkling of taxpayers' money – permission to print which was unaccountably being withheld by the spoilsports of Brussels. Meanwhile, most of the brownfield land that was economic to build on was turning out to be what used to be the mature back gardens of existing houses in older suburbs, which were busily being converted into sites for new duplex or triplex apartments.

Not only is this high-density low-rise outcome a far cry from the Buck Rogers metropolis that was the original 'vision', but the absence of resources to turn this

misunderstanding around is becoming more evident with each passing day. Permission to disburse the fabled inducements may be won from Brussels in the end, but in finance everything is connected to everything else and the government's urgent need for funds to pay for new railways, new doctors, new teachers and everything else, is bound to outweigh the needs of a mad metropolis schemed by architects.

And so we shall be permitted to go on leafing enviously through the pages of *Country Life* a little longer.

**'With an obtuseness that is hard to credit, the government has decreed that more than half of all new houses shall be built on urban land'**

## a life in architecture

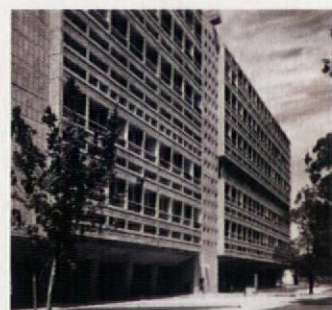
**julian treuherz**

Julian Treuherz is immersed in the Victorian splendours of Liverpool's newly refurbished Walker Art Gallery, where he is keeper, but his roots are firmly in the Modern Movement.

His parents were German Jews who escaped 1930s Berlin. 'My parents had an active interest in architecture. Dad had decorated his flat with Bauhaus furniture, and my mother had worked in an architect's office for a while.'

So Treuherz was brought up in the Bauhaus aesthetic – in spite of, or perhaps because of, the terraces and semis of post-war Rochdale, where the family lived in a house designed by Yorkshire Modernist Peter Womersley in 1958. 'It was almost Scandinavian in design, with great sheet glass windows and vertical timber cladding, and Aalto furniture from Heal's.'

Treuherz knew Le Corbusier's Unité d'Habitation at Marseilles



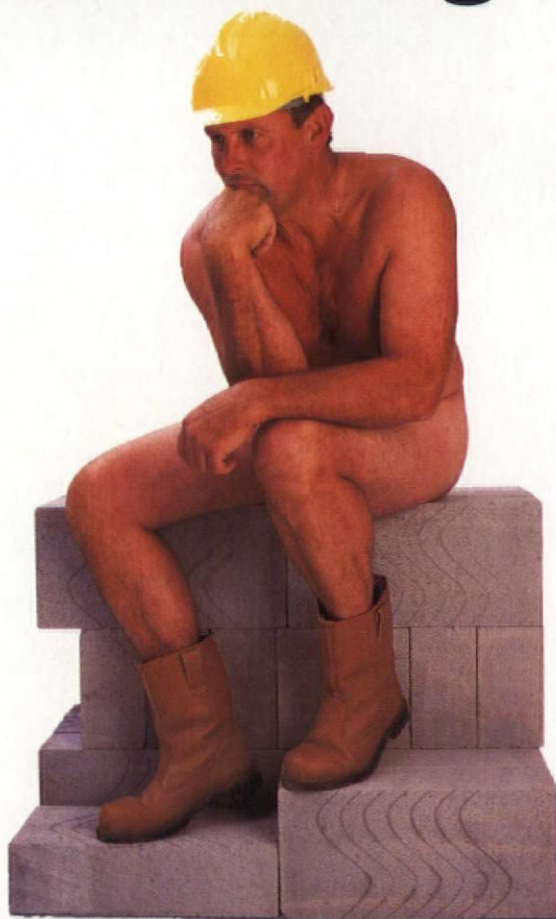
(pictured) from books, but didn't visit until recently. 'It was life-enhancing to wake up there – the tremendous sense of space and the human proportions of its internal streets. It's so utterly different from our experience of a modern block of flats and illustrates how poor copies destroyed the ideal.'

Treuherz started his career at a time when Victorian buildings were under threat. But he loves the decorative riches of places such as the John Rylands' Library in Manchester, and admires the way that Gilbert Scott carried on the Victorian Gothic into the 20th century with Liverpool's Anglican Cathedral. 'I'm not religious but it has such a strong spiritual charge.'

Deborah Mulhearn



# Part L got you thinking?



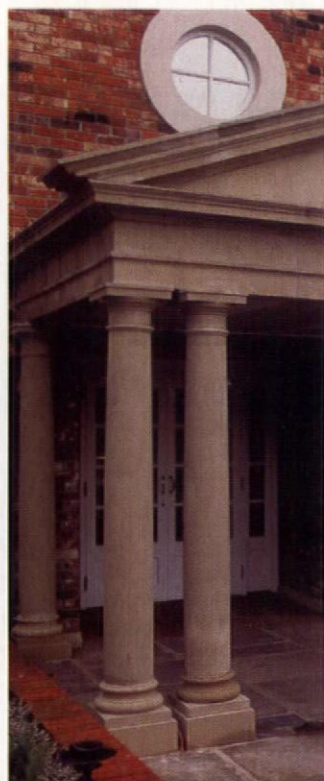
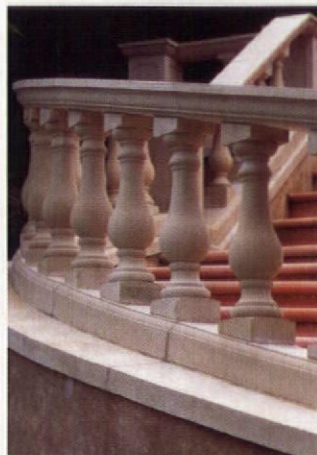
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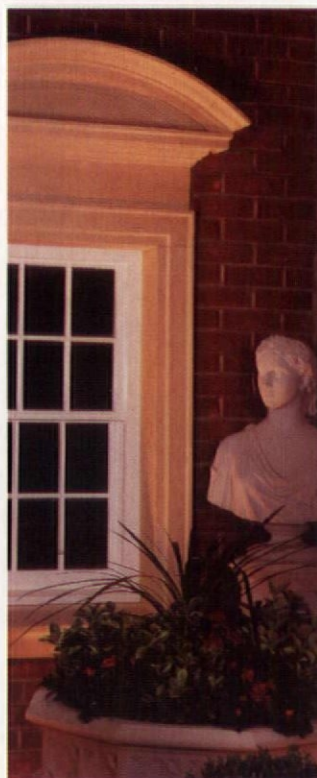
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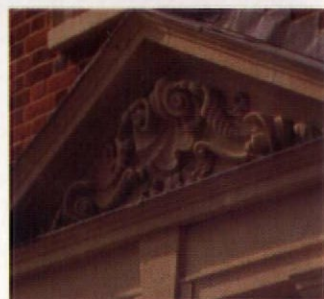
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# aj building study





# Club class

**MPV, the latest nightclub project from Liverpool practice Union North, is a creative fusion tucked away under four Victorian railway arches in Leeds**

*By Deborah Mulhearn. Photographs Chris Gascoigne/VIEW*





A practice of six that includes an ex-sheet metal worker, an ex-upholsterer, a graphic designer and a founding member who wrote his dissertation on architecture and cookery, is almost duty bound to come up with some radical design solutions. Union North, a Liverpool practice for whom the more restrictive mantras of Modernism have clearly got too much, has applied its oblique creative mix to what it is hoping will be its last bar/nightclub project.

MPV is housed in four identical funky, chunky red pods that protrude cheekily from four interconnected railway arches in Leeds city centre. The arches carry the trans-Pennine railway from Liverpool through Manchester and onwards to York and Newcastle. By day, the shiny shuttered pods give no clue as to their identity or their point of entry; each 7x3m front wall is in fact a coun-

terweighted, hinged door, which opens upwards on a power-assisted winch mechanism to form a canopy.

'We aimed for a response which would achieve maximum contrast between the existing structure, which we weren't allowed to alter, and the new intervention,' says Lance Routh, Union North's co-director (and cookery guy). His favourite bit is the remote door control, operated from a secure box opposite the pods. 'You can orchestrate them so they all open together,' he says with a laugh.

Once opened, four svelte and cleverly lit interiors are revealed: glossy plum laminated and meranti plywood-lined wall panels which curve continuously from the floor and follow the roofline round. The plywood ceiling houses light scoops with concealed fittings, and warm air grilles and speakers are also concealed. Bars are oak; upholstery and

drinks counters are in durable black leather.

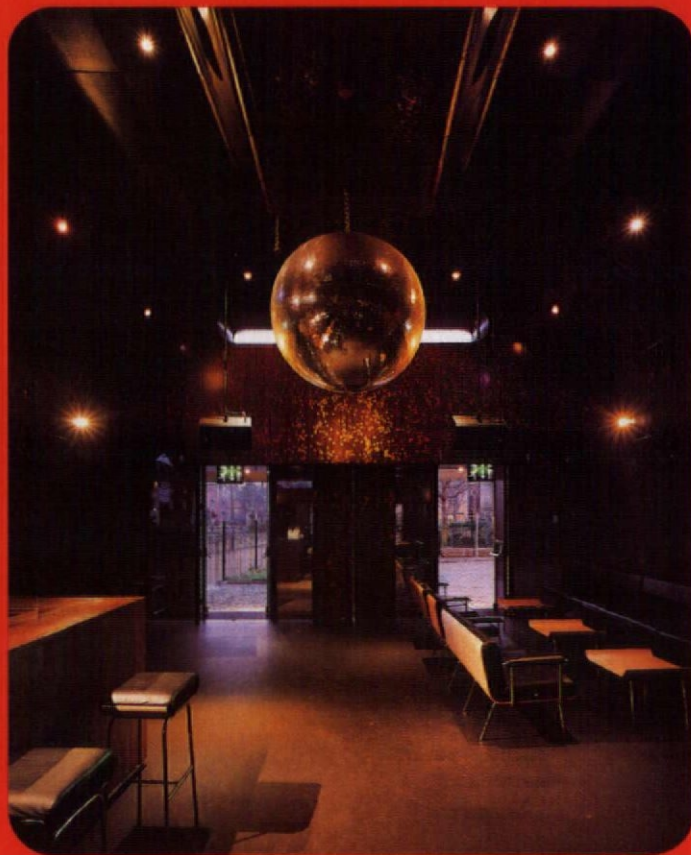
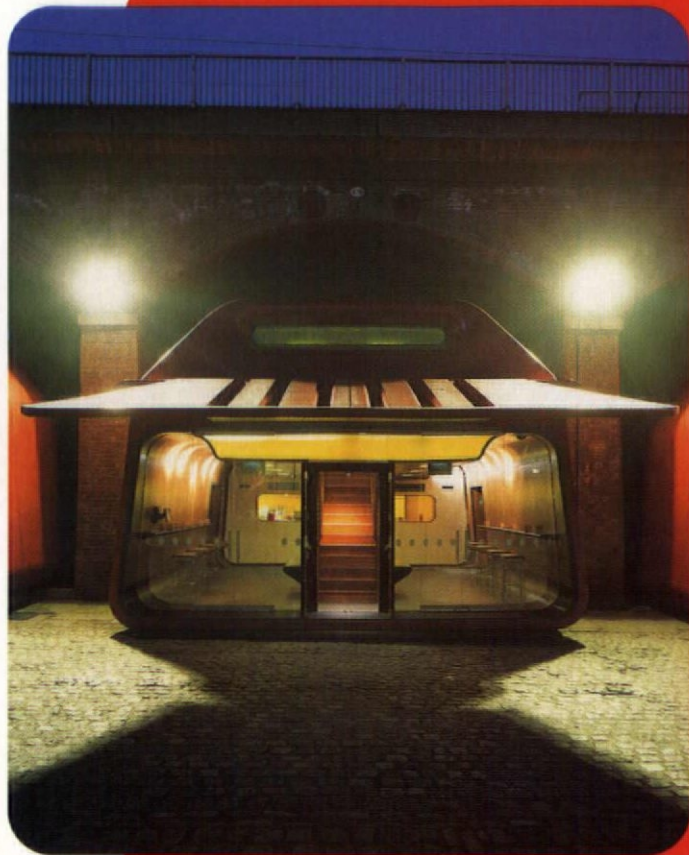
Routh and partner Miles Falkingham built up the aptly named Union North on the back of Liverpool's '90s nightlife explosion, injecting a fair measure of stylistic rigour into the city's cavernous bar and club scene. A steady stream of commissions included Blue Bar, Baby Blue (AJ 27.4.00) and Modo. Now that the explosion has become an implosion, with nearly as many bars as there are punters to patronise them, Union North has seen the writing on the dripping walls. New projects include housing schemes in Liverpool and Manchester, and a collaboration with Rotterdam-based practice BIQ Architecten for a £5 million refurbishment of the Bluecoat Art Centre, Liverpool's city centre jewel.

But first Union North has sidetracked to Leeds for MPV. MPV stands for multi-pur-



Counterweighted, hinged doors open upwards on a power-assisted winch mechanism to form a series of canopies





The middle units have a single-storey bar space (left) and each of the end units has a double-height bar space (right). Passageways cut into the structure of the Victorian viaduct offer long views through all four pods

pose venue, but the original concept for a versatile meeting, drinking and performance space has so far failed to materialise, even though the unexpectedly generous site would allow various creative day and night time uses.

The practice envisaged a musical and cultural dimension which would bring the outside area into play and differentiate the four rooms with separate functions, such as a comedy club and live music. But the client finally decided to focus solely on the internal spaces, so in effect MPV operates as four giant bars with dance floors at either end, and drinkers spilling out onto the enclosed cobbled area to the front.

Townhouse Life was an existing client, owned by a couple who previously ran clothing stores in Manchester, Liverpool and Leeds. It commissioned Union North to convert a disused mill near to Leeds Corn Exchange, where it also had a shop, into the Townhouse bar/restaurant three years ago. Bolstered by Townhouse's success, it acquired eight arches from Railtrack's property arm less than a kilometre along the track from Leeds City Station, on the south edge of the city centre. The four end arches comprise MPV, while the first four await refurbishment.

Despite being just outside the city centre club circuit, the only apparent disadvantage is that revellers, who would logically progress along the short distance from the pedestrianised Townhouse area, have to zigzag under the railway twice to reach MPV because a

fenced-off factory car park denies direct access. The club replaces an assortment of units including a tattoo parlour and a taxi firm which also used the paved area to the front.

The site is almost south-facing, and looks out on to the enormous early 19th century Leeds parish church. The venue's address is 5-8 Church Walk, but it is well separated from the church by a wide grassed area and Kirkgate, a main road flowing westwards into the city centre. To the east, the site is bounded by a busy arterial road. The arches are not blind, but the back wall of office buildings abuts them to the north, blocking most of the daylight.



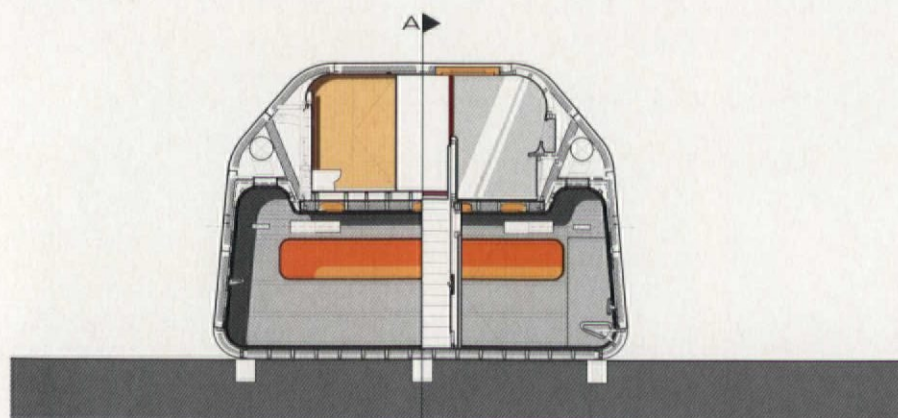
The pods are inscrutable by day

MPV may be just a short stagger from Union North's earlier and bigger bar, but baby Townhouse it is not. 'It's not an unexpected use, but it is an unexpected treatment,' says Routh. 'We try to bring an individual response to each project instead of relying on a formulaic house style, and MPV is a good example of this. It is a product design solution as much as a building design solution, so we have expressed seals and trims like a fridge door or a portable TV.'

In cross section, the pods, or units, resemble a tilting train carriage, with curved corners and slightly inclined sides, but in long section they are more like a transporter or roll-on-roll-off ferry. A breathing space between the flattened roof of the unit and the underside of the arch evokes a train going through a tunnel, but the transport aesthetic, while pleasing, is thankfully not overplayed. They have also been described as dustpans, dustbins, bottle banks, handbags and Portakabins. Take your pick. In fact they were made exactly as the hull of a ship is: rolled steel sections with a continuously welded mild steel skin. Conventional steel fabricators proved to be too costly, and they ended up being built – inexpensively – by Merseyside Ship Repairers.

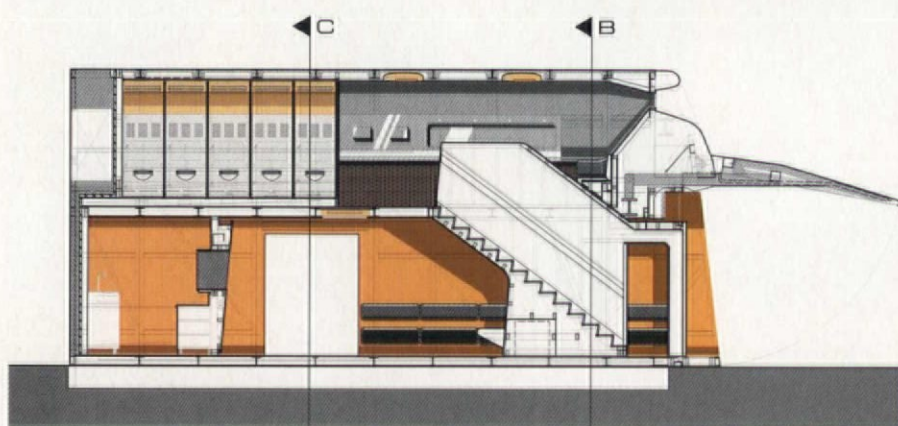
The scale of the units meant they needed a police escort along the M62, and there is a satisfying sense of them arriving and being parked. But despite their temporary, transportable look, they are complex permanent structures and an exacting fit-out was carried out on site. Symmetrical in plan, the two



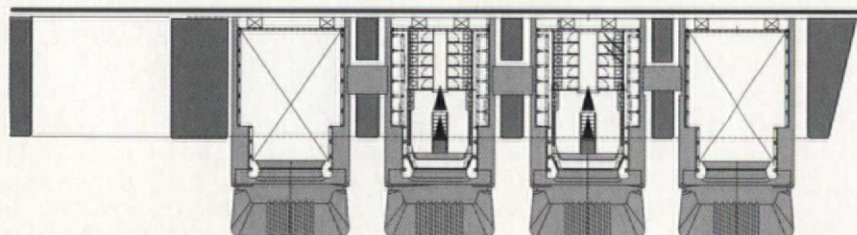


section CC

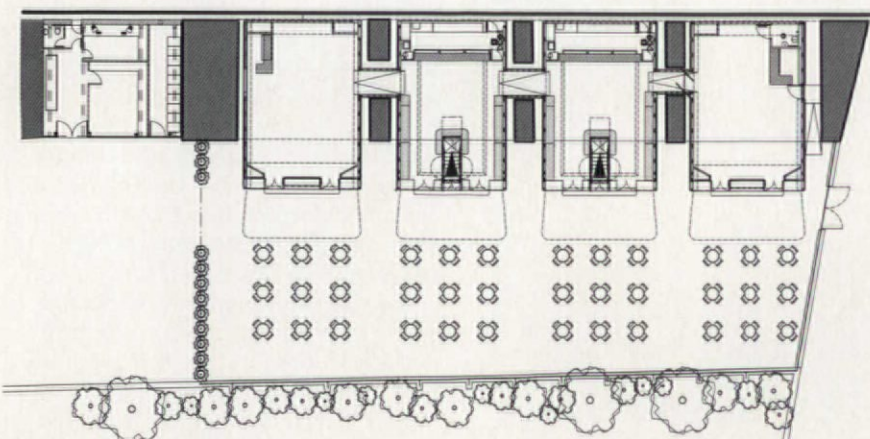
section BB



section AA



mezzanine



ground floor plan

## Structure

Constructed completely in steel, this building uses technology similar to that used in shipbuilding and was in fact constructed by Merseyside Ship Repairers.

The four units are based on the same structural system with either single- or two-storey spaces adapted for their individual uses, such as bar, restaurant and nightclub. The steel construction provides the primary structure of ground and first floors, roof and walls integral with the steel skin, which provides the external envelope. The ground and first floors consist of timber joists spanning between the primary steel ribs and supporting plywood decking.

The units were prefabricated in sections to meet the height and width restrictions of normal transport, avoiding the expense of escorted delivery. On site the units were bolted together with neoprene gaskets to produce a weathertight seal.

The design also addresses the site constraints incurred due to the units being located within the arches of an operational Railtrack viaduct. The requirement for access for inspection and maintenance of the brickwork of the arches was resolved by the freestanding design of the units, which allows free access to all sides, and the roof of the units was designed to take access loading for Railtrack inspection purposes.

The restriction on craneage next to a live railway line was resolved by using an all-terrain forklift truck for unloading and positioning of the segments on the pre-constructed sub-structure consisting of steel mini-piles and reinforced concrete ground beams.

The front elevation of the units is constructed in steel with a fibreglass skin allowing the architect to produce a complex double-curved form. This forms a canopy when open and provides secure enclosure to the glazed facade of the units when closed. The canopy is counterweighted and is operated electrically by winches and cables.

The steel was given a protective paint coating in the fabrication yard and a final finish on site. Internally the steel is protected by the spray-applied insulation layer.

*Ian Leaper, Buro Happold*

**Glossy plum laminated and meranti plywood-lined wall panels curve continuously from the floor and follow the roofline round**

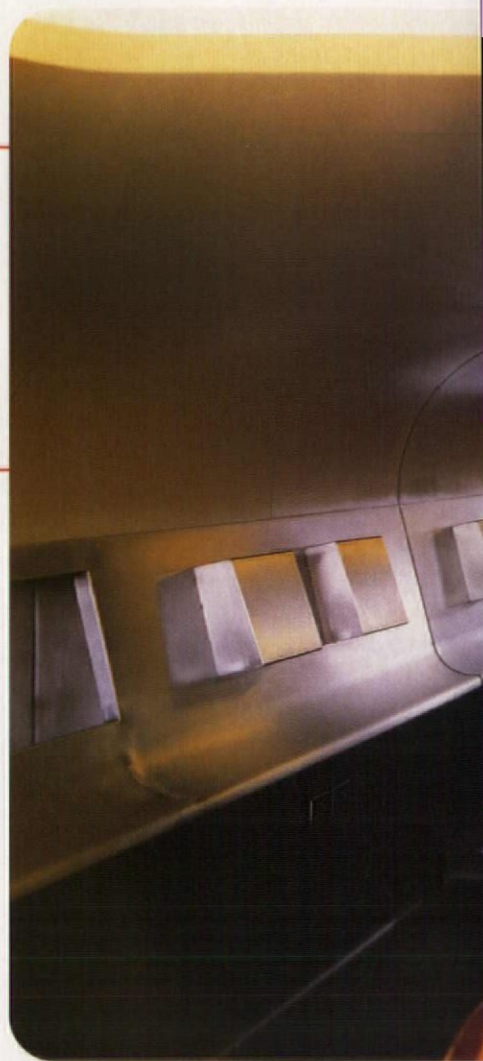








Each of the middle units has a servery-style bar plugged into the back wall (left) and a central staircase which leads to a cabin-like WC block (right)

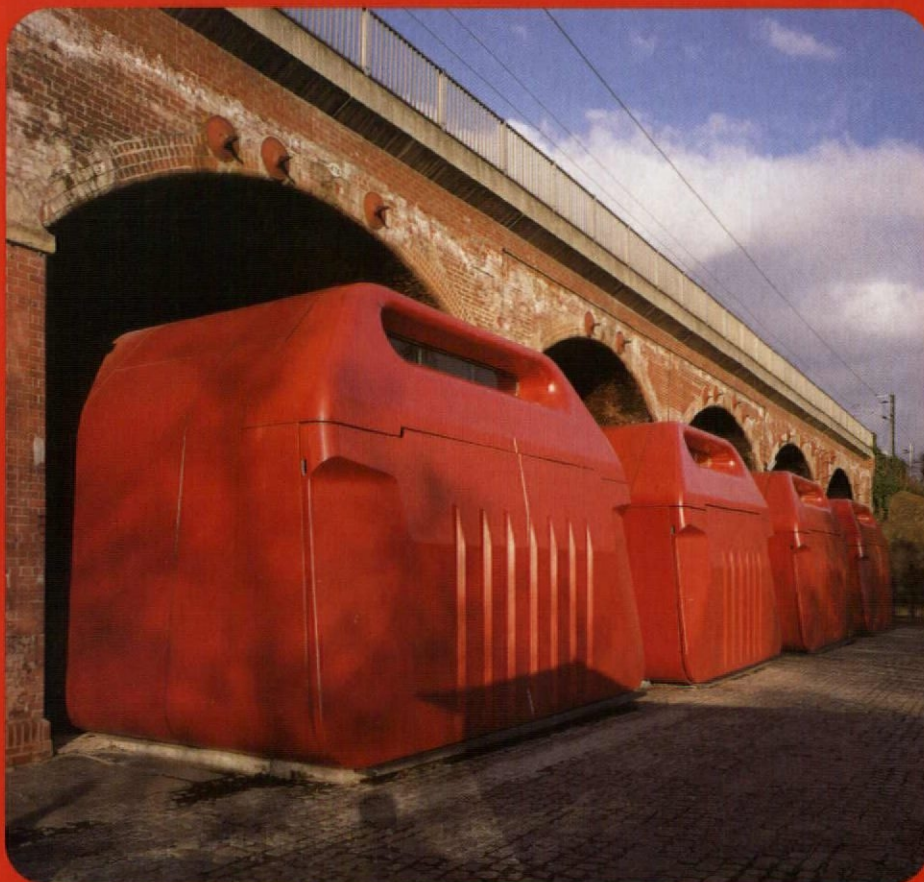


middle units have a fully enclosed central staircase leading up to a WC block, which people can access direct from outside, while the two end units are double height spaces. All have a GRP nose piece, with a window embedded above the canopy door.

The canopy/doors open to reveal glazed front elevations, with solid doors leading up to the WC blocks in the middle units. The underside of the canopies are clad with birch faced plywood and have recessed lights. They also perform several important functions: they provide covered outside space, solar shading, security and they clearly signal when the venue is open.

The interior spaces have been worked to

allow maximum circulation. Each room is linked by passageways through the existing jack arches. The bars in the two double height end rooms face each other through the three interconnected jack arch openings. The middle rooms have off-white servery-style bars which plug the back wall. It is in these two rooms that the vehicle aesthetic is most strongly continued. The low contoured ceiling, the sculpted staircase cutting through the central space, the cabin-like WC block with recessed stainless steel sinks, integrated seating and the moulded nose piece like a prow with its elongated porthole, suggest this time a ferry – a port out, starboard home one, of course.



## Costs

Costs based on tender sum

### SUBSTRUCTURE

**FOUNDATIONS** £131.03/m<sup>2</sup>  
Concrete strip foundations on mini-piles

### SUPERSTRUCTURE

**FRAME AND UPPER FLOORS** £389.00/m<sup>2</sup>  
Mild steel channels with 3mm steel skin suspended mezzanine superstructure and staircase case, canopy door subframe, bearings and counterbalance

**BUILDING ENVELOPE** £184.11/m<sup>2</sup>  
GRP nose and canopy shell. Sprayed polyurethane insulation to steel shell. Kingspan cladding on timber subframe to rear walls, plant deck and link construction, ply lining. Ply deck and single ply roof membrane to plant deck

**STAIRS** £4.13/m<sup>2</sup>  
Timber strings, treads and risers

**WINDOWS AND GLAZED EXTERNAL DOORS** £42.75/m<sup>2</sup>  
Frameless glazed elevations and mezzanine windows

**INTERNAL PARTITIONS** £58.61/m<sup>2</sup>  
Front and rear bulkhead linings formed from lacquered ply on suspended studwork to door mechanism and rear plant decks. WC cubicles and partitions

**DOORS** £13.79/m<sup>2</sup>  
Laminated and lacquered door blanks

**WALL FINISHES** £227.58/m<sup>2</sup>  
Paint finish to shell, primed inner surfaces and three-coat epoxy external finish, internal linings; clear/covered lacquered plywood on plywood





grounds. Lacquered plywood & MDF linings to stair enclosures

**FLOOR FINISHES** £71.40  
Floating floors to ground and mezzanine floors. Sheet vinyl and rubber safety flooring

**CEILING FINISHES** £16.55/m<sup>2</sup>  
Canopy lining, clear lacquered birch ply lining

**FIXTURES AND FITTINGS** £186.87/m<sup>2</sup>  
Bar fascia, top and back bars, laminate-faced plywood fascia in timber sub-frame, laminate-faced mdf back bar units with mirrors and display frames. Fixed seating and loose furniture, cantilevered mild steel brackets, plywood frame, leather upholstery

**SERVICES EQUIPMENT** £243.09/m<sup>2</sup>  
Bar and kitchen equipment. Stainless steel bar subframe, underbar and back bar, refrigeration, kitchen equipment and associated plant. Till system

**MECHANICAL INSTALLATION** £224.13/m<sup>2</sup>  
Mechanical and plumbing/sanitary installation generally

**ELECTRICAL INSTALLATION** £110.34/m<sup>2</sup>

**COMMUNICATIONS INSTALLATION** £224.13/m<sup>2</sup>  
Direct contracts for sound system and security installation

**SPECIAL INSTALLATION** £68.96  
Canopy mechanism, winches, controls and safety mechanisms

**PRELIMINARIES** £327.58/m<sup>2</sup>  
Preliminaries, overheads and profit

**EXTERNAL WORKS** £10,000  
Paving, bollards, copings and fencing

## Cost summary

	Cost per m <sup>2</sup> (£)	Percentage of total
<b>STRIP-OUT AND DEMOLITION</b>	<b>25.00</b>	<b>0.96</b>
<b>SUBSTRUCTURE</b>	<b>131.03</b>	<b>5.04</b>
<b>SUPERSTRUCTURE</b>		
Frame and upper floors	389.00	14.98
Building envelope	184.11	7.09
Stairs	4.13	0.16
Windows and glazed external doors	42.75	1.65
Internal partitions	58.61	2.26
Doors	13.79	0.53
<b>Group element total</b>	<b>692.39</b>	<b>26.67</b>
<b>FINISHES</b>		
Wall finishes	275.85	10.62
Floor finishes	71.40	2.75
Ceiling finishes	16.55	0.64
<b>Group element total</b>	<b>363.80</b>	<b>14.01</b>
<b>FIXTURES AND FITTINGS</b>	<b>186.87</b>	<b>7.19</b>
<b>SERVICES</b>		
Services equipment	243.09	9.36
Mechanical installation	224.13	8.63
Electrical installation	110.34	4.25
Communications installation	224.13	8.63
Special installation	68.96	2.65
<b>Group element total</b>	<b>870.65</b>	<b>33.52</b>
<b>PRELIMINARIES</b>	<b>327.58</b>	<b>12.61</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£2,597.32</b>	<b>100.00</b>
<b>WEBLINKS</b>		
Buro Happold	www.burohappold.com	

## CREDITS

### TENDER DATE

January 2001

### START ON SITE DATE

January 2001

### CONTRACT DURATION

22 weeks

### GROSS INTERNAL AREA

290m<sup>2</sup>

### FORM OF CONTRACT

JCT 98

### TENDER SUM

£512,989 (main contract only, excludes direct contracts)

### DESIGNER

Union North

### STRUCTURAL ENGINEER,

FIRE AND M&E

### CONSULTANT

Buro Happold

### MAIN FIT-OUT

### CONTRACTOR

Simons Construction

### DIRECT CONTRACTORS

### AND SUBCONTRACTORS

steel fabricator

Merseyside Ship Repairers; external painting E&P Coatings, Bagnalls Painting and Decorating; mastic sealant Fastglobe; bar equipment Dawnvale Catering Equipment Specialists; sound system 52nd Street; security systems TI Security; joinery Simons Joinery; bar joinery H&R Forbes; electrical installation Baseline Electrical Engineers; glassfibre door shells and nosepieces IUF Developments; plumbing & sanitary, mechanical ventilation Downvale Catering Equipment Specialists; sprayed foam insulation Websters Insulation; glazing JMW

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# working details

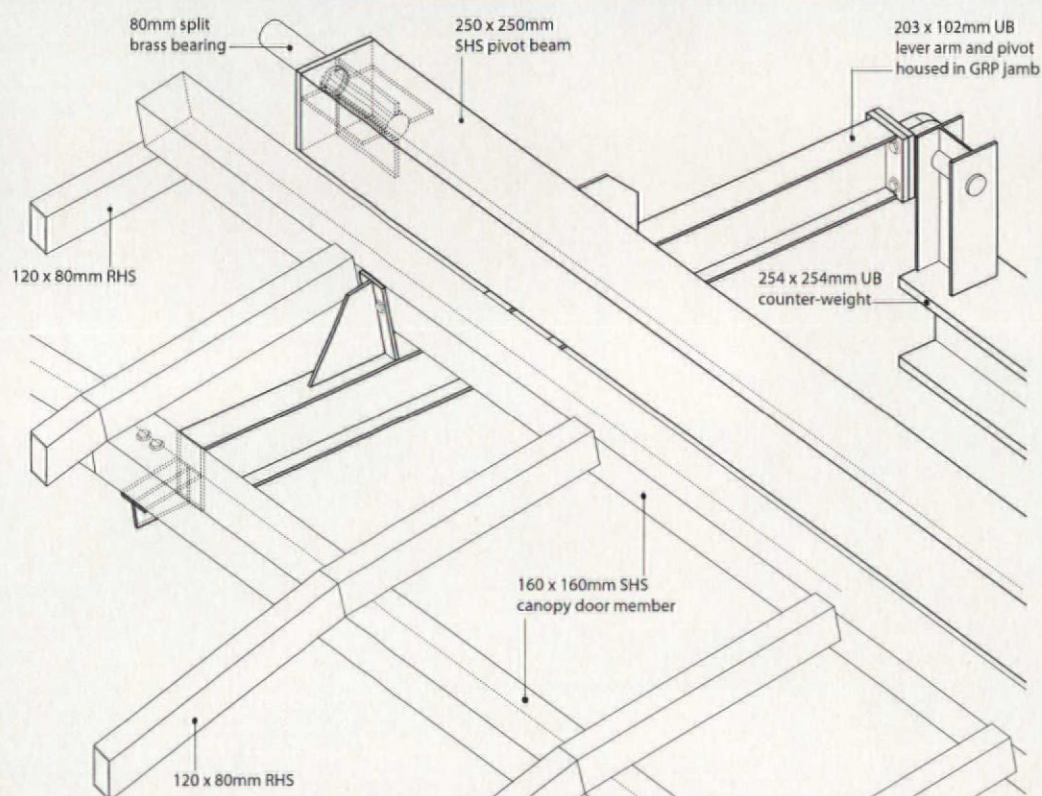
The bar/venue is housed in four linked steel-framed pods set under the brick arches of a functioning 19th-century railway bridge. Each is shaped like an inverted boat hull; size and shape were limited by clearance requirements to maintain the arches. The structure, a series of curved 152 x 89mm UBs and 150 x 75mm PFCs (parallel flange channels), covered with a continuously welded 3mm mild steel skin, was prefabricated by Merseyside Ship Repairers. The front of each pod is a steel frame, covered with GRP to accommodate the curved jambs to the upper window and glazed facade.

A pivoting projecting canopy runs above each facade. It has a steel frame of 160 x 160mm SHS and 120 x 80mm members clad with GRP. When the bar/venue is closed, it pivots to act as a shutter door, enclosing the facade and protecting the interior.

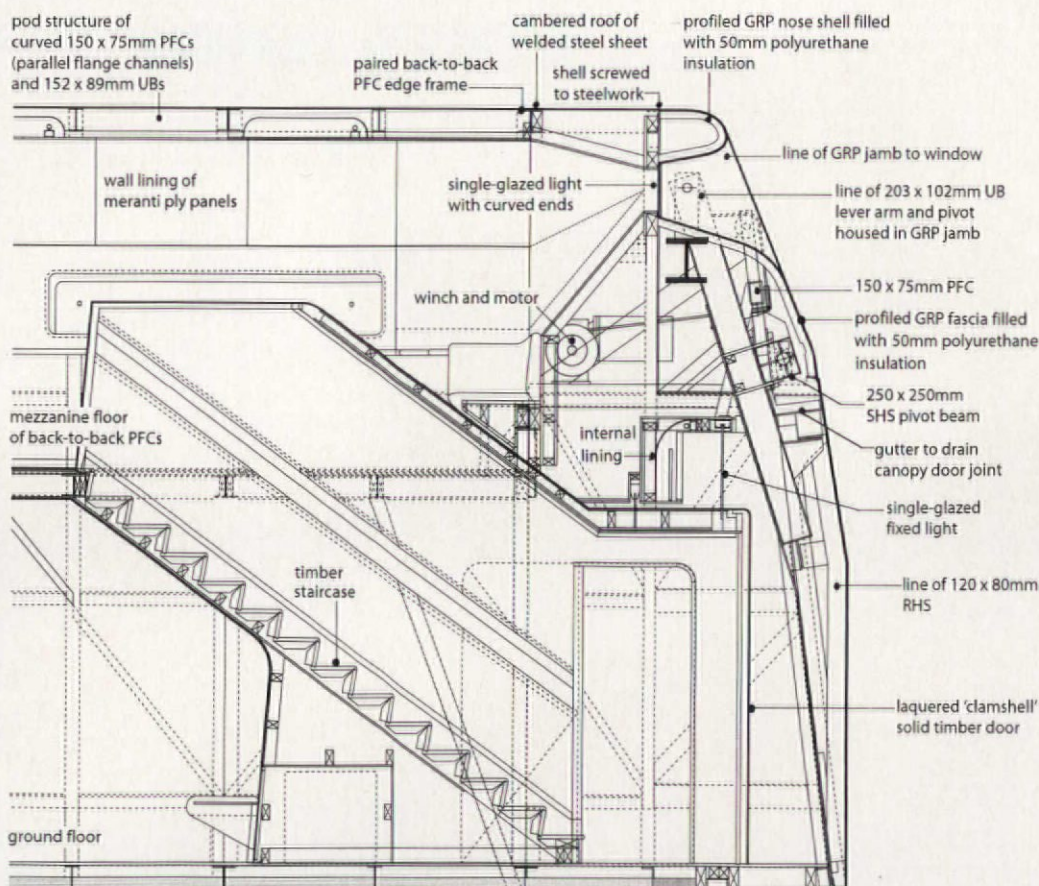
The shutter door pivots on a mechanism formed by a 250 x 250mm SHS pivot beam which runs at the head of each canopy, with phosphor bronze pivots at its ends which fit into split brass bearings. A pair of 203 x 102mm UB arms are welded to the pivot beam. The lower ends are bolted to the canopy/door frame; the upper ends are bolted with a phosphor bronze pivot to a huge counterweight beam – a 254 x 254mm UC weighted with solid 10mm bars. The counterweight assists the opening mechanism which is a motorised winch, winding a cable fixed to the pivot arm. The upper parts of the UB arms are neatly enclosed in the narrow jambs on each side of the upper window.

The soffit of the canopy is fitted with lighting to illuminate the pods at night.

Susan Dawson

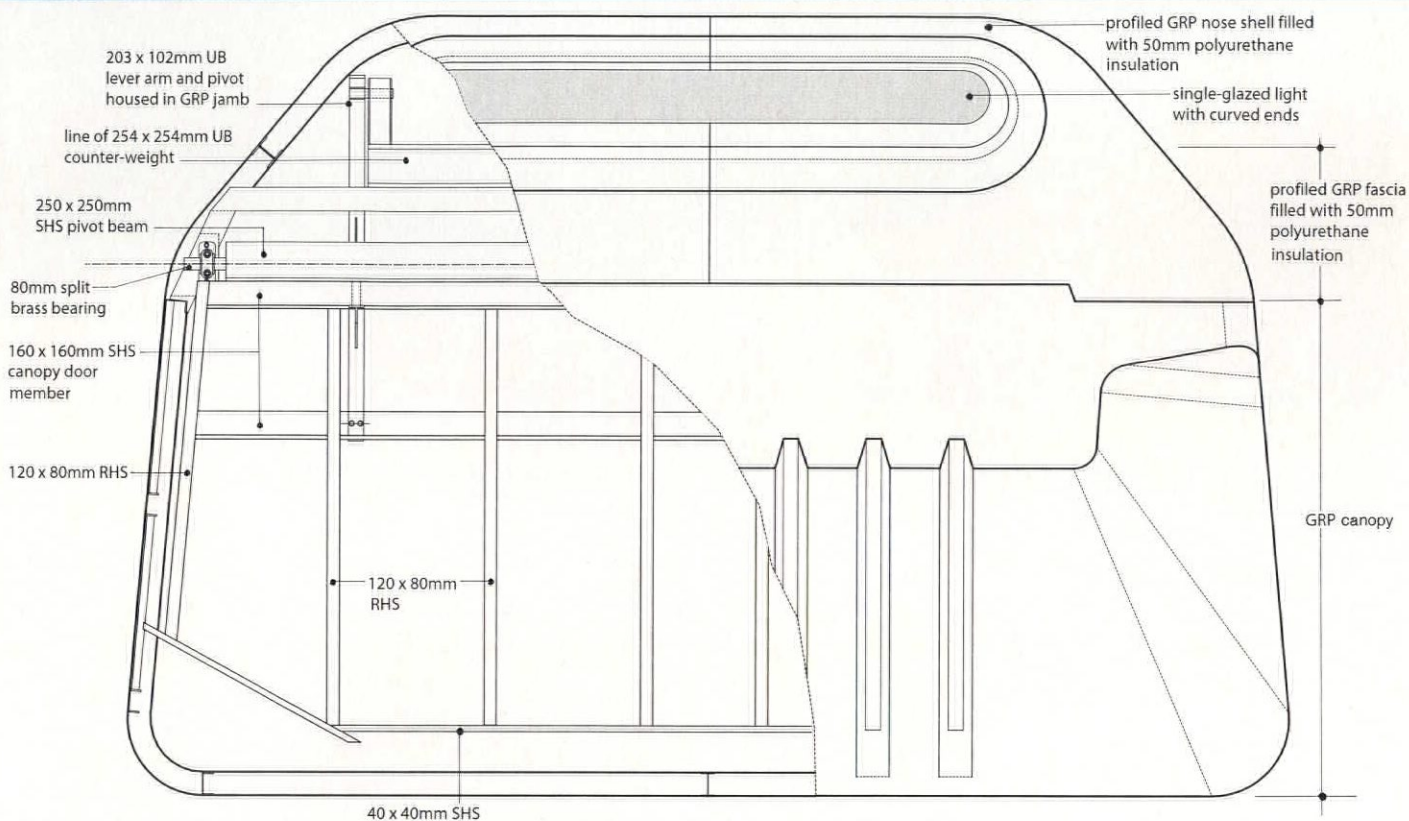


## ISOMETRIC OF CANOPY DOOR CONNECTION

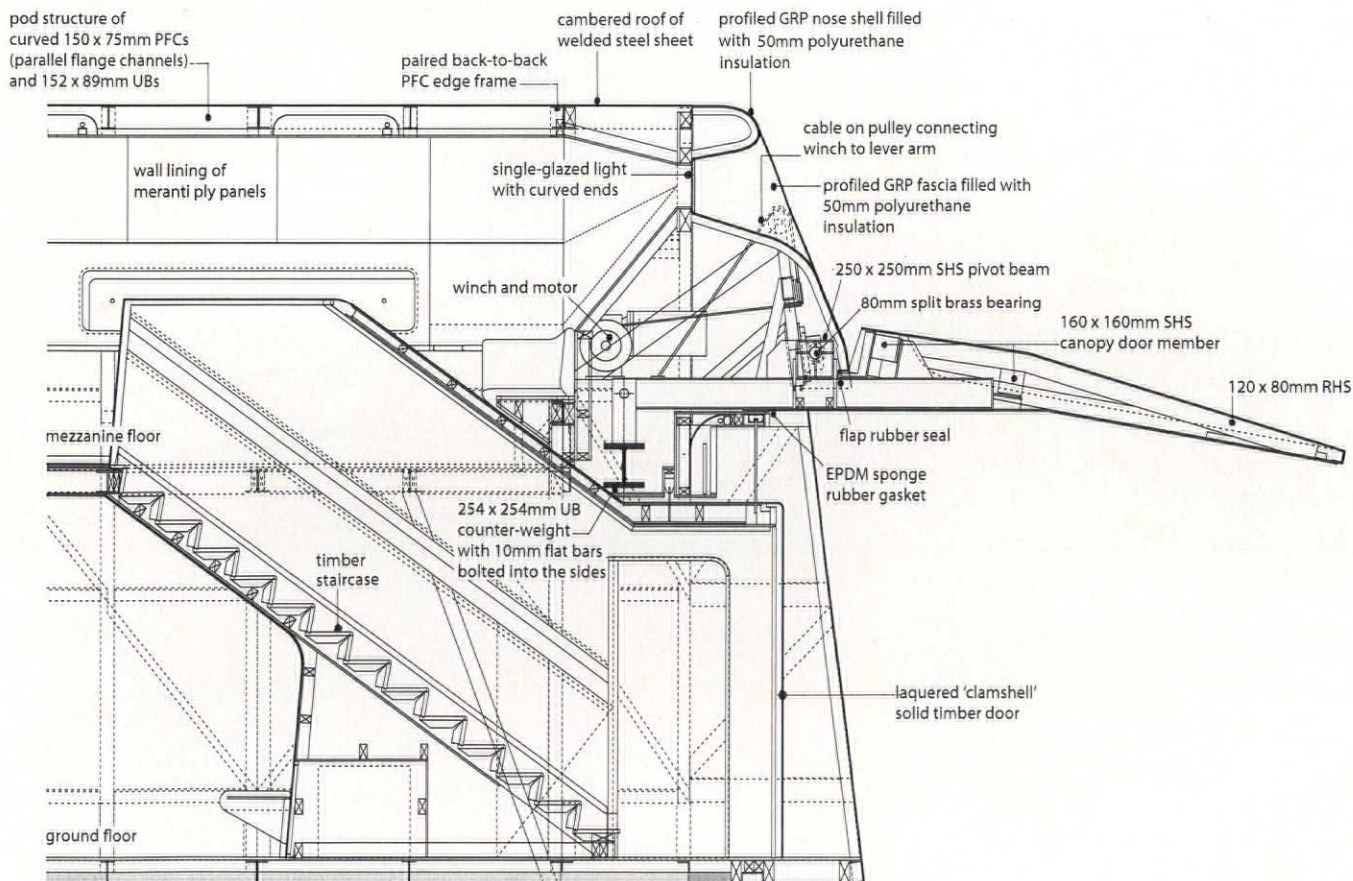


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**THRISLINGTON PARTITIONS**





The T2 product was shown to great effect in terms of colour, style and finishing technique at the Broadband office in Nottingham and RSPCA new headquarters near Horsham.

Ability to provide wide panels with minimal framing makes for a spacious and open environment, but maintains the privacy requirements without compromising vital communication.

Thrislington has installed high-quality products for numerous well-known companies and government bodies over many years. They include:

Ford Motor Company, Lloyds Bank, Barclays Bank, MOD, MI6, GlaxoSmithKline, Merck, Church Commissioners, St Thomas' Hospital, British Airways and hundreds more



Monobloc partition systems have for a long time embodied many of the cost and time efficiencies inherent in prefabrication. However, the challenge has been to combine the benefits of prefabrication with the capability of providing enough integral variety to allow the creation of bespoke design solutions.

Meeting these requirements is, a new steel stud-based partition system that steelmaker Thrislington has designed to offer greater flexibility and stability than that offered by most glass and aluminium systems.

The essence of T2 is that, unlike conventional composite partitions, the factory-engineered system of components is rapidly erected on site to provide a solution that can respond in a multitude of ways to today's working practices. The diverse palette of facing materials which this provides can be tailored to suit bespoke

requirements without incurring cost penalties. So while having different finishes on either side of a T2 partition is simply achieved, the system is also quicker to erect than conventional steel stud solutions. Yet T2 has the robustness of steel and provides more crisply detailed elevations.

The T2 range of pre-finished facing materials includes fabric, vinyl, laminate, veneer and powder-coated steel. Facings are fixed by concealed clips which also facilitate demounting and relocating. White boards, integral trunking and a variety of joint systems complete the versatility of T2. In performance terms, one-hour fire ratings are achievable, while a typical 80mm-thick partition can achieve in excess of 45dB Rw when solid.

T2 was recently installed to architect Miller Hughes Associates' requirements at the RSPCA's Project Ararat national headquarters in West

Sussex. The precision of the system achieved a high-quality finish with tight tolerances, which enabled the architect's shadow-gap detailing to be achieved consistently.

Established over half a century ago, Thrislington is the UK's longest-established manufacturer of relocatable steel partitions, with a capacity to produce all components under one roof. The company's fully relocatable, steel monobloc systems offer numerous design options for greater flexibility, such as the ability to have any specified module width up to 1,500mm and to a height of 5m. All solid, glazed and door modules are fully interchangeable, and different visual effects can be achieved by exploiting the various jointing methods, door arrangements, finishes, skirtings and head details.

Thrislington makes partitions for three main market sectors: offices, industrial and process





applications, and clean rooms, each of which has its own demanding performance criteria. One of the company's most notable developments for the industrial and process sector is the unique and cost-effective 'Box in Box' construction, which provides an enclosed haven – be it for offices, production areas, Internet/telecoms space or even the works canteen – within a larger working space.

Box-in-Box comprises steel monobloc walls and a walk-on ceiling construction that is rigid enough to obviate the need for a separate steel structure, thereby providing further economies. All components are factory-engineered and clipped together on site. A recent installation at a major UK motor manufacturer's engine plant provides a clean area of rest and relaxation amid the surrounding hubbub of conveyor belts and engineering activity.





Many who are aware of Thrislington's pedigree as a manufacturer of steel monobloc partitions may not know that this also extends to the design, manufacture and installation of steel structures. At Digital Island's information-storage facility in West London, Thrislington designed a steel structure to spread the load due to the insufficient load-carrying capacity of the existing floor.

But the company's capacity in clean-room applications is also considerable, with a long list of prestigious blue-chip clients. Partitions to heights of up to 7.2m installed at GlaxoSmithKline's Maidenhead facility were suspended from a structural steel soffit to facilitate the manufacturing process. The light and airy feel was imparted by the flush-glazed partitions, which were sealed to provide an airtight construction.

The full panoply of benefits associated with Thrislington's engineered steel monobloc partitions is utilised at a demanding installation for TyCom Global Network's data interchange facility at Heathrow. Fire resistance was crucial, as was the ability to withstand a uniformly distributed load exerted by an inert gas which is released at very high pressure in the event of a fire. The £1 million, totally flexible solution provided by Thrislington involved 1,700 linear metres of bespoke, narrow-module, relocatable steel monobloc panels in a range of heights up to 5.6m.

Since its foundation in 1946, Thrislington has been an energetic manufacturer, providing cutting-edge solutions in steel-partition technology. Its in-house technical design and support teams have helped generations of architects and designers create attractive, productive environments that have set the standards for other partition manufacturers.



## Thrislington

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[www.thrislington.co.uk](http://www.thrislington.co.uk)





## An image problem

With the report due soon on the Heron Tower planning inquiry, we examine a landmark in digital presentation

BY SUTHERLAND LYALL

Architects have long been known for their creativity in producing perspectives of proposed buildings. With the right viewpoint, a knowing eye and imaginative background painting, any competent perspective artist can transform architectural pigs' ears into decent, unassuming buildings worthy of planning permission.

The bad (or perhaps good) news is that the planners have got wise. It used to be impossible (until the building was completed) for them to pinpoint where the exaggeration or diminution in a perspective occurred. That is because, however precisely set up with straight lines on a drawing board a perspective might be, it is actually a

**KPF used a digital light source on its 3D model of the City to establish from where it was possible to see St Paul's**

sketch, a work of imagination which is all but impossible to deconstruct.

It took a while for it to dawn on anybody that the coming of computer-aided design involved the introduction of unwelcome precision. Once a three-dimensional digital model of a building was set up there could be generated an infinite number of perspective views of it under different lighting conditions and from a variety of 'camera' views. Naturally the most favourable was picked. But if the architect could do that, so could the planners more easily demand a different view – which was perhaps more illuminating as to bulk and effect on surrounding buildings.

And that is exactly what happened at the Heron Bishopsgate Tower planning inquiry. To many it sounds like a matter of pressing a few keys and waiting for the new image to roll out. In fact, it takes a lot of work and time to produce new images.

KPF designed the tower using Bentley MicroStation on a network of Windows 2000 PCs, some of them with dual processors. The most recent incarnation of the application, version 8, can read and write native AutoCAD files – which the British construction industry has more or less settled on as its CAD standard.

Lars Hesselgren, KPF's head of graphic imaging, says: 'We use MicroStation for all our design and modelling and rendering.' That is because the application does all these things seamlessly. It makes sense not to have to change graphic user interfaces and procedures just because you are changing from production drawings through three-dimensional models to





rendering and even animation. And a MicroStation file can be rendered by a number of computers simultaneously on the office network – each allocated a horizontal band of the image. Hesselgren says: 'We did animations for Heron using 20MB files and managed to render 2,000 frames using 30 machines in the office in just two days. MicroStation's ray tracing is the fastest in the business.'

'We have configured MicroStation in a standard way. People protect their own files but there is no need for special user privileges – so that everybody can use it. Because there is no real difference between using 2D and 3D, it raises the way three-dimensional design is used in the office.'

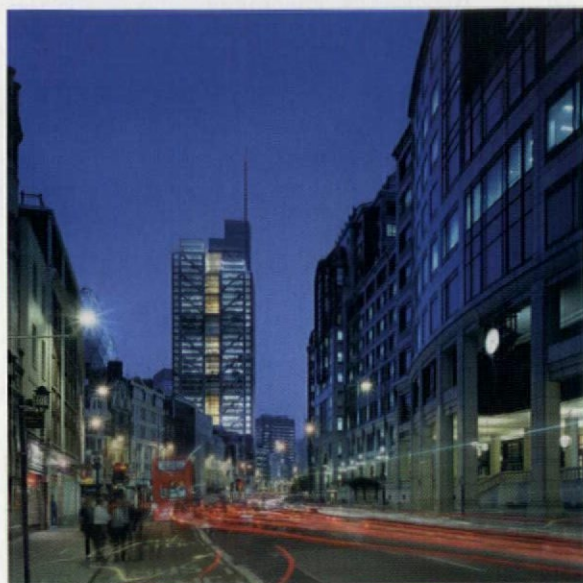
But in the hands of lawyers, CAD drawings are not good enough. The issue of verifiable precision became a critical one which KPF and Hayes Davidson had to take seriously.

Verification probably started, says Alan Davidson, managing director of Hayes Davidson, at the Poultry inquiry when surveyor Roy Fenton verified the accuracy of images using acetate sheets on top of photographs. Things have moved on since then.

Hesselgren says: 'One of the key things in addressing this was the fact that over the years we have built up a detailed digital model of the City which sits on the Ordnance Survey map of the area. We add to it every time we do a new building and it now extends into the West End. It is this that we used to calibrate the 140 or so photomontages and used as proof that we have shown the correct angles.'

The procedure was to position the 3D model of the tower in the 3D digital model of the City. The ground level was raised to the average human eye height. A digital light source was attached to the top of the digital St Paul's and all the other lights turned off. The ray trace of this light enabled Hesselgren to establish from where, in London, people could see the dome of St Paul's. He sent KPF people out in cars to check the accuracy of the model and, apart from trees blocking some views, the model was verified in real life.

Lawyers being lawyers, one check was, of course, insufficient. Hesselgren says: 'The Ordnance Survey people refuse to guarantee accuracy of



**Above: Hayes Davidson's photomontages were subjected to rigorous verification procedures by lawyers; below: KPF produced its images of the Heron Tower on MicroStation**

more than a metre, although it's actually about a foot. So as a second check we used LIDAR, sideways radar scans carried out during regular plane flights over the City. These were compared with our model at University College London.

'Then there is a third check by a firm of specialist surveyors which uses an enhanced radio positioning system which allows you to establish a position in Cartesian space to an accuracy of something like 5mm. They put up target points on key locations such as Waterloo Bridge, St Paul's and the former Natwest Tower and calibrated our 3D model against this.

'So in the end we were pretty sure our model was correct,' Hesselgren says wryly, conscious that this sounds exact-

ly like the massive overkill that it was.

Hayes Davidson was commissioned by Heron to produce a number of high-resolution photomontages – partly because it is proficient at this kind of thing and partly, one suspects, to dispel the idea that all the images had been cooked up by the same people. Its chosen software is Studio Max, LightScene and QuickTime VR.

Hayes Davidson was also responsible for the video of what was reckoned to be a crucial five-minute walk across Waterloo Bridge. Objectors had said that a key specific argument against the tower was that it would obscure the view of St Paul's for people walking across the Thames two and a half kilometres away.

The video involved four 6,000-frame sequences and was interactive so that buildings could be switched on and off. But in essence Hayes Davidson shot a continuous video of the walk across the bridge and composited images of the tower into this. In the process it had to deal with issues of parallax, camera positions and lenses and developed a method of 'locking' rendered buildings into videos. Because of the lawyers' preoccupation with verification, producing the video seemed rather less arduous than preparing the 120-page document describing the methodology that provided evidence of the video's veracity. Davidson, who always plays things close to his chest, is cagey about the precise detail behind the verification. 'The inquiry spent a long time working through the document,' he says. But it was convinced.

Are we likely to see quite this scale of visual information in future big-league planning inquiries?

The consensus seems to be that, although everybody was deeply admiring of its quality and usefulness, everybody also hopes not. Especially those who would be paying the lawyers. The function of images is to provide a fair representation in the inquiry room of the reality in the street. With buildings as big as the Heron tower you cannot build mock-ups, so accurate images are essential. It would be a pity, though, if planning inquiries became bogged down in long arguments about the minute veracity of images – rather than what they have to say. The trouble is, the images are so great.

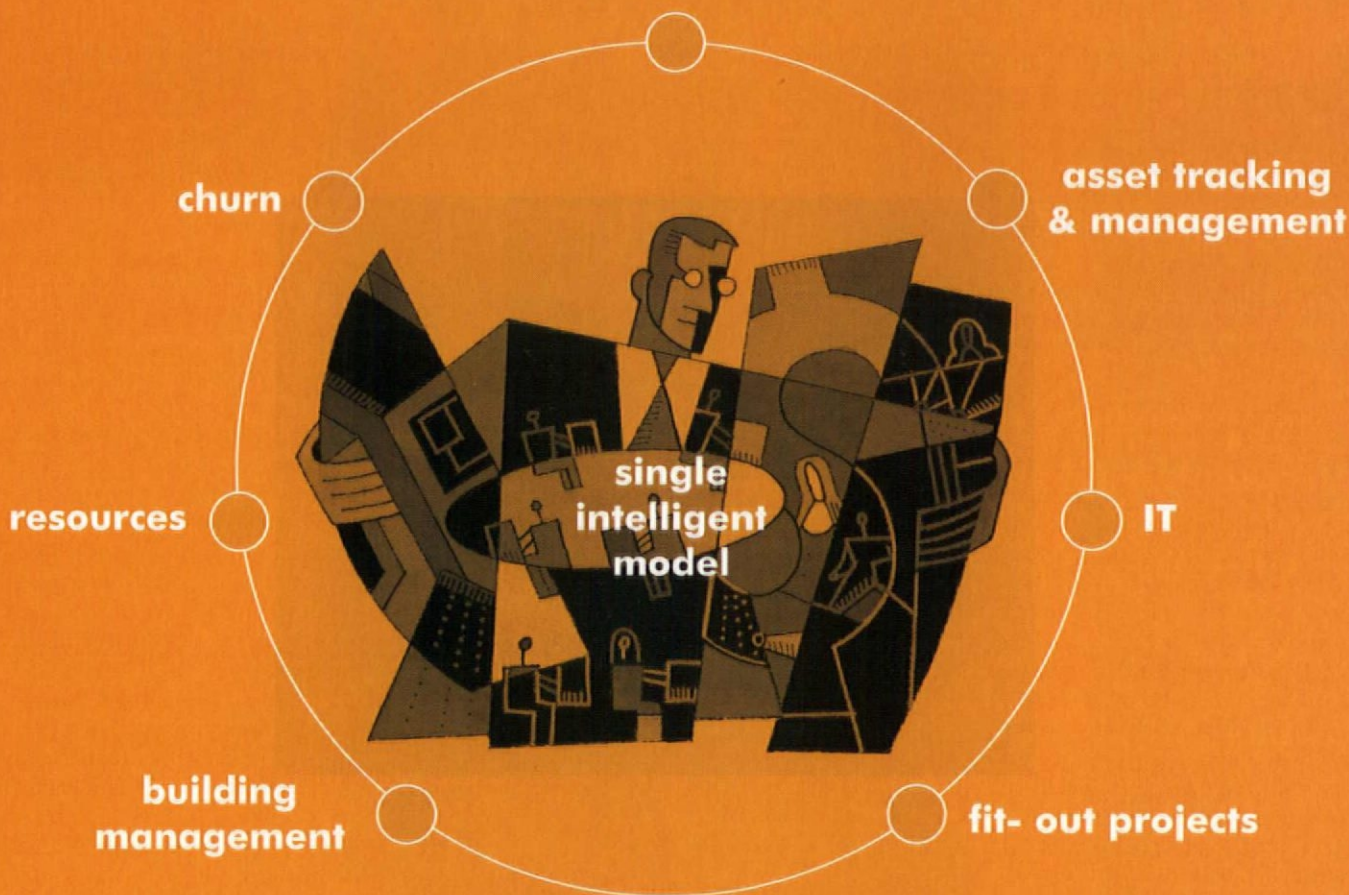




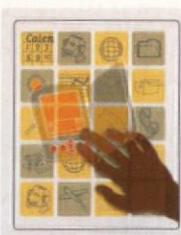
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# ORMS plumps for third way

The practice took the plunge and appointed an IT manager, resulting in improved performance and cost savings

BY RUTH SLAVIO

We all know how frustrating it can be when technology lets us down. Why can't they do something about it? Everything is grinding along at a snail's pace. We must need a bigger server.

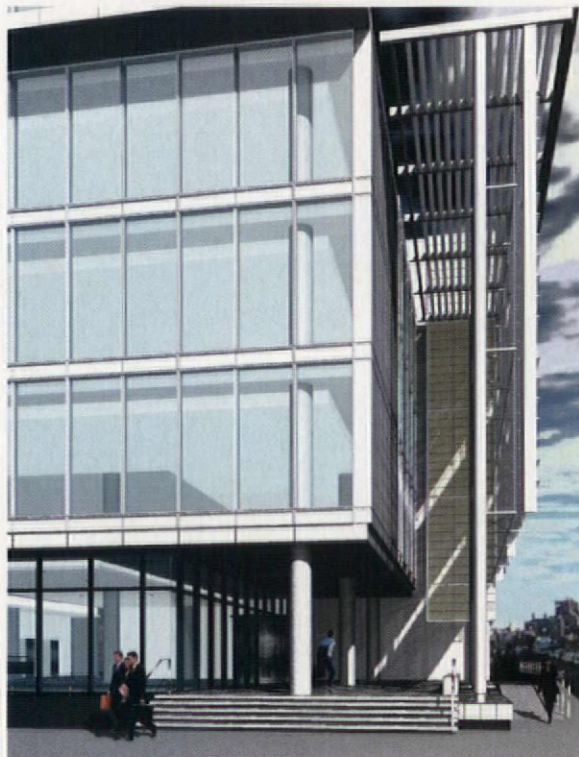
Faced with this kind of complaint, most architects respond either by making a substantial investment or by telling their staff to grit their teeth and put up with it. But this apparent Hobson's choice is born of ignorance. There is another option, and it is one that architect ORMS has explored.

It involves learning how you are actually using your IT, and whether the problems you are experiencing can be resolved by better management. If more investment is needed, you should pinpoint exactly where rather than upgrading everything. In other words, use your common-sense – but to do so you need considerably more IT knowledge than most architectural practices have.

ORMS' solution was to appoint an IT manager, Adam Pritchard, who, says director Dale Jennings, 'has started to buy programs that give him information'. One of the things this led him to discover was that, of the 98 gigabytes of data on the server, only 7 per cent was CAD related. Thirty per cent was presentation, 29 per cent was live and archived e-mail, 11 per cent was personal and 8 per cent was marketing images.

This was an important discovery. ORMS had just doubled its server capacity at a cost of £10,000. 'We spend about 50 per cent more than the average practice on IT,' said Jennings, who added that the firm wanted to avoid the need to upgrade again in another six months, which would have been the case without rationalisation.

The 30 per cent of space occupied by presentation is one reason for the proliferation of data. 'We have always used DTP,' said Jennings. 'We got into doing presentations and having an image database 18 months ago.' But DTP is memory intensive, particularly if there is duplication of material.



**ORMS has only two physical letters on file from the client for the £15 million Capital One project**

'That is why we have an image database,' said Pritchard.

In addition, said Jennings, 'the problem with presentations is that they tend to be cut-and-paste material. We have been keeping all the old stuff as well [old layers]. When we get rid of that we will knock a huge amount of data off the server.'

Personal files are another issue. Practice members tend to squirrel away bits of information that are not project based. The only way to tackle this is to instill a discipline of keeping essential material off the server, and to have regular purges. 'It is a process of education,' said Jennings. 'We have to teach people why we want them to do things in a certain way.'

This is particularly true of the e-mail system. In some ways the introduction of e-mail has been advantageous. For example, on a £15 million project for Capital One there are only two hard-copy letters on file from the client. But Jennings is con-

cerned about records which, with a paper system, the practice kept meticulously. He is proud that the practice has not made a PII claim for 16 years.

Under the old paper-based system, administrators took a copy of every letter and filed it appropriately. E-mail has bypassed that system. While it is easy to ensure that a paper copy is made and filed of every e-mail coming into the office, taking copies of outgoing e-mails and filing them has, up to now, been the responsibility of individual architects. 'It requires architects to do admin that they won't do,' said Jennings.

ORMS has been looking for an equivalent to the Lexus system used by lawyers, software that would pick up e-mails by file code or by key words and file them automatically. The stumbling block has been that the practice is wedded to Apple Macs, on which it uses the VectorWorks CAD package.

'We use it because it is essentially an extension of the photocopy, Tippex and drawing that we used to collage drawings,' said Jennings. The practice invested in MicroStation for one specific project, but is letting its licence lapse.

'With MicroStation, you need to know what you want to draw,' said Jennings. 'With VectorWorks, you don't need to be that sure.' He says that the practice believes in an 'arts and crafts' approach that sees projects all the way through from concept to realisation, and that most CAD systems get in the way of the creative process. This may change for a future generation of architects for whom CAD is so instinctive that they do not notice they are using it.

If this sounds a bit old-fashioned, do not forget that this is also a practice with 51 staff and 64 computers, that has taken homeworking and remote access seriously.

It also recognised the value of employing a full-time IT manager. Another of Pritchard's coups has been to identify a bottleneck in the system between the switch and the server. The solution was a piece of fast optic fibre.

Now which architect would have worked that out? There would have been unnecessary upgrading of expensive equipment – or a return to moaning and dissatisfaction.



# Down sizing

Despite the paperless office, desktops can still suffer from clutter – often large PCs. Perhaps it is time to think small

BY SUTHERLAND LYALL

The average midi-sized computer box measures roughly half a metre square by, say, 150mm deep. So you can put them under a desk or, with the 19-inch plus screens which it is thought CAD calls for, less ergonomically correctly on the desk under the monitor. The back end of such a box soon acquires an infestation of grubby cobweb-clad cables. Add up the no-go volume occupied by boxes and the cable-plus-cobweb interzone in even a small office and you start developing deep theory about IT-installation gross-to-net.

It is true that big monitors take up a similar volume but cheaper flat-screen technology, including the now-cheaper (a bit more than £1,000) draw-on Wacom Cintiq 15X ([www.wacom-europe.com](http://www.wacom-europe.com)) and, perhaps sooner than you think, head-mounted eye-screens, offer a solution to desk-top clutter. Take a squint at the head-mounted display of the \$1,500 (£1,050) Poma at [www.xybernaut.com/newxybernaut/Solutions/product/listing\\_product.htm](http://www.xybernaut.com/newxybernaut/Solutions/product/listing_product.htm).

We have looked at integrated computer/LCD panels in the past (a random example is the LP200E at [www.pars.co.uk](http://www.pars.co.uk)) and there are book-sized configurations available that are twice the width and height of a conventional CD-ROM drive and perhaps three times the depth. But now there are also two solutions to the below-desk problem. One is a tiny



**From the top: Paysan's M Series Byte Size; the Elite all-in-one; and the mind-blowing Senseboard**



While clearing clutter off your desk is a laudable ambition, making sure that what is on your desk is elegant is also important. This is the thinking behind Wacom's launch of its Intuos2 Designer Pen. Aimed at 'Wacom tablet enthusiasts and the design-conscious tablet user' the Designer Pen is in brushed aluminium and has an enlarged version of the cushioned area of the standard Intuos2 Grip Pen. As well as looking slick, this is designed to relieve strain, alleviate fatigue and reduce hand tension. The pen will respond to 1,024 different levels of pressure. It costs £69.99 from Computers Unlimited or Wacom Accessories. Learn more at [www.wacom-europe.com](http://www.wacom-europe.com)

computer – The M Series Byte Size from Paysan ([www.paysan.co.uk](http://www.paysan.co.uk)) and the similar Pino Mini from Compro ([www.compro-int.co.uk/Content/frm.htm](http://www.compro-int.co.uk/Content/frm.htm)) which are just a little larger than a CD-drive and the thickness of a big box of matches. They sticky-pad to the desk somewhere under the LCD screen.

The companies do not tell you to do this, but you have to because the units have all the usual heavy, unwieldy 2m-long computer cables plugged into them, trying to achieve equilibrium on the floor somewhere behind the modesty panel. And they are super-easy to drop into a passing pocket – if you can get the cables unplugged before the CCTV camera catches you.

The other space-conscious solution is a computer devised by the California firm Cybernet Manufacturing. It is built into the base of a hefty keyboard with a CD-ROM at one end and a floppy drive at the other. In the UK, it is called the Elite and Paysan also sells it.

The idea is not exactly new because this is the format of practically every home computer of the '80s. The difference is that the three new machines are modern and fairly fast and have all the usual ports you find on a desktop machine.

So, you say, why not just use a laptop? After all, the CD and floppy drives used in the new kit are skinny laptop models and the hard drives are probably the same. And the motherboard is also dependent on laptop miniaturisation techniques. Then the answer comes to you. The technology is knowable and thus passes the Cedric Price Technological Appropriateness Test. All that has happened is that the packaging has been intelligently (at least in the case of the Elite) thought out, not as a variation of the lumpy old beige box. Full marks for that but not the novelty prices.

Anyway in the future you will not need a hefty keyboard. The latest input gizmo is a sort of fingercuff, the Senseboard ([www.senseboard.com](http://www.senseboard.com)). You slip your hands into what look a bit like a pair of padded knuckle-dusters and start air typing. It probably will not go down very well here. Unlike the US schoolchildren I have come across, our architects were not, as a matter of course, taught how to touch type.



## ADT Toolbox

### PROS:

- Makes a complex tool a lot easier

### CONS:

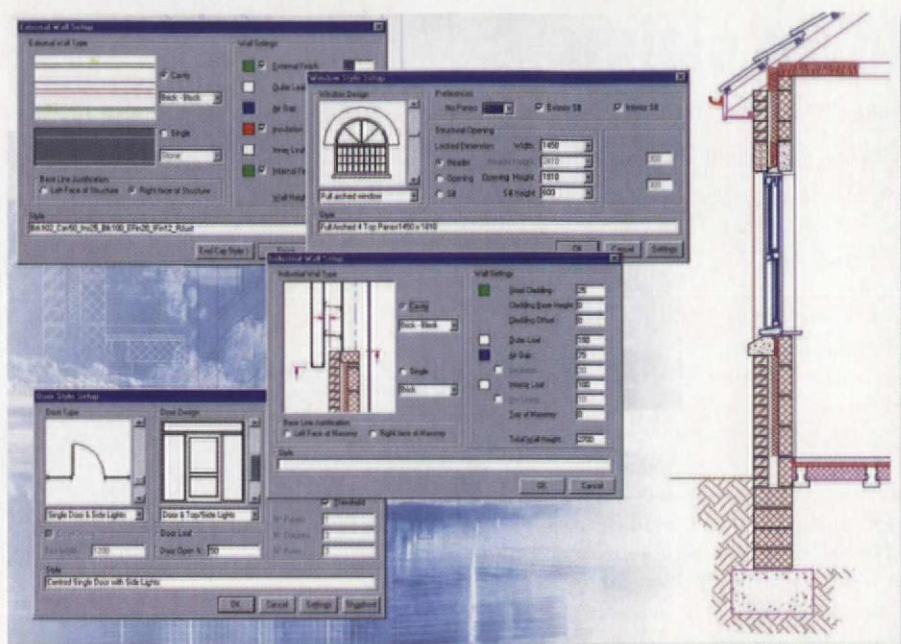
- You are paying extra for what should have been included in ADT from the start

**PRICE:** £295

A few years ago, Architectural Desktop (ADT) was launched in the UK to a critical audience that included, importantly, the AutoCAD and AEC user base. Where AEC had previously excelled, ADT stumbled; release one should never have seen the light, release two had some improvements and release three started to show real promise yet still something was missing. In its current form, ADT 3.3, it is a powerful tool but it remains complex to use and difficult to learn.

Autodesk accepted that it needed to make ADT easier to use and more appropriately configured for the country of use via localisation of the software. There is now a move across Europe to customise ADT for each market, removing some of the usability issues. In the UK CADlogic has been handed the task of kissing the frog in the hope that it will turn into a handsome prince.

CADlogic has been around since the late '80s when Steve Tew left Autodesk to set up on his own as a reseller. Not content with just shifting boxes, CADlogic set about



ADT Toolbox takes the hassle out of style creation

developing tools which would increase the power of AutoCAD. The first one was ParaCAD, a parametric engine that enabled users of AutoCAD to define and edit data parametrically. The company later acquired MultiCAD, a DOS-based tool which it merged with ParaCAD and eventually developed LT

Architect and Architect 2000 which enhance the functionality of their namesakes.

ADT Toolbox takes some of the good stuff from LT Architect and Architect 2000, including 2D detailing which is not always addressed comprehensively by many of the 3D design products on the market. It then

## Future Space

### PROS:

- Being able to re-use design data is the way forward

### CONS:

- The real benefits will be to those who use MicroGDS for design development

**PRICE:** Varies according to project

A few years ago, while working for Richard Rogers, I remember helping one of the directors put together some visuals for a seminar he was giving on cost reduction in the construction industry – a big issue since the Latham report was published in 1994. The director, Andrew Morris, presented some figures illustrating how much buildings cost to design, construct and operate. It should be no surprise that the lion's share of the finance goes on the maintenance of the building or the management of the facility.

Morris' point was simple; investing time and money on ingenious design solutions will result in a greater increase in value for money across the life cycle of the building. Naturally there were many other experts on hand who presented ideas for reducing the

cost of construction and maintenance through the introduction of partnering and framework agreements. I think it was then that I was first introduced to the concept of facilities management, or FM, applications.

The principle is simple. Fill a computer with the kind of knowledge we have to retain in our already overcrowded minds and, when requested, it will spit out the information quicker than you can say 'What is the extension number for Austin Williams and where does he sit in the building?' Properly configured FM software will reduce the time it takes to perform simple and repetitive

queries by eons, thanks to the database, which stores all the relevant information.

The queries do not have to involve people. They could relate to the building itself. For example, the types of light fitting could be linked to the correct replacement bulb. So when one popped, the maintenance officer would not have to visit the location twice in order to replace it – once to find out what type it was and once to return with the correct bulb. I have heard it said that replacing a bulb in the BBC has been costed at £1,000 a unit, thanks to all the to-ing and fro-ing. I don't believe it but it is a great story.

Some FM systems are smart enough to serve up the information retrieved in the form of text and graphics. This could include building plans, a picture of the required light bulb and any other relevant information. So getting there is as easy as can be. Furthermore, the system can be programmed with associated rules and relationships so that when the maintenance man heads off to find the right light bulb, he also picks up the right set of stepladders in the nearest storeroom to the failed light. All this information can be served up to him simply.



A ready-made FM database



introduces new easy-to-use interfaces for the creation of walls, windows and doors.

If you are familiar with ADT you will know how complicated the process of working with Style Manager can be. ADT Toolbox takes the hassle out of style creation through simple dialogue boxes, which improve the feedback to the user as the style is developed through pictorial previews.

Walls are created with options for external/internal and cavity construction and clad wall types. Further options are available for colour, cross-hatching, internal and external finishes and wall height.

The Window Style Setup enables the designer to pick from various pre-defined styles, including sash, casement, bay, bow and arched, while able to alter the structural opening dimensions, number of panes and the addition of internal and external sills.

The Door Style Setup has options for single, double, garage, roller-shutter and shopfront designs. Again the variable parameters include structural opening dimensions, threshold, jamb, stop and leaf.

Enhancing the integration of the geometry created, ADT Toolbox can place lintels semi-automatically as it inherits the structural opening size from the doors and windows.

However, the creation of a 3D model really does contribute to the design-development process. Having the ability to

extract plans, sections and elevations from the same model makes the extra time investment worthwhile, but the drawings are rarely of sufficient detail for construction drawings and as a result they require more time to bring them up to scratch.

ADT Toolbox makes the job easier. It has inherited some of the functionality of its stablemate Toolbox, and so has some simple-to-use tools for the creation of detailed sections. By selecting the appropriate module from a list of key components or interfaces, one can generate an entire section within seconds. The modules include: foundations, DPC, floor structures, walls, sills, headers, doors, windows, roofs – trusses, tiles and fascias – stairs and timber panels.

Further, if traditional construction is not your bag, there are many options for steel detailing and fabrication including portal frames, UBs, UCs, RSJs, angles, channels, sections and tees.

ADT Toolbox is a welcome addition to ADT. In the few areas it affects, it makes the difference between what ADT is and what it should be. I would like to see CADlogic develop even more tools for ADT Toolbox in the areas that remain complex.

If the advocates of AEC felt they had been kicked in the teeth by Autodesk when they were given ADT as an 'upgrade', CADlogic's ADT Toolbox could be the dentist they need,

The downside of FM applications of this kind is that, like all IT-related tools, they are only as good as the information they hold, and updating them can be onerous and tedious. Furthermore, getting the system up and running in the first place can be quite an overhead as the shifting topography of the office constantly changes while the information is being entered.

What then would you give for a tool which builds the FM database while you design your building? Quite a bit, I should say, and Future Space has come up with just the tool.

What makes Future Space think there is room for it in the market? Well, it has developed its FM tool to use the database inherent in MicroGDS. So while you are using MicroGDS and placing the geometry used to articulate your design, the MicroGDS database catalogues the information according to the rules defined using the Future Space tools. When the design is complete, the full drawing package and database can be handed over to the client for managing the facility.

The benefits are that there is no external database (ergo there are fewer things to go wrong), the database is populated as the



Offices are complex beasts

design develops so there is no post-processing to perform, and data is easily editable by dragging and dropping the objects using the graphical interface.

You don't even have to use MicroGDS as your standard CAD tool (although it helps) as the Future Space tool will import data

#### ELEMENTS COVERED IN ADT TOOLBOX

##### WALLS

All wall types: automatic naming, hatching, component colour settings

External walls

Internal walls

Clad walls

##### 2D DETAILING

Building sections

Structural steel details for construction and fabrication

##### WINDOWS

Window designs

Window parameters

##### DOORS

Door types

Door designs

Door parameters

For more detail go to [www.cadlogic.com](http://www.cadlogic.com)

#### RATINGS

INTERFACE	●●●●○
EASE OF USE	●●●●○
FUNCTIONALITY	●●●●○
COMPATIBILITY	●●●●●
WEB INTEGRATION	N/A
PERFORMANCE	●●●●○
COST	●●●●○

directly from AutoCAD and, with a little manipulation, the results are the same.

So if you are managing a facility which includes 20,000 people on 35 sites and you are constantly moving people around, you may benefit from a closer peep at Future Space. As an architect you may just be a little more attractive to the large corporates if you can deliver your data to them in a fashion that will make their life easier.

The cost is wholly dependent on the size of the implementation for existing projects but the guide given to me works out at about £2 per square foot of floor space. When you bear in mind that the cost of maintenance is in the region of 10 times the cost of development, I think it could be money well spent.

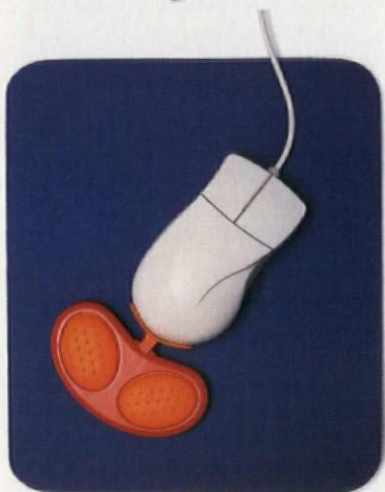
Joe Croser can be contacted at [joe@croser.net](mailto:joe@croser.net)

#### RATINGS

INTERFACE	●●●●○
EASE OF USE	●●●●○
FUNCTIONALITY	●●●●○
COMPATIBILITY	●●●●○
WEB INTEGRATION	N/A
PERFORMANCE	●●●●○
COST	●●●●○

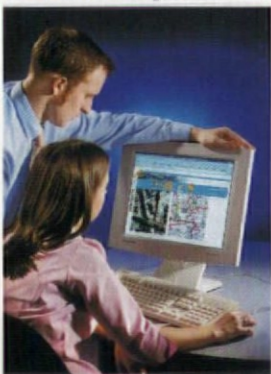


## Rest your wrist on a bean



The average CAD user apparently clicks their mouse 17,000 times a day, making architects prime candidates for repetitive strain injury (RSI). John Crocker, himself a victim of carpal tunnel syndrome, has invented a wrist rest that he believes will help prevent the problem. Called the Mouse Bean it is (surprise) bean shaped, and attaches directly to the mouse. Its two padded areas help to keep the wrist straight, reducing stress on the tendons as they run through the carpal tunnel. At only £6.99, Mouse Bean should be worth a try, particularly as its jellybean range of colours makes it an ornament to the desktop. To learn more, go to [www.mousebean.com](http://www.mousebean.com)

### On the map



Getmapping's service

Prodat Systems has now made its digital mapping product, Promap, available on a pay-per-use basis on the Internet. Until now Promap, which uses Ordnance Survey large-scale mapping, was available only on CD. In addition to roads, it shows details of site and field boundaries and includes the outline of individual buildings. It offers a number of ways to select sites, and can then calculate areas. Information can be printed or exported as DXF files for use in geographic information systems (GIS) or CAD drawings. Find out more at [www.promap.co.uk](http://www.promap.co.uk)

If you feel that you or your clients will be best served by the use of aerial photography, then you may be interested in another pay-per-view service. Imagexpressplus from Getmapping uses images from its Millennium Map, the first-ever aerial survey of the entire UK. High-resolution aerial images are geo-corrected to match.

### WHAT'S HAPPENING?

**Graphisoft** has made a number of innovations, putting Windows and Macintosh OS versions of ArchiCAD in the same box for all users. It has also launched HVAC for ArchiCAD and has brought its ArchiFM building-management software into the UK. **Advanced Computer Solutions** has bought computer-aided draughting package **Caddie**, for which it already had the exclusive UK rights. **Conedia**, a costing, scheduling and cashflow software program for multi-storey construction, had been developed by **BusiBuilder Software**. Plan-printing service **Blueprint** has introduced black and red plan printing. **Acefolio** has launched what it claims is the first UK-wide free directory for construction developers and specifiers which can be searched by specific project details. **Autodesk** now offers a subscription programme for software delivery. It has also brought out Autodesk Raster Design 3 (previously Autodesk CAD Overlay) for GIS, civil engineering, manufacturing and building-design professionals. There are many new features. **ISI** (formerly DataCAD) has linked up with **IME UK** to launch ProView, a web-based solution for viewing and delivering information to partners, clients and suppliers. Building-services consultant **Roberts and Partners** has introduced a document-management system called RAPID (Roberts and Partners Information Directory).



### Any old iron

Computers were most certainly not used during the design of the famous Iron Bridge in Shropshire, the first metal structure in the world. But cutting-edge computer technology has helped English Heritage learn how the bridge was built. Its survey team created a high-resolution 3D model of the bridge, using archaeological recording of every single part, commissioned from the Ironbridge Institute.

This has shown that, although built in a new material, the bridge was constructed using highly traditional methods. Carpentry techniques were used to make the bridge fit together, with each element cast individually and tapered to fit as construction went along. As well as being of great historic interest, these discoveries should help in the process of repair and maintenance. English Heritage is making the computer model available to professionals, students and schoolchildren. It will also be on display at the bridge.

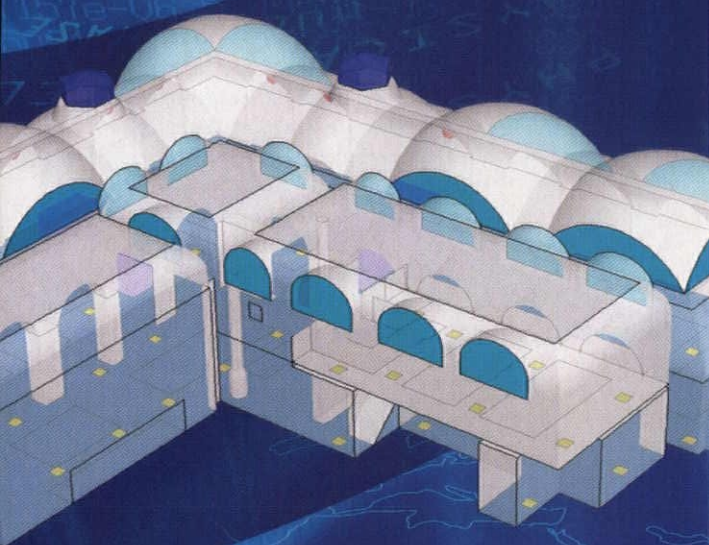
### Goliath swallows David

Less than two-and-a-half years since its launch with promises of revolutionising the CAD market, Revit has been swallowed up by giant Autodesk. The US company, whose name was a shortened form of 'revitalise', looked as if it would not be able to overcome the hurdle of attracting sufficient users while its system was being developed. However, Autodesk must have considered Revit a threat (only a few months ago, a senior Revit representative was boasting that Autodesk would have disappeared within five years) or see considerable potential for it, since it has paid a hefty price – \$133 million. It claims that Revit will complement its existing portfolio, being employed on parametric design and construction projects using integrated building models. Many industry observers think integrated building models will not be taken up for many years, if at all. And they question how compatible Revit is with other Autodesk packages. Either Autodesk knows something they don't – or it has acted very oddly.



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CFD Geometry of the Bank of England,  
Courtesy of Hilson Moran Partnership Ltd.

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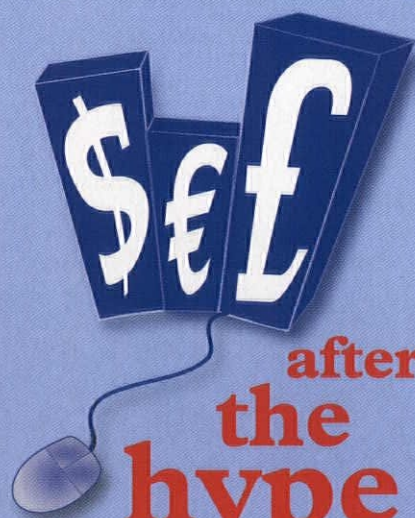
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## Contract terms must be put to test – and then again and again

Drafting contracts is a tricky job into which those of us at the litigation end of the law seldom delve. Lawyers who write contracts have to 'try on' their proposed terms with several hypothetical situations to test the results in much the same way as lawyers who draft legislation have to consider the many and varied effects of their drafting. Despite the best efforts of the drafters, once a particular set of facts has arisen and the contract is looked at to see what happens next, the results are sometimes surprising and occasionally baffling.

In *Casson v Ostley*, a case that went to the Court of Appeal last year, two key terms in a contract between a building owner and a builder were in issue. The first placed on the owner the risk of all damage caused to work or materials other than damage caused by the builder's negligence. The second gave the owner the risk of all fires and obliged him to insure against it, with no mention of fires caused by the builder's negligence being treated any differently.

There was a fire. The parties went off to court to ask, assuming that the fire had been caused by the builder's negligence, who was to carry the risk of the damage. The judge in the first instance decided that the builder was exempt from liability. The Court of Appeal disagreed.

In giving his judgment in the Court of Appeal, Lord Justice Sedley observed that, although words may appear quite straightforward, they may make little or no sense when applied to real situations, and cited the example of a proposal to put a World War Two tank on a plinth in a park regulated by a bye-law banning motor vehicles. His Lordship went on to say that construing a contract may call for significant creativity. 'Construction has two meanings, one derived from the verb to construe, the other from the verb to construct. It may be as well to admit that under the guise of the first, the courts in cases like this are doing the second.'

'We mitigate the uncovenanted effects of literalism, not by nakedly writing a new contract for the parties but by construing the words according to principles which enable the contract, in effect, to be reconstructed.'

As to the Court of Appeal's reasoning in this particular case, the builder used its standard terms. The builder drafted them, so it could have clearly and unambiguously exempted itself from particular liabilities. As to what the other side intended, the court's starting point was that one party does not ordinarily agree to absolve the other of its negligence. It followed that any ambiguity in the builder's terms was to be resolved against it.

The court applied a three-step test. First, was the builder expressly exempted from liability for damage caused by a negligently started fire? It was difficult to reconcile the two clauses and, resolving the doubt against the builder, the answer was no. If the answer had been yes, the exemption would have been effective, subject to possible arguments as to fairness.

As the contract did not do what the builder wanted on the first step of the test, the court moved on to the second. Although not expressly saying so, were the words wide enough to protect the builder from liability for a fire started due to negligence? Yes.

The court then asked the third question posed by the test: while the words were wide enough, was there another plausible way by which a fire might have started? If so, the contract wording had a sensible commercial purpose even if it did not protect the builder from the consequences of its own negligence. That would be fatal to the builder's contentions. The court decided there were several ways the builder could find itself liable for the consequences of fire started other than by its own negligence, for example acts of third parties.

It followed that there was no effective exemption from liability for fires that started because of negligence.

So exemption clauses must be as clear as possible if they are to work (although even then they may be ruled unfair). More generally, when looking at contract terms, remember to consider how they might work in a variety of circumstances. And hope that something even stranger does not crop up.

Sue Lindsey

## Beware geeks bearing domain name 'gifts'

The excellent Register ([www.the-register.co.uk](http://www.the-register.co.uk)) reports that Cabinet Secretary Sir Richard Wilson earns a Privacy International nomination as worst civil servant 'for his long-standing commitment to opposing freedom of information, data protection and ministerial accountability'. He's also up for a 'lifetime menace award'.

Most invasive company nomination is the Countryside Alliance, which apparently keeps astronomical amounts of information on people it does not like. Whingeing pop-eyed, green-wellied, fox-breeding, CAP-handout scroungers. There, I'm on the list too – and me a farmer's son. Privacy International's The 2002 UK Big Brother Awards is at [www.privacyinternational.org/bigbrother/uk2002/](http://www.privacyinternational.org/bigbrother/uk2002/).

After the first flush of getting your own domain name and maybe an inchoate website going plus a personalised e-mail address it is suddenly two years later and time to renew all the sites you registered. Some you will re-register because they are soundalikes for your own site. Some you will quietly drop because you have not, after all, had the gall to blackmail your rivals over soundalikes of their sites. However, The Register reports that unscrupulous sales people are calling up firms whose domain names are nearing renewal and trying to pester them into renewing them on the spot. Others are being cold-called and told that someone is trying to register their domain name and they should snap it up there and then. The bloke from Nominet, who registers dot UK domain names, advises us to shop around for a more congenial/less threatening ISP. I've also had readers asking me to look at come-ons from companies which purport to get you to the top of search engine lists. Don't bother, seems to be the best advice – although, mildly scandalously, you can pay some search engines to 'place' your site at the beginning of a search whose criteria you select.

[sutherlandlyall@btinternet.com](mailto:sutherlandlyall@btinternet.com)



## London

### Practice Structure, Management and Growth Thursday 14 March. A

Colander course at the Building Centre. Details 020 8771 6445.

**Masters and Pupils Thursday 14 March, 18.30.** Richard Burton on Powell & Moya at The Gallery, 70 Cowcross St, EC1 (020 7250 3857).

**Baltic: A Vision on Emulsion Until 15 March.** Photographs by Etienne Clement at the RIBA, 66 Portland Place, W1. Details 0906 302 0400.

**LCC Architecture Conference Saturday 16 March.** A Twentieth Century Society conference at the AA. Tickets (£20) 020 7250 3857.

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

**Making the Most of Public Relations Thursday 21 March.** A Colander course at the Building Centre. Details 020 8771 6445.

**Peter Märkl: Approximations Until 22 March.** An exhibition at the AA, 36 Bedford Sq, WC1.

**Circle 33 Innovation in Housing Exhibition Until 27 March.** At the Architecture Foundation, 30 Bury St, SW1. Details 020 7253 3334.

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

**Component Design Until 6 April.** An exhibition at the Building Centre, Store St, WC1. Details on 020 7692 6209.

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

## Eastern

**A Measure of Reality 9 March-28 April.** An exhibition at Kettle's Yard, Castle St, Cambridge. Details 01223 352124.

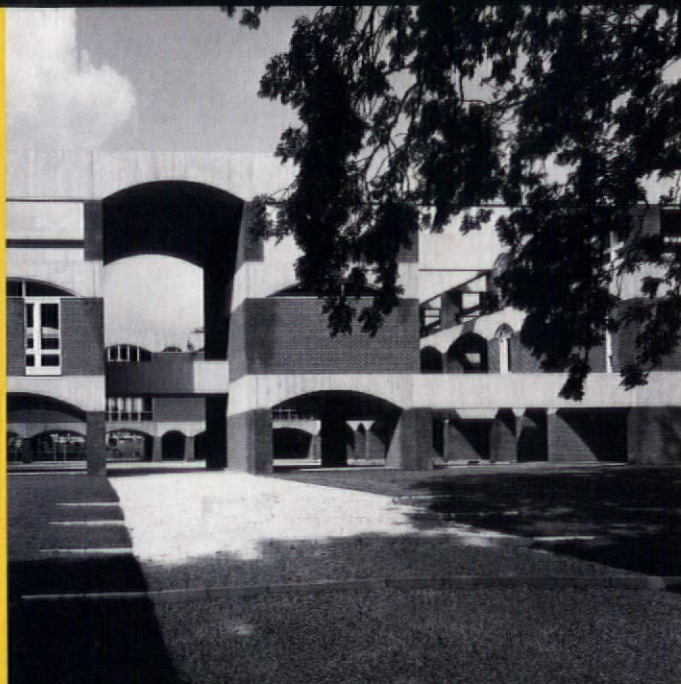
**The Route to Sustainable Resource Use in Construction Wednesday 13 March, 16.00.** A CIEF seminar in Norwich. Details 020 7222 8891.

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

## East Midlands

**Alex de Rijke Thursday 14 March, 19.00.** A lecture at the Angela Marmont Theatre, University of Nottingham (0115 978 9680).

**Art for Circulation Spaces Sundays 14.00-18.00 until 25 March.** At Fermyn Woods Contemporary Art,



## SPENCE IN THE SIXTIES

University building in general, and Basil Spence's work in particular, are the focus of 'Building Universities: The 1960s and Beyond' - a conference at the University of Sussex on 11-12 April. Speakers include Louise Campbell, John McKean and Stefan Muthesius. Details [kfwraith@wraithconf.f9.co.uk](mailto:kfwraith@wraithconf.f9.co.uk)

Fermyn Woods, Brigstock, Kettering. Details 01536 373469.

**Third National Regeneration Convention 8-10 April.** At the East Midlands Conference Centre, Nottingham. Details Emma Tozer (020 7251 2363).

## Northern

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

## North West

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

**Kevin Drayton (One Seventeen AD) Thursday 28 March, 19.30.** A lecture at the Foster Building, University of Central Lancashire, Preston. Details Peter Trebilcock 0161 973 1505.

**Climate Change and the Built Environment 8-9 April.** A conference at UMIST, Manchester. Details 0161 200 3700.

## South Eastern

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

**Conservation and Repair of Plasters and Renders 23-26 April.** A course at West Dean College, near Chichester. Details 01243 811301.

**RIBA CPD Event: Building Regulations Update Thursday 25 April, 16.00.** At Le Meridien Hotel, Gatwick. Details 01892 515878.

**Ian Breakwell Until 28 April.** An installation at the De La Warr Pavilion, Bexhill-on-Sea. Details 01424 787900.

## Southern

**Simon Allford Thursday 14 March, 18.00.** A lecture at the Portland Building, Portsmouth School of Architecture. Details 02392 842086.

## South West

**RIBA CPD Event: Site Visit to Plymouth Argyle Football Club Redevelopment Wednesday 20 March, 16.30.** Details 01752 265921.

## Wessex

**Peter Frie / Gary Breeze Until 12 May.** Two exhibitions at the New Art Centre, Roche Court, East Winterslow, near Salisbury. Details 01980 862244.

## West Midlands

**Becoming a Planning Supervisor 12-14 March.** A Construction Study Centre

course at Birmingham. Details 0121 434 3337.

**RIBA CPD Event: Presentation Skills Wednesday 13 March, 14.00.** At Birmingham. Details 0121 233 2321.

**Brian Vermeulen Tuesday 2 April, 19.30.** A lecture at the Victoria Hall, Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent. Details Chris Hesketh 01538 373497.

## Yorkshire

**Sir Jeremy Dixon Friday 8 March, 13.00.** A lecture at the University of Leeds, School of Civil Engineering, and site visit (0113 233 2308).

**4 x 4: Leisure v Culture Thursday 14 March, 18.00.** A discussion at LMU School of Architecture. Details Ian Tod 0113 244 9973.

**RIBA CPD Event: Building Regs Update, Part 1 Wednesday 20 March.** At the Hilton Hotel, Garforth, Leeds. Details 0113 245 6250.

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

**Tania Kovats / Richard Devereux / Anthony Caro Until 12 May.** At the Yorkshire Sculpture Park, West Bretton. Details 01924 830302.

## Scotland

**India of Inchinnan 9 March-26 May.** An exhibition at The Lighthouse, 11 Mitchell Lane, Glasgow. Details 0141 225 8414.

**Ingal Maxwell Thursday 14 March, 17.30.** A talk at the Scottish Centre for Conservation Studies, Edinburgh College of Art (0131 221 6072).

**RIAS Convention 2002 Friday 3 May.** At Inverness. Speakers include Alvaro Siza and Nicholas Grimshaw. Details RIAS Events 0131 229 7545.

**Anatomy of the House Until 26 May.** An exhibition on Scottish domestic development at The Lighthouse, 11 Mitchell Lane, Glasgow. Details 0141 225 8414.

## Wales

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

**Walter Segal Self-Build Course Saturday 16 March.** At Swansea. Details 01668 213544.

**RSAA Access Auditing and Inclusive Design 25 & 26 April.** At St David's Hotel & Spa, Cardiff Bay. Details 029 2087 4753.

## International

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

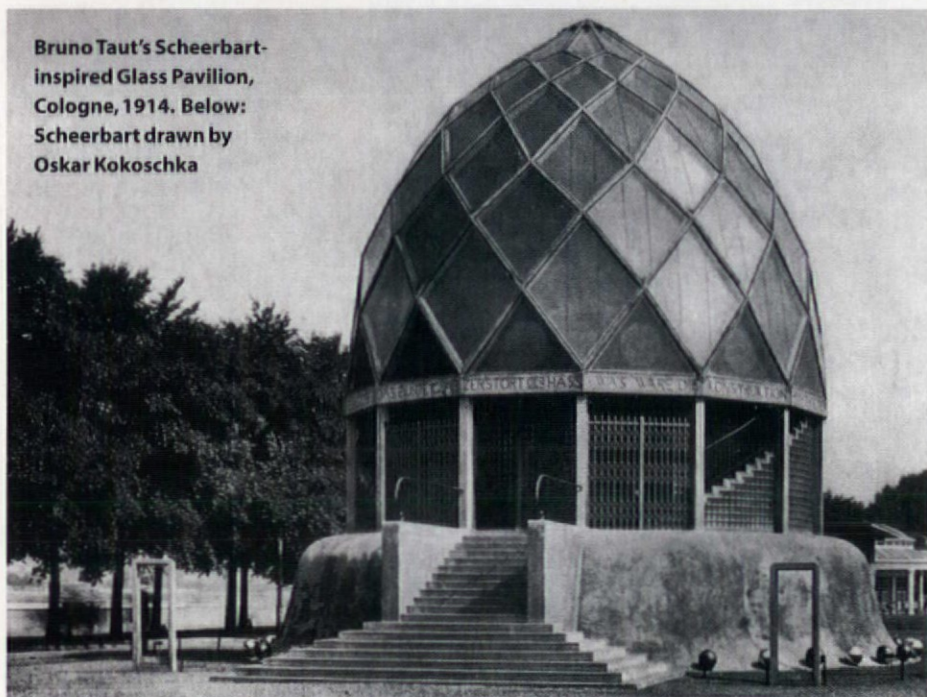


# Fashion statement

JEREMY MELVIN

## The Gray Cloth: A Novel on Glass Architecture

By Paul Scheerbart. Translated by John Stuart. MIT Press, 2001. 143pp. £16.95



Bruno Taut's Scheerbart-inspired Glass Pavilion, Cologne, 1914. Below: Scheerbart drawn by Oskar Kokoschka

Paul Scheerbart is one of those names in the margins of accepted histories of Modernism. Best known for his manifesto *Glasarchitektur*, and collaborations with Bruno Taut, Scheerbart was a prolific writer and member of the Expressionist avant-garde in Berlin before the First World War.

When he died aged 52 in 1915, he had written almost 30 works (many of them 'fictional narratives' on glass architecture), founded the literary magazine *Der Sturm*, and done enough for Walter Benjamin to claim – as John Stuart cites in his informative introduction – that 'Bertolt Brecht had ended what Scheerbart had best begun'.

*The Gray Cloth and Ten Per Cent White: A Ladies' Novel* is one of those 'fictional narratives', at least in outward form – a novel first published in 1914 and here translated for the first time. Its plot is simple. Edgar Krug, an architect with a penchant for glass, proposes to the organist Clara Weber by the odd means of stipulating that she should only wear grey with 10 per cent white, shortly after meeting her in a glass pavilion of his design at a Chicago World Fair.

She accepts, and there begins an odyssey in an airship that takes them to Fiji, an artists' colony in the Antarctic, an animal

reserve in India, an island in the Arabian sea inhabited by a curious, rich Chinese man and his entourage, and Malta, before arriving home on Lake Maggiore. At each stop the purpose is to design or advocate glass architecture, though Clara's peculiar dress code excites almost as much interest.

This is, of course, the point. Krug wants her to wear grey with ten per cent white because he thinks it best shows off the colours of his glass architecture. Bound by the terms of a marriage contract (Krug's lawyer friend Herr Loewe was happily on hand at the momentous meeting), Clara has to wear her monoglot outfits, despite the tempting suggestions of women she meets on her travels. Although travelling in great modern luxury, she is the prisoner of an idea, just as so many were to versions of Modernism later in the 20th century.



When she lapses, the consequences are not quite as drastic, though, as they were for Judith, Duke Bluebeard's seventh wife in the old central European folktale, around which Bela Bartok was composing an opera at about the same time. Judith's unwise propensity to open too many doors leads her into the incarceration suffered by her six predecessors: Krug eventually releases Clara from the clause and they manage to live, if not happily ever after, at least until the World Fair on Lüneberg Heath in northern Germany, with which the book concludes.

As fairy tales do, *The Gray Cloth* embodies many truths, though mostly in a state of half digestion. Gray did indeed become a fashion statement; people did become prisoners, not just of buildings, but of architecture; and yes, we do have glass buildings designed by megalomaniac architects fond of flying. And Lüneberg Heath may not have hosted a world fair until the Hanover Expo 2000, but it was the setting for the closing stages of the Second World War. These affinities with the future account for part of the fun of reading the book.

More comes from Stuart's translation, which has a verve that no doubt comes from the original. Even the hectoring tones seem authentic – glass buildings and airships are hardly the place for refined repartee à la Jane Austen, and Scheerbart's career makes clear the literary affinities between Expressionism and manifesto writing.

*The Gray Cloth* has a structure which is a little like a series of glass shards, transiently commanding attention before retreating into a myriad of indistinct reflections and refractions. It does not have the organic unity of a novel by Scheerbart's great contemporaries like Thomas Mann, Robert Musil or Alfred Döblin, where the narrative structure itself embodies metaphorical meanings in a way which defines a genre.

But Scheerbart's genre is architecture, and if the apparent paradox hinders *The Gray Cloth* from being a great novel, it uses enough of that literary form to give an insight into the pretension and potential of architecture.

Jeremy Melvin is a writer and teacher at South Bank University



# A shining light

PATRICK HODGKINSON

## Towards Universality: Le Corbusier, Mies and De Stijl

By Richard Padovan. Routledge, 2002. 238pp. £28

In 1983, Richard Padovan published his translation of Dom Hans van der Laan's *Architectonic Space*, bringing that Dutch monk's lifework to English-speaking minds, and in the years that followed he has published his own *Dom Hans van der Laan: Modern Primitive* and then *Proportion*. Each of these books has shown Padovan to be a master of clarity and *Towards Universality* is no exception.

Instead of the normal frontispiece, the book opens with De Stijl's first manifesto of 1918, signed by Theo van Doesburg, painter; Robert van't Hoff, architect; Vilmos Huszar, painter; Antony Kok, poet; Piet Mondriaan, painter; G Vantongerloo, sculptor; and Jan Wils, architect. It makes no attempt to put our clock back, as its title might suggest to some, but interprets what went on in the minds of the major players in the heroic period of the European Modern Movement from, at the outside, 1917 to 1931, the year Theo van Doesburg died.

It is only by removing these players momentarily from the wider Modern Movement scene that we properly comprehend the reasoning behind their actions and therefore the nature of Europe's kick-start. This is particularly true of De Stijl, which was not a formalised group and whose membership changed. Rather it was a journal, a loose group of artists, and an idea which nevertheless was as important as either Le Corbusier or Mies in those early days.

The book contains eight essays, which its author tells us we can read in any order. What I like about that is that one can pick it up at any time for short spells in-between thinking things over. And in terms of what eventually went wrong with a movement that tried to go too fast, there is a lot for young people to think about – more so than in some longer histories. This one, coupled with a full bibliography and an index, makes good use of quotations by the various players. Moreover, we have the benefit of authority

stemming from Padovan's lifelong interests. This is a writer who instinctively knows precisely *how* to shine his light, not just *where*.

Two of the book's essays have been published before, 'Mies: The Correspondence of Thing and Intellect' and 'The Pavilion and the Court', both having been expanded and revised for inclusion here. While the Mies study was written for an American exhibition catalogue on that architect, it amounts to a very fresh interpretation of the character of the work. The second, published in *The Architectural Review* in 1981, is particularly memorable.

Its theme is a comparison of these two opposites as legitimate building forms to which much serious architecture relates – the openness of the pavilion against the closedness of the court. Of course, it is not just open and closed, but the difference between that which is freshly free and the Classical, which is not. It is here, and because he has chosen an analogy free of boring style (the glue that poor historians get stuck in), that Padovan can help us to comprehend how his players were sometimes at cross purposes.

Padovan is crystal clear – this book is a little classic.

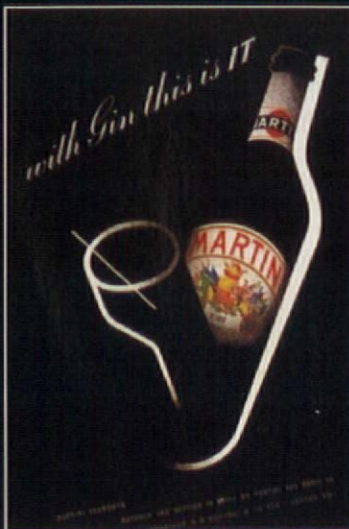
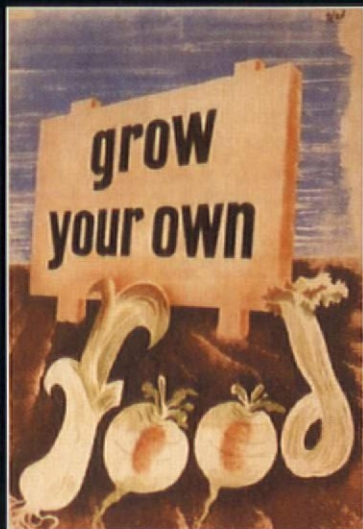
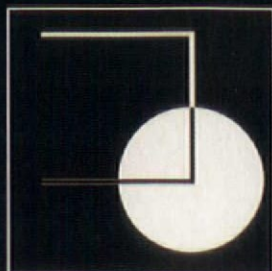
Patrick Hodgkinson is emeritus professor at the University of Bath

## Zero – Hans Schlegel: A Life of Design

By Pat Schlegel. Lund Humphries, 2001. 271pp. £30. A related exhibition is at the London Institute, 65 Davies St, London W1 until 14 March

This book and exhibition may come as a surprise, writes Andrew Mead, in revealing just how pervasive Hans Schlegel's designs were in the 20th century, and how prominent they are still today. The London bus stop sign and the symbol for Penguin Books – these are Schlegel's; just two enduring products from his 50-year career, which began in the New York of the 1920s and prospered in London until his death in 1976.

Schlegel's clients were hugely varied: the Ministry of Agriculture 'digging for victory' in the Second World War; the Design Council; the Edinburgh Festival; Fisons Chemicals, Martini, and MacFisheries. Those MacFisheries posters, while successful at the time, look whimsical and dated. As a rule, though, Schlegel's search for graphic simplicity, his reductionist impulse, holds sway; and from the Bauhaus-ethos Pro Industria booklet cover of 1930, when he worked briefly in Berlin, to the penguins and logos of the 1960s, they still look fresh. A group of such reductive designs, hung together on one wall of the gallery, are particularly strong. They communicate in an instant, but hold your attention with their elegance, economy and wit.





# The world's a stage

PAUL TEBBS

Jeff Wall: *Figures & Places*

Edited by Rolf Lauter. Prestel, 2002. £39.95



Jeff Wall is probably 'art' photography's foremost practitioner – not that he would be keen to be called this. He creates scenes of everyday dystopia using actors and digital manipulation, and displays the resultant transparencies in large light-boxes similar to those used in advertising.

Despite the luminous immediacy of the work, Wall is very much a theorist's and an artist's artist. His work resonates with art-historical references, and visually enacts various cultural critiques – not least, the antagonism between an avant-gardist's self-consciousness about the means of visual representation and the naïve literalism of photography's documentary tradition. Through the introduction of

artifice, the theatrical, and a penchant for the grotesque, Wall appropriates the aesthetics of film and painting to (almost ritualistically) counter photography's claims to visual truthfulness.

*Figures & Places* is published in conjunction with a recent exhibition of the same name at the Museum für Moderne Kunst in Frankfurt (co-curated by Wall and Rolf Lauter) – but it aims to be more than a catalogue. If compared to Phaidon's Contemporary Artists monograph on Wall (1996), however, whose approach and design it echoes, it is a lacklustre sequel.

Unlike many visual artists, Wall takes an active responsibility in the interpretation of his work. His curatorship of the exhibition,

and presumably some role in this publication, are symptomatic of that. A strength of *Figures* is that it includes three interviews with him, for Wall is prodigiously capable of defending his work, and better at describing it than most. Unfortunately, the accompanying essays, by various academics, verge on hagiography – perhaps not a surprise, but disappointing. As with the Phaidon publication, some relevant fiction has been included – Kafka and Calvino. Sadly, the reproductions, although numerous, are poor.

In one of the essays, Wall is quoted as stating that he wants his work to move 'away from a subjectivistic dream-world of art, to show something of the dirt and ugliness of the way we have to live... the effects of capitalism are like scar tissue.' A recurring motif is his depiction of marginalised people in marginal spaces displaying dysfunctional behaviour: a man pretending to shoot a rifle (see picture); a man sitting on the street crushing a milk carton; two people fighting.

In his introductory essay Lauter states: 'Wall champions oppressed people and with his auratic everyday narrative gives back something of the human dignity due to them.' This is a strong claim and typical of the book's reverence. One wonders whether the 'oppressed' would recognise themselves or their struggles in Wall's heightened aesthetic – let alone the dignity it proffers them. For all of Wall's pronouncements, the aesthetic critiques that structure his images blunt their political dimension. Wall's aesthetic is precious. Class war via the billboard it isn't. The political content, at times, reads as so much fodder for cultural dialectics.

One advantage of *Figures* over Phaidon's ageing publication is in reproducing and analysing Wall's recent work. His critique of photography's documentary tradition has become more subtle and less obviously theatrical. Some coloured light boxes are unusually simple in subject matter – focusing, for instance, on a discarded food carton or a bundle of wood. They are poignant – indeed almost documentary.

Paul Tebbis is a writer and critic



## The Factories: Conversions for Urban Culture

Birkhäuser, 2002. 280pp. £30

This book is the creation of a pan-European network called TransEuropeHalles, writes Andrew Mead, with members in Croatia, Slovenia, Romania and Russia, not just France, Germany and the UK. The projects that it features are all adaptations of redundant buildings – industrial, mercantile, military – for new cultural use; as a rule by marginal, not mainstream, groups. There is scant architectural information,

however – no plans, no technical accounts, no sense of how new has been integrated with old. The images are more likely to be close-ups of someone juggling or playing an accordion than of masonry or trusses, while the stories are vaguely 'inspiring' ones of obstacles overcome amid social / political complexities. How instructive they are is another matter: it is hard to determine just who the book is aimed at, or how readers are meant to profit from it. Pictured is one of the few buildings that really registers – the Kaapelitehdas in Helsinki, a former cable factory, now a 'cultural and artistic centre'.



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## people & practices

**Barton Willmore Partnership** has established a new London-based **Regeneration – Urban Design Group**. The team will work with local authorities, regeneration agencies, housing associations and developers to achieve sustainable urban regeneration. The team is **Andrew Gregory, Dean Wright, Jonathan Reynolds** and **Sandra Wohlleben**.

Birmingham's **John Dalkin Associates** has promoted **Adrian Evans** to associate director with responsibilities for CAD development and management.

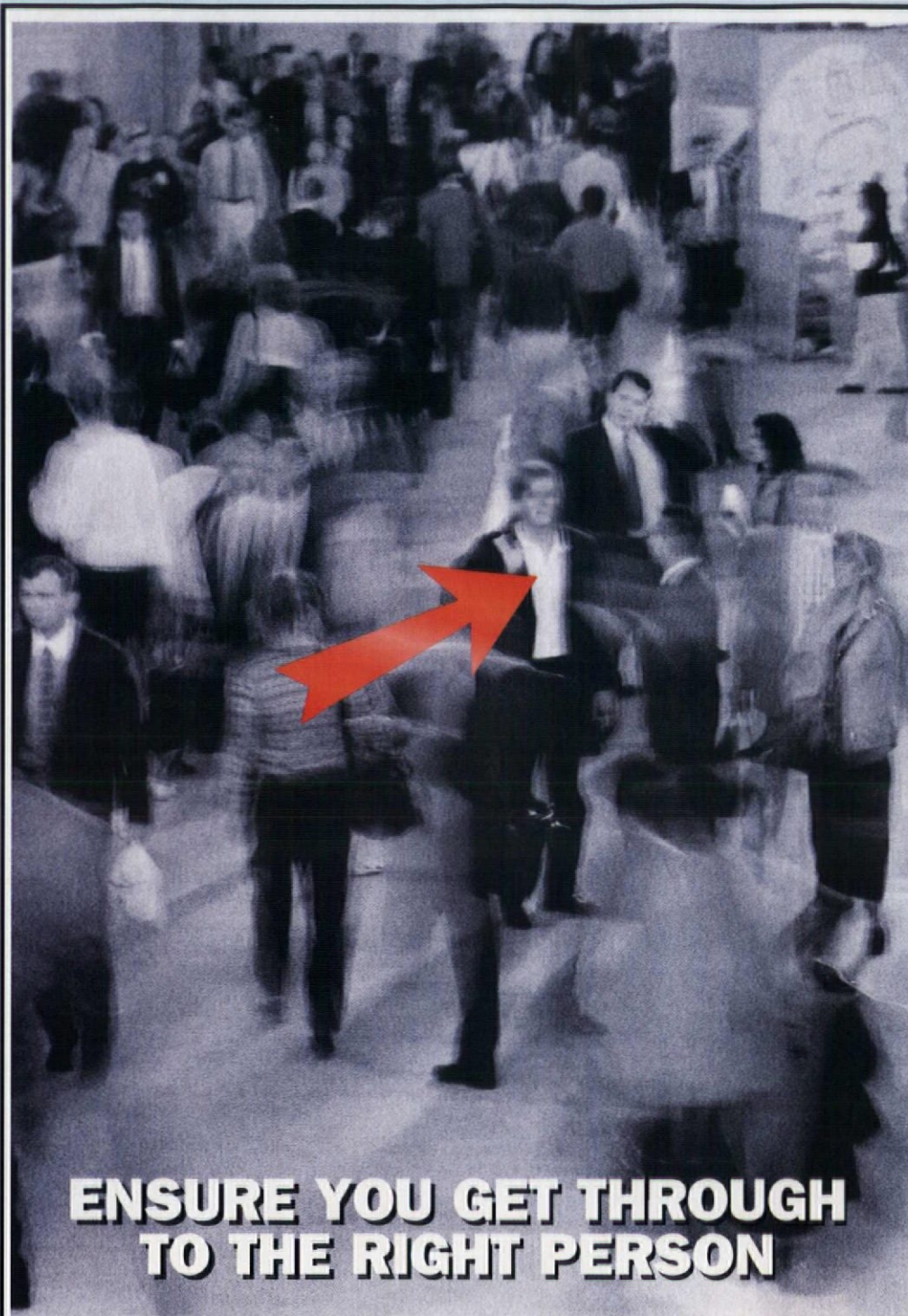
**Pyle Boyd Architects** has opened an office in Islamabad, Pakistan, headed by **Geoffrey Pyle**. The e-mail address is [pyleboyd@comsats.net.pk](mailto:pyleboyd@comsats.net.pk) and the practice website is [www.pyleboyd.co.uk](http://www.pyleboyd.co.uk)

London-based **Hoare Lea Consulting Engineers** has made **Simon Russett** principal of its Lift Engineering Group.

**Glyn Cartwright** of **Cox Building Products** is to become chairman of the newly formed **National Association of Rooflight Manufacturers (NARM)** in 2003. NARM was formed by the merger of the Independent Nationwide Federation of Rooflight Manufacturers and the Association of Rooflight Manufacturers.

**Brookes & Vernon Communications Ltd** has moved to Heath House, Cheadle Road, Uttoxeter, ST14 7BY.

● 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](mailto:victoria.huttler@construct.emap.com)



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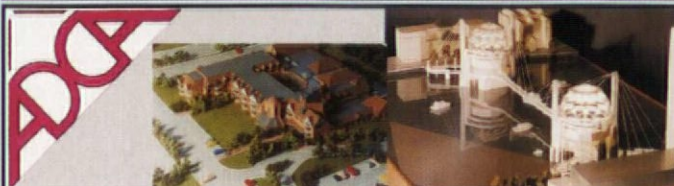
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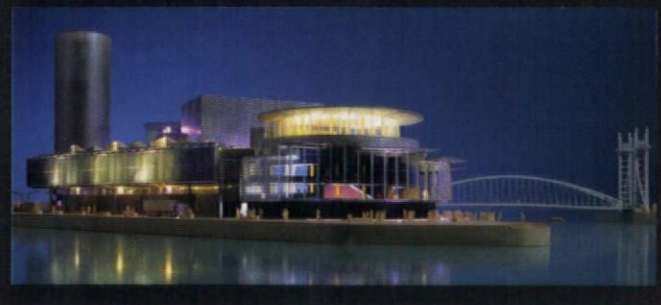
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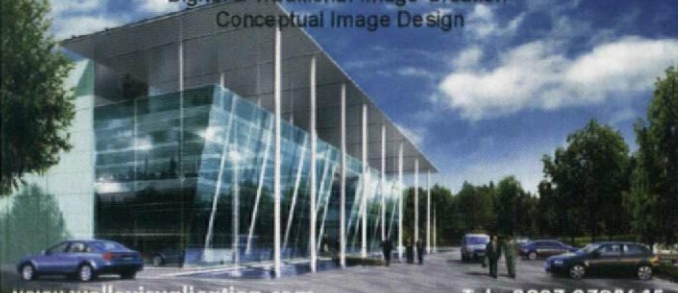
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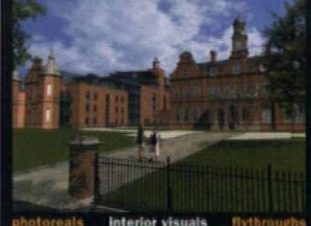


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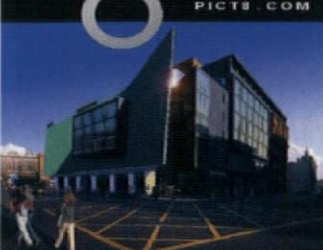
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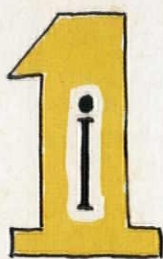
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# archicharades



Champagne goes to Peter Cummins of Covell Matthews Architects of Edinburgh who correctly identified Ben Van Berkel from the clues in last week's 'archicharades' competition. 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 a hat wins a bottle of bubbly.

## Detailed objection

**T**he fur is flying in the normally polite world of Classical architecture. A gushing article by Jeremy Musson in *Country Life* magazine describes Henbury Hall, Cheshire, as 'a totem of the Classical tradition', praising the designs by **Julian Bicknell** realised in 1984-87 for Sebastian de Ferranti. The article fails to mention that the house, a reinterpretation of **Palladio's** Villa Rotonda, was originally designed by **Quinlan Terry**. Terry, who, as the successor of Raymond Erith could claim the title of doyen of modern British Classicism, is furious. 'I designed the house right down to working details,' he says. 'The client decided that he wanted another architect to build it – maybe he wanted someone more compliant. The details were changed, not necessarily for the better. I had phone calls from the contractor, who wasn't happy at all. But it was essentially my scheme and some mention of my role would have been polite.' Bicknell (ex-Cullinans) has of course gone on to great things, including some extraordinary neo-Georgian golf clubs in Japan.

## Norman under fire

**B**ack in the world of high-tech Modernism, critic **Rowan Moore** lays into **Norman Foster** with a vengeance in *Prospect* magazine, in a long series of complaints about almost everything Foster has ever done. Hong Kong Bank? Structure is upside down. GLA headquarters? Lacks relevance. Spec office

blocks? Leaden. 'He supplies the look of innovation without the pain of actually changing anything... the purveyor of radical architecture for people who want no such thing.' What this critic and others can never get to grips with is that the running of a great commercial office has consequences. If you have designed 50 office buildings, they will not all be masterpieces. The question is, what is the minimum quality level? In the case of Foster, with a couple of exceptions, it has been very high indeed.

## Dearth in Venice

**T**he shortlisted group of five architects, one of which will represent Britain at the Venice Biennale this autumn, is a slightly odd one. **Foreign Office Architects** one can understand, and the piquant idea of having Blighty represented by the Iranian-born **Farshid Moussavi** and the very Spanish **Alexandro Zero-Polo** cannot have escaped the notice of the organisers, the British Council. As for the others, they are certainly not untalented (Alison Brooks/David Adjaye/East/de Rijke Marsh Morgan). On the other hand, an invited list could easily have included Caruso St John, Birds Portchmouth Russum, Allford Hall Monaghan Morris, Glen Howells, Gareth Hoskins and many others. Why didn't the British Council hold a competition? Why did they pick who they picked?

## Membership dues

**W**ill Alsop may be regretting his call for the profession to follow his

lead – resign from the RIBA and join the Architecture Foundation instead. This would be marginally more convincing if Alsop were not the foundation's chairman; as it is, it sounds like a rather sad cry for help from an organisation with money troubles. Actually the foundation would hate having large numbers of individual architect members – there is nothing for them. It will be interesting to see how foundation trustee **Ricky Burdett** reacts to Alsop's demand that **Rick Mather's** South Bank masterplan be scrapped. Ricky was a strong supporter of Mather and an adviser on the competition.

## P is for party

**S**quire & Partners held a great party to celebrate the opening of their new King's Cross offices, complete with an urbane speech from **Michael Squire**, who reminded the audience of the three 'Fs' of architecture: 'Finish it, photograph it and fxxx off.' Bad language in Camden was nothing compared with shenanigans at the other party in London on the same evening: the launch of the BBC4 arts channel in a group of linked buildings in Fashion Street, east London. Guests received free artworks, including a 'limited edition of 2000' by **Damien Hirst**. This comprised a box containing a large onion and a dart. This was a reference to the fourth musketeer – D'Artagnan, geddit? A faintly pornographic Christ artwork lined one end of the space, which could have caused trouble had any devout Muslims been present.

The chances of this were remote, since BBC personnel had sealed off the (public) street at each end, allowing in only those with party invitations.

## Volt farce

**A**s the three main candidates for the next RIBA presidency start jostling for position, Astragal hears shocking news of the present incumbent. **Paul Hyett**, attempting to tend to a small flood at home, decided to poke his hand into an area where there just happened to be a junction box. 'Luckily I recoiled, otherwise you might be writing a different article today,' he told Astragal. El presidente said he would have copped it if he had grabbed and held on – as it was, he burnt two fingers and felt nauseous after the electric current appeared to zip right up to his elbow. So he really is the current president.

## F is for . . .

**O**ne thing that is certain is that if you achieve superstar status you will generate envy and resentment from the less successful and the up and coming. So it is hardly surprising that some of London's younger architects have taken to referring to the ever more dominant **Lord Foster** as 'the F word'. I blame Rowan Moore.

## Illuminating

**M**ore light bulb gags: Question: How many students does it take to change a light bulb? Answer: Why bother – we're out of here in July!

astragal ●



## CORUS KALZIP

**AJ ENQUIRY NO: 201**

A major advance in Kalzip facades has been achieved with the introduction of the new Aspect 120 system that offers both simplicity of installation and outstanding performance. Available in either steel or aluminium with a wide range of finishes and colours, this flat panel presents a clean, crisp appearance to both the interior and exterior face. The intersection of the panels is sealed by a very neat and easy-to-apply front gasket, with further gaskets to the rear providing airtightness and secondary watertightness.



## HANSENGROUP PRESTIGE CONTRACT 9 AJ ENQUIRY NO: 202

Fire and steel glazing specialist FendorHansen has supplied and installed fire-resistant screens at a new study centre at Benenden School in Kent. FendorHansen applied its Fineline system with Pyrostop glazing, affording 30 minutes' fire protection to escape routes. Swingline doors were also incorporated in the screens, providing access to escape staircases.



## KEIM

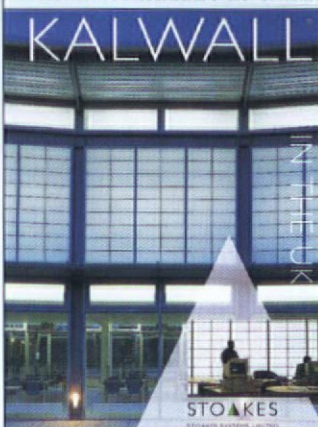
**AJ ENQUIRY NO: 203**

For the restoration of Greater London House to the original art deco style, Keim Mineral Paints were specified for 25,000m<sup>2</sup> of external redecoration including precisely detailed ornamentation. The Keim Mineral Paint system was specified for its proven longlife performance together with Keim's ability to provide exact colour matches to the original strong colours of stained-glass detailing which was a key feature of the building.



## STOAKES: PROJECT OF THE WEEK

**AJ ENQUIRY NO: 204**

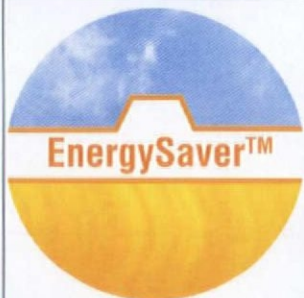


*Kalwall in the UK*, written for architects, describes a host of UK projects where Kalwall has been used for cladding and roofing, plus comprehensive technical and performance information. Kalwall provides natural diffused daylight without shadows or solar problems, is highly insulating and maintenance-free. Visit [www.stoakes.co.uk](http://www.stoakes.co.uk) or tel 020 8660 7667.

## HARTINGTON CONWAY

**AJ ENQUIRY NO: 205**

Hartington Conway has launched EnergySaver, a range of low U-value rooflights for composite panel systems. These in-plane rooflights provide an insulation level of 2.0 W/m<sup>2</sup>K at minimal extra cost, without reducing light transmission levels. They also exceed the requirements of revised Building Regulations Part L. EnergySaver incorporates an invisible thermal membrane within the rooflight's double skin.

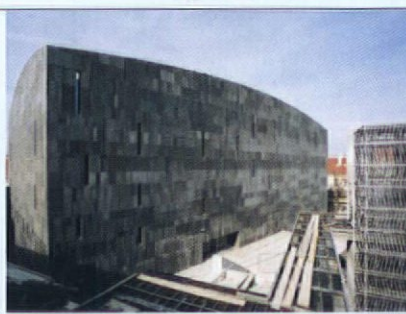


low U-value rooflights,  
full light transmission,  
minimal extra cost.

## MENDIGER BASALT

**AJ ENQUIRY NO: 206**

Mendigier Basalt Lava was used to build Ortner & Ortner's Ludwig Museum of Modern Art in Vienna – for the facade, the curved roof, and the inside walls. The outer wall is 500mm thick, with 10mm air gap behind the shell of Basalt slabs. It is a monument to this volcanic material, chosen for its beauty and resilience. For Basalt Products, tel 020 7407 1157, fax 020 7407 5364, e-mail: [info@lavastonedesigns.co.uk](mailto:info@lavastonedesigns.co.uk)



## WARD ROOF TILES

**AJ ENQUIRY NO: 207**

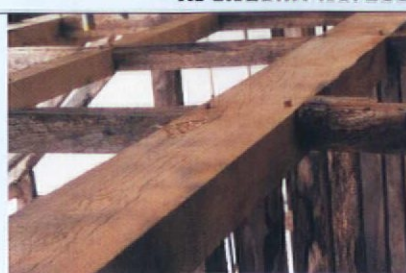
Roof Tile from Ward is a new insulated roof panel with a traditional appearance. Ultra-realistic terracotta and anthracite colourways give alternative options to designers, particularly in conservation areas. Roof Tile conforms with Building Regulations Part L and has low air leakage, and is proven to reduce heating costs by 20 per cent.



## COMPRIBAND

**AJ ENQUIRY NO: 208**

Vertical mortice joints in green oak frames can suffer from moisture ingress, causing damp patches in the external structure. Traditionally, drain holes are used to alleviate the problem, but it is possible to stop the moisture before it penetrates the joint. The use of Compriband Acrylic Tape set into a neat rebate only 3mm thick will stop any surface moisture entering the joint. For details call Compriband on (0191) 419 6860 or e-mail [sales@compriband.co.uk](mailto:sales@compriband.co.uk)





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