

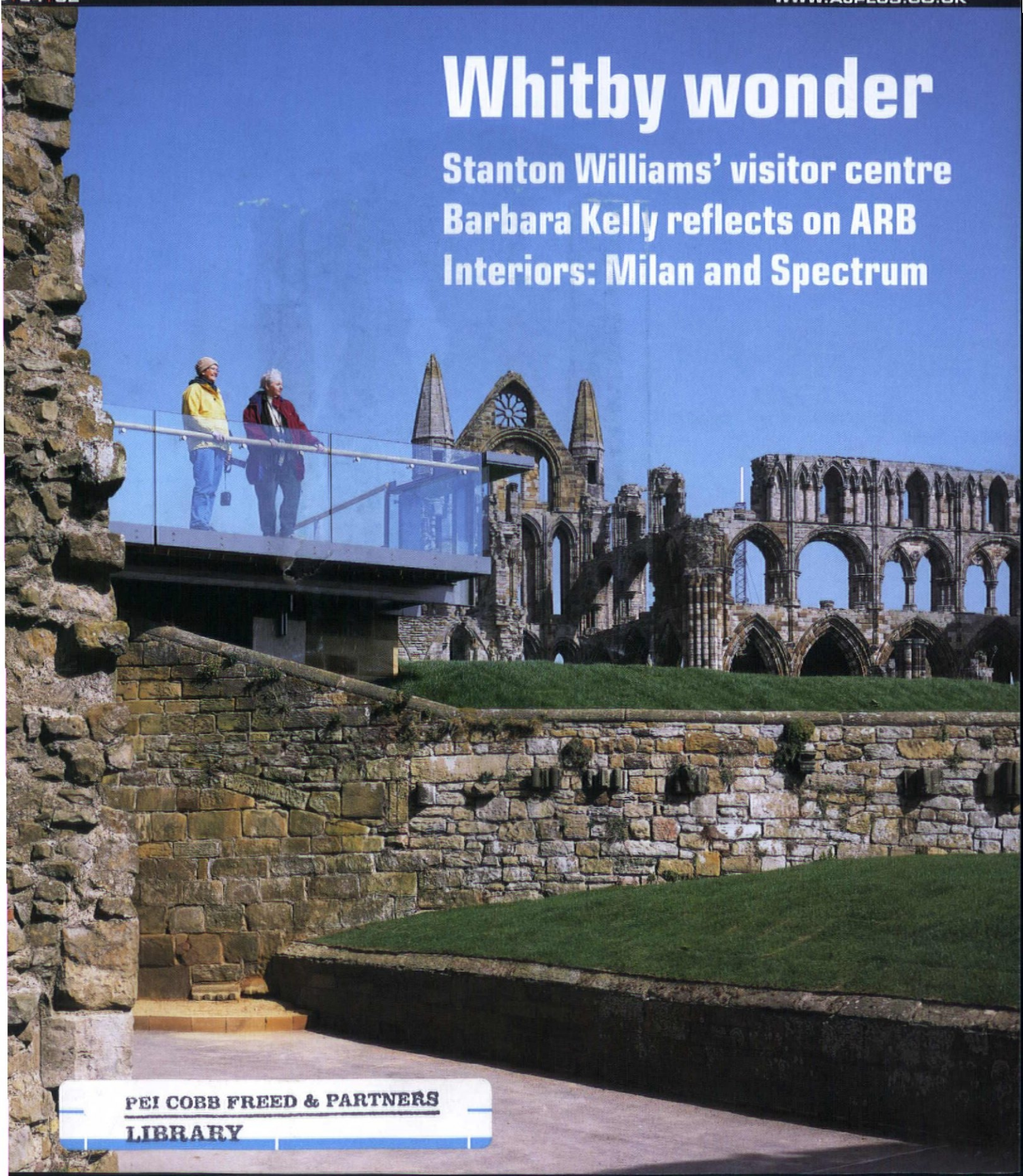
# Whitby wonder

Stanton Williams' visitor centre

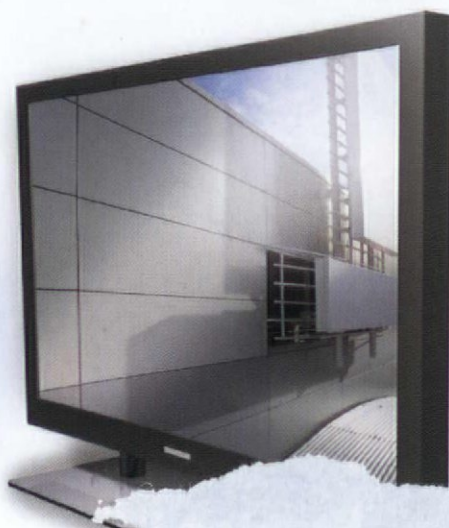
Barbara Kelly reflects on ARB

Interiors: Milan and Spectrum

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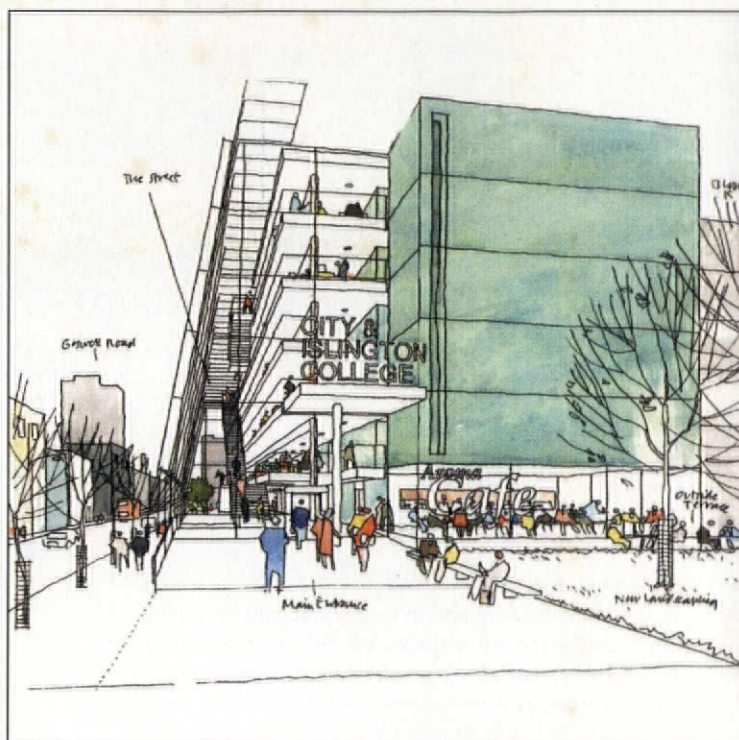
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Van Heyningen and Haward's exhibition, 'Winning Designs: City and Islington College' opens at Manchester's CUBE Gallery this week. The show is one of a series organised by the RIBA competitions office. It was accompanied by a lecture from Joanna van Heyningen and Birkin Haward on three of their education projects – City and Islington College (left), King Alfred School in Hampstead, London and Polhill Information Centre, part of De Montfort University's Bedford campus. The exhibition and talk are reviewed on page 12.

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## COVER

**Whitby Abbey visitor centre**  
**Photograph by Martine Hamilton Knight**

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**'He is astute enough to be all things to all people. He wants to keep the snuff-box collectors on side, and also attract a mass audience for popular culture.'**

Deyan Sudjic on V&A director Mark Jones.  
*Observer*, 20.4.02

**'I tell them, this will be the big one, like having Ronaldo, Rivaldo and Ravanelli playing at St James' Park.'**

Alan Smith, chairman of the Baltic Trust, on the soon-to-open Baltic arts centre, Gateshead.  
*Daily Telegraph*, 20.4.02

## aj news

### RIBA AND RIAS IN AGREEMENT

The RIBA and RIAS have reached a 'milestone' agreement to emphasise the Scottish institute as a chartered body in its own right and not a part of the RIBA, says RIAS president Gordon Davies. The bodies fell out in February on issues of closer integration (AJ.21.2.02). +

### BDP'S WIMBLEDON ACE

BDP has submitted a planning application for the next phase of its work at Wimbledon, including a new Court Two at the All England Club. The project, located on the south side of the club, will seat 5,000 people, and it will be sunk into the ground to preserve views for local residents. The club also revealed plans for an indoor mini-tennis centre and clay court in the grounds. +

### SCOTTISH DESIGN PRIZE

The Scottish Design Awards has made its shortlist for its 2002 awards. Nominations for best architect include Malcolm Fraser of Malcolm Fraser Architects, Karen Pickering of Page & Park, Ric Russell of Nicoll Russell Studios and Paul Stallan of RMJM. The winner will be announced on 24 May.

### CHANGE FOR THE BETTER

Construction minister Brian Wilson has welcomed this week's launch of *Accelerating Change*, a consultation looking at how to break down barriers to speed up the rate of improvement across construction. The consultation paper, can be downloaded at [www.cbpp.org.uk/acceleratingchange](http://www.cbpp.org.uk/acceleratingchange)

**For the best jobs in architecture turn to page 58 or visit [www.careersinconstruction.com](http://www.careersinconstruction.com)**



Erick van Egeraat's EEA Architects has beaten 100 architects to design Middlesbrough's £11 million modern-art gallery and £4 million civic square (pictured). The gallery with shop, cafe and teaching areas is forecast to be the most significant modern building in the Tees conurbation. It will bring art from two galleries under one roof and host international touring exhibitions.

## Schools hit by funding bombshell

Two leading schools have been stripped of their top research rating amid calls to overhaul the system by which research funding is allocated. The Cambridge School of Architecture and the Bartlett at University College London have fallen from a top five rating to a four. The move will have financial implications for both institutions for the next five years. As well as seeing cuts in their research funding from central government, it will have a knock-on effect with foreign students choosing to take their fees elsewhere.

Head of school at Cambridge Alan Short said he was still assessing the impact, but that it would be a 'not insignificant amount'. He pledged that the shortfall would not affect teaching.

According to the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE), Cambridge has seen its funding for the research category for the built environment drop by almost half from £468,676 in 2001-02 to £284,773 in 2002-03. UCL's built environment research funding fell from £1,171,856 in 2001-02 to only £907,750 in 2002-03. Funding is based on the number of academics within the department as well as the research rating.

Heads of schools are set to debate the issue at the annual SCHOSA conference in Vienna this week. The issue promised to be a 'hot potato' said Professor Peter Tregenza from Sheffield University.

Tregenza, who has responsibility for research within the school, said he was 'very relieved' that Sheffield had managed to keep its five rating. The impact of dropping a rating would have been the equivalent of losing two members of staff, he said.

Short agreed there was a 'big issue' around the allocation of research ratings and that there needed to be discussions about how ratings are assessed.

The five-yearly research assessment (RAE) exercise by the HEFCE, which was completed in December, pointed out a number of general concerns with research in the area of the built environment – the principal category under which most schools apply. It criticised the ageing profile of researchers and pointed to evidence of neglect towards technical subject areas.

But in a damning report published today, a House of Commons select committee has called for an overhaul of the system. It accuses the RAE of causing 'collateral damage – damaging staff careers and distracting universities from their teaching, community and economic development roles'. It criticises the DfES for leaving the decision about research ratings to an unelected quango. And it calls on government to make a significant increase in research funding in its 2002 spending review.

Zoë Blackler



**'Daniel has taken the feel of a war zone and turned it into an art form.'**

Jim Forester, director-designate of the Imperial War Museum North. *Independent*, 20.4.02

**'I'm constantly telling the Bryant/Wimpey people, "Look... young people are living modern lives. Why should they want to go into tacky-tacky little boxes?"'**

Sir Terence Conran. *Daily Telegraph*, 20.4.02

**'It's more hierarchical than any other office I've worked in. The guys up top are pretty unapproachable. You'd never just walk up to him and go, "Hi, Norman!"'**

A 'former Foster architect'. *Guardian*, 20.4.02

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

## Portsmouth blasts 'hideous' Pick Everard Navy scheme

Architects in Portsmouth have condemned plans for a new Royal Navy HQ after dismissing the design by Pick Everard as hideous. The Portsmouth Society attacked the £14 million building proposed for Whale Island in Portsmouth Harbour, which is with the planners. Pick Everard's Taunton office drew up plans for a 13,500m<sup>2</sup> block, with blue curtain walls and curved roofs to the five-storey design. The site commands the approach to the city from the water.

Roger James, secretary of the Portsmouth Society, said: 'It is an opportunity for a splendid landmark building but the design proposed is actively hideous and fails to do justice to this magnificent site.' He said the local RIBA office thought the footprint – likened to a four-leafed clover – was contrived, the inner atrium was unsatisfactory and the raised roof was not expressed externally. Work on the HQ is due to start in late summer for a 2003 finish.

James said: 'The government endlessly assures us it is committed to good design, and the Ministry of Defence has produced Design Better Defence Buildings. Why has this large and important building been completely overlooked?'

Ian Parkinson, principal development control officer for Portsmouth, said he was sending the drawings to CABE. 'We hope the issues are taken on board and they will modify the scheme. I believe it can be changed without a total redesign.'

Philip Hawtin, senior associate and project architect at Pick Everard, was surprised the Portsmouth Society went public: 'They haven't even given us the chance to get back to them and they may not

appreciate what we are trying to achieve.'

He said his team was 'reviewing the situation' and a meeting with the council was due next week. Hawtin refused to release images of the scheme because 'they are not quite at the stage we want them published' and the ministry was sensitive about these issues.

Commander Mike Tompkinson, the Royal Navy officer responsible for the project, said he was happy with the proposals. But the MoD was keen to win the approval of Portsmouth even though it did not require approval from the local planners, being an MoD project. He insisted critics did not realise the full brief or the needs for security. 'Any building is a potential terrorist target and I think the fellow [James] is quite out of order making these sorts of statements without getting an explanation on why things are the way they are.'

Jez Abbott

## RIBA sees high demand for National Conference tickets

Tickets are selling fast for the RIBA National Conference 2002, which takes place on 11-12 June during Interbuild at the National Exhibition Centre, Birmingham.

Speakers include Ted Cullinan, Robert Adam, Jon Rouse, Richard Saxon, Glen Howells, Richard Murphy, Elia Zenghelis and Sunand Prasad. The conference is free to RIBA members but delegates must pay a refundable booking fee of £50+VAT (£61) per day. The fee for non-RIBA members is £250+VAT (£303) per day. Visit [www.ajplus.co.uk/promotions/riba](http://www.ajplus.co.uk/promotions/riba) or see pages 20-21 of AJ 11.4.02 for booking details and a programme of events. +

A £13 million proposal by Penoyre & Prasad to turn an old East End sweatshop into a cultural centre won the backing of London mayor Ken Livingstone this week. The disused factory near Brick Lane will become the Rich Mix Cultural Foundation, an arts complex with a gallery and cafe, cinema and performance space. Multicoloured louvres and glass will overhaul the 1960s concrete-framed building. 'It will be fantastically whizzy in terms of technology and have aluminium and triple glazing,' said senior architect Bob Wills. Work should start this December for a spring 2004 opening. +

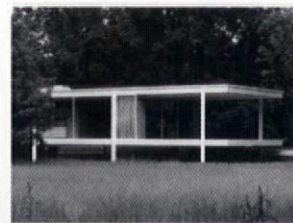


### 6 WEEKS TO GO



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 past 50 years and makes predictions for the next 50, based on interviews with a range of experts. This week, on page 18, CABE deputy chairman and AJ editorial director Paul Finch explains why Mies Van der Rohe's Modernist Farnsworth House on the banks of the Fox River in Plano, Illinois, designed and built between 1946 and 1951, is his favourite building.



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### Q&A

# 44%

... of voters in a poll on the AJ's website think Richard Rogers should win next year's Pritzker Prize.

Respondents: 77

This week's question:

Which building on Paul Hyett's London walkabout with Barry Sheerman MP is the best exemplar of good design (see page 14)?

+ Register your view at  
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Innovation inspires you





# ceilings



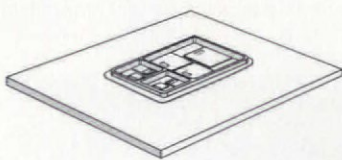
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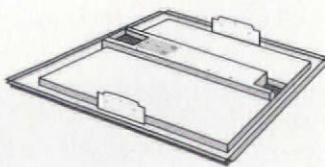
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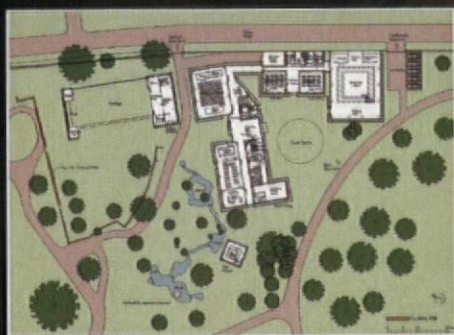


Rear view of Antenna Panel



Rear view of Sound Panel





## Pavilion brings a touch of Japan to Gunnersbury

Kisho Kurokawa plans to bring the East to west London with his design for a Japanese pavilion in Gunnersbury Park.

The pavilion will be Kurokawa's first building in the UK if it wins the backing of park owners Hounslow and Ealing councils. It will house the UK's first Anglo-Japanese cultural centre and bring together facilities for a range of Japanese activities – martial arts, Japanese archery (kyudo), origami, flower-arranging and poetry.

Gunnersbury has the third largest Japanese population outside of Japan, explained Phillida Purves, Japanophile and the driving force behind the project. The centre will raise awareness in England about Japanese culture as well as offering a resource for the diaspora.

'I strongly believe the breadth of different activities and Japanese connections in this country justifies one identifiable Japanese centre,' she said. 'It's something that's been talked about for years.'

The scheme involves the restoration of two 17th-century stone stable blocks – one Grade II-listed, the other Grade II\*-listed – and the addition of transparent glass extensions.

The existing north stable block will house a library and administration offices, with the construction of a new block providing a Japanese restaurant. A neglected Japanese garden behind the north block will be restored, and the restaurant will look out onto it. Within the garden, there will be a glass teahouse for Japanese tea rituals.

The existing east stable block, flanked by the road, will house a sound-insulated music room and meeting rooms. An earlier extension will be converted to WCs and changing rooms. This will be connected to the largest of the new buildings neighbouring it, which will house a martial arts centre, the budokan.

The scheme also adds a lecture and conference room and an archery hall, sited at the other end of the east stables block.

The new-build glass structures will act like greenhouses, collecting solar energy for a natural heating system. Transparent solar panels will cover the exterior walls and roofs. Trained ivy inside the walls will provide shading, with natural breeze ventilation used during the summer.

Zoë Blackler



Top and bottom left: transparent glass buildings extend the existing stable blocks. Right: interior of the restaurant in the north block





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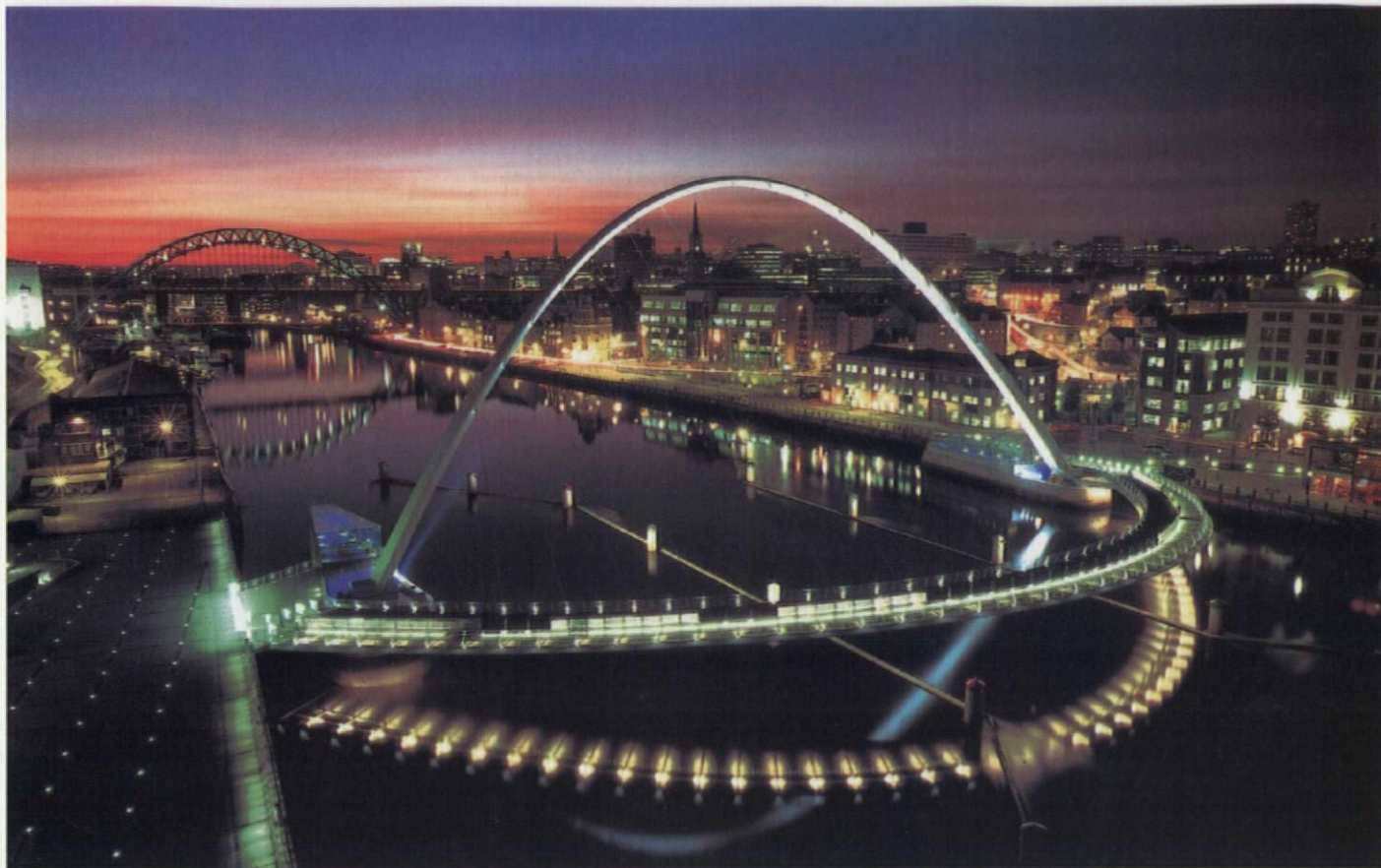
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# Wilkinson Eyre shines in UK lighting awards



Wilkinson Eyre's Gateshead Millennium Bridge was praised for the way its lighting scheme created 'an iconic night scene' for the city

Lottery projects and Wilkinson Eyre Architects have dominated the 2002 Lighting Design Awards, backed by AJ publisher Emap.

Gateshead Millennium Bridge and the Stirling Prize-winning Magna Centre, both high-profile lottery schemes by Wilkinson Eyre Architects, were among the big-name projects to scoop top prizes in their categories.

The awards, which also commended familiar schemes such as Jeremy Dixon, Edward Jones' Somerset House with its lit fountains, Alsop's colourful Peckham Library, Morley Architects' Docklands exhibition centre ExCel, Bennetts Associates' Wessex Water operations centre, and MacCormac Jamieson Prichard's Wellcome Wing at the Science Museum, were presented at an event at the Park Lane Hotel, London.

Chetwood Associates' Sainsbury's Millennium superstore in Greenwich, with a good deal of natural light and a lighting design by Pinniger+Partners, clinched the sustainable projects prize, while the transport award winner was Kensington High Street, with its series of graffiti-proof lighting columns.

But it was Gateshead which clinched the exterior award, Jonathan Speirs & Associates' lighting scheme highlighting the bridge's arch with

white light and a 'dynamic' colour wash from bank to bank. The deck's underside is illuminated to reinforce the bridge's structural I-sections and capture reflections from the Tyne.

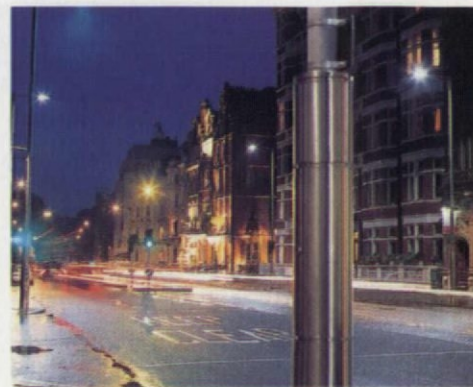
Peckham Library and Somerset House lost out in the community award to a Sutton Vane Associates-designed lighting scheme for 60 buildings, structures and vessels around Portsmouth Harbour, while Magna – with lighting 'capturing the sense of danger and drama of the site' by Speirs and Major and DHA Design Services – took the retail and leisure gong.

It was a record year for the awards. Some 166 projects and product innovations – the highest ever – were received, with judges describing the quality as 'excellent'.

All the shortlisted projects were individually assessed in site visits by the project judges, who included designers Derek Phillips and Janet Turner; Ray Molony, editor of competition organiser *Lighting Equipment News* (along with the Institution of Lighting Engineers); and AJ group editorial director Paul Finch.

For the awards in full, see [ajplus.co.uk](http://ajplus.co.uk)

David Taylor



Chetwood Associates' Sainsbury's Millennium superstore; Wilkinson Eyre's Magna; and Kensington High Street's transport winner



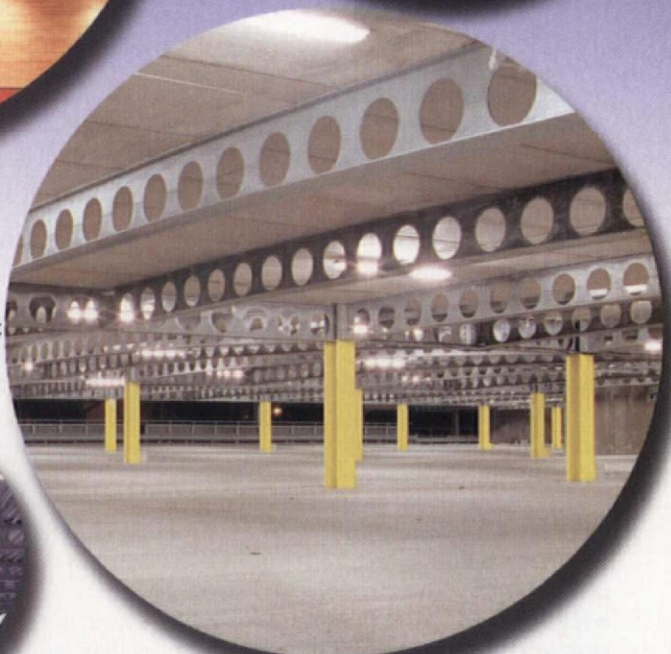
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# Hellman

KUROKAWA HAS DESIGNED AN ANGLO-JAPANESE CULTURAL CENTRE IN LONDON'S GUNNERSBURY PARK—MAYBE ARCHITECTS COULD BENEFIT FROM THE ACTIVITIES OFFERED ?!



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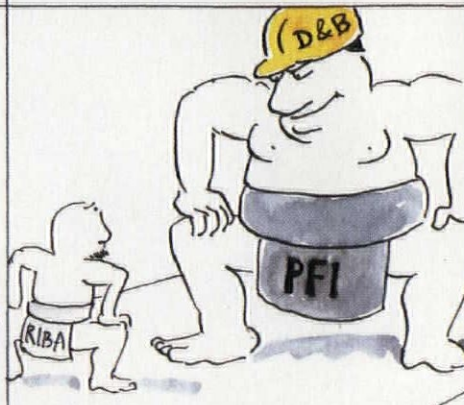
JUDO



ZEN ARCHERY



IKEBANA



SUMO

www.louishellman.co.uk

## vital statistics

- Some 331,000 people worked in the City in 2000, according to London's 'Tall Buildings and Sustainability' report. While there are 10,000 parking spaces, 90 per cent of staff used public transport.
- Office buildings can gobble up more than 1,000kwhr/m<sup>2</sup> a year for heating, hot water, lighting and computers, says the same report.
- The grounds of Scotland's new Parliament at Holyrood are to be planted with 40 native Scottish oaks – all shipped from Germany – at a cost of £6,000 each. The oaks will tie in with Enric Miralles' vision of a building inspired by the Scottish countryside.
- New mortgage lending rose to a record £16.6 billion in March, up from £13.3 billion the month before, says the Council of Mortgage Lenders.
- The increase in NI contributions will stoke the black economy as the number of bogus self-employed people rises, warns construction union Ucat.

## Deborah Mulhearn reviews the design philosophy of van Heyningen and Haward

The RIBA competitions office has been putting its space at Manchester's CUBE Gallery to good use with a series of exhibitions and accompanying lectures, 'Winning Designs'.

The latest speakers were Joanna van Heyningen and Birkin Haward, describing their winning design for City and Islington College in north London and a selection of earlier schemes.

The second slide featured a goat. This was not, apparently, a tilt at the capricious nature of clients, despite the brief for the City and Islington College changing out of the blue from a further education to a sixth form college – and then even further along switching to design and build.

If van Heyningen and Haward were frustrated by their winning design's vicissitudes, it did not show. What came across was in fact consistency – in design intent, in commitment to sustainability, and in creating an inspirational space for the building's inhabitants.

Van Heyningen and Haward picked three very different educational buildings to illustrate their inside-out, people-centred design philosophy. Cost per square metre may have varied widely, but a picture emerged of how each project had informed and influenced the next. Natural light, attention to acoustics, and the work/play balance were paramount.

First was one of those groovy progressive schools in well-heeled Hampstead in north London. King Alfred School did not have much money but needed new lower school buildings, with the proviso that construction work should not disturb any part of school life or affect the children.

Outdoor spaces were to be maximised for these inner-city children, so classrooms were opened out onto the playing fields and semi-enclosed wooden terraces blurred the boundaries between inside and out.

The goat lived here, and was to van Heyningen and Haward a symbol for the school children's status – 'It thinks it's free but actually it's tethered,' explained van Heyningen.

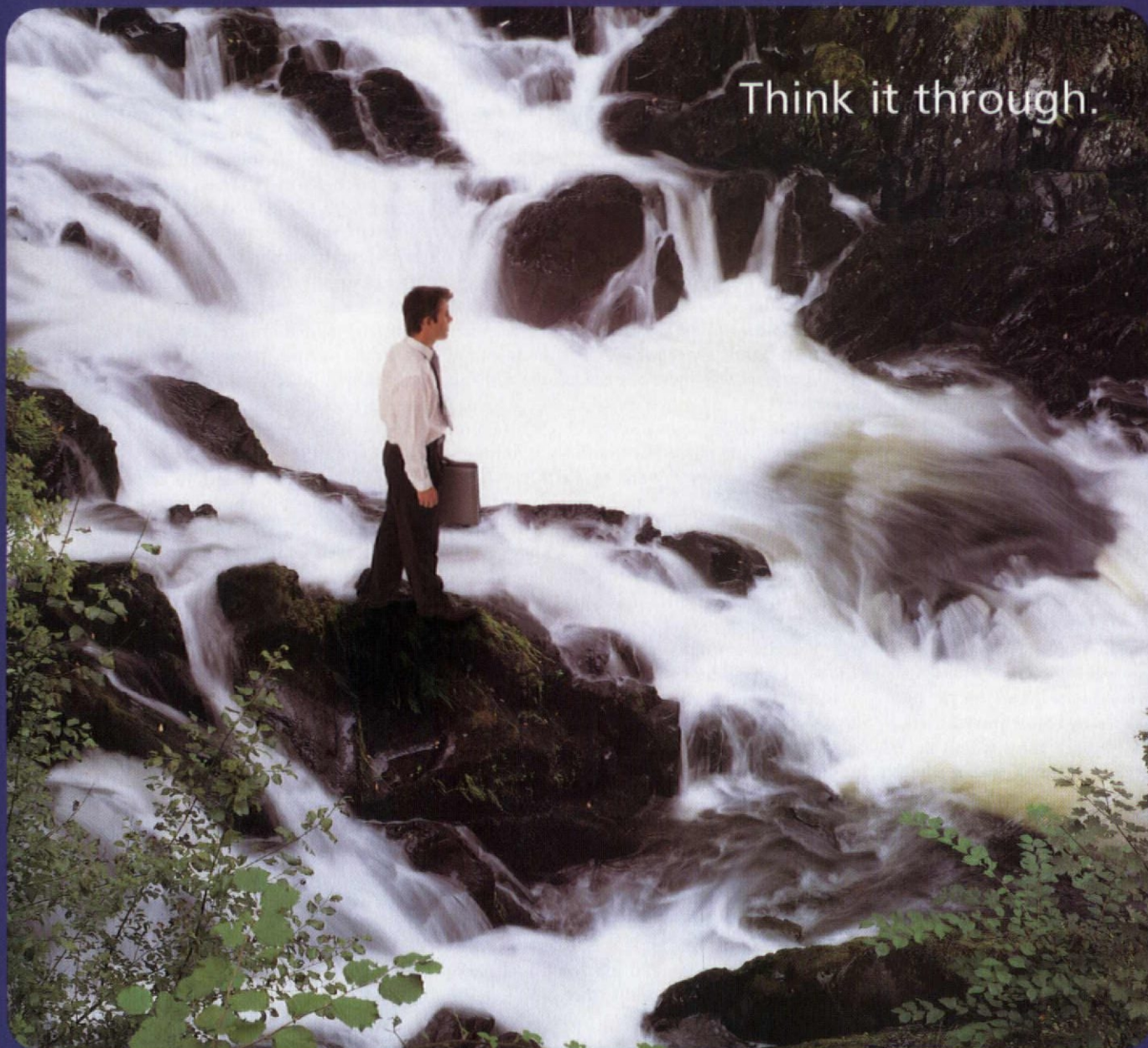
She went on to stress the importance of natural ventilation in educational buildings, where people occupy a room for an hour or more with the door shut, and computers generate heat and glare.

At Polhill Information Centre, part of De Montfort University's Bedford campus, timber louvres set away from the building help control the internal environment but also allow views out – a humane touch typical of this thoughtful practice.

'We were taught at college to design from the inside out,' says van Heyningen, 'and you never really forget what you learn at college.'

'Winning designs: City and Islington College' is now showing at the CUBE Gallery, 113-115 Portland Street, Manchester until 31 May. Opening times: Monday-Friday 12-5.30pm, Saturday 12-5pm, closed Sunday





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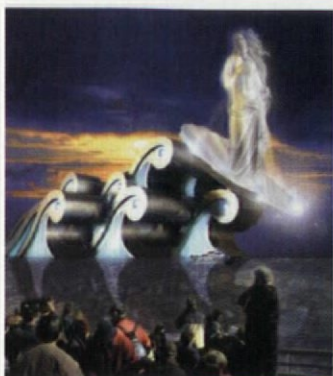


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Richard Grubb is designing a £30 million visitor centre for Paphos in Cyprus themed on Aphrodite. The centre will be topped with a 30m-high statue of the goddess (above). Sole practitioner Grubb will include exhibition spaces, an aquarium, shops and restaurants in the 8,000m<sup>2</sup> design.

#### SUPERSTARS AT BISHOPSGATE

Railtrack has shortlisted 12 internationally renowned architects to masterplan the 4ha Bishopsgate Goodsyards site in London. The list is headed by Foster and Partners, Zaha Hadid Architects and Rem Koolhaas' Office for Metropolitan Architecture. It also includes Rafael Viñoly Architect/EDAW; Kees Christiaanse Architects and Planners; Denton Corker Marshall; Eric Parry Associates; Mecanoo Architecten; Terry Farrell/DEGW; Van Berkel & Bos; Kohn Pedersen & Fox; and Alsop Architects. The successful firm will be named 'in the next couple of months'.

#### RIBA RAISES RIOTS ALERT

The RIBA is advising that attendees of the lecture by Jonathan Dimbleby on 1 May should use Great Portland Street Underground Station to avoid possible May Day riots.

## 'Architects should be shot' MP goes on walkabout with Hyett

RIBA president Paul Hyett has taken an MP who said architects 'should be shot' on a tour of London's highest-calibre buildings to make him see sense.

Hyett's walkabout with Barry Sheerman took in some of the capital's most controversial blocks – from the Lloyd's Building by Richard Rogers Partnership to No 1 Poultry by Stirling and Wilford.

The tour was prompted following comments made by the chairman of the education and skills' select committee at a meeting last December (AJ 21.2.02). But Hyett, who was at the meeting, said the remark was 'light-hearted, off the cuff and throwaway'.

The pair walked from Foggo Associates' and Arup's Broadgate phase one to offices at numbers 27 and 50 Finsbury Square by Eric Parry and Foster and Partners, respectively. Stirling and Wilford's No 1 Poultry followed before the men taxied to Horselydown Square by Julyan Wickham.

After a brief lunch, they took in views across London, including 'fairly ugly stuff in the City', said Hyett. Sheerman liked the Lloyd's Building and Michael Hopkins and Partners' Portcullis House, which is where the tour ended.

'Sheerman is an MP who is very appreciative of design and pretty sophisticated,' said Hyett. 'We are not going to exploit this issue. He is hugely interested in the problems that construction and development face in delivering good design.'

RIBA head of government relations Jonathan Labrey said the meeting was positive and he hoped the RIBA would have more chances to speak before the select committee on education.

'We wanted to move the conversation forward rather than dwell on the past. Sheerman is also chairman of the design and innovation all-party group and one of the most informed MPs.'

Jez Abbott

## CABE tells Stockwell Street scheme to be more 'quirky'

A CABE design review criticising a £25 million mixed-use scheme as 'wallpaper' rather than distinct and modern has been welcomed by the designer, BWCP Architects.

CABE said the Stockwell Street scheme in

south London's Greenwich was trying too hard to be unobtrusive. 'We feel the architecture is in danger of becoming wallpaper rather than a distinctive piece of contemporary design.'

The project includes 130 flats, 4,700m<sup>2</sup> of shops and restaurants and 4,000m<sup>2</sup> of offices around a small piazza. The four main buildings are due to start on the World Heritage Site near a railway line next year and take two years to finish.

CABE said the architects were trying to create a 'simple architecture', but that the site 'could take an unequivocally modern and distinctive building'. However, the watchdog believed the urban-design analysis resulted in a credible proposal.

Brian Waters, principal at BWCP Architects, said he felt good about the report because of its support for the scheme's urban design analysis. 'They felt we were being a little polite and it could be more quirky and gutsy.'

'CABE thinks we need to be more assertive on the treatment of the buildings. My reaction is that we as architects don't need much encouragement but we need a little support because there were a lot of voices in the consultation such as a local group, who wrote to the council saying they liked it but didn't want to see too much of it.'

Greenwich planners are due to make a decision on the project in the summer, he said. +



Panther Hudspeth Architects has won planning approval and listed building consent for a new theatre and the redevelopment of three Grade II-listed buildings in Leeds. The Civic Theatre, a new building of stone and brick costing about £6 million, will have a 350-seat auditorium, bar and conference rooms on Millennium Square.

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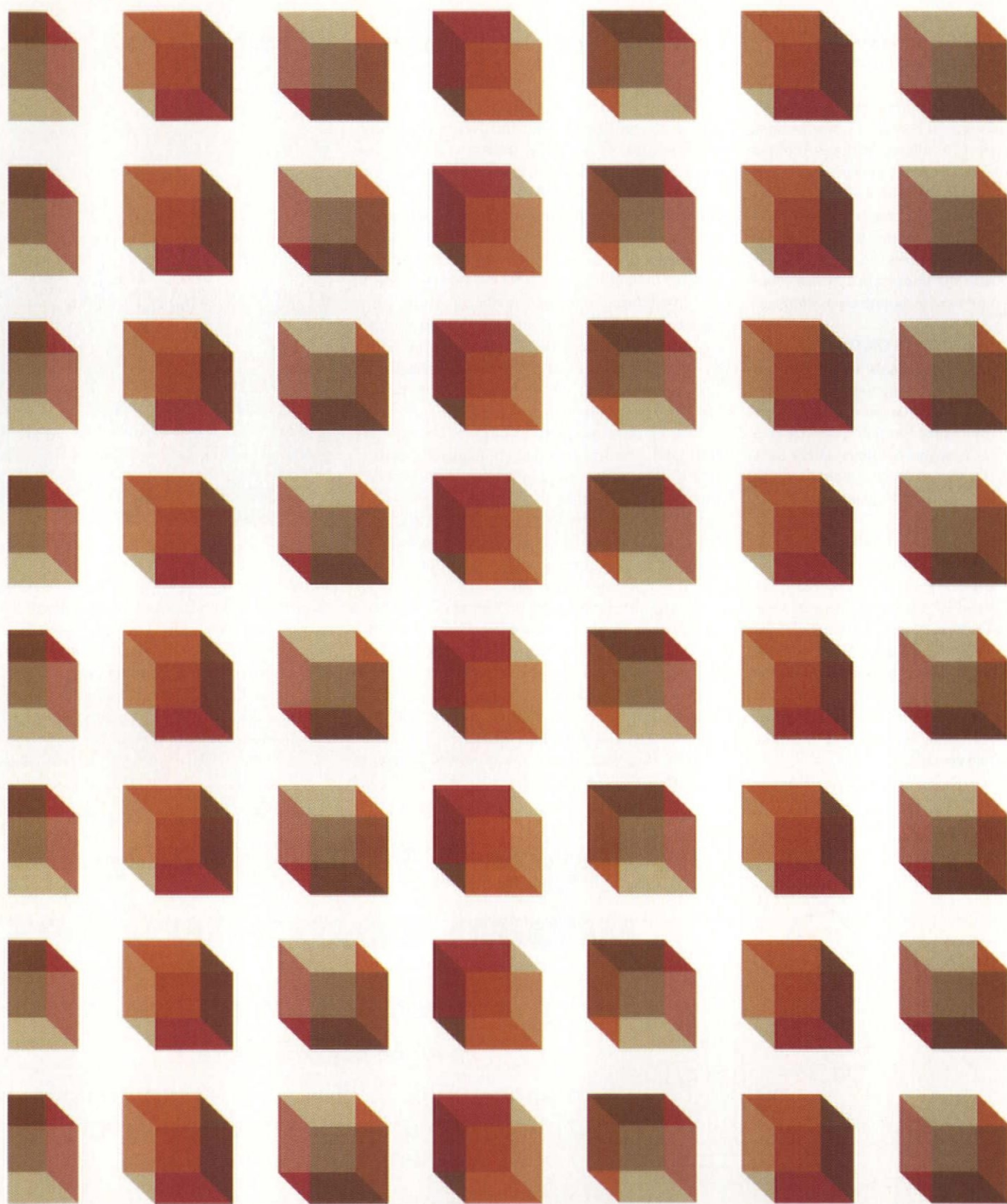


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#### DESIGN RISK WARNING

The National Audit Office has warned of the risks of using innovative design after finding Portcullis House ran over budget by £28 million. Michael Hopkins and Partners' design cost £234 million, 18 per cent more than forecast, its report found. The watchdog made 10 recommendations including the need to recognise the importance of risk management in ambitious buildings.

#### ARCHITECTS ON DISPLAY

'Neighbourhoods by Design', an exhibition of recent work by London architects, from Alan Power Architects' Kentish Town Library to Timpson Manley's Cutty Sark Gardens, is to go on show at the RIBA from 10 May to 30 June.

#### FLATS ON THE CLYDE

Gordon Murray + Alan Dunlop Architects has applied for detailed planning consent for a 14-floor block of flats by Glasgow's River Clyde. The design, for 102 flats on Lancefield Quay, will include shops, offices and roof gardens. Construction is due to start this autumn and will take two years. ➤

## 'Views will be ruined,' warns GLA at mayor's high-rise plans

The Greater London Assembly has had a dust-up with its mayor Ken Livingstone over tall buildings and his leadership style, within a week of a new report supporting skyscrapers in the capital.

GLA members warned views of St Paul's Cathedral from Greenwich could be ruined if Livingstone had his way on tall buildings. The assembly said he was 'set to give the green light' to the principle of building high-rise blocks on Greenwich riverside.

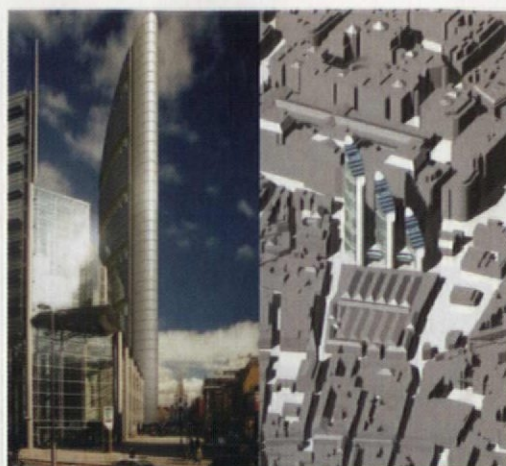
Tony Arbour, chairman of the planning committee, said: 'The committee and assembly are sceptical about the mayor's tall-buildings policy and we back Greenwich.' The borough wants all new schemes in front of Greenwich Park and Blackheath Point to be lower than 30m.

But Livingstone, responding to Greenwich's draft UDP, said the view had changed enormously over the centuries and continued to change. 'We don't want to fossilise the view as there is much room for improvement. We want to manage the view so that St Paul's remains visible, but also to ensure the panorama on each side contains some beautiful buildings to look at.'

Livingstone is currently reviewing his strategic-views policy in his London Plan. But a report by GLA members published on Monday accused the mayor of paying lip service to Londoners' views.

Livingstone said he had 'total contempt for consultation' to a committee in February, and that seeking views was not a top priority.

Sally Hamwee, chairwoman of the assembly



m' Architects has produced this alternative to Foster and Partners' plans for the controversial Spitalfields market site in east London. Director Ken Hutt called the 'tri-tower concept' an exercise in 'what if?'. The practice will be meeting with developer Hammerson to discuss its ideas. ➤

and the committee that wrote the report, *Is the Mayor Listening?*, said the mayor's views did not seem to tally with his early commitments and that he may lose the goodwill of Londoners.

Meanwhile, the Corporation of London's 'Tall Buildings and Sustainability' report, published last week, claimed advances in technology and sensitive design could make towers more sustainable than low-rise buildings.

Jez Abbott



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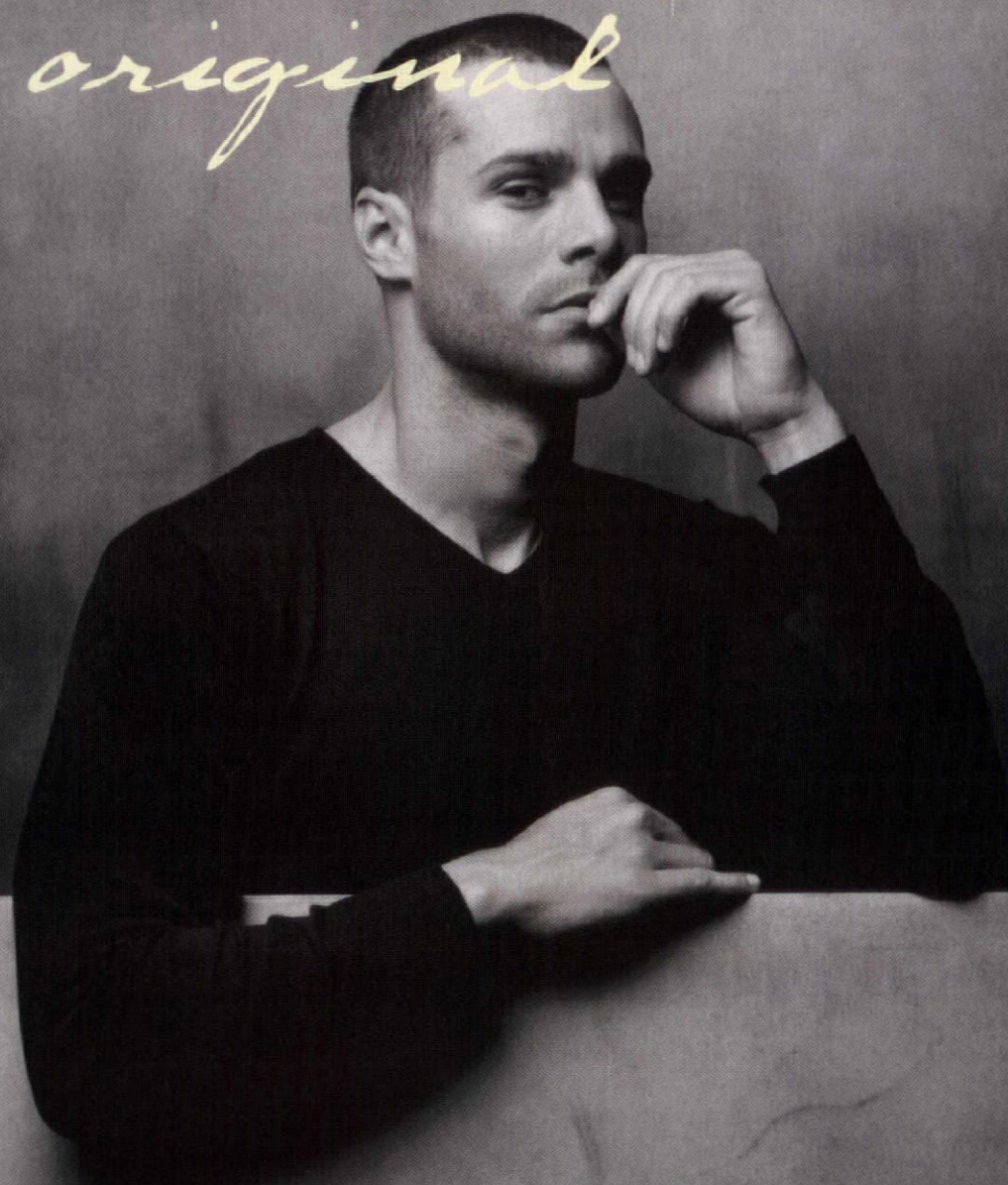
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# 50 50

PAUL FINCH

Deputy chairman, CABE

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

The Farnsworth House because the experience of it is such a revelation. I wouldn't have thought that a single-storey house could be so infused with such an aura, and could achieve such a harmonious relationship between materials, space and the landscape outside.

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

The innovation which has changed the construction industry is the mobile phone. On one hand it symbolises the fragmentation of the industry with its myriad tiny units doing their own thing. Not a weakness, fragmentation is actually a strength: it explains why construction can cope with anything from kitchen extensions to the Channel Tunnel rail link. On the other hand, the mobile phone represents linkage and the ability to sequence events. Because you can communicate instantly you can make decisions on the basis of information rather than guesswork.

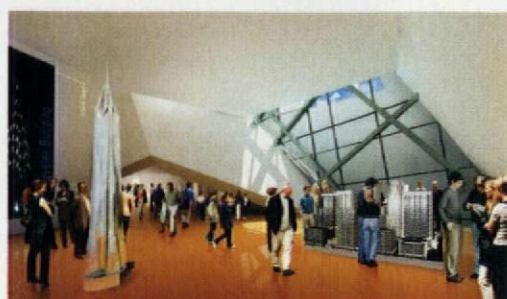
## What is the best building product of the past 50 years?

Super-strength carbon reinforcement. It is already in use for the strengthening of bridges without necessarily closing them. This material and developments like it offer the prospect of a new aesthetic in which strength and mass are no longer synonymous.

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

The coming together of architectural inspiration, cost analysis and construction efficiency in the name of combined working rather than as a preliminary to litigation. What it will require is some kind of Eganite philosophy allied to a cultural shift on the part of both public authorities and private contractors towards an understanding that good architecture is essential to the satisfaction of that generally ignored third party – the end users.

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



A restaurant will be housed on the top floor (top) with a contemporary architecture gallery on one of the upper floors (above right). The Spiral will be sandwiched between the wings of the Victorian museum (above left)

## Libeskind's Spiral on track as V&A begins £150m overhaul

Work on Daniel Libeskind's long-awaited Spiral for London's V&A could begin next year along with a comprehensive £150 million makeover of the museum. V&A director Mark Jones pledged his commitment to Libeskind's £50 million building last week. Jones said £31 million was already in place and he was entirely confident the rest would be raised from the Heritage Lottery Fund and private donations.

The five-storey structure – a series of asymmetrical, interlocking blocks sandwiched between the Victorian museum – has full planning permission and the backing of English Heritage.

Construction of the Spiral will proceed in tandem with a major overhaul of the museum. The masterplan is by Metaphor – initiated by Stephen Greenfield and Catherine Hanway in the spring of 2000 when they were still with DEG – and Eva Jiricna as the principal architect.

The idea behind the 10-year plan is 'to work with the grain of the building', Jones said. And while the 5ha site presented difficulties, it also had great qualities. 'Our plan will emphasise these qualities and in so doing make the whole museum more enjoyable and easy to understand,' Jones said.

Key to the plan will be to open up the heart of the museum and make the under-utilised central garden the focus for public activities. Jiricna will now produce detailed designs to open up the galleries around the garden to create a cloistered space with clear routes into it. She will also be charged with improving the main entrance hall on Cromwell Road, the shop and sculpture garden.

Jiricna said she would be reinterpreting the space, not rebuilding it. 'We are starting with the tone of the

building to enhance it and to improve the architecture and its qualities,' she said. Other work will include new galleries for the medieval and renaissance collections, restoration of the north and south courts and the development of a learning zone.

Other practices working on sites around the museum include Gareth Hoskins Architects, which is creating the Architecture for All gallery – a joint project with the RIBA – and Wright and Wright Architects, which is restoring the archive stores and study rooms in the Henry Cole wing.

A newly completed contemporary gallery by Gareth Hoskins Architects opens this week.

Zoë Blackler

## Fears for education as EU bids to silence architecture's voice

Euro chiefs want to ride roughshod over professional education by abolishing the EU's dedicated architectural committee. The European Commission proposes to merge its five existing education committees, which also include those for medicine and vets, into one super group.

The move, an attempt to cut red tape, could cause chaos in architectural education, warned Sue Ware, Architects Registration Board member and a teacher at the Bartlett School of Architecture. She said: 'Each committee has its own advisory structure, which is a unique voice. How will this one committee operate and will we have enough representation? How we can influence the agenda, can we appeal, and where do we go if we feel ignored?'

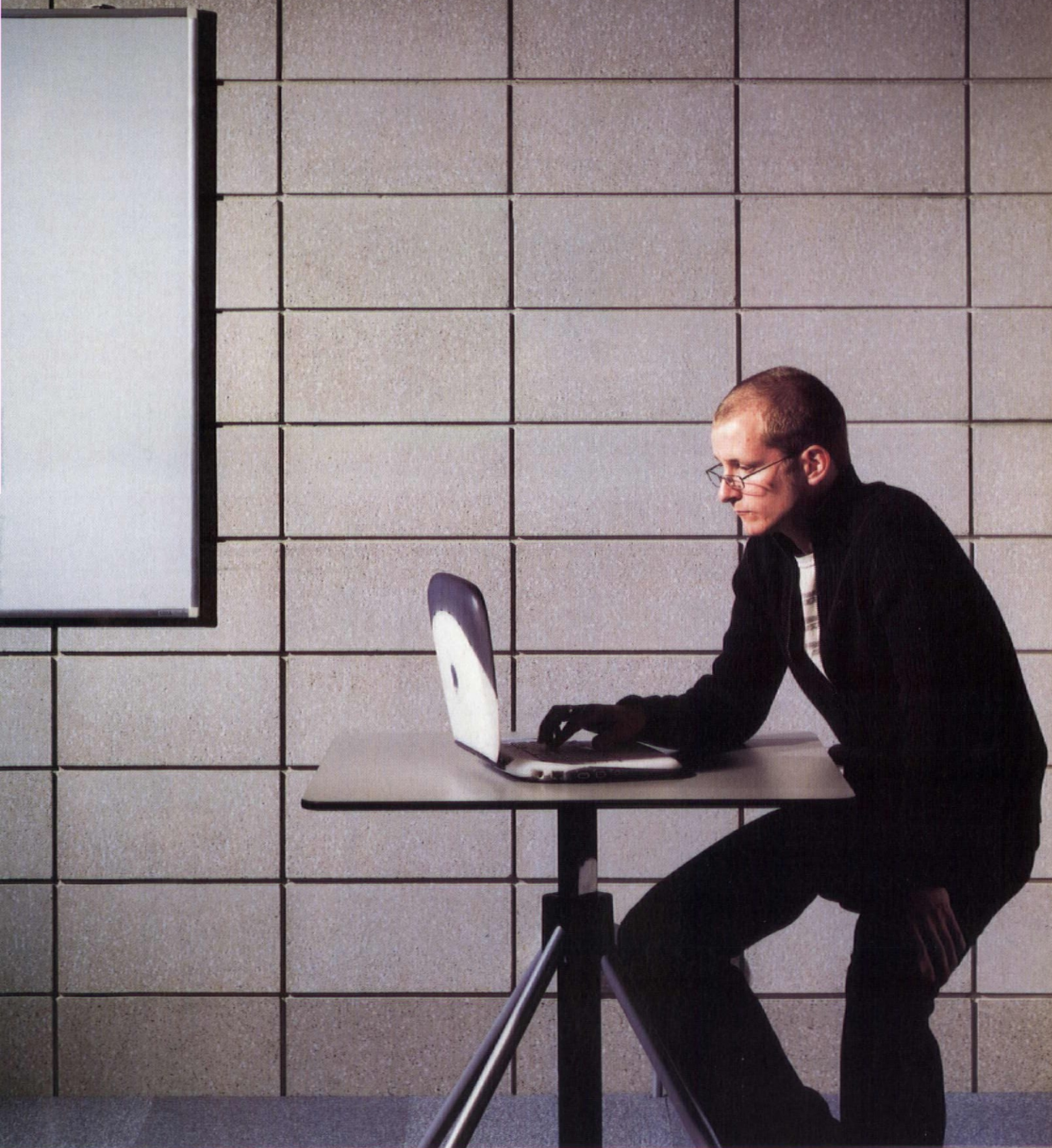
Alain Sagne, secretary-general of the Architects Council of Europe, said he was also unhappy about one single committee for all the professions.

The proposed directive, being debated next month, could come into force by the end of 2003.



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## Pierre Vago: 1910-2002

The internationally acclaimed architect, writer, editor and critic has died at the age of 92 at his home near Paris. Dennis Sharp reflects on a lifetime's work and influence

The founder of the Union Internationale des Architectes (UIA) – an organisation that now has 800,000 members worldwide – Pierre Vago served as its secretary-general (1957-68) and latterly as honorary president.

Vago was born in Budapest in 1910, and moved with his family to Rome at an early age. His architect father, Joseph Vago, won the competition for the League of Nations in Geneva despite Le Corbusier's disqualification and disdain.

The young Vago, carrying letters of introduction from his father, left for Paris in 1928. There he met Le Corbusier who advised him not to go to the Ecole des Beaux-Arts before he found out who he was, but to begin a journey of self-education. Vago settled for the Ecole Speciale (1928-32) studying under Auguste Perret, who became a lifelong friend.

At the age of 21, Vago took on the editorship of what was to become France's most respected architectural magazine, *L'Architecture d'Aujourd'hui*, an association that lasted until 1979. The magazine encouraged discussion among architects and led to the Reunion of Architects. From this initial organisation, the UIA was

formed in 1948 at the RIBA. Sir Patrick Abercrombie was the first chairman, Vago the first secretary and the inaugural congress was held in Lausanne. After the Second World War, Vago began to build, first in Algeria and Tunisia and then at Lourdes, where, after building the famous Grotto of Bernadette, he designed the immense subterranean Basilica dedicated to St Pius in 1957. Many Catholic churches followed in France at Marseilles, Le Mans, Saint-Cyr and in Israel, the Monastery of St Claire at Nazareth, where he also designed the Cultural Center and the University of Jerusalem in 1971. In 1957, he

designed a fine block of apartments for the Interbau exhibition in the Hansaviertel, Berlin, alongside work from more than 50 architects including Aalto, Bakema, Niemeyer and Gropius.

Vago was honoured by institutions around the world including the International Academy of Architecture, the academies in Berlin and Paris, the RIBA and the AIA – all of which recognised his international reputation within the profession he served and loved, and defined his status within it.

*Dennis Sharp was a friend and colleague of Pierre Vago*



Vago's Basilica at Lourdes, dedicated to St Pius, designed in 1957

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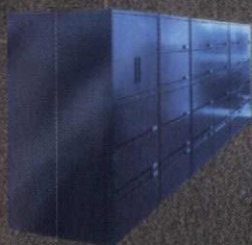
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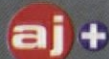
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## editorial

In December 2001 the government published *A Force for our Future*, its statement on the historic environment. In it, it stated that it would be considering the case for supporting a European reform that would allow a single low rate of VAT to be charged on all building work. The announcement was welcomed by those sectors of the construction industry which have been lobbying for a reduction in the VAT rate on domestic repair and maintenance work from 17.5 to 5 per cent. Yet the figure remains at 17.5 per cent. One of the many objections to this legislation, loudly voiced by English Heritage, is that it discourages conservation-led regeneration. New-build solutions prove more cost effective than preserving old buildings, which suffer neglect.

This week's building study, Whitby Abbey visitor centre, demonstrates the way in which English Heritage is starting to initiate projects where the conservation of historic projects is used as an impetus for innovative contemporary design – and it is hard to imagine how a new-build structure could have had the resonance of Stanton Williams' deft combination of old and new. Whitby was rendered financially viable by the fact that the project was exempt from VAT and, indeed, the government is constantly adding to the categories of preservation and conservation projects which are eligible either for zero-rating or for a reduced VAT rate of 5 per cent. In November 2000, for example, the chancellor pledged to reduce VAT on repairs to listed places of worship; in last week's budget he announced that VAT on building work which includes the conversion of non-residential properties into old people's homes will be reduced to 5 per cent.

But piecemeal interventions are not enough. While bodies such as English Heritage may be able to wade through the regulations, less experienced clients are deterred both by the confusing quantity of 'special cases' and by the fact that it is up to a building's owner to prove that a given project should not be liable for VAT at the standard rate. While the government chips away at the edges of its own legislation, countless historic buildings are falling into disrepair.

Isabel Allen

## letters

### These mindless doodles won't impress anyone

If Will Alsop is looking for reasons why the RIBA is not knocking down his door to get at his drawings, he could do worse than turning back to pages 6 and 7 in the same issue (AJ 18.4.02) to review the images of his Barnsley scheme (pictured). Surely clients are now sophisticated enough not to be impressed by the kind of five-minute Photoshop montages that are presented here?

Regardless of the ideas behind the scheme, the mindless doodles encompassed within this 'generous' two-page spread mean nothing that could not be adequately described in a short paragraph of text. Have we really reached the day where a word is worth a thousand pictures? Perhaps if this is to be the sign of things to come from Will's flock, it might be worth him popping into the office now and again to check the time going into his output. The amount of thought and time going into the production of these works seems to have dwindled since the days of more worthy work, whose (presumably generously discounted) price the poor old V&A is unable to afford. Even recently, what criticism the Goldsmiths images attracted was certainly not for their evocativeness.

Or were perhaps the doodles regarded as being elaborate enough to impress the Barnsley folk, whose best talent had all gravitated towards London long ago?

Kenton Wilson, by e-mail

### Drunken graphics with a sense of humour

Will Alsop's proposals for transposing an Italian walled hill town to Barnsley (AJ 18.4.02) might be merely the usual mixture of logophilia and drunken graphics, were it not for three facts that seem to have escaped the eagle eye of your news editor:

- 1) Barnsley doesn't have a quarter-mile wide river as shown on the plan.
- 2) It isn't on a hill.
- 3) Alsop's scheme has already been described in the pages of the *Guardian* on 1 April.

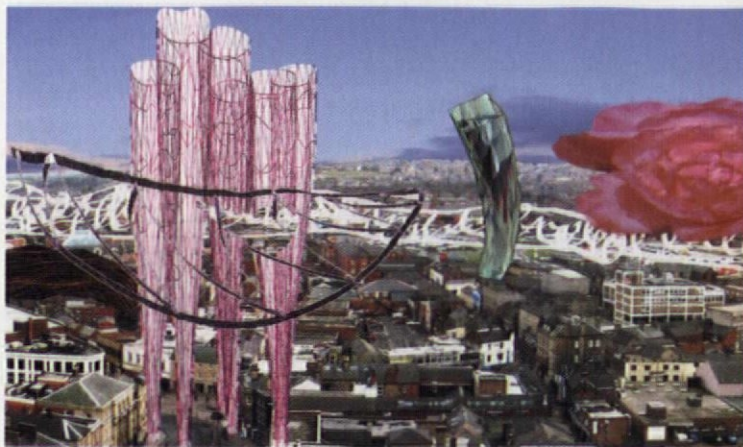
It seems that Mr Alsop has more sense of humour than I credited him with.

Michael Levey, London SE17

### Bryan Avery proposed a walled vision in Finland

Medieval Luca may seem an unlikely model for post-industrial Barnsley (AJ 18.4.02), but Will Alsop is not alone in promoting such a stirring vision.

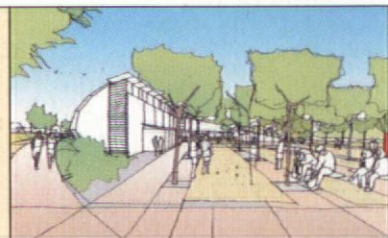
As long ago as 1993 at an international Urban Design Seminar in Helsinki, Bryan





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Check out the news service on the homepage including new images of competition wins. Last week, Feilden Clegg Bradley's competition-winner was for Formby Leisure Centre (right). The scheme involves tilting up a football pitch and sliding a swimming pool underneath. The practice beat Bill Dunster Architects, Richard Murphy Architects, Studio BAAD and Aire Design to win the £4.5 million project. Work is scheduled to start next March.



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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Avery proposed a comprehensive reorganisation of Finland into a series of 'walled' towns. The hosts were delighted by this manifestation of Avery's ongoing Wilderness City project, and the fact that Will was a guest speaker at the seminar is doubtless entirely coincidental.

*Richard Weston, by e-mail*

### Enough of this digital 'starchitects' thinking

After having been subjected to Will Alsop's 'Dream for Barnsley', I can take no more! Surely this wanton use of digital images to force feed us the current 'starchitects' version of the built environment cannot be allowed to continue? I had hoped that the 'digital sketches' (?) for the Goldsmith College Arts Complex as featured in the AJ (31.1.02), were where the line would be drawn, but no. I open this week's AJ to find that Barnsley will first be transformed into a messianic icon of the north, with the hope being to rival Gateshead's Angel I expect, before huge shards of jauntily angled colour transform it into a Stonehenge for the new Millennium, forever changing the way that urban design is approached, conceived and administered!

It is not that the principles behind Alsop's architecture should be questioned, but the

continual need to produce images that amount to little more than rapid fire mouse movements in cyan and other such non-committal hues, passed off as 'thought in process'.

The irony of such coverage is further enhanced by the backlash that occurred when it was announced that Archigram had won the RIBA Gold Medal (AJ 14.2.02). Here is a practice of radicals that dedicated their time to bringing architecture to the public in a way that could be easily related to, and ultimately digested as plausible form, while pushing the boundaries of contemporary understanding of the subject. And yet almost every week, in a similar vein to Foster, an Alsop drawing makes it onto the pages without so much as an 'excuse me, what the f\*\*k is that?' (Handy things, these hotlines to the editorial staff.)

It must also be made clear that showing a video to the residents of Barnsley depicting 'The Day of the Triffids on LSD' cannot be the way to convince a public that remains highly sceptical of our profession that what you see is what you have been dreaming of (remember Aylesbury, Will, you weren't going to live there). Certainly Alsop's approach to architecture is 'alternative' and often fresh, aided by employing poets,

artists, actresses and the like within his office, and yes, his work is undoubtedly of great appeal to many students of architecture; but this digital doodling is ultimately damaging, and should be considered only as an interpretive method of design, not hailed in some terrible moniker reading apocalyptically as 'Some day all architects will think like this!' (It hasn't happened yet, but it will).

Perhaps I should try and swear on TV, then I too may be able to design what the hell I like and blame the system around me when it is rejected by those who will have to live with it.

*Alan Morrissey, by e-mail*

### You get your 400 words and that's your lot

In response to Annette Fisher's letter 'Cut off in the prime of my ballot paper' (AJ 18.4.02), the RIBA rules are clear. Candidates are allotted 400 words for their manifesto statements. To ensure fairness to all candidates, the number of words allowed is strictly adhered to and the statement terminated at that point. In this instance, it occurred just after the start of the sentence.

*Robert Adam, honorary secretary, RIBA*

### It's a fatal flaw to ignore what we already know

Your recent article 'Trial and Error' (AJ 18.4.02) concludes with the inference that risk and consequent failure are a function of progress and without them stagnation results. This view is reinforced as received wisdom in your editorial.

In reality, most catastrophes in building result not from testing the boundaries of knowledge, but from ignoring information already available or simply overlooking the obvious. The former may be put down to ignorance, a state that a profes-

sional is assumed to have advanced beyond; the latter is due to lack of imagination. Neither are qualities that engender progress.

It was well known at the time of the Tay Bridge design (by Bouch, incidentally, not Stephenson) that cast iron was unpredictable in tension; large panel system jointing design took no account of the likelihood of lateral loads applied from within (Ronan Point); and the propensity for taut undamped strings to vibrate (sway) has been known since Archimedes' time (Millennium Bridge).

There is a strand in architectural thought which confuses a change in style with progress. Indeed, the basic needs that humans have from buildings do not change greatly, and therefore do not in themselves require or justify cutting-edge solutions.

It was not Daedalus, the inventor, who suffered disaster, but Icarus who chose to ignore that which he already knew.

*Bob Owston, Owston Associates Bushey, Herts*

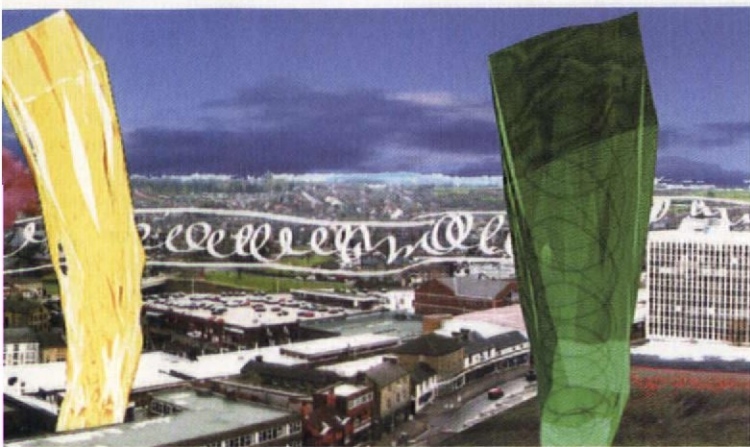
### Alcan has solution for surface variations

I was interested to read the article on cladding by George Demetri (AJ Focus, February 2002).

I sympathise with problems of surface variations experienced on some anodised aluminium rainscreen panels (as stated on page 19).

However, it has not been necessary to wait for new processes using aluminium coil to overcome this problem. Alcan's J57S aluminium sheet (featured on page 67), carries a product warranty of reproducible and uniform colour when it is anodised to appropriate standards.

*John McNamara, Alcan Europe Uxbridge, Middlesex*







will also

## Learning by working is the only way to educate our students

What is an appropriate way to think about an architectural practice and what, if any, is a practice's responsibility towards architectural education and speculation? Kierkegaard made the following observation: 'Life is to be lived forwards and understood backwards.'

What is certain is that in 100 years' time, we will look back on current procedures as archaic and in some cases cruel. What, for instance, would induce us to lock up young people in schools and impose lessons on them at a time when they can learn from their own curiosity via so many different forms of media? The teacher must learn with the pupils. It is relatively clear to me, although not absolutely, that the architecture studio must become a place of more diverse activity, one that is capable of escaping any particular ideology or methodology.

If I look at the activities of my students in Vienna, I see interests that are very diverse. Katharina Tiesch is installing a sound transposition of Paris into Vienna as an interactive public space that will allow us all to create music. She has not only conceived the work but has also arranged sponsorship for the event and solved many technical problems.

It does not occur either to her, or to me, to ask whether this is architecture or not. The fact remains that she is influencing a specific environment and broadening people's perceptions and experience. She is well able to do this because of her architectural background, but in the end, who are we to decide what is and what is not architecture any more than it is possible to answer the question, 'What is art?' Another group is installing 'soft' paving into the city. I cite these two examples because I can see that they represent a broadening of architectural practice that the profession should consider embracing, and within this context I am in turn

considering the future of my own practice.

Schoenberg considered that a composer should not compose two, eight or 16 bars today and again tomorrow and so on until the work was finished, but rather that they should conceive of the work as a totality in a single act of inspiration. The composer should be intoxicated by the work and write as much as possible and not care for details. They could be added later. How can the office organise itself to allow for such passion?

I see a room with lines of activity. Who knows how the computer will evolve? But I can only imagine that there will be a much more direct link between creative play in both two, three and four dimensions, which will avoid the sea of nasty greyish boxes that succeed in separating people when they are sitting down. Screens will be thin and horizontal to allow tables to be used for other activities. This body of people will include film-makers, painters, photographers etc.

There will be no separation between any of these people and the architects as they work together on a variety of projects that are not always building related. The architect in this office will be absorbed in a variety of work from media to fashion. In this way, architecture remains informed about a wider view of life which is necessary to give a better understanding of the people we serve.

Another line of activity would be working bays for students of all the above subjects. I would shut all the architecture schools, with two or three exceptions, and bring back a system of learning by working. Between these two lines would be a public bar for all and sundry to meet.

This recognises that the best form of relaxation is to watch others at work and the best form of education is to talk to them.

*WA, from the Isle of Wight ferry*

people

Barbara Kelly is horrified. Staggered. The outgoing chairwoman of the Architects Registration Board wants me to specifically note how shocked she is by the opinion – given by RIBA president Paul Hyett in conversation last week – that the architectural profession does not need a regulatory body.

'I find it extraordinary – this is a great profession, and to suggest we should go back to the pre-1930s position is astounding,' she says. 'The ARB is one of the greatest market advantages the profession has. It can demonstrate to customers and the world at large it is organised, and has well-qualified professionals, adequately insured to give customers proper cover and protection. And I find it staggering that this is his view.'

She would say that, of course, wouldn't she. The line is that the profession has the title-protectors it asked for and, according to an ARB marketing survey last year, it is broadly satisfied.

But Kelly's five-year reign at the head of the board, a 'stressful', 'roller-coaster ride' of many ups and just as many downs, has actually borne fruit, if government interest in it is anything to go by.

Robin Vaughan, ARB chief executive and a fan of the work Kelly has put in, explains that Whitehall mandarins are pushing the ARB as a good example for other such bodies in different professions to follow suit.

'Lord Bingham, the presiding judge of the House of Lords, held up the ARB as the right model for 21st century regulation,' he reports.

Why? It's the way that the board's disciplinary procedures – the Professional Conduct Committee – are handled; its moves toward greater accountability and 'transparency'; and the way in which the ARB is uniquely constituted with an eight to seven lay majority on its board.

And much of this is down to Kelly.

Sixty-two-year-old Dr Barbara Kelly, CBE, started at the fledgling ARB in 1997, when it emerged from the old ARCUK. Kelly – whose previous jobs include a spell as a BBC local radio presenter on a 'Woman's Hour'-type programme in Scotland – was joined by Vaughan two years ago. And both dealt swiftly with a tricky ARCUK legacy – a long lease on its Hallam Street property that foiled a move away (and slightly further from the RIBA, perhaps). Cue a funky refurbishment from De Rijke

'Who are we to decide what is and what is not architecture, any more than it is possible to answer the question, "What is art?"'



# Chairwoman Barbara Kelly has come to the end of her 'roller-coaster' reign at the ARB. She is keen for her replacement to continue her work of moving the board towards greater openness, independence and transparency

by david taylor. photograph by guy jordan

## moving on



Marsh Morgan in place of the rows of dusty corridors that were there before.

'We should emphasise that the offices were on time and on budget,' she says with a smile, while Vaughan adds that the scheme has brought staff together.

'It's been very interesting,' says Kelly, looking back on her term. 'And it's definitely had its ups and downs.'

She talks of having laid the foundations, of how the ARB will now be entering a new phase. But there were teething troubles, and especially for Kelly.

'It's been stressful, no question,' she says.

Partly this was geographical – Kelly lives on a 'mixed' farm in south-west Scotland and the journeying to London proved difficult. She would have liked to have been able to have given more of her time to the cause. So now she wants her replacement – to be decided at a board meeting on 23 May – to commit to a minimum one day a week.

The key problems like education – now finally resolved – were also tough to deal with.

'The principal difficulty has been the reluctance of the industry to accept what the statute delivered,' she says. 'It's important to emphasise that the ARB has never had any empire-building desires. We've made significant progress... but it was the length of time it took to get decisions, on often very simple and procedural matters, about which there should have been no argument.'

Now, as part of the ARB's moves towards greater openness, independence and 'transparency' – more Kelly positives – it is to publish validation reports covering all 36 schools, online. It will also shortly publish its new, revised validation criteria after a process begun a little over a year ago.

'The quality of information available to clients has improved,' says Kelly. 'We're very proud of the work that the organisation has

done and we've produced a set of pamphlets in good, plain English. It's more information than is required statutorily.'

There are other positives too. 'We've sharpened up our act on registration and discipline,' she says, with the PCC another exemplar held in high esteem. The appeal system here goes straight into the High Court, rather than the shadier, less transparent Privy Council, where appeals to all other regulatory bodies go.

'People don't seem to perceive [the PCC] as a court of law, but it is in fact a court and part of the British justice system,' says Kelly, schoolmarmishly. 'It has to be taken very seriously indeed.'

Having just introduced warning letters for discipline cases, the board is shortly to begin having discussions about alternative dispute resolutions. The discipline system has been working well – despite a recent case where the offender simply changed his title on his stationery and carried on – but this is the kind of resolution work staff at Hallam Street have been doing anyway.

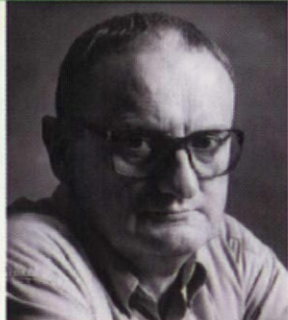
Kelly says going down the route of mandatory professional indemnity insurance was one of the most important decisions taken over the last five years.

The next five will have a new chair, and Kelly makes a plea he or she is again a lay representative, partially in order to emphasise to the outside world that this is not a closed shop for architects with their self-interest uppermost in their hearts. The fact that it is likely to be lay has naturally meant that Judge Humphrey Lloyd and Alan Crane are seen to be most in the frame.

Kelly would also like the board's new architect members to be more geographically spread – though there is no way the ARB can prescribe it. At the moment, it is a bit too south-east England for comfort, says Kelly, a former equal opportunities commissioner.

How will she cope without the ARB? Kelly was only last week given the Freedom of the City of London, but has plenty of other interests to keep her going, mostly north of the border. There's her job on BP's Scottish board, another on the Scottish Post Office's, another still on Scottish Natural Heritage's. And she will be able to pick up her painting again, along perhaps with her other main *Who's Who* recreation, 'the pursuit of real food'. For the ARB, meanwhile, necessary regulator, it is time for the second course.





martin pawley

## Conservation? Start by looking at the bottom of a frozen lake

Sometimes one stumbles on a parallel universe. Perhaps in a newsagents. A magazine, hastily bought for a long journey, turns out to be a revelation. It shows you that heritage is not just another name for the built environment. From here on in you know that heritage is in the air.

All over the developed world, it seems that nostalgia is sprouting full-size wings and time is being made to stand still by amateur aeroplane builders working from copies of ancient sets of plans bought on the Internet.

For instance, did you know that right now in America, a small aircraft company is building five replica Messerschmitt 262s, copies of a German jet fighter that became extinct 57 years ago and is now to be brought back to life? Did you know that in New Zealand, a man is patiently making his own set of machine tools so he can use them to make a fuselage for a replica de Havilland Mosquito that many years from now may take to the air?

In Norway, parts of a Gloster Gladiator biplane fighter that crashed into a mountain in 1940 have been scooped up and shipped to England, where they will be mated to a newly built replica fuselage and a set of wings from another wrecked Gladiator. In time this compilation will emerge as an aeroplane in authentic Norwegian markings, bearing the serial number of the aircraft that originally had the wings.

When this is done, there will be three Gladiators that have been brought back to life, or 'restored to airworthiness', on the civil aircraft register. Exultantly, they will be photographed flying in formation 1930s style and eventually, one by one, they will either crash and be recycled again or become exhibits in the world's burgeoning number of aviation museums, of which there are more than 70 in the UK alone.

Once you become interested in this consump-

tion of the obsolete, you can find out more. Marveling at the '10,000 hours' that have already gone into the restoration of a huge Douglas Cargomaster transport plane (due to be finished this year), you will finally come to the biggest aviation preservation project of all – the proposed purchase and repatriation from Rio de Janeiro of the Brazilian aircraft carrier Minas Gerais (formerly the British

Second World War aircraft carrier Vengeance), and its restoration to HMS Belfast levels of authenticity as a floating naval aviation heritage museum anchored in Southampton Water.

Compared with these death or glory exploits in the cause of aerial conservation and preservation – most people only hear about restored aircraft when they crash at air shows – the issues confronting the almost fully institutionalised conservation wing of the architectural profession seem mild indeed.

Aero-conservationists search the world for wrecked aircraft, one month bargaining with Siberian peasants for what is left of a crashed German bomber, the next, cutting a five-into-one 'composite rebuild'

deal in Australia for the veritable phoenix of the Brewster Buffalo.

Nor, when they get their wrecks to their workshops, do they get much help from the original manufacturers, many of whom no longer exist, and even those that do are unwilling to release the construction drawings filed for their long-expired certificates of airworthiness in case they get sued when they crash.

Of course, being mass-production items, nearly all these crash rebuilds once existed in some numbers, but then they equally often failed to leave their bones in the right place for preservation – which is apparently the bottom of a frozen lake. A place generally not on the beat of the conservation officer employed by the council.

'The issues confronting the almost fully institutionalised conservation wing of the architectural profession seem mild indeed'

## a life in architecture

jeremy lee



Good food goes well with good architecture, according to Jeremy Lee, head chef of the Blueprint Café at the Design Museum. He names two of his favourite restaurants to illustrate his point – one in London, the other in California.

St John, near Smithfield Market, is run by Fergus Henderson, who trained as an architect. Lee loves how Henderson has handled the interior of the old smokehouse (see picture). 'It's a very elegant way of dealing with a large space that most of us would have been tempted to muck about with, but Fergus boldly left it alone.'

'You still have a sense of this great working space in which you can sit down and eat and have a good time. It has a wonderful Spartan simplicity and a nice wit that you rarely get in restaurants nowadays.'

Chez Panisse, opened more than 30 years ago in Berkeley by Alice Waters, is his American choice. Lee says Waters is 'a marvel. What she did then is what allows us to do what we do now'. He describes the architecture of Chez Panisse as 'a cross between Schindler and Frank Lloyd Wright'.

The original dining room was tiny. An upstairs cafe was added later, making the place much larger. 'It's on many different levels and has all sorts of nooks and crannies, all charmingly done in wood.'

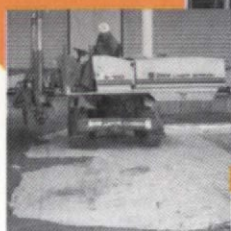
'You know that the thought that's gone into the building must also have gone into the food, the menus and the staff.' And the cooking? 'Extraordinary.'

Deborah Singmaster



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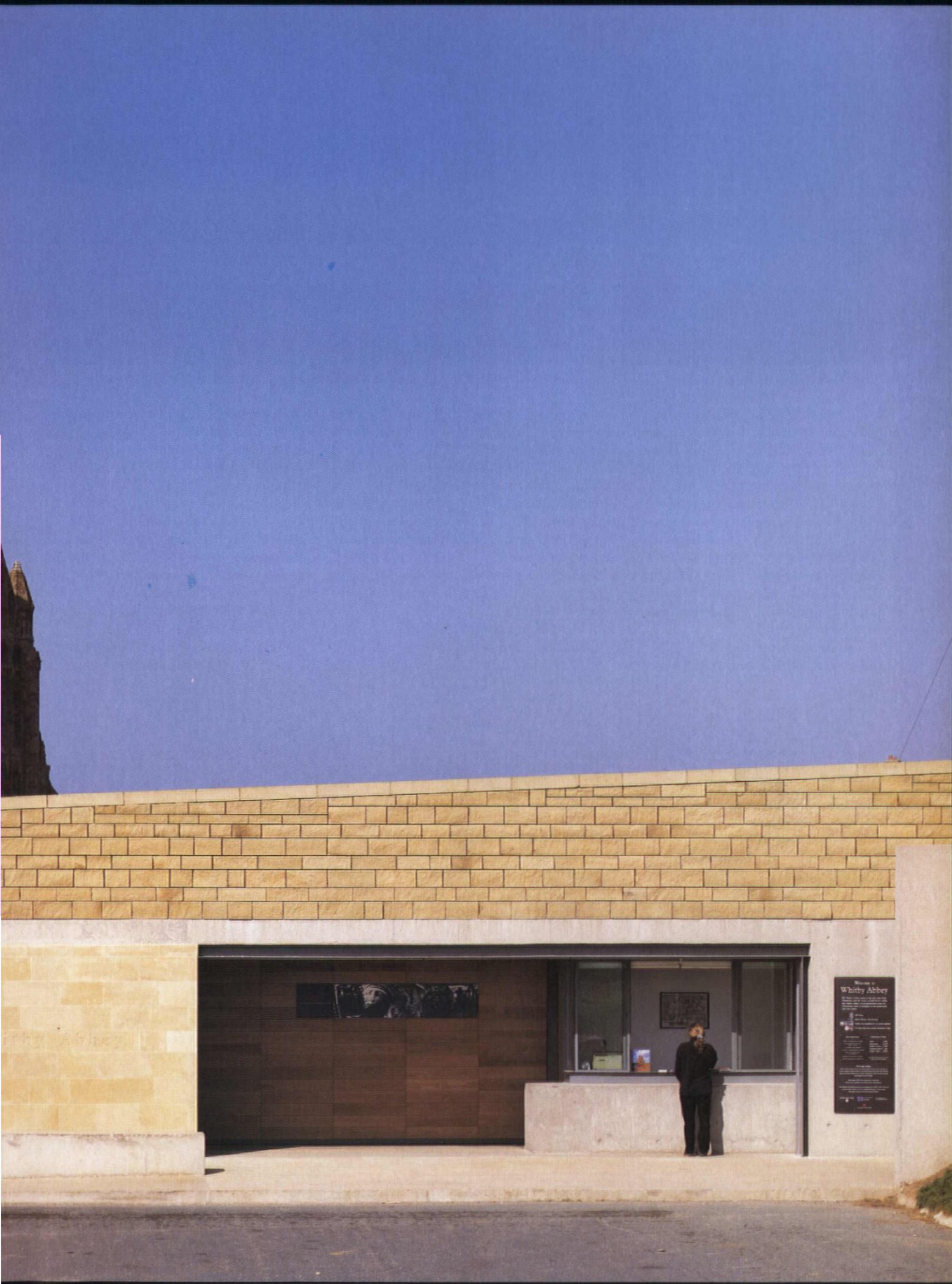


# Ancient and modern

**Stanton Williams' visitor centre, commissioned by English Heritage, is one of Yorkshire's best contemporary buildings, and part of a major reworking of the Whitby Abbey site**







By Kenneth Powell. Photographs by Martine Hamilton Knight





Whitby headland before works began



The abbey and parish church are set on a windswept headland, overlooking the harbour

Whitby has seen some catastrophes in its time. In 867 the famous monastery, which had been established there more than two centuries earlier, a renowned centre of culture and learning and the meeting place of the Synod of Whitby (which turned the English into Roman Catholics), was looted and razed to the ground by marauding Vikings. Re-established by the Normans, the abbey was finally wound up by Henry VIII in 1539, with its great church and other buildings falling into abject ruin. It took the town 300 years to recover.

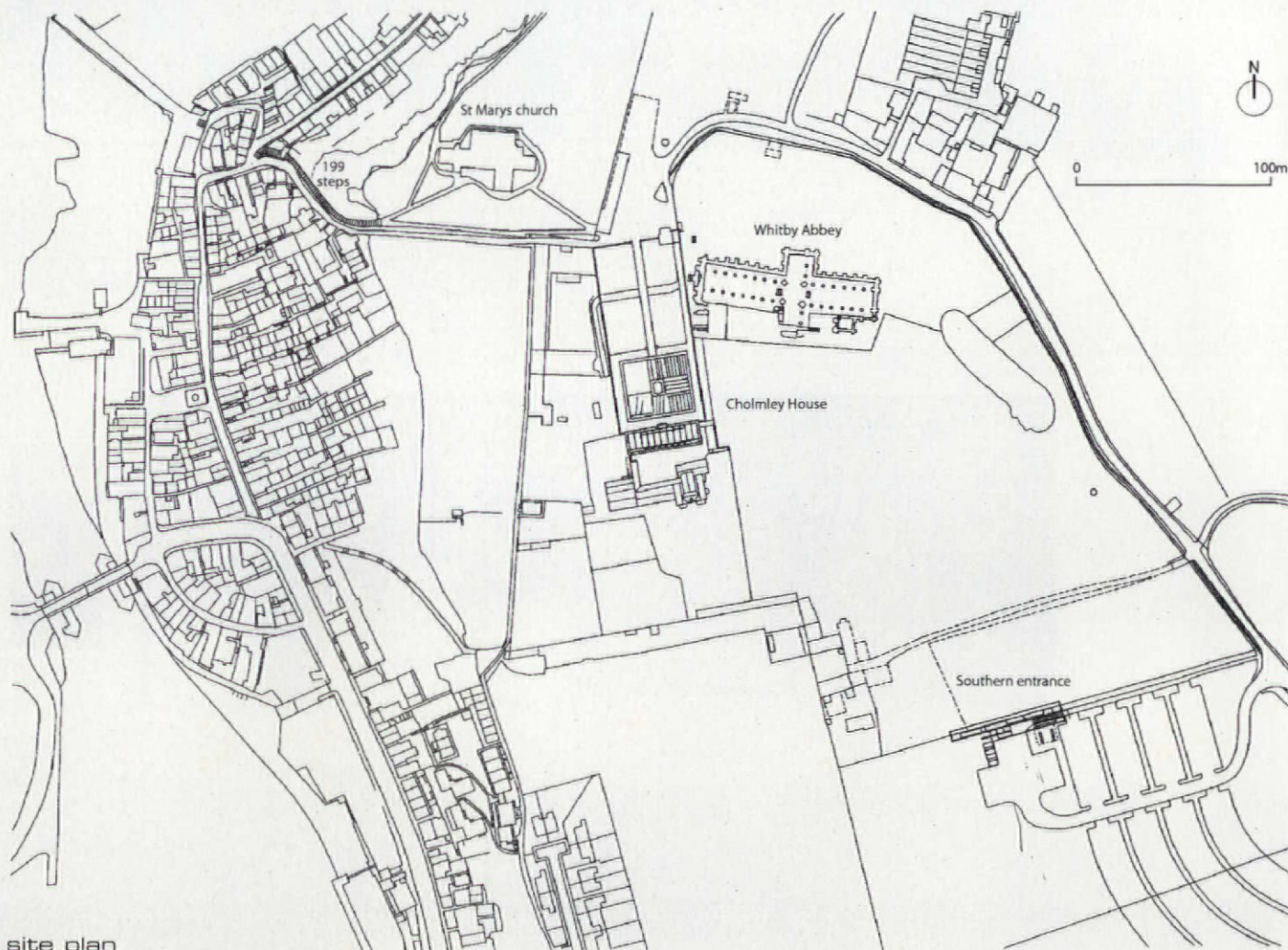
Besides these horrors, the arrival of Dracula might seem a minor matter but somehow

nobody who writes about the town can omit a mention of Bram Stoker's rather feeble novel, published in 1897 and set partly in Whitby. Dracula fans, most of them more comic than sinister, are regular visitors – the packed churchyard, set perilously close to the cliffs, is the promised land for them. They, and more conventional visitors, are now the foundation of the local economy, compensating for the dramatic decline of fishing and associated industries since the Second World War.

Dracula makes his appearance in the 'interactive presentations' which are, inevitably, a feature of the new visitor centre

which English Heritage has recently opened close to the abbey ruins, now a much-visited tourist sight. But Whitby does not need romance conferred on it by second-rate fiction writers. The site of the place is stupendous, with abbey and parish church (itself one of the most remarkable in England) set on a windswept headland overlooking the town and harbour, nestling below. Few sites, indeed, could be more challenging for an architect than that presented to Stanton Williams, appointed to design the new visitor centre in 1998.

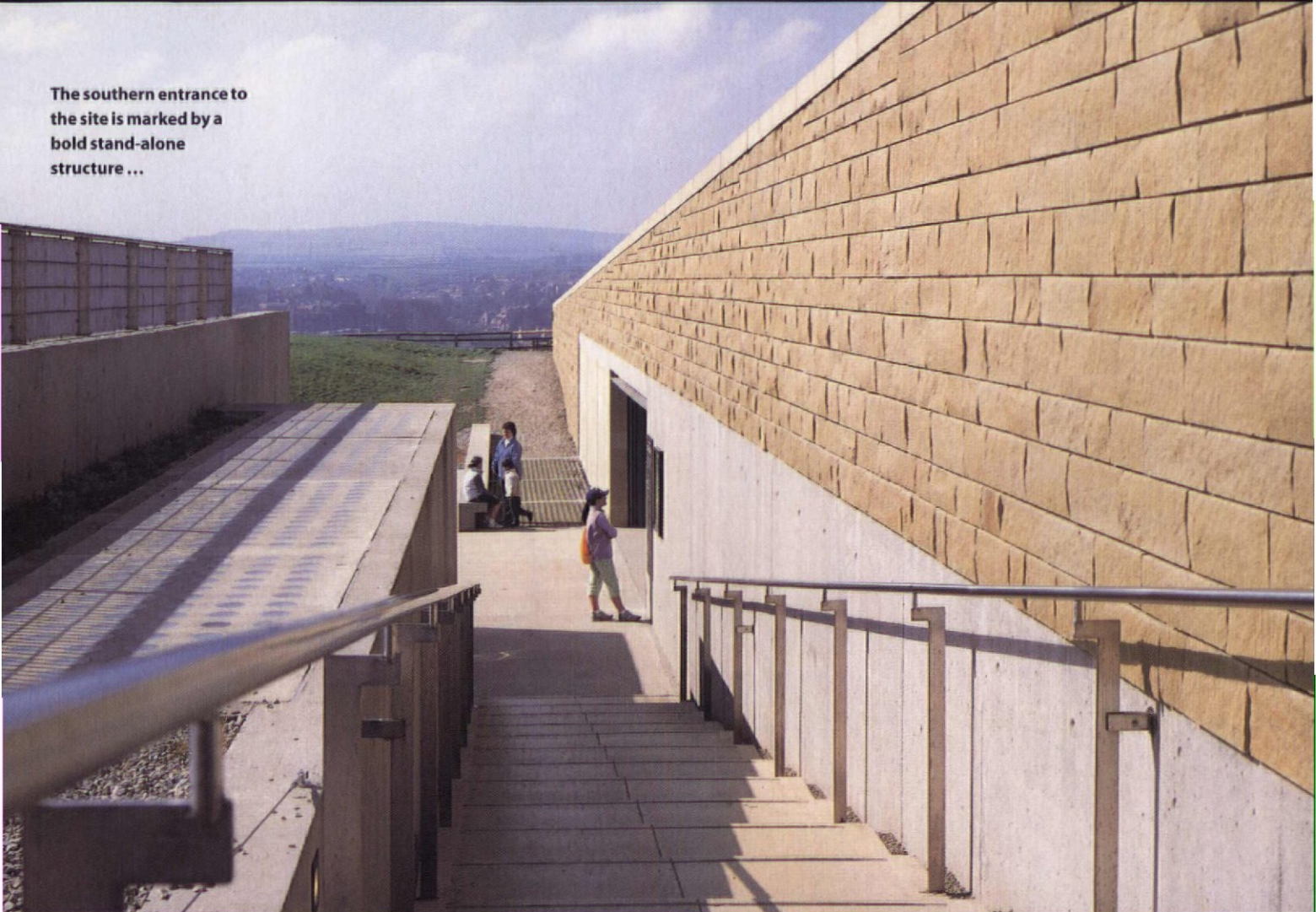
Visitor centres are deeply unfashionable, scorned by aesthetes for whom the golden



site plan



The southern entrance to the site is marked by a bold stand-alone structure ...



EDMUND SUMNER

... which houses a ticket office and WCs for visitors who arrive by car



View of Whitby Abbey headland showing Abbey House to the left with Stanton Williams' visitor centre tucked into the adjacent banqueting hall



age of the heritage (though the term was not yet used) was back in the 1950s – you paid sixpence to an elderly person crouching in a green-painted Ministry of Works hut. The same sum bought you a guidebook – no pictures, but the scholarship was sound. The rest was left to the imagination. You brought your tea in a flask.

There are still sites where similar conditions prevail – long may they survive. But in a popular location like Whitby, visitor facilities had, by the 1990s, become utterly inadequate for the numbers of people involved. Parked cars sprawled across the headland, where a utilitarian WC block defaced the view. Once inside the abbey grounds, having passed through a makeshift ticket office/shop, visitors were tightly constrained by fencing – much of the land around the ruins was in private ownership and out of bounds. You could peer over the wall from the abbey at the ruined mansion standing to the south-east, clearly a late 17th-century building but long abandoned, with its windows blocked – ‘the silence of this assertive range is tremendous,’ wrote Pevsner. On closer examination, the great house turned out to be a melancholy shell, ruthlessly tidied and shored up by the Office of Works during the 1930s and used in

recent years as a car park.

‘An entirely new building was not inevitable,’ says Alan Stanton of Stanton Williams. ‘At the beginning of the project, we looked at possible conversions of buildings around the site’ – a range of barns adjoining the ruined mansion was considered. Eventually, however, attention turned to an adaptation of the house itself. It had been built by Sir Hugh Cholmley, whose family had acquired the monastic buildings after the Dissolution.

Cholmley (1632–89) was a talented, as well as a wealthy man who had worked as resident engineer in the (then) English colony of Tangier. Returning from North Africa in 1672, he recorded that ‘most of the summer I spent at Whitby, in finishing my new building.’ The ‘new building,’ known as the banqueting hall, was a bold addition to what had (probably) once been the abbot’s lodging and was designed in the newly fashionable Classical manner. The old quarters behind were retained, though probably downgraded as service areas. The headland at Whitby was an incongruous location for a fashionable residence. By the end of the 18th century Cholmley’s house was little used. After storm damage in 1790, it was unroofed and left as a shell. By 1828 the south wall of

the house had been demolished. When the former monastic lodging was completely rebuilt in the Victorian period as a residence, Abbey House, for W C Strickland, the shell was repaired, with the windows blocked up flush to the wall and, it appears, a lightweight roof installed so that the building could be used as a shed or coach house – an undignified end for Cholmley’s elegant pavilion.

By the 1930s, when the Office of Works moved in, major interventions were necessary to stabilise the ruin – reinforced concrete shoring was introduced to hold up the main facade, while further demolition work, including much of what remained of the south wall, further tidied up the remains.

‘The term “visitor centre” was not actually used at the start of the project,’ says Stanton. ‘We conceived the building as a museum.’ In fact, the completed building lacks two of the standard ingredients of recent visitor centres, a cafe and lavatories, though it does contain a shop as well as a ticketing desk.

Stanton Williams’ proposal was to construct the new building as essentially a freestanding structure on two levels, roughly those of the original main floors, within the shell of the banqueting house: a steel ‘cage’ dropped into the ruin. For English Heritage, this was a high-profile project, overlapping





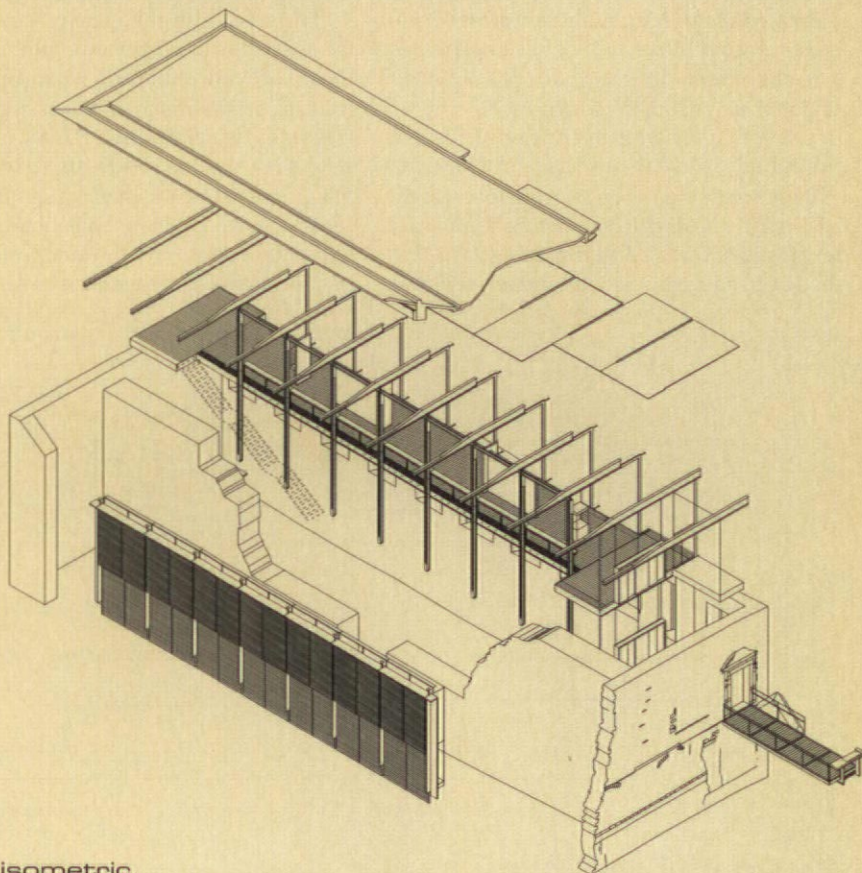
## Structure

At the start of the project, the only remaining elements of the original building were the four perimeter walls, and much of the 1,500mm thick rear wall was reduced in height as a result of severe weathering.

The first stage of the works was to install a new piled foundation slab to carry the existing masonry together with the new elements of the superstructure. The new building elements include the roof and first floor, a small plant mezzanine and a twin lift installation, together with an access bridge from the grounds of the abbey. The first floor is a composite deck which provides a stiffening diaphragm spanning between, and connected to, the return walls at each end. There is a horizontal glazed gap between the edge of the first floor and the front wall, but stainless-steel dowels have been installed below the glazing between the floor and the masonry, to provide lateral stability to the wall. A new internal steel frame carries the upper floors and the roof, and extends to form the skeleton for the combined lift shaft which has a glazed internal elevation. The roof cantilevers approximately 4m from the internal support column to beyond the rear wall, and a large panel of curtain wall glazing is suspended from the end of the cantilever to create a very striking but simple rear elevation.

The solution adopted was developed in conjunction with the architect to meet EH's criteria of minimum disturbance to the buried archaeology and minimum loss or modification of the existing building fabric.

**David Calam, Stevenson Calam Associates** isometric







The north facade. Previously infilled windows were fitted with a single sheet of glass. Historical reconstruction was the chosen approach for the courtyards

with the ill-fated Stonehenge visitor centre and engaging the attentions of EH's then chairman Sir Jocelyn Stevens. The decisiveness of the client was refreshing, says Stanton – a meeting on site confirmed that all parking would be concentrated in a natural declivity south of the abbey ruins, where there would be a second ticketing point as well as lavatories – around 50 per cent of visitors arrive by car, the remainder trekking up a dramatic flight of steps from the town.

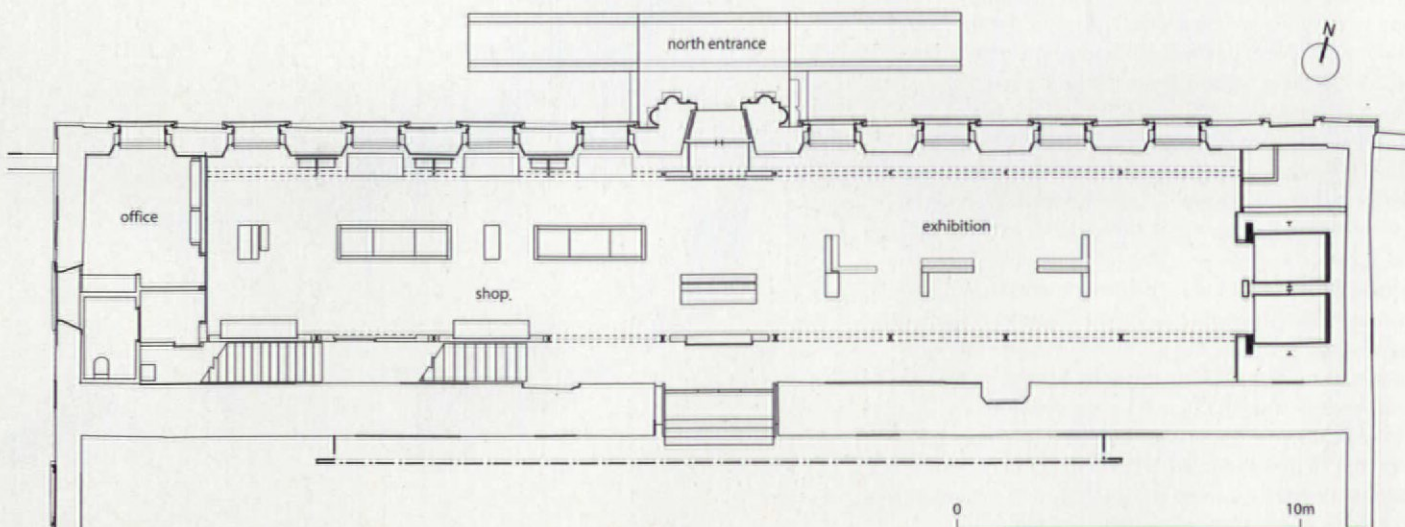
Negotiations with the owner of the surrounding land, the Strickland-Constable Estate, secured public access right across the site, with the intrusive fencing removed – excavations revealed that much of this land had been an Anglo-Saxon cemetery. EH was,

however, 'nervous', says Stanton, about the proposed alterations to the banqueting house. In particular, the opening up of the infilled windows was seen as a sensitive issue, given that the dramatic 'silence' which Pevsner so enjoyed could be replaced by distracting views of the shop and display areas.

There was also the issue of how to treat the overgrown courtyards north of the house, which would form a principal access route to the building – in the event, a historical reconstruction, rather than a modern reworking, was the chosen approach. Casella Stanger's scheme for these spaces includes a reconstructed dividing wall between inner and outer courts, and the repair of the cobble surface of the inner court – found to be

remarkably intact below a layer of soil.

Stanton Williams' building, though a significant work of contemporary architecture in its own right, is therefore just one element in a major rearrangement of the abbey site which has given the ruins a new dignity and cleared away unworthy intrusions – the WC block and parked cars on the headland have gone. The new visitor centre/museum had to be connected to an accessible visitor route across the whole site. At the eastern end of the banqueting house, the ground fell away sharply, with ditches and terracing marking the site of gardens and formal walks laid out in the 17th century. The blocked doorway, oddly stranded at first floor level in the east facade, was thus explained – it had presum-



ground floor plan





The new structure extends over the partly demolished south elevation to provide a framework from which an enclosing curtain of glass and cedar is hung

ably once been connected to a bridge or timber walkway providing access to the gardens and the ruins beyond. Stanton Williams therefore reinstated this connection.

For some visitors, the visitor centre forms the starting point for their visit. Others, entering from the car park, may explore the abbey first and then come to the centre, ending in the shop – incidentally, well stocked with books and good quality souvenirs (and not a sign of Dracula fudge). Refreshments can be had in an adapted portion of Abbey House (which has been used as a hostel for many years) or in a pleasant garden in fine weather.

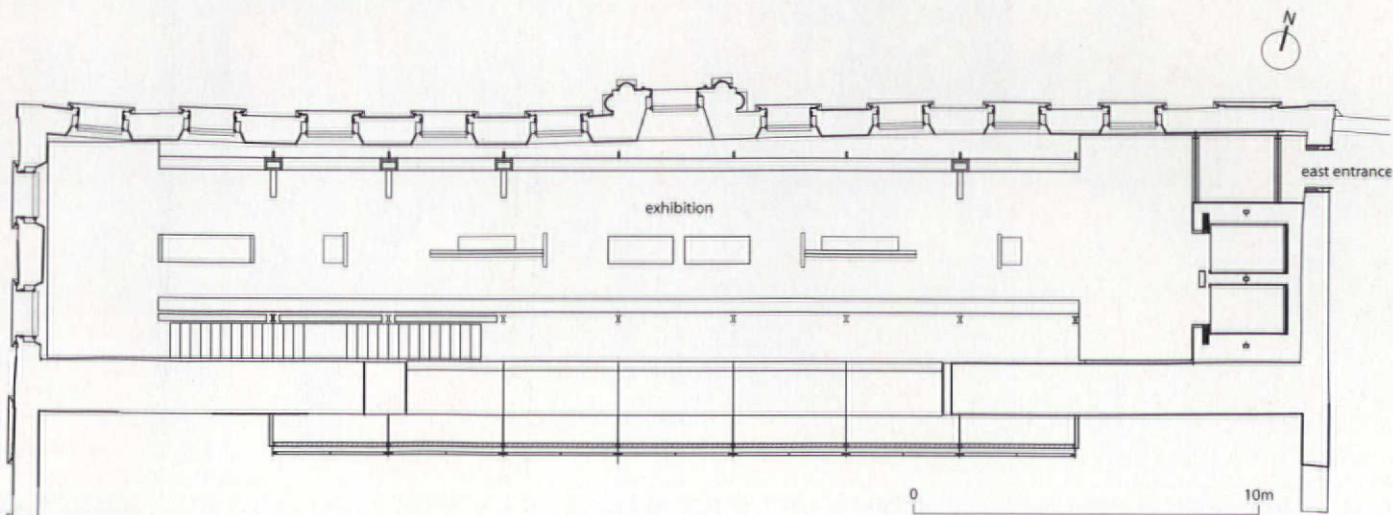
Stanton Williams has a formidable reputation for bold juxtapositions of old and new, in the tradition of Italian masters such as Carlo

Scarpa, Franco Albini and BBPR. 'It's been our crusade,' says Stanton. From small works like the cathedral museum at Winchester the practice has moved on to major projects such as 60 Sloane Avenue (with YRM) and the galleries and other ongoing additions at Compton Verney. It is also renowned for its fastidious attention to detail. The Whitby project tested its abilities to the full.

The unblocking of the great majority of the banqueting house windows was fundamental to the scheme – it would, indeed, have been perverse to deny visitors spectacular views out to the headland and North Sea. Metal gauze curtains provide an element of black-out, obscuring what goes in inside the building from the courtyard but admitting a

degree of natural light. The single sheets of glass which now fill the window openings might appear straightforward to the point of banality, but it is hard to see what else could be done – nobody knows what form the original windows took and EH would not have considered a speculative reproduction of lost work. Moreover, it is now possible to see the depth of the wall – the traditional identity of the windows as holes in the wall has been reinstated.

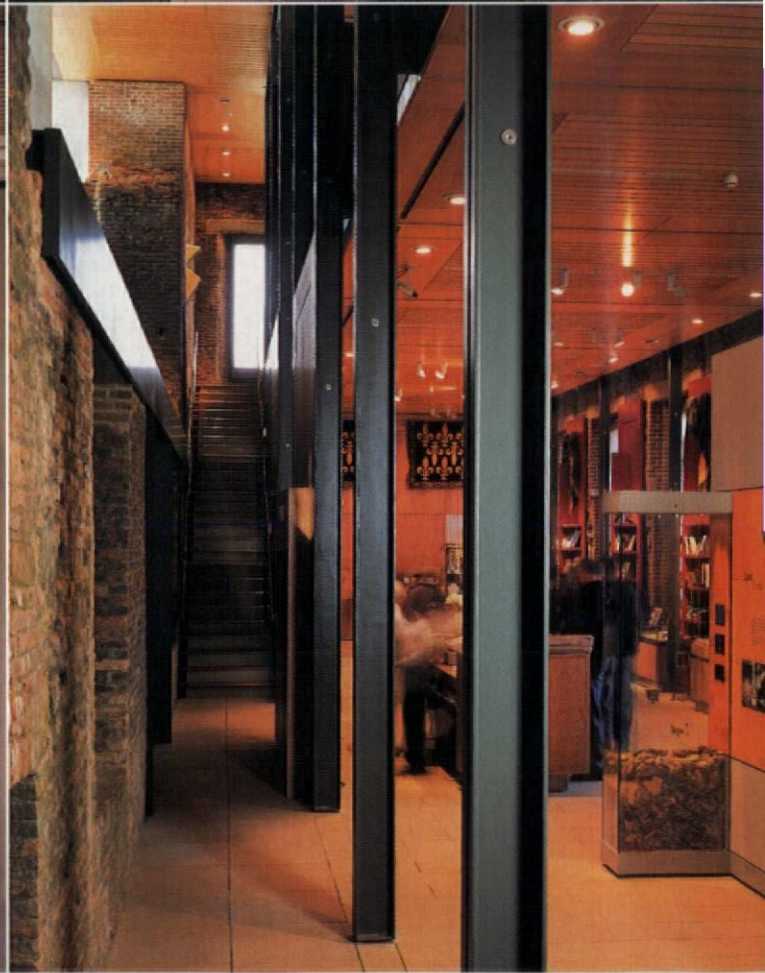
The interior of the centre is, even by Stanton Williams' standards, exquisitely done. With a York-based main contractor and locally based subcontractors and craftsmen, the construction team responded strongly to the challenge of a building which is, by



first floor plan

25 April 2002





Top: first floor exhibition with views west  
Above: the first floor balcony provides full-height gallery views

Top: the southern screen and plinth cantilever beyond the historic fabric  
Above: ground floor exhibition space





EDMUND SUMNER



Top: first floor gallery space: the centre was conceived as a steel 'cage' dropped into a ruin

Above: display cases, benches and other furnishings were designed by Stanton Williams



The bridge link from the first floor to the ruins takes the modern interventions of the building's interior out into the grounds







Juxtapositions of old and new: reminiscent of Italian masters such as Carlo Scarpa and Franco Albini

North Riding standards, radically modern. The new work, using timber, steel and glass, is finely made, providing a suitable contrast to the exposed brick and stone of the old house. Display cases, benches and other furnishings were designed by Stanton Williams. The budget was not, in fact, particularly large and the sensitive archaeology of the site posed further problems. The structural agenda (devised initially by Dewhurst Macfarlane) had to compensate for the stripping out of the 1930s shores.

The banqueting house sits partly on rock, partly on made-up ground. The new steel structure, carrying a lightweight, zinc-clad roof, sits on a new concrete floor slab, with minimal piling below. At first it was hoped that the new building could stand entirely clear of the old walls, but it was necessary to tie it to the old fabric and thus stiffen the entire structure (the main facade is visibly 'bent'). The main steel columns are formed of C-shaped sections welded together – the architects wanted to achieve a sharpness of form not possible with the rounded-off form of standard sections. The detachment between old and new is visually striking – on the southern edge, the new structure is cantilevered out over the partly-demolished south elevation to provide a framework

from which a new enclosing curtain of glass and cedar is hung. The marriage of old and new on this elevation, with the rich mix of stone, timber and metal, forms a classic instance of the dialogue between history and modernity.

The vital bridge link from the first floor of the centre to the ruins takes the modern interventions of the building's interior out into the abbey grounds. Perhaps the glass balustrade here looks too ethereal, even fragile, and a little mannered but the aim was to preserve views, to avoid a weighty intrusion into the historic scene.

Perhaps the greatest disappointment of the visitor centre is the absence of exhibits – the abbey has never been fully excavated and recent digs have produced surprisingly little in the way of artefacts. Yet EH, which has an uneasy and shifting relationship with new architecture (and which is saddled with the scandal of Stonehenge), has commissioned one of the best new buildings in Yorkshire for decades. Whitby's last major new development was a dire supermarket, surrounded by parking, on the site of a picturesque old creek. Stanton Williams has set a new standard for design in this part of the world and, to my taste, it has enhanced, rather than diminished, the appeal of this entrancing locale.

## Costs

Costs based on tender sum

### ENABLING WORKS

Piling within confines of historic structure; removing buttresses retaining historic walls; retaining scaffolding to building; concrete fingers cut into historic fabric; excavation and ground floor slab **£306,800**

### SUPERSTRUCTURE

Steel frame and concrete slab forming a diaphragm structure pinned into existing fabric **£741,800**

### BUILDING FINISHES

Including American oak ceilings and joinery, York stone floor finishes to ground floor and American oak finish to first floor and stair **£216,200**

### BUILDING AND SITE INTERPRETATION

Including display cases, graphics and audio tour to headland **£347,000**

### BUILDING SERVICES

Radiators, trench grille heating, electrics **£253,600**

### WORKS TO ABBEY COURTYARDS

Uncovering and restoration of courts **£454,000**

### LINK BRIDGE

Steel and timber structure with glass balustrade and York stone ramp **£40,000**

### ADDITIONAL EXTERNAL WORKS

Works to Abbey Lane footpath and car park **£189,300**

Remaining external works to site and Abbey Headland **£164,900**

### WEBLINKS

English Heritage  
[www.english-heritage.org.uk](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk)  
Dewhurst Macfarlane  
[www.dewmac.com](http://www.dewmac.com)  
Edmund Sumner Photographer  
[www.edmundsumner.co.uk](http://www.edmundsumner.co.uk)  
Martine Hamilton Knight  
[www.mhkphotography.ndirect.co.uk](http://www.mhkphotography.ndirect.co.uk)

## CREDITS

### TENDER DATE

December 1999

### START ON SITE DATE

26 June 2000

### CONTRACT DURATION

64 weeks

### FORM OF CONTRACT AND/OR PROCUREMENT

GC/Works/1

### TOTAL COST

£2,847,600

### CLIENT

English Heritage

### ARCHITECT

Stanton Williams; Dusan Decermic, Alan Farlie, David Farlie, Richard Griffin, Colin Holden, Roo Lam Lau, Alison McLellan, Monica Ors, Oliver Ralphs, Bert Rozeman, Tom Shell, Steven Shorter, Alan Stanton, Daniel Tsoi, Paul Williams, Reiko Yamazaki

### STRUCTURAL ENGINEER

Dewhurst Macfarlane & Partners, Stevenson

### PROJECT MANAGER

Citex

### QUANTITY SURVEYOR

Citex Bucknall Austin

### LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT

Casella

### INTERPRETATION

Past Forward

### MAIN CONTRACTOR

William Birch & Sons

### LIGHTING

LAPD

### SUBCONTRACTORS AND SUPPLIERS

structural steelwork DW Engineering; roofing Carlton (north-east); joinery Dalton Joinery; glazing Odyssey Glass; mechanical J Michael King; electrical John Wright Electrical Services; lifts Express Evans Lifts; lighting Concord Lighting; stainless steel BDA Fabrications; louvres Aspinalls; exhibition installation Plowden & Smith; specialist plaster Perucchetti Associates; groundworks (courts) Keith Brown; architectural metalwork Marshall Howard; landscaping JJ Harrison; stone Egton Quarries; stone mason Kevin Foster; contractor southern entrance Turner Construction



# working details

The visitor centre – a ground floor exhibition space and first floor gallery – is designed as a delicate steel structure standing independently within the stone shell of a 17th century pavilion. On its north side, the first floor gallery flanks the original stone wall; on the south side it is unenclosed, acting as a continuous balcony from which visitors can look down on the floor below and beyond to the glazed screens of the south elevation. The floor edge is protected by a wide oak handrail and a glazed balustrade.

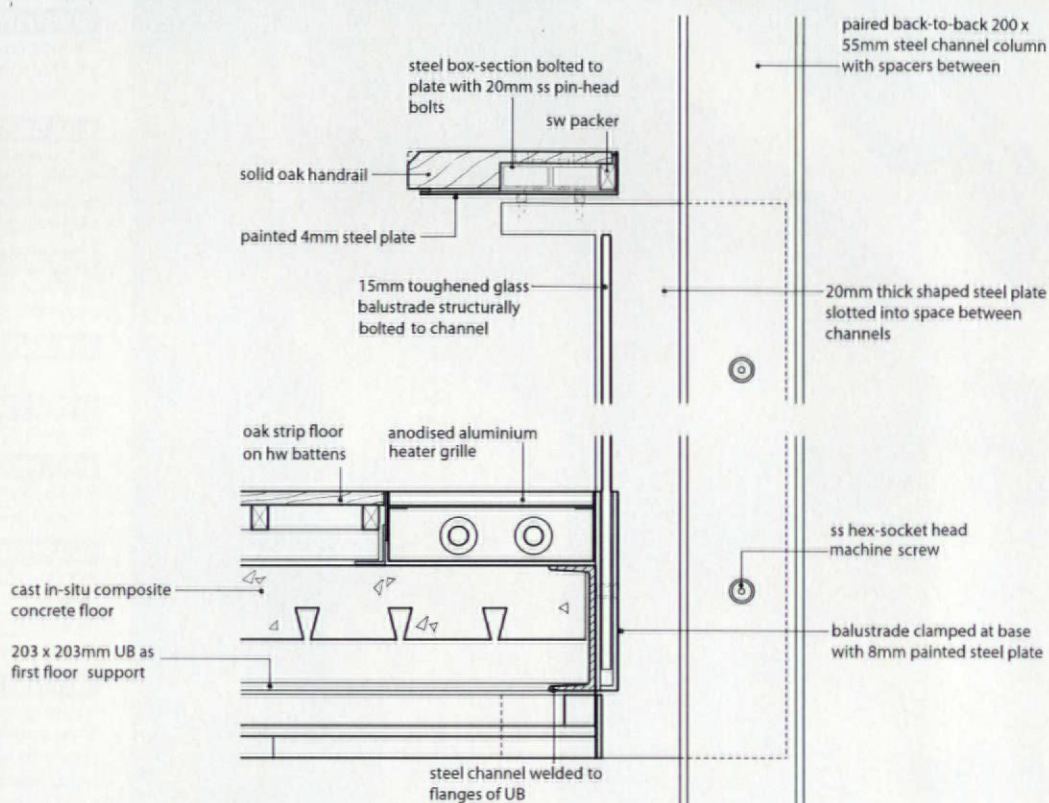
The new first floor and roof act as diaphragms to provide lateral support to the original walls, especially the north wall which leans in as it rises. The roof consists of 457 x 152mm universal beams covered with an insulated steel deck. The first floor is of cast in situ composite construction on 203 x 203mm universal beams which are edged with steel channels.

On the north side, the first floor and roof are supported by a row of box-section 150 x 60mm fabricated steel columns/beams, welded to form an L-shape. Delicate 30mm-diameter steel rods with escutcheons at their ends connect the original north wall at first floor and roof level to the box-section columns, transferring loads to the horizontal diaphragms.

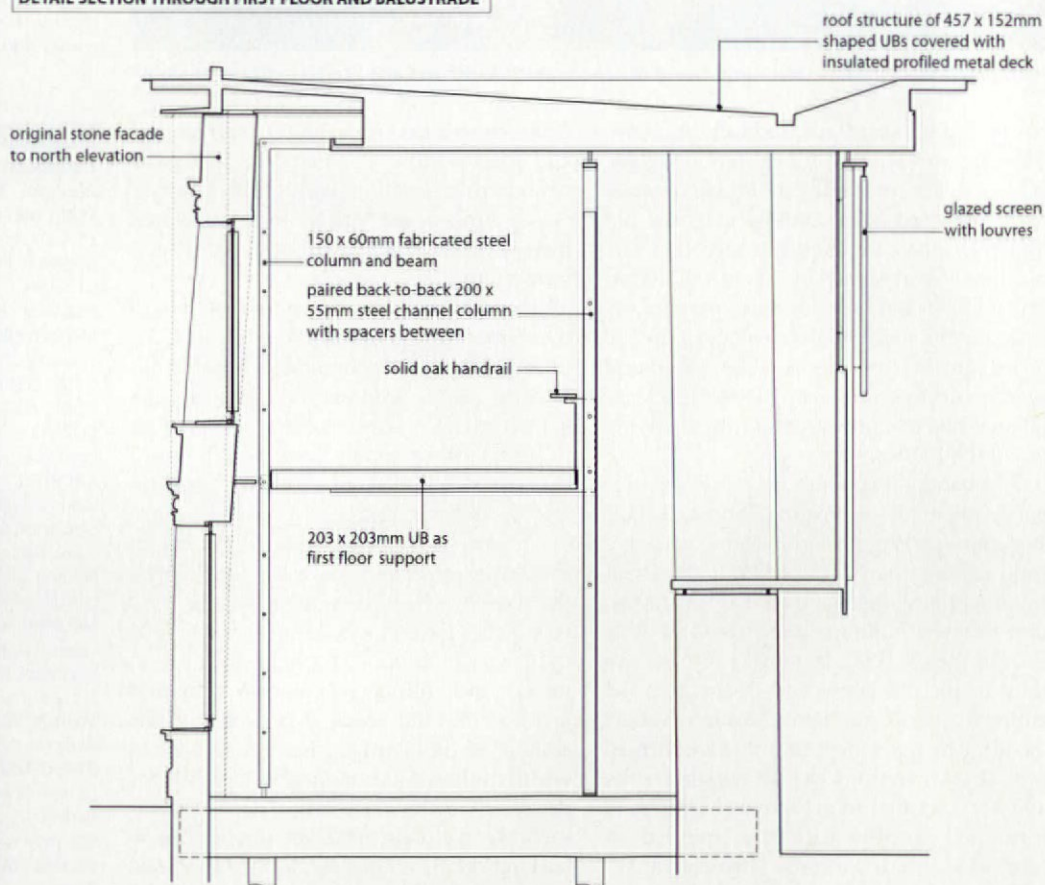
On the south side, floor and roof are supported by a row of paired back-to-back 200 x 55mm steel channel columns. At first floor level, each universal beam is welded to a projecting steel plate slotted into the gap between the channels. At roof level, each universal beam rests on a 30mm-diameter rod slotted between the channels.

The wide oak handrail is stiffened with steel sections and plates to span 3.5m between the channel columns.

Susan Dawson

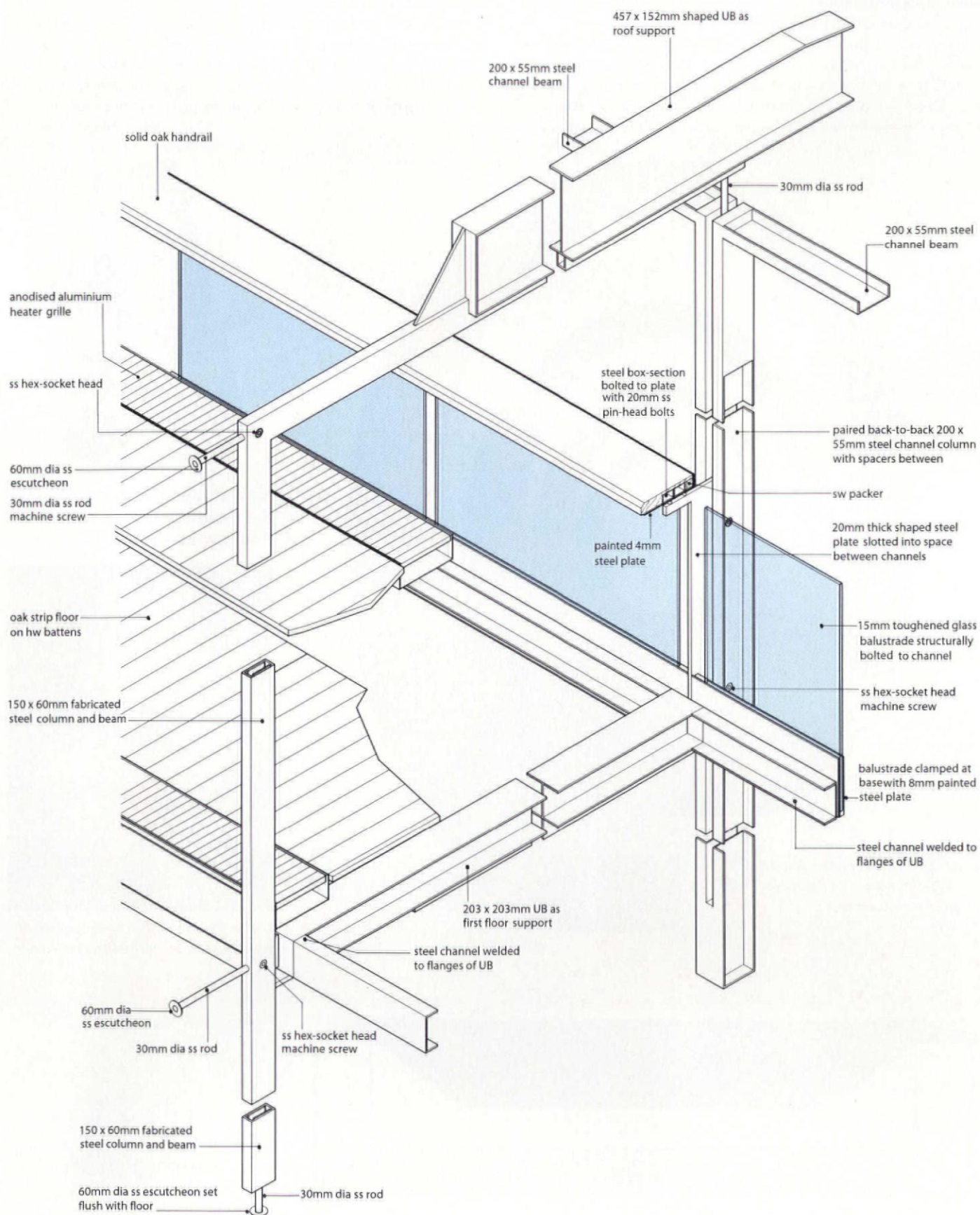


**DETAIL SECTION THROUGH FIRST FLOOR AND BALUSTRADE**



**KEY CROSS SECTION**





CUT-AWAY ISOMETRIC OF STRUCTURE AND BALUSTRADE



# All the fun of the fair

The 2002 Milan Furniture Fair opened with the usual panache. For the five days of the fair, Milan is transformed with an influx of international visitors and a stream of events, exhibitions and parties. There are now 250 satellite events happening outside the main fair. Among the 'Salone Fuori', as the alternative events are titled is Designers' Block which has been transported, in a reduced size, from London's 100% Design Week and is on display at the Spazio Consolo, a large industrial warehouse space.

The fair is a significant event for British designers, principally because Italy still has design-led companies and a strong manufacturing base. James Irvine, a British designer who set up studio in Milan after moving

there in 1984 when he joined the Olivetti design studio under the direction of Ettore Sottsass and Michele De Lucchi, showed a new range of lights for Artemide and also designed the exhibition for the German bathroom accessories manufacturer Dornbracht.

Matthew Hilton, who has had a long association with Driade, the Milan-based furniture company, talked about the benefits of forging links with the Italian manufacturers: 'The Italians are highly skilled at manufacturing and construct everything with the greatest attention to details. All the artisans take great pride in what they do and it is a valuable experience

*Continued on page 44*



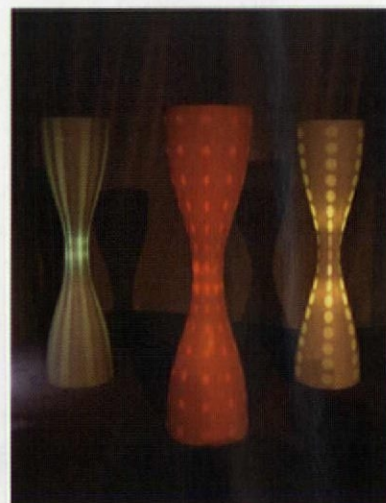
Cappellini set the stage for '60s-style socialising with 'And' – a Fabio Novembre designed sculptural seat



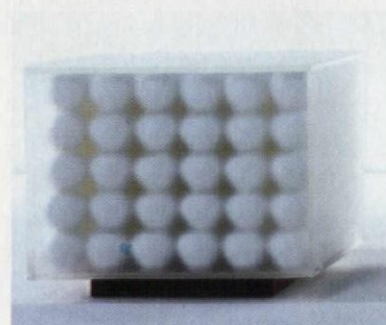
'Outline' for Cappellini by Jean-Marie Massaud reflected this year's trend away from undulating, organic forms towards seating that makes a feature of its own engineering



Ron Arad's witty take on the cinema chair *None Rota* (shown) and its companion, *Nino Rota*, were exhibited by Cappellini



Corian showed itself in a whole new light with these wasp-waisted 'squeeze' lamps



Also for Cappellini, Ilaria Marelli designed 'Apple', a range of seating blocks available in various configurations





## JOHN CULLEN LIGHTING

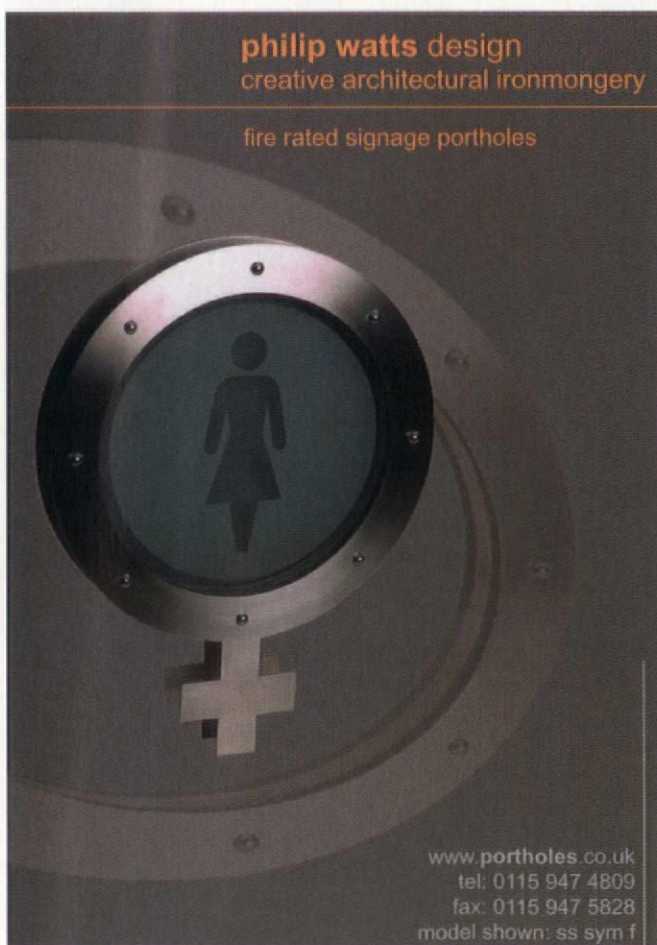


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SPECTRUM 2002

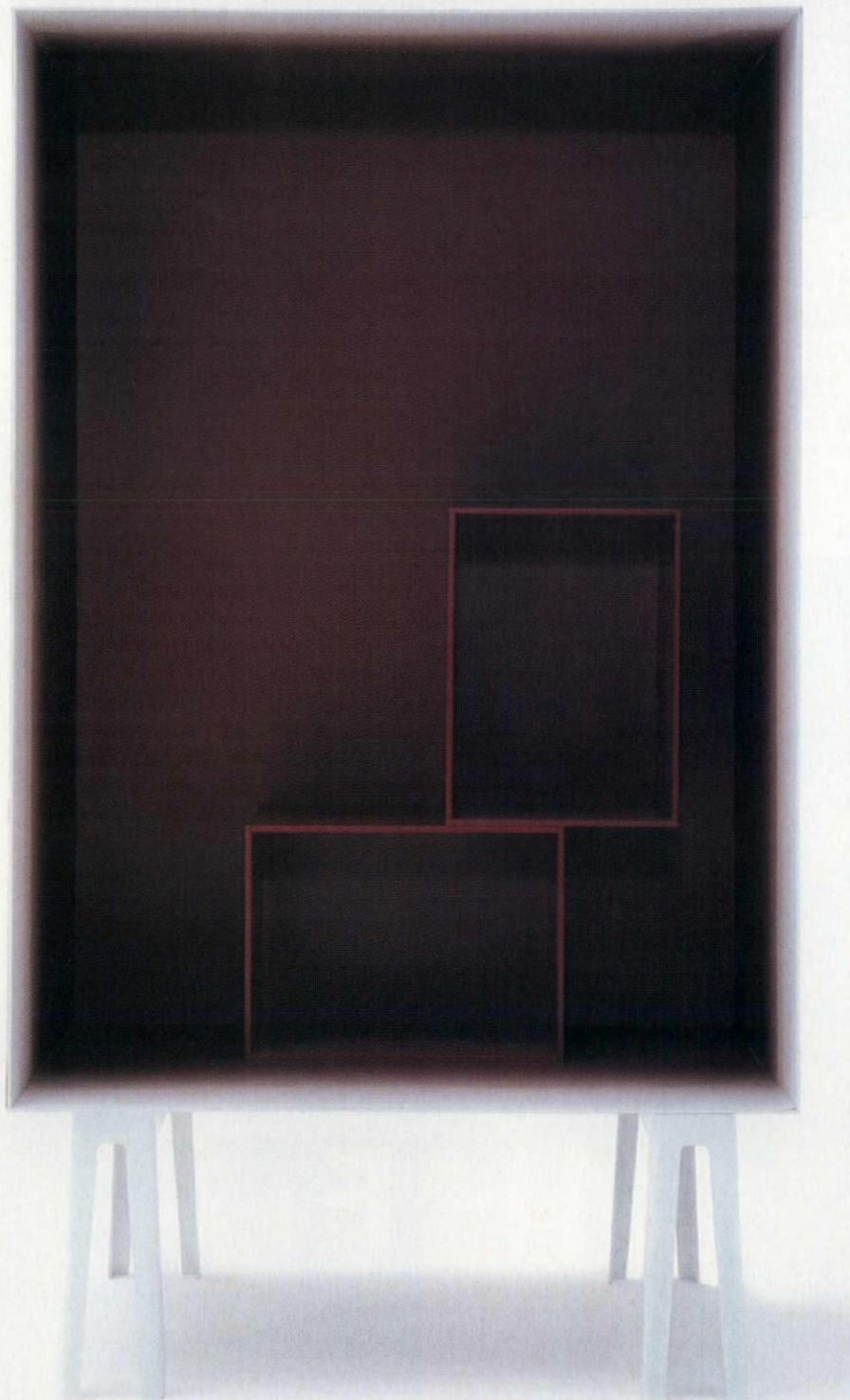


*Continued from page 42*

developing products with them.' This year, Hilton has produced a range of cabinets for Liv'it and for the British manufacture SCP, exhibiting alongside Cappellini. A strong supporter of British design, Sheridan Coakley opened SCP in 1985 in the then unfashionable Curtain Road in east London. Michael Sodeau, formerly of Inflate, presented a stretched version of the sofa to form an abstracted notion of the simple couch. Hilton presented a bold and sculptural swivel chair titled 'Buffalo'.

If any trends were emerging, they could be seen in a shift away from undulating sofas and chairs and a return to a demonstration of the

engineering of products. Konstantin Gricic, the German designer and formerly a tutor on the Royal College of Arts MA Course in Product Design, presented a new chair titled 'Chair One' for the Italian company Magis. The chair is manufactured using die-cast aluminium and could be described as a skeleton of a chair. The seat also functions as outdoor public seating with an alternative base of conical concrete. Achille Castiglioni, the grand maestro of design once said of Gricic's work: He is a designer not out to change the world, yet he creates objects that suggest a certain type of behaviour and pursues demanding, neutral and well thought out projects that are bound to have a lasting effect.'



Fresh from their exhibition at London's Design Museum, the Bouroullec brothers presented their 'Butterfly' display cabinet designed for Cappellini



Michael Sodeau, formerly of Inflate, presented this simple abstracted couch designed for SCP



Konstantin Gricic's 'Chair One' for Italian company Magis is a 'skeleton of a chair' manufactured from die-cast aluminium



Also for SCP, Matthew Hilton showed a range of new designs including 'Buffalo', a bold and sculptural swivel chair



## The colours of success

furniture, textiles, surface coverings,  
architectural fittings, lighting,  
accessories, materials and processes.

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### Information

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

For negotiated rates on hotels  
phone First Option 0870 8709145  
quoting Spectrum

### The Annual AJ/Spectrum Lecture Wednesday 15 May at 6pm

By Will Alsop talking about the  
collected works of 'Gordon Bennett'.  
Entry on a 'first come first served'  
basis in the Lecture Theatre,  
followed by drinks in the Galleries.

### Collexion 2002

An exhibition of materials  
of the new millennium from  
Material Connexion NY

Showing for the second year running,  
Material Connexion will reveal over  
130 new materials and three  
dimensional product samples,  
showing potential application of  
materials featured.

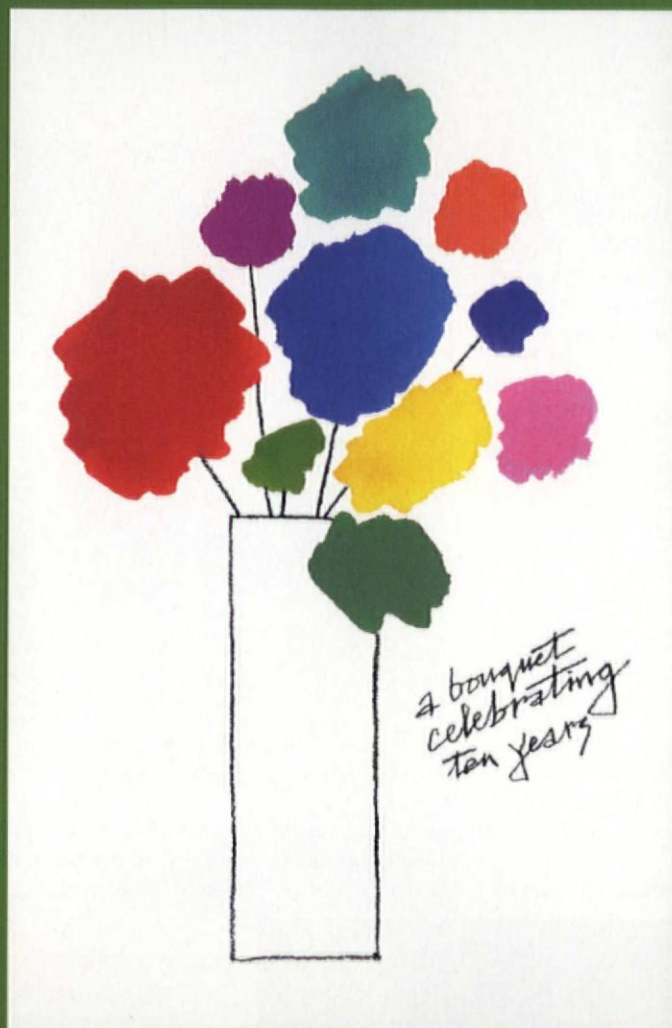
### The Inaugural Interface Europe Sustainability Debate

Tuesday 14 May at 5:30pm

Tickets available from

Design Events 020 7247 6116 or  
[spectrum@designevents.co.uk](mailto:spectrum@designevents.co.uk)

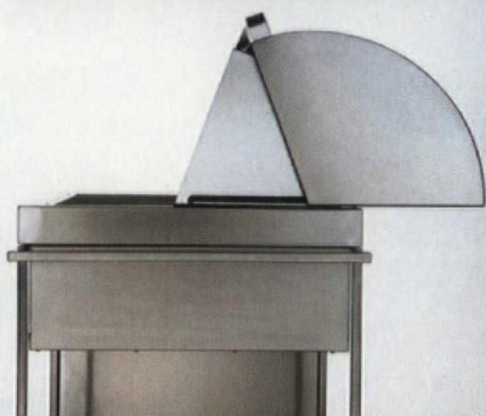
Speakers - Marco Goldschmied,  
Guy Battle, Rob Coombs, David Oakey.



# SPECTRUM 2002



Spectrum, the exhibition of design-led contract interior companies, celebrates its 10th anniversary this year. Among the attractions are the AJ/Spectrum lecture, to be given by Stirling Prize winner and AJ columnist Will Alsop on the evening of 15 May, which will be followed by The Architectural Review awards for the best products in this year's show. Here we give a sneak preview of some of the new products which are being unveiled by some of the 130 exhibitors.



▲ This contemporary barbecue is part of the CoRo Collection designed by Stephen Gallizoli – one of three new collections to be launched by the Modern Garden Company at this year's Spectrum.

☎ 020 7375 2337 ✉ info@modernngarden.co.uk



▲ Furniture designer and maker Luke Hughes and Company is showing a range of new projects including the three-legged Mercury Table which comes with a top made up of interchangeable leather panels set within a timber lip.

☎ 020 7404 5995 ✉ c.watson@lukehughes.co.uk



◀ K+N will be featuring its St@ndby-Office, a flexible and mobile office pod constructed from a combination of K+N's Horizonte partitioning and the S80 storage wall system. The 'office' will be shown alongside the new 'Skye' seating range.

☎ 020 7490 9340

✉ info@kn-international.co.uk

🌐 www.kn-international.co.uk



▲ Beyon is a new furniture system designed within Richmond Solutions by Stephen Philips. The simple assembly method makes it ideal for organisations which change teams at great speed.

☎ 020 7405 0400 ✉ KellyG@richmondsolutions.co.uk 🌐 www.beyon.co.uk

► Aktiva, the London-based designer and manufacturer of light fittings, is showing a range of new products by designers from Germany and the UK including shimmer (pictured) by Peter Christian.

☎ 020 7428 9325

✉ info@aktiva.co.uk

🌐 www.aktiva.co.uk




▲ Hemsley Associates is unveiling the latest additions to Corpus, a collection of superbly crafted precision engineered cabinets and shelving units in extra fine grade stainless steel.

☎ 020 8998 4806 ✉ ph@hemsleyassociates.com

🌐 www.hemsleyassociates.com

Spectrum 2002 is at the Commonwealth Galleries, London W8. The show is open between 11am and 9pm from Tuesday 14-Thursday 16 May and from 11am-5pm on Friday 17 May. To pre-register for free entry visit [spectrumexhibition.co.uk](http://spectrumexhibition.co.uk) or call 0870 429 4420.






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## Drawing comparisons

First impressions are important so how do you choose between various styles of architectural illustration?

BY AUSTIN WILLIAMS



It is common for architectural firms to reach straight for their contact book of computer visualisers when thinking about ways to represent their design proposals to best effect. The growth in virtual three-dimensional modelling packages has enabled many architects to prepare presentation drawings in-house beyond the wildest dreams of their own manual technical drawing skills. Furthermore, the prevalence of visualisation companies producing dramatic walk- and fly-throughs has undoubtedly raised the aspirations of both designer and client alike.

So what of the other methods of producing graphic representations; what used to be called 'artists impressions'? Are clients forsaking handcrafted drawings and jumping on the techno-bandwagon? Here we look at the work of some 'traditional' artists and ask why they still do it.

### Wash and brush up

Gerald Green is a watercolourist – an artist and architectural illustrator – who sees his illustration work as a bridge between fine art and technical drawing. Trained as an architect, Green has been working in illustration for 18 years, during which time the

**Above:** Gerald Green's watercolour for a hotel project in Portugal. **Below:** David Hoare's measured drawing quality elevation in pencil and watercolour



computer has clearly come to dominate the market. Green is circumspect: 'If an architect has the technology in house, then it's common sense to use it.' But he warns that many finished computer renderings can have a certain sterility about them.

This is why he is so keen on his watercolour approach; even though he acknowledges that it is a dying art, he believes strongly that it provides a more human, emotional angle on architecture. He considers his finished images to be part of the process; part of the development of the architectural realisation – a working drawing but also 'something which has a little of me in it'. He most enjoys his work when he feels engaged early into a project, able to participate in discussions about how to present the finished artwork.

### Computa obscura

'The advent of computer graphics is now posing a threat, in the same way that photography brought on painting a century ago,' he says. However, similarly, it brings opportunities, so that even though there are fewer and fewer people working in handcrafted artwork, their services are at a premium. Green has more work than ever before, with a client base of architects, property developers and even contractors.

In the same school, David Hoare uses watercolours and soft pencils because he enjoys the 'less precise medium' to digital renderings or even pen and ink. He admits that the choice of illustrator is 'very much horses for courses – some computer images are terrific'. What he worries about is the fact that many finished images that purport to be illustrations have been carried out by technicians with graphics packages and which lack artistic influence – 'no brushstrokes, no character, nothing left to the imagination of the viewer'.

'The computer is not very useful for conveying a project that isn't fully designed,' he says, even though Hoare also often works to architects' detailed drawings. But he finds that quick sketch proposals are most rewarding, where the architect is framing out a vision in his presence; helping to create a photofit. 'A thumbnail with an instruction that



this is glass, this is brick, or whatever, means that I can then be left to produce something that shows the embryonic building to its best advantage,' Hoare says.

Even though a computer can churn out information, 'is there any real reason to produce 15 internal perspectives where one, well done, will do?' Imagine showing a boardroom with a particular table that has been in the company for 50 years. A computer cannot do that. It is more likely to produce a generic table from a library of Ikea standards.'

As with commercial artists, Hoare is concerned that the profession is disappearing, with very few new and experienced artists coming through. In the course of our conversation, he mentioned 10 or more names of recently departed illustrators. Caught in the net of architect and client deadlines, maybe illustrators do not have such a relaxing, carefree profession as I had imagined.

### Illustrated guide

The Society of Architectural Illustration (SAI) was founded in 1975 to foster the use of architectural perspectives as a necessary communication medium between a designer and the public, using a variety of graphic media and artistic interpretations.

The SAI, which has charitable status and whose previous patrons have included Sir John Betjeman, Sir Hugh Casson and Gordon Cullen, is



**Above: Don Coe's illustrative sketch technique of Leadenhall Market**  
**Below: Ian Denby's computer graphics with airbrush quality**

also a resource base to find illustrators in your area.

Tim Monk of the SAI said that at a recent illustration presentation (at a university that shall remain nameless), the students who were well versed in 3D CAD images – and slightly bored with the flashy digital renderings – sat up in amazement at the work of Don Coe, wondering how he did it.

As chairman of the SAI, and an illustrator of 23 years standing, Coe

sees this as much an indictment of architectural education as of a blind acceptance of possibilities of technology. Coe's work is simply hand drawn with a quick wash render. 'It's called drawing,' he says.

### Daily sketch and mail

His style has developed as the true meaning of efficient self-employment; as the quickest way to make money and save the rest of the day to indulge his love of vintage motorbikes.

Until the advent of the Internet, he would visit the architect, talk through the scheme, sit in the office to draw it up and travel home in the evening. Now he boasts that he can discuss the project on the phone, receive transmissions of the architects' drawings and fax back three rough sketches within half an hour. On approval, he will complete the finished work within two hours which he then e-mails to the client. His style is very illustrative, reminiscent of Quentin Blake, and is very distinctive to those versed in computer graphics. Many clients will actually send him the printouts of basic computer models and ask that he 'put some life into them'.

An illustrator who produces very different images is Ian Denby. Denby produces conceptual sketches from the architects' rough sketches and elevations, interpreting the concept without focusing on design details. His work gives the appearance of an air-brushed painting. The image below, showing a modern showcase storage facility, has been created using digital techniques and a variety of programmes.

In his more detailed renderings, Denby aims for more than photorealism and says that being an artist is the 'key to superior digital visualisation. Good software and technical know-how are not enough'.

### Contacts

- Society of Architectural Illustration, Stroud, tel 01453 766958, [www.sai.org.uk](http://www.sai.org.uk)
- Gerald Green, Nuneaton, tel 024 7632 5059, [www.ggarts.demon.co.uk](http://www.ggarts.demon.co.uk)
- David Hoare, London, tel 020 8852 7508
- Don Coe, Rotherfield, East Sussex, tel 01892 852584, [www3.mistral.co.uk/doncodes](http://www3.mistral.co.uk/doncodes)
- Ian Denby, Leeds, tel 0113 258 5585, [www.idenby.co.uk](http://www.idenby.co.uk)

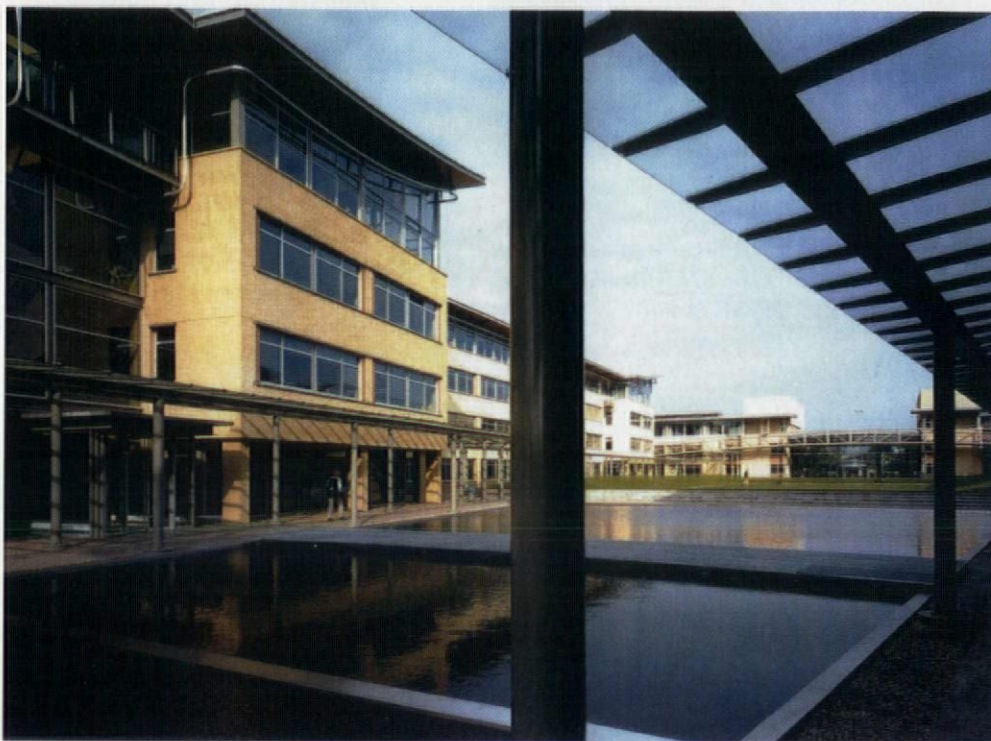




# Green saviour or eco-maniac?

US architect William McDonough is touring the world with a message of how top business leaders can go green

BY AUSTIN WILLIAMS



**Nike's new HQ is deemed to be the most energy efficient office of its size in the Netherlands**

Imagine a list of firms that you would be least likely to see on the books of a committed environmentalist: Ford Motor Company, Nike, IBM, Monsanto, Wal-Mart, Gap. The list of multinationals reads like an anarchists' hit list. But all form part of the portfolio of William McDonough + Partners, an environmentally based architectural and research practice from Charlottesville, US.

While his client base is reputed to be worth more than half a trillion US dollars and includes some of the biggest names in global corporatism, McDonough is hailed by *Time* magazine as one of the 'heroes for the planet'. A man who says that 'we must begin to look at the modern world and develop habitats that are intrinsically connected to nature. We need to redesign our lives to be part of the natural flow of life on Earth'.

His partner, Michael Braungart of McDonough-Braungart Design Chemistry, a spin-off chemical research company, is the ex-founder

of Greenpeace's chemical division. A very useful poacher-turned-game-keeper? McDonough does not see things that way. While all of his clients are regularly criticised as the very emblems of an irresponsibly capitalistic world, he is unrepentant in saying that green might be good, but profitability is what business is all about. When it seems that many cultural commentators claim to be anti-capitalist, it is almost refreshing to see someone making a good old-fashioned business case for the market mechanism, albeit a green one.

Although McDonough is much in demand on the world's conference circuit, on this occasion, we were at a guest presentation at the offices of Gazeley Properties in Milton Keynes. After the main presentation, there followed a closed business strategy meeting with his hosts, where McDonough was undoubtedly hoping to increase his portfolio further. He is not averse to developing his own business case.

## Waste banned

His speech was a mixture of relentless business sense and Walton's mountain home-spun philosophy. Where else could you be told that the central organising principle of design is that 'we must love all children, of all species, for all time'. The audience in Milton Keynes politely kept smiling.

In his seminal pamphlet, 'The Next Industrial Revolution', McDonough argues that we need to eliminate the concept of waste; that everything 'manufactured by industry must, after each useful life, provide nourishment for something new'.

'There used to be something called "away"', he says. We let that sink in. Just as the expressions of concern, that McDonough had said something weird again, were forming on the faces of the audience, he launched into the punch line: 'We used to throw things "away", but now we all know that whatever we discard has consequences. We can't throw things "away" anymore.'

He criticises mainstream eco-efficiency for restricting industry and curtailing growth – recognising that it tries 'to try to limit the creativity and productiveness of humankind'. This is what allegedly sets McDonough apart from other radical proponents of environmentalism – his refutation of eco-efficiency. Instead of designing for recycling and all that, he wants a world in which waste ceases to be waste. Unfortunately, his is an almost mystical vision and one that is not all that different to eco-efficiency when you get down to it. His ideal production system is the cherry tree; a system of regeneration that, no matter that only a few seeds out of many thousands germinate, the 'wasted' seeds become part of the earth, not alien to it.

In the process of challenging the poverty of ideas within the sustainability industry, he dismisses one of its more positive by-products, namely the desire to 'do more with less'. At the end of the day, while he has a new spin, he is still wedded to Amory Lovins' resource productivity model in wanting productivity measured by 'how many people are gainfully and meaningfully employed'. In the final analysis, and in the name of progress, this is comparable to celebrating the productivity of pre-industrialism.





WILLIAM MCDONOUGH + PARTNERS, 2002

## William's Bill

A polished performer, McDonough has a great line in name-dropping and self-effacement – all at the same time. Slides of poor shanties in China where he was brought up sat alongside the fact that his father was president of Seagram Overseas division. Last week he was chatting to Michael Dell (you know, of Dell computers), next week he is meeting President Bush.

He lives in a house in Virginia designed by his hero Thomas Jefferson, and has tried to update the third President's Bill of Rights as a model for his work, one which he labels the Bill of Responsibilities. 'Life, liberty, the pursuit of happiness and freedom from remote tyranny' in the original US constitution, becomes translated into 'ecological intelligence, justice, fun and freedom from inter-generational remote tyranny'. What he calls a Declaration of Interdependence rather than a Declaration of Independence.

## Don't try this at home

His ability to convince clients to adopt his philosophy is legendary. When he arrived for the presentation of his proposals for an international competition for the design of Nike's European HQ in Hilversum, Holland, he did not bring any drawings or models; not even a proposal. His explanation to the waiting jury was that it would have been 'stupid and arrogant' to have turned up with a scheme for a site he had never seen and a client he had never met. He got the job. By continuing this naive, non-arrogant position with planners, with whom he developed his propos-

als 'by listening', the 150,000m<sup>2</sup> project was approved in three weeks, whereas the client had programmed for one year's haggling.

Among proposals to make Chicago the greenest city in the world, building IBM's European headquarters and developing a bio-degradable shoe, he is currently working on a \$2 billion, 20-year scheme to upgrade and refurbish Ford's Rouge plant in Dearborn, Michigan. The 45,000m<sup>2</sup> roof of one of the buildings will be a green habitat specifically engineered and researched with local naturalists to encourage previously indigenous species to return. Species, that is, that were believed to live there before the plant was built a century ago.

His business sense carries the day on many of his suggestions. For example, Ford was set to reject his proposals for \$13million-worth of storm water drainage around the site, until he pointed out that, to comply with updated local by-laws, they would have to spend \$48 million on chemical water treatment and pipework. The storm water proposal by McDonough comprises an open ditch, meandering around the site, self-cleansing in the manner of a stream, 'which means', he adds, 'that the client gets landscaping for free'.

His lateral thinking is one of the reasons he succeeds. He has eliminated all but four air-con units on the massive body shop roof and replaced the huge internal ductwork with local ground level air-cushion carpets. 'Why spend energy and money venti-

lating such a massive space when the people occupy such a narrow movement path?' Now air is directly wafted up at workers along their production line and automatically cuts out on breaks for even higher efficiency. In this way, he has reduced the heating load by 60 per cent.

## Soft soap, hard sell

When railing against the problems of modern production, he looked forward to the day when enterprises will produce, say, soap, locally; reducing costs by cutting down on delivery distances, selling it without packaging. Maybe he has not been in the country long enough to visit Beamish Museum, but that is what he is describing. This parochialism would, he argued, help other similar small businesses flourish in proximity. Admittedly, he wants to reinvest the savings made from selling basic goods, back into the next round of production, but I do not think that it is going to be feasible to try and relive the last 100 years of capitalist production over again in this way. Even if it was possible, would life turn out any differently?

In the midst of all his great ideas, there is the recurring theme in McDonough's presentation of how life could be simpler. Apple pie cooked on a solar stove. With apologies to Sean O'Hagan, McDonough is 'old-fashioned and visionary, traditional and groundbreaking'. In the meantime, business is good and President Bush is certain to be very receptive to the southern philosophising.

**Top: IBM's European HQ sky-terrace. Below: Ford's massive Dearborn car plant built between 1917 and 1925 will be replanted with 1,500 new trees**



WILLIAM MCDONOUGH + PARTNERS, 2002





## When getting an apology is more important than receiving cash

Courts have little option but to award monetary damages to reflect a wide range of wrongs. Informal tariffs exist for complaints ranging from a broken leg to inconvenience while your car is repaired. The system works so long as the complaining party wants cash. But in some cases the claimant wants something else. One advantage of alternative dispute resolution (ADR) is that it can provide a way of allowing parties to let off steam, or ask for an apology, which may be what they really want.

The courts are obliged by the CPR to actively manage cases, and the parties have a duty to help. That includes encouraging the use ADR. Two recent Court of Appeal judgments have emphasised the benefits of ADR, and that the courts will take a dim view of parties who fail to consider it.

Susan Dunnett – *Dunnett v Railtrack* (22.202) – kept horses in a field next to the Swansea to London railway line. A self-closing gate from the field leading on track was used (unlawfully) by children. Railtrack replaced the gate with one that did not close itself. Railtrack refused Dunnett's request for the new gate to be locked. In due course the gate was left open, and three horses strayed onto the line and were killed.

For reasons that do not concern us here, Dunnett lost her claim, appealed, and lost the appeal. In the usual course of events, she would have been ordered to pay Railtrack's costs. But at an earlier stage of the proceedings, Dunnett had, on the advice of the judge, asked Railtrack if the parties could try ADR. Railtrack refused. Because of that refusal, the Court of Appeal declined to order Dunnett to pay Railtrack's costs.

In the other recent case, *Cowl and others v Plymouth City Council* (14.12.01), the Court of Appeal considered an application for judicial review of a decision by the council to close a residential care home in which the claimants lived. The parties were not a long way apart on what needed to be done. They agreed that a full assessment of the effect of such a decision was needed, and that such an assessment had not been carried out. There was, however, a question

over the assessment's timing.

After the Court of Appeal made its initial views clear, the parties reached agreement. The court criticised that this decision could have been achieved, with significant cost savings, at an earlier stage. Lord Woolf concluded that if the parties had found themselves unable to reach agreement they should have recruited a mediator to help. He went on to emphasise that the failure to use ADR sensibly when public money is at stake is 'indefensible'.

These were both cases in which feelings were running high. In its decision in the Dunnett case, the court emphasised the benefits of ADR in such matters, as it offers a range of options beyond the power of the court. In giving his judgment, Lord Justice Brooke used the examples of clinical negligence claims and claims against the police as matters in which what the claimant sometimes really wants is an apology. Wise potential defendants use a similar

approach to head off claims before they get started – how much less likely to sue is the person who falls and injures themselves if they are taken home in a taxi and sent flowers, rather than being immediately treated as a potential litigant?

That is not to say that more commercially based claims cannot benefit from ADR. The parties often have other

interests, such as an ongoing business relationship or a reputation to protect, that might benefit from any dispute being kept out of court.

While it may look as though by promoting ADR the courts are trying to do themselves out of a job, this approach better meets the needs of some litigants.

The benefits of the flexible options offered by ADR are worth bearing in mind if there is a storm brewing on the horizon, while taking care not to make an admission of liability without carefully considering all the consequences. But if a matter gets as far as court, it certainly now seems that failure to explore ADR, if it was an appropriate option, will be frowned on, and potentially penalised.

Sue Lindsey

## Flash flash, you're on BTinternet, but then again...

It is almost a year since I had BTinternet install an ADSL line. It is faster than a 56K modem but not as fast as you are led to believe. Since Christmas it has dropped the line so frequently that I have had to buy a USB plate to go on the front of the computer. You cure line-drops by turning off, pulling the modem's USB plug out and later pushing it back in.

When you have to do this on a daily basis you buy a front plate because you always gouge your forehead on that screw sticking out under the desk. Waste of time really because one day ADSL stopped working altogether – it has been out of action for 10 days.

OK, so maybe it is an overloaded machine. I install the whole thing on a newly configured, minimal-load computer with just hard disk and CD-ROM and not even a sound card. Flash, flash goes the modem light.

In desperation I call the BT Openworld press office and pull rank – and feel a tad ashamed. I need not have worried. Although, magically, a few hours later I am back online again, it only lasts for a couple of hours. Come next morning and flash flash, flash again. More calls to the press office... Helpless... wrung hands... hopeless... 'not me guv'. Long wait for the helpdesk and then: 'All our team are being recalled at the moment. Please wait for our next available specialist.'

And then nearly half an hour later on comes an absolutely courteous bloke in a call centre 50 miles north of Inverness. 'Yes, you were escalated yesterday. Here is a new number. No, we are not allowed to talk to the engineers and you certainly aren't. No, we have to wait until they do the work. No they won't talk to us.' It's just like the old days. You suddenly remember that however privatised BT may be it is still the same engineers.

Aha. Eventually, enigmatically and unannounced my line has just come back on again.

Sutherland Lyall is, maybe, at [sutherland.lyall@btinternet.com](mailto:sutherland.lyall@btinternet.com)

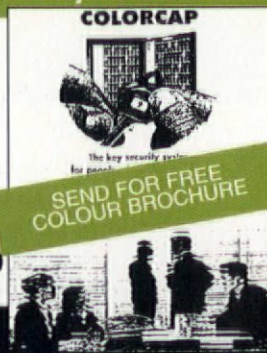


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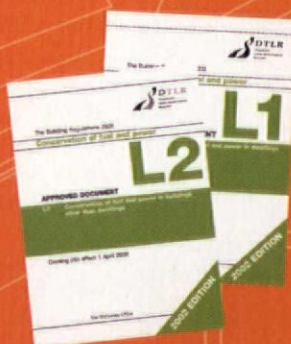
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# Eastern promise

ROBERT COWAN

**Ten Years, Ten Cities: The Work of Terry Farrell & Partners 1991-2001**

Laurence King, 2002. 320pp. £60

It is the dream of any designer: a book written by the practice itself, almost too heavy to lift, illustrated by 1,000 drawings and photographs, chronicling 10 years of international success.

At the end of the 1980s, Terry Farrell & Partners found itself expanding in only 12 months from 15 staff to the more than 100 needed to tackle three major London projects. Equally suddenly, the domestic market collapsed. This book tells the story of how the practice, which before 1991 had never built outside London, rediscovered itself by winning a string of large commissions, many in the Far East. The London architect became an international one.

Sir Terry Farrell's passion (shared by his design partners Aidan Potter and Doug Streeter) has always been for building in the

context of a city. The places of the title, though, are not all cities as we know them. Pearl Delta Supercity, for example, is 'an urban civilisation without parallel on earth', incorporating Hong Kong, Guangzhou, Shenzhen and Zhuhai in 'a giant landscape of car-based planning, commercial and residential complexes and shopping malls'.

In some of its projects, such as Kowloon Ventilation Building and Peak Tower, both in Hong Kong, the practice has further developed the monumentalism that it displayed in London in the previous decade, and which had its jokey beginnings in the giant egg-cups of TVam. Farrell seems proud to have found inspiration in 'the global branded corporate community' (for its Pearl Island masterplan) and 'a particularly Chinese brand of corporate gigantism' (for its

Guangzhou Daily News headquarters).

As ever, urban design is a matter not only of tuning in to the physical context but also of talking to the client, learning about the other people with a stake in the place, and understanding what is financially and politically feasible. Most of the stories of how conflicts were resolved in the successful projects, or how they may have doomed the unrealised ones, remain untold. This is Farrell's own story, and the practice is not in the business of upsetting people.

One can only guess at the politics behind the process of selecting a design for a National Opera House for Beijing. It was a project 'equivalent to having London's National Theatre, Royal Festival Hall and Covent Garden Opera House planned as one complex and situated beside Parliament Square' (Tiananmen Square, in this case). Farrell's design, seeking to knit the complex into the traditional fabric of the city, ended up competing head-to-head with Paul Andreu's 'object buildings within a prairie of open space' (in the words of Farrell).

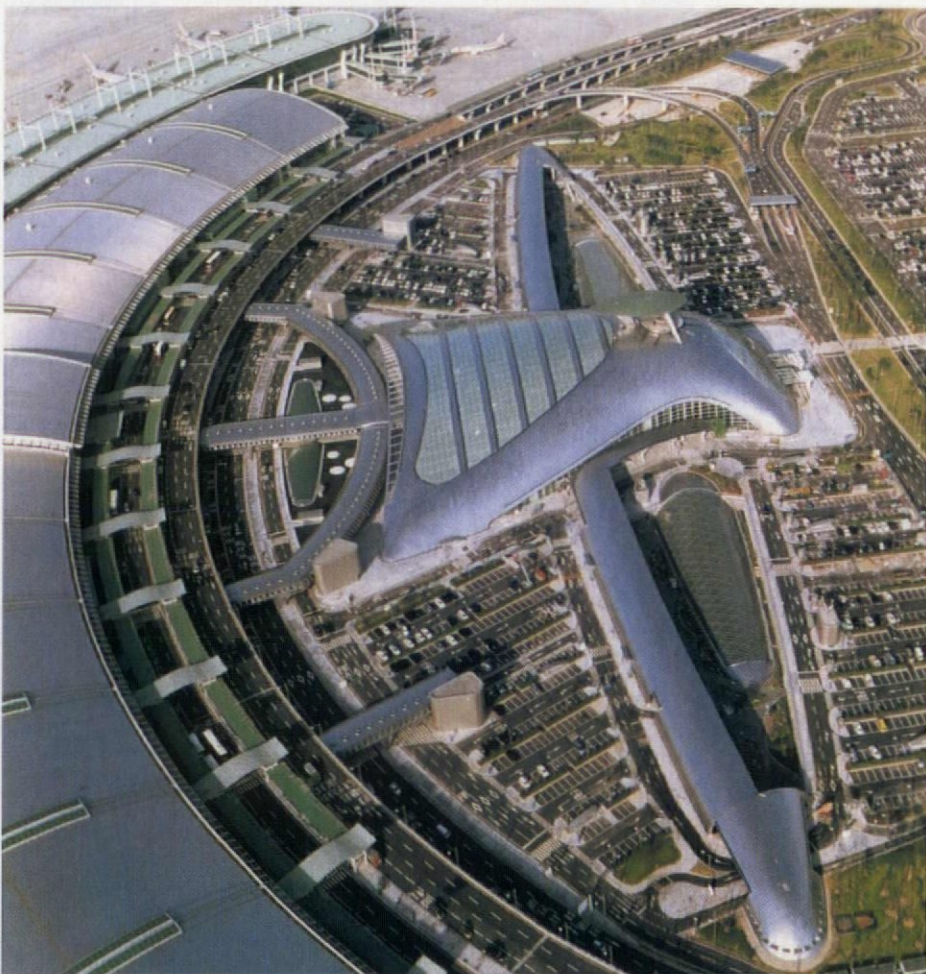
Eventually, the Chinese government decided that Farrell's democratic approach was not its style, and gave Andreu the job. The account of this episode is one of the few in the book that conveys the painful frustration of a big commission slipping away.

Finding a context to work with can be just as difficult closer to home. Farrell was commissioned to design The Deep, a £40 million 'world ocean discovery centre', on a barren site where the River Hull meets the Humber estuary (AJ 11.4.02). Sir Terry's aim was 'to win popular support for the project by bridging the gap between elite and populist causes'. The result is a striking building intended to conjure up associations with a cracking glacier or a frozen wave, appropriate to both its geographical setting and its function.

A more familiar type of contextual design is represented by Farrell's UK masterplans, with the Marsham Street site, Paddington Basin, Swiss Cottage and the Edinburgh financial district among the many well-illustrated examples. Little is said about the frustrations of trying to making the designer's fee budget accommodate the extensive analysis on which such masterplanning depends.

For Terry Farrell & Partners, this book will serve as the most impressive practice brochure ever, though its weight may lead to excess baggage charges eating into the company's profits. The rest of us can value it as a superbly presented summary of the state of the art.

*Robert Cowan is director of the Urban Design Group and a consultant*



Transportation Centre for Incheon International Airport, Seoul, Korea – just completed





# Breaking the rules

CHARLES RATTRAY

## Claus en Kaan: Buildings

By Hans Ibelings et al. NAi Publishers, 2001. 240 pp. £48 (ISBN 90-5662-228-5)

In the remarkable bifurcation of Dutch architecture that followed the explosive Weeber/Koolhaas and van Eyck/Hertzberger collisions of the early 1980s, one would have to place Claus en Kaan in the camp characterised by radical toughness as opposed to emotional idealism. But this book reminds us that it is not quite as easy as that.

Carel Weeber has pointed out elsewhere that Dutch clients still want 'compassion, a contribution to a better society... the mentality is pure boy-scout', and yet here we have more than 250 projects produced by Claus en Kaan since the practice's beginning in 1989, about half of them built or being built. Its workload is increasing exponentially.

'Once upon a time', say Felix Claus and Kees Kaan in their introductory note, 'we pondered how to go about making

architecture. Now we know that it cannot be made. All you do is build... architecture is born out of building.' They love the dynamic and messy realities of this – physical, bureaucratic, stimulating, banal. 'In the Netherlands, there exists an ideal basis for an architecture without originality,' they say. 'We adapt and turn the culture of consensus to our advantage.'

Is this an architecture founded on tectonic principles, then? For Hans Ibelings, both Claus and Kaan are 'passionate pragmatists'; in Han Michel's end-piece they are 'architect-entrepreneurs'.

Claus and Kaan's absence of theorising is the antithesis of the rich intellectualising of the genre characterised by MVRDV's FAR-MAX and Koolhaas' S,M,L,XL. As an object, too, the book itself has something to say about

this – it eschews flashy graphics and acronyms. One hesitates to suggest that the idea of content could have determined the form, but it does adopt the standard format for an oeuvre complète. It is white and very calm. The projects are presented in date order, accompanied by concise and straightforward text.

Early projects, such as the stylish Amsterdam public works department depot, illustrate a concern to restrict the mode of expression in favour of larger-scale moves. Housing at Groningen includes apartments which make a virtue out of off-the-shelf windows, and where 'explanation' of the building's content by articulation is eliminated.

The pensioner apartments, also at Groningen, up the ante – in fact, to 14 storeys: a wedge-shaped tower, with glazed ends intended to make it look twice as high, and profiled sheet flanks with multi-coloured 'dazzle painting', like camouflage, which gives the opposite effect. At Sporenburg, Claus en Kaan's phenomenally crisp housing, within the masterplan produced by Adriaan Geuze and West 8, conceals its various spaces and uses, all in perfect accord with Geuze's aim of uniform clarity of houses and streets (see picture).

Each of these buildings is a tour-de-force, and there are many more in this extraordinary book. It is extraordinary, not only because of Claus en Kaan's invigorating rule-breaking, cerebral play, wit and fearlessness, but also because these things are hardly ever mentioned. The buildings are the clue, but you have to think for yourself as a reader or a visitor.

For an example, turn to their new gestural apartment tower at Almere. This is real critic-fodder, a design tutor's nightmare. It is a rectangular block with two full-width extensions on adjacent sides, one at the top, and one at the bottom, all clad in corrugated metal. The text tells us that 'there are plenty of takers for the top and bottom levels of a tower, far fewer for the middle section. The middle has therefore been reduced to a minimum and the top and foot maximised'. Functional determinants are most assuredly not the whole story here: is this Beauty, the Beast, or even the Emperor's New Clothes?

By way of an answer, Rafael Moneo's preface suggests 'a deliberate forgetting of iconography'. Claus en Kaan's work is beautiful, intellectually and physically – but, until you get used to it, not always both at the same time.

Charles Rattray teaches at the Robert Gordon University and is associate editor of *arq* (Architectural Research Quarterly)



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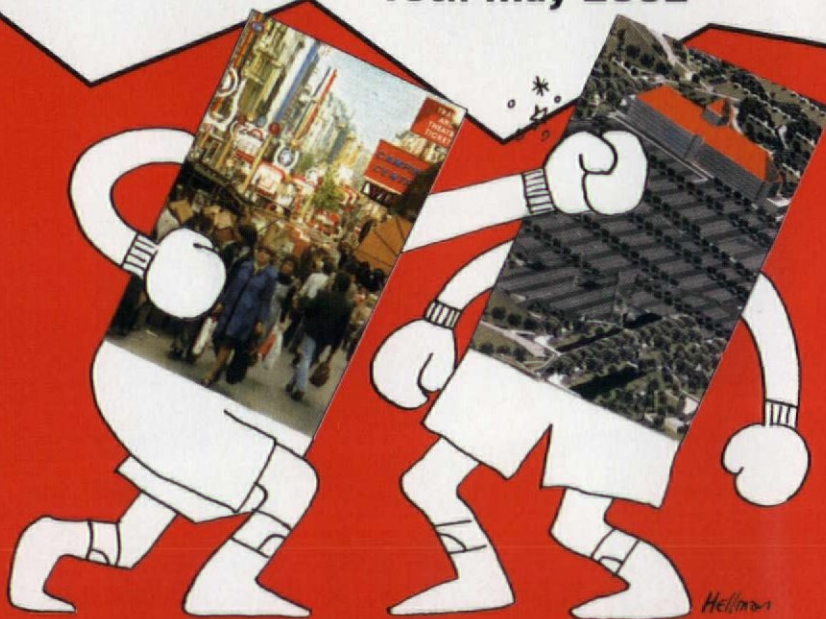
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## London

**Atelier van Lieshout** 26 April-16 June. An exhibition at Camden Arts Centre, Arkwright Rd, NW3. Details 020 7435 2643.

**AJ Small Projects Award** Until 1 May. An exhibition at the RIBA, 66 Portland Place, W1 (0906 302 0400).

**Barbara Delaney** Until 3 May. Paintings at the Friends Room, V&A Museum, SW7 (020 7942 2277).

**Marketing and Brand Imaging** Thursday 9 May. A Colander course at the Building Centre, WC1. Details 020 8771 6445.

**Cities Fight Back** Thursday 16 May. An AJ conference at the RIBA with speakers including Lord Foster, Jon Rouse and Nicky Gavron. Details Martin Davies 020 7505 6650.

**Hardcore: Concrete's Rise from Utility to Luxury** Until 25 May. An exhibition at the RIBA, 66 Portland Place, W1. Details 0906 302 0400.

**Hélène Binet** Until 1 June. Architectural photographs at the Shine Gallery, 3 Jubilee Place, SW3. Details 020 7352 4499.

**Stephen Hughes** Until 1 June. Marginal urban sites in photographs at Photofusion, 17A Electric Lane, SW9. Details 020 7738 5774.

**Will Alsop: Beauty, Joy and the Real** Until 8 June. An exhibition at Sir John Soane's Museum, 13 Lincoln's Inn Fields, WC2. Details 020 7405 2107.

**Nigel Henderson: Parallel of Life and Art** Until 14 June. An exhibition at the AA, 36 Bedford Sq, WC1. Details 020 7887 4000.

**Art of the Model Maker** Until 15 June. An exhibition at the Building Centre, 26 Store St, WC1. Details 020 7692 6209.

## Eastern

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

**Construction Safety Conference** Thursday 23 May. A conference at the BRE, Garston, Watford. Details Angela Mondair 01923 664775.

**Architectural Metalwork** Thursday 30 May. A one-day seminar at Cressing Temple, nr Witham. Details Pauline Hudspeth 01245 437672.

## East Midlands

**Office Manager Health & Safety Course; Designers and the New Approved Code of Practice for CDM** Tuesday 21 May, 14.30. Two RIBA courses at Derby (0121 233 2321).  
**RIBA CPD Event: Party Wall Act** Wednesday 26 June, 16.00. Details of venue 0121 233 2321.



## PRIVATE WORLDS

The subjects of Martin Parr's socially acute photographs, whether seen on a seaside outing or at a Home Counties fête, seem always to be oblivious of his presence. Who, though, could be more oblivious than the mobile-phone users that are the focus of Parr's latest work? At the Rocket Gallery, 13 Old Burlington Street, London W1 until 18 May. Details 020 7434 3043.

## Northern

**Developing the Communities of Tomorrow: Sustainability and Housing Regeneration in the North of England** Tuesday 14 May. A CIEF conference at the Earth Centre, Doncaster. Details [www.ciria.org.uk](http://www.ciria.org.uk)

## North West

**Christophe Egret (Alsop Architects)** Thursday 25 April, 19.30. A lecture at the Foster Building, University of Central Lancashire, Preston. Details Doug Chadwick 01254 59835.

**Rendering the Unseen: Art & Architecture in Japan** Until 31 May. An exhibition at the Holden Gallery, Manchester Metropolitan University. Details 0161 247 1911.

**A Matter of Art: Contemporary Architecture in Switzerland** Until 31 May. An exhibition at the Cube Gallery, Manchester. Details 0161 237 5525.

## South Eastern

**Cleaning Masonry Buildings** 21-24 May. A building conservation masterclass at West Dean College, West Dean, near Chichester. Details 01243 811301.

**RIBA CPD Event: Planning Update** Thursday 23 May, 16.00. At Gatwick Le Meridien Hotel. Details 01892 515878.

**Building the Homes of Tomorrow** Tuesday 28 May. A CIEF conference at the County Hall, Maidstone, Kent. Details fax 020 7222 0445.

## Southern

**Will Alsop** Wednesday 1 May, 19.30. A lecture at the Nightingale Building, Southampton University. Details 023 8059 7707.

**Edward Jones** Thursday 2 May, 18.00. A lecture at the School of Architecture, Oxford Brookes University. Details 01865 483200.

**Bryan Avery** Thursday 2 May, 18.00. A lecture at the Portland Building, Portsmouth School of Architecture. Details 02392 842086.

**Arne Jacobsen** Until 23 June. An exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art, Pembroke St, Oxford. Details 01865 813830.

## South West

**Urban Plymouth: Regeneration with Inspiration** Thursday 2 May. A conference at Plymouth, with speakers including Lord Rogers. Details 01752 233304.

## Wessex

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

**Regeneration Through Conservation: Reviving Our Urban Communities** Friday 24 May. A conference at The Watershed, Bristol. Details Charlie Bisnar 01732 220151.

**The Rough and the Smooth** Until 31 May. An exhibition on earth as a building material. At the Architecture Centre, Narrow Quay, Bristol. Details 0117 922 1540.

## West Midlands

**Which Contract? (Refurbishment and Small Works Projects)** Thursday 9 May. A Construction Study Centre course at Birmingham. Details 0121 434 3337.

**Office Manager Health & Safety Course; Designers and the New Approved Code of Practice for CDM** Wednesday 15 May. Two RIBA courses at Stoke-on-Trent. Details 0121 233 2321.

## Yorkshire

**Tania Kovats/Richard Devereux** Until 12 May. Two exhibitions at the Yorkshire Sculpture Park, West Bretton. Details 01924 830302.

**Project Extranets** Wednesday 15 May. A one-day EMAP Construction conference at the Hilton, Leeds. Details Joanne Head 020 7505 6745.  
**Richard Wilson** Until 1 June. A retrospective exhibition of Wilson's installations at Leeds Metropolitan University Gallery, Leeds. Details 020 8858 2379.

## Scotland

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

**Ruth Vollmer** Until 5 May. Sculpture and drawings at Inverleith House, Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh. Details 0131 248 2983.

**Improving Construction Site Communication** Thursday 9 May. A BRE workshop at Glasgow. Details Alastair Stupart 01355 576244.

**India of Inchinan** Until 26 May. An exhibition at The Lighthouse, Glasgow. Details 0141 225 8414.

## Wales

**Wendy James (Studio Libeskind)** Thursday 25 April, 19.30. A lecture at Faenol Fawr Hotel, Bodelwyddan, St Asaph. Details 01745 815600.

**RSAP Spring School: Design-Led Regeneration** Friday 17 May. At Portmeirion. Details 029 2087 4753.  
**Piranesi's Sublime Dreams** Until 4 June. An exhibition at the National Museum & Gallery of Wales, Cathays Park, Cardiff. Details 02920 397951.



## people & practices

The Parr Partnership has promoted **Kevin Cooper**, **Mark Fresson** and **Derek Reid** to partner. **Bryan Munford** and **Brian O'Donnell** have also been appointed as associates at the Glasgow office.

**Trevor Hewett** has set up his own practice, **Trevor Hewett Architects**, at 25 Castle Street, Hereford HR1 2NW, tel 01432 360938, e-mail trevor@hewett-architects.co.uk

**Gary Taylor** has joined **HOK International** as senior project manager.

**Broadway Malyan Manchester** has moved to Bass Warehouse, Castle Street, Castlefield, Manchester, M3 4LZ, tel 0161 819 2277.

**Dr Stephen Garvin** has been appointed director of **BRE Scotland**.

**CERAM** has appointed **Dr Andrew Smith** as research manager in the Building Technology Division.

The Bishopsbridge Limited Partnership has appointed **Alison Shields** as executive director. She will work closely with **Insignia Richard Ellis**, which has been retained to advise on all property management matters.

**Roger McDermott** has joined management consultants **Michael Rigby Associates**.

**Drivers Jonas** has appointed **Mathew R D Evans-Pollard** to the position of senior surveyor within the Corporate Sector Development team headed by **Clive Pane**.

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



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<b>Farnham</b> Experienced Architectural Technicians are required to work in this expanding busy design led architectural practice. You will need to possess a thorough understanding of construction and construction detailing, Autocad skills, and a knowledge of the residential sector would also be a benefit. Although these are long term positions, applications are also invited from contract or temporary/candidates. Ref: MR685A	<b>York</b> This multi-disciplinary practice involved in a number of varied work types are looking for experienced Technicians and Assistants to work on a range of recently awarded projects. Good communication skills, autocad knowledge and an aptitude for technical/traditional construction details would all be a benefit. These are long term permanent positions, although contract staff will also be considered. Ref: MR682A	<b>Ramsgate (E. Kent)</b> Do you have space planning experience, good computer skills including CAD & EXCEL, and live in East Kent? YES, then this small design and facilities management department have a rare vacancy due to maternity leave that will be of interest. Although initially on a 6/7 month contract basis there is a strong possibility that this position will be permanent for the right person. Ref: MR672A
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<b>Eastbourne/Brighton</b> These two award winning practices involved in the leisure educational, retail and residential sectors are looking for additional members of staff. You will need to have good communication skills, good Autocad, be technically competent and be able to fit into a small team. Applications are invited from both permanent and contract staff. Ref: MR683A		



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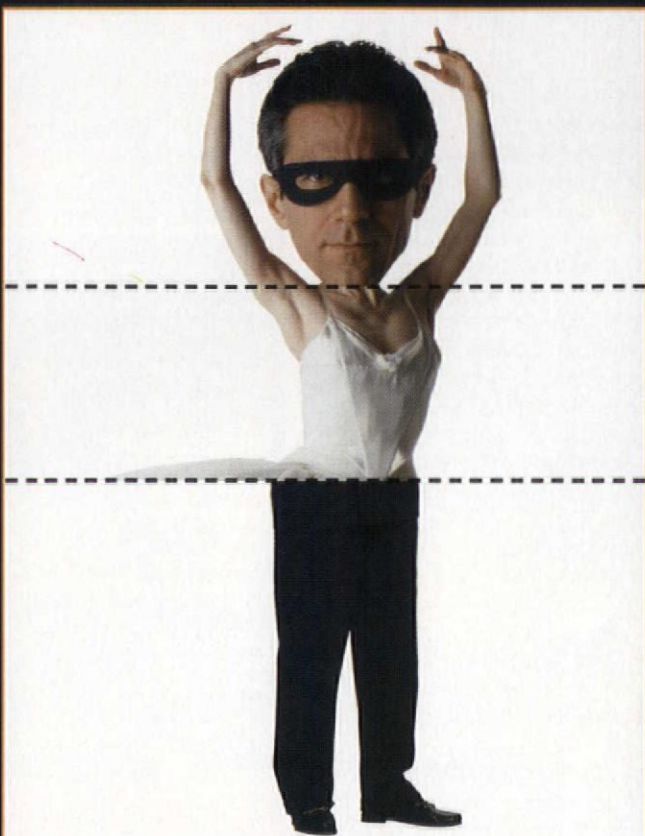
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Details are available from the RIBA Competitions Office, 6 Melbourne Street, Leeds LS2 7PS, tel 0113 234 1335, fax 0113 246 0744, e-mail [riba.competitions@mail.riba.org](mailto:riba.competitions@mail.riba.org)

### PAVILION, PLYMOUTH

Redevelopment of Armada Way including a unique 'pavilion' to provide a food and drink facility as well as remodelling of the existing landscape. Interest is sought from teams capable of producing designs that demonstrate contemporary innovation, high design standards and commercial viability. Deadline 11.6.02.

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### INTEGRATED CARE CENTRE

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### OTHERS

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



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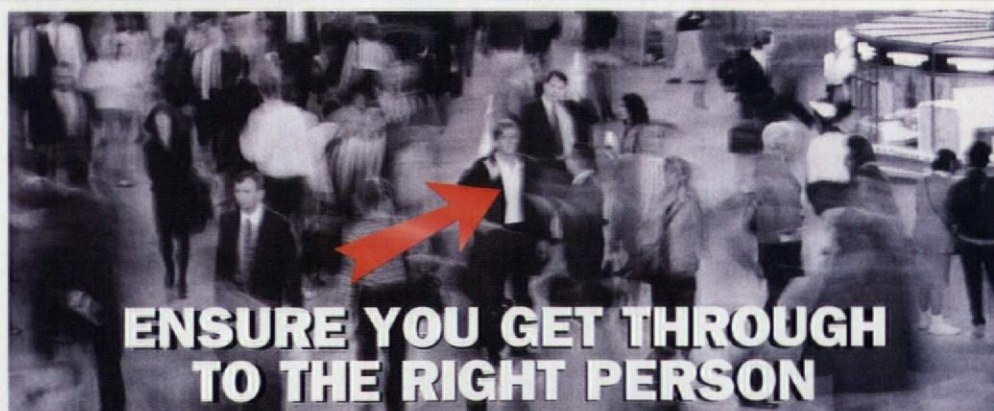
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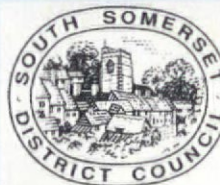
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Application forms and job descriptions are available from the Personnel & Facilities Management Unit, South Somerset District Council, The Council Offices, Brympton Way, Yeovil, Somerset BA20 2HT. Tel: Yeovil (01935) 462153 (24hr answerphone) or Yeovil 462155/462583 if you require further details. Alternatively visit our web page under the SSDC vacancies section. Job Ref: NW/264

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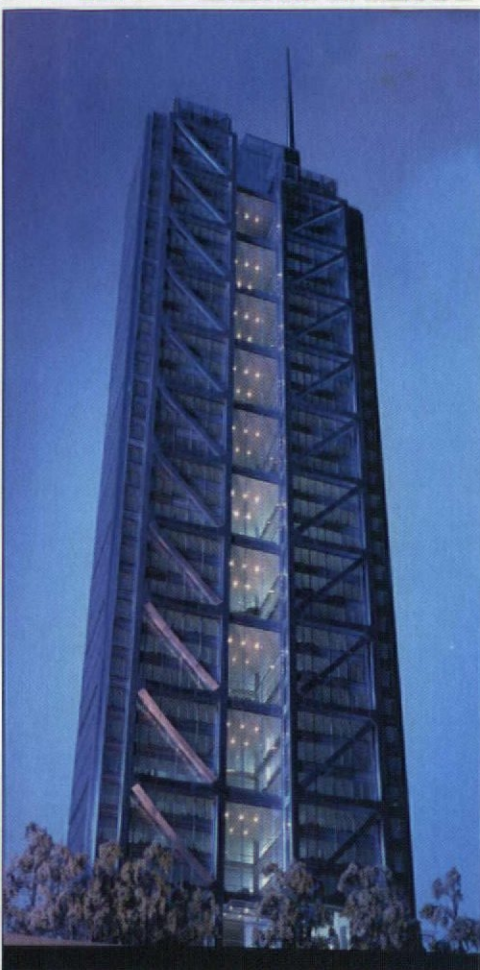
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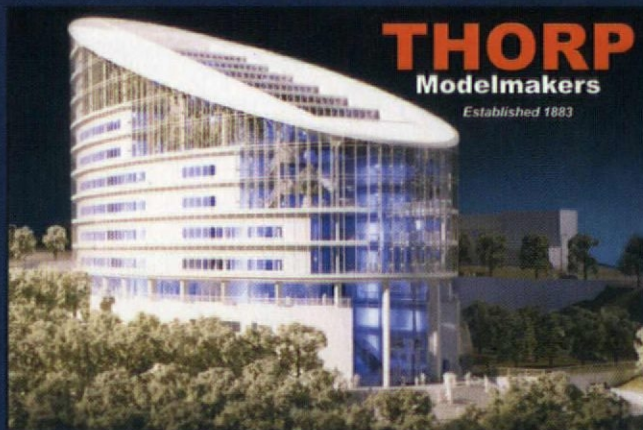
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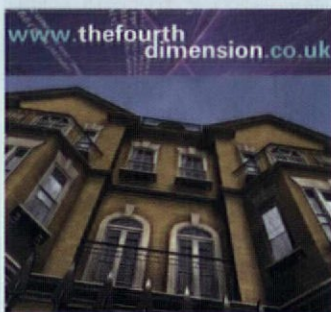
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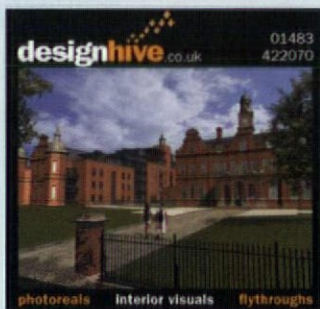
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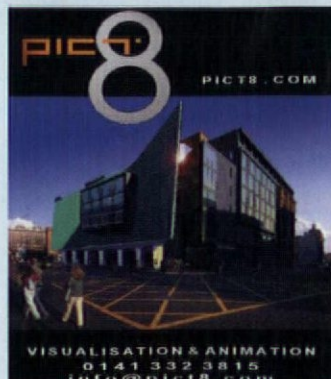


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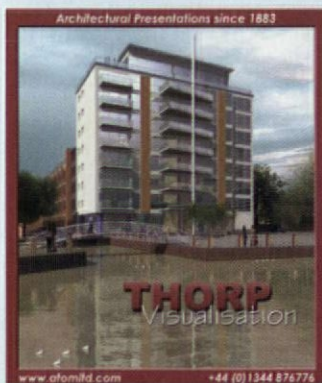
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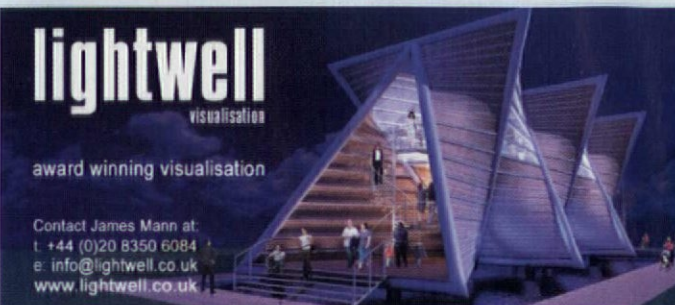
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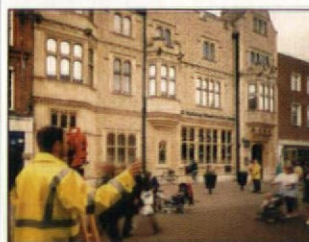
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## archicharades



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

### Purple haze

**R**IBA residential candidate **George Ferguson** has sometimes been criticised for his 'comedy trousers', which come in a startling shade of red. There is only one person in architecture who can really handle the colour, and that is Mike Davies of Richard Rogers Partnership, who gets away with it because his entire outfit is red, not just the trousers. However, endorsement of the Ferguson strides has come from an unlikely source: the **Rt Rev and Rt Hon Richard Chartres**, Bishop of London and candidate for the Archbishopric of Canterbury. He was speaking at the annual dinner of the Worshipful Company of Chartered Architects in the Mansion House, and a jolly good speech it was too. Apart from anything else, he claimed an alter ego had been seen working as a barman in the Abbots Castle pub, Hatton Garden, causing some confusion among his flock. He praised Ferguson's trousers, which looked particularly splendid as part of his formal dinner apparel. However, the bishop did express the view that 'purple is the colour of the future'.

### City habits

**T**he whole business of livery company dinners is redolent with history, even for those which are of recent origin – architects were given livery status in 1988. The dinner included the 'loving cup', and the people involved have the usual arcane titles, ranging from the Dennis Wheatley-esque

'Master', present incumbent **Michael West**, to various wardens, chief of which is the Upper Warden, currently the AJ planning correspondent **Brian Waters**, who will be the next Master. A nice innovation this year was the presentation of the company's New City Architecture award, which it runs in conjunction with the City Heritage Society. This year's award went to 60 Queen Victoria Street (architect **Foggo Associates**, client the Heron Group, contractor McAlpine), with a commendation – made for the first time because of its quality – to the Merrill Lynch headquarters on Newgate Street (architect **Swanke Hayden Connell**, client the bank, contractor Mace).

### Going dotty

**D**oubtless readers have been scrutinising candidates' statements for the RIBA elections. For some reason, several of the texts end mid-sentence with a row of dots... Astragal deduced that they were given a fixed number of words, overran it, and were simply cut at the relevant point, presumably without anyone asking them to do an edit so it made sense. This was confirmed in a letter to the AJ from **Annette Fisher** last week. As a voter, I wonder: Do I want free-thinking candidates who are prepared to bend the rules, in the heroic spirit of Le Corbusier's entry for the League of Nations competition? Or do I want candidates who are capable of understanding simple instructions, and/or of operating

the word count function on their computers? A laconic independent would be nice, but that doesn't seem to be an option.

### Snobbery goes on

**A**ttacks on **Lord Foster** continue apace following the controversy set off by **Rowan Moore**. This time it is the *Guardian* with the familiar mantra – used to be great, now too big, too many commercial buildings, developer's architect etc. As usual, **Stephen Bayley** is both witty and abusive simultaneously, describing the current output as 'slick and splashy'. He quotes Braque's remark to Picasso: 'You used to be a great artist, but now you're just a genius.' The *Guardian* report says Astragal 'fumed' over the Rowan Moore piece; not so. I repeat: most of the criticism levelled at Foster is because in snobby, cultural apartheid Britain, offices have the mark of Cain on them, and anyone who designs them is eternally tainted. The critics just cannot stand the idea that good-quality architecture should be for ordinary people in the workplace. It is only supposed to happen in cultural buildings for people like them, you see. Like Cambridge Colleges or (preferably) Venice, or any museums or gallery. This column declines to support the 18th century.

### Any questions?

**T**he RIBA has gone Dimpleby mad. Not content with president Paul Hyett's appearance on **Jonathan Dimpleby's Any Questions?** radio programme last week, the institute is hoping to stage an

edition of the show (Astragal suggested doing this only last week), probably in the Jarvis hall (less than half a mile from the BBC's Broadcasting House). The institute is busy filling out the forms required. Of course, J Dimpleby is giving the inaugural annual lecture on 1 May. A small party from the RIBA visited him at his Notting Hill home last week to run over a few things. Sustainability is on his talk agenda, and it is likely to be 'challenging'. There are 130 tickets available to the public on a first come, first served basis. Tickets cost £15 and can be reserved by calling 020 7307 3699.

### Swiss role

**T**he Foster gherkin tower – perhaps a more appropriate analogy would be to a barbershop sign, with its swirling, spiralling curvilinear appearance – prides itself on its sustainability. As usual with low-energy commitments, many of the materials used were sourced from far and wide across the continent. There's the glass from Austria, assembled in Switzerland, lifts from Finland, and steel from the low countries. At least the concrete was from the UK. Sadly, however, this last was the only thing that didn't arrive on time.

### Critic watch

**I**ncidentally, is **Stephen Bayley** the kiss of death? No sooner does he pen a huge paean of praise for **Gio Ponti** and all his works in a Sunday newspaper, than some idiot crashes a plane into the Pirelli Tower. What's he writing about this week?

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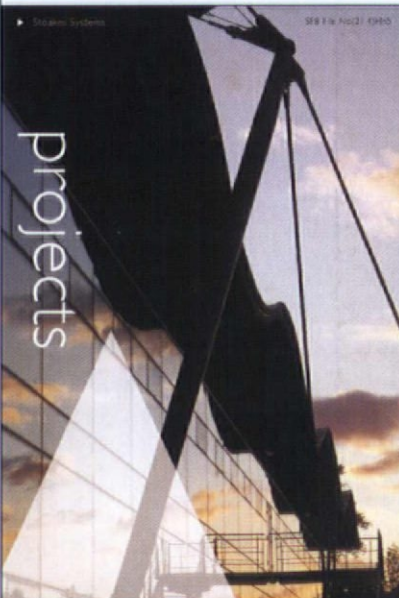
## HANSENGROUP PRESTIGE CONTRACT 52 AJ ENQUIRY NO: 202



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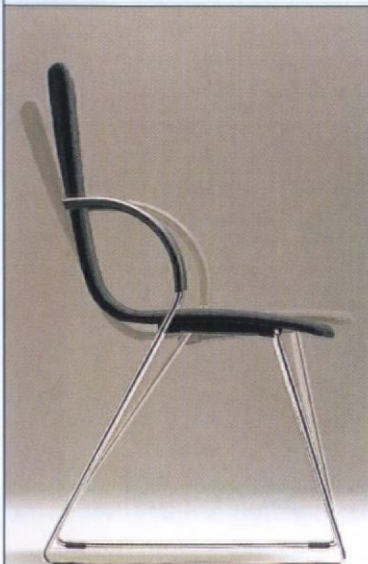
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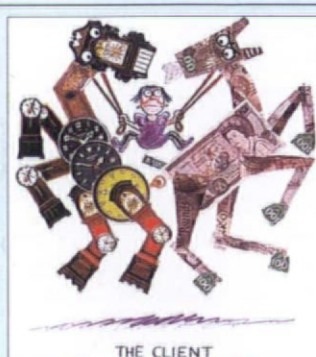
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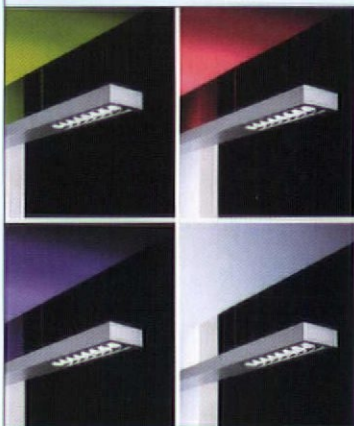
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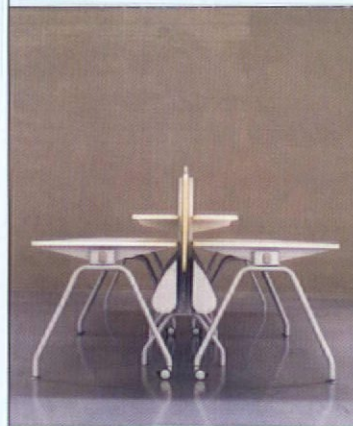
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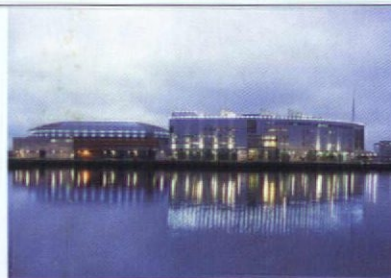
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The Invisible Switch from Forbes & Lomax has a flush-to-the-wall acrylic face plate, allowing the wallpaper or paint finish to show through. Pictured here are the brass and bronze dolly switch, steel and nickel-silver button dimmer controller and the brass or steel dimmer switch. Invisible sockets complement the range. Tel 020 7738 0202.



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