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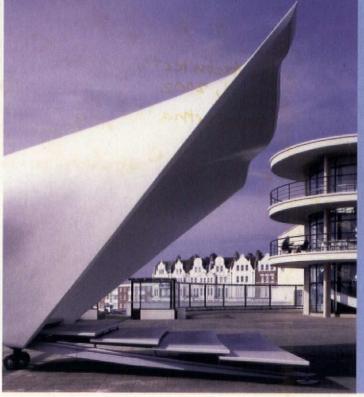


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Niall McLaughlin Architects' RIBA award-winning bandstand at the De La Warr Pavilion in Bexhill is the subject of our working detail on page 34, while McLaughlin is profiled on page 22. The award, one of 58 which are searchable on our website at ajplus.co.uk along with the judges' reports, was for 'a small project of remarkable quality that manages to enhance the setting of Mendelsohn and bandstand, the judges said, was an inspirational commission which involved wide consultation with the local community - a collaborative approach which underpins much of McLaughlin's work.

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'To be honest, I don't care about visitor numbers: I care about the experience they get, and I hope they have it over and over again.'

Baltic director Sune Nordgren. Times, 3.7.02

'People should not have schemes foisted on them that promise more traffic blight and pollution in already heavily polluted areas, and are more likely to help commuters from Kent than London's East End.'

Jennifer Bates of Greenwich Friends of the Earth on the London plan. *Guardian*, 3.7.02



#### CENTRE BOWLS 'EM OVER

The indoor cricket centre at Edgbaston, Birmingham, designed by David Morley Architects with Bryant Priest Newman, has won the top prize in the 12th Colorcoat Building Awards. The judges praised the building for its oversailing roof. For full details of the awards, see our eight-page supplement in this issue.

#### LONDON EYE SET TO STAY PUT

The London Eye is set to be granted extended permission to remain on the South Bank. The London Borough of Lambeth's planning department is expected to recommend that the London landmark remain for 35 more years.

#### DR LIBESKIND, I PRESUME

The University of Edinburgh has awarded Daniel Libeskind an honorary doctorate in social sciences. His citation included his work on the Jewish Museum in Berlin.

#### PLUG PULLED ON BRISTOL SPA

Quentin Alder Architect's controversial plans to convert the Grade II-listed Whiteladies Cinema in Bristol into a health farm and spa have been rejected by Bristol City Council. The council's planning committee cited the danger that a sauna and swimming pool would trigger damaging humidity levels.

#### STUDENT HOTEL DESIGN CALL

The European Hotel Design Awards have called for entries for the Rearden Smith Student Award for Hotel Architecture, to be held on 29 October. For further details call Conrad Smith on 020 7378 6006.

For the best jobs in architecture turn to page 49 or visit www.careersin construction.com



Nicholas Grimshaw & Partners has won a competition to design the new £156 million Southern Cross Station in Melbourne, Australia. The scheme will transform the existing Spencer Street Station into a world-class transport interchange. It will upgrade station facilities, incorporate a new coach and bus terminal and taxi rank, and provide retail and office accommodation in pods that lie above the main public concourse. Other improvements

# CIC reveals new design 'language'

The Construction Industry Council has revealed its Design Quality Indicators – a measurement system to assess good design – hailing it a new 'language' for the construction industry to talk about design.

Government has thrown its weight behind the DQIs – developed over the past two years with the backing of the DTI and CABE – which will now be used on all government spending departments' building projects.

The CIC has invited 100 designers, contractors and clients to take part in an initial 'trailblazing' scheme. For a cost of £300, the chosen 100 will be allowed to use the measurement system on up to six projects.

Ex-planning minister Lord Falconer outlined the government's support: 'Government is already piloting adapted versions of the DQI toolkit, and the emerging findings have convinced me that the DQIs have the potential to become a key stage in a broad swathe of public sector construction projects and in the pursuit of improved design standards.'

But RIBA president Paul Hyett expressed the worries of the design community that there was a danger that the measurement system could become 'the bottom line'.

Sunand Prasad, CABE commissioner and one of the team developing the DQIs, rejected fears. 'All systems are open to abuse,' he said, 'but I am confident they can only help the process.'

They will not demystify design and reduce it to a box-ticking exercise, he said. 'Demystification is an overused word. We need to put mysteries in context.'

Those who believe in design must take on responsibility for the measures, he argued, rather than allow others to impose their own standards.

Prasad added that he anticipated the DQIs would soon be taken on across the industry and would become a normal way of talking about buildings. 'But it shouldn't become a cosh to beat people over the head with,' he said.

DQIs will focus on the building produced, as opposed to the emphasis given to the process by the Egan Report and the Rethinking Construction movement that has followed it.

The questionaires, intended to be used by all members of the construction team at all stages of a project, contain a set of statements organised into three categories – functionality, build quality and impact. Participants are asked to respond whether they agree or disagree with the statements. Questions asked range from the more practical – whether the building weathers well and whether it is easy to clean – to the more esoteric – if it lifts the spirit and if people like visiting it.

The one-year pilot will be used to develop the DQIs, after which the CIC will be encouraging all within the construction industry to take them up.

Zoë Blackler

'The one glaring legacy industrial Britain has left the 21st century is spare land, hundreds of thousands of acres of it. Go up in a helicopter, Mr Prescott. See it.

Simon lenkins on how to meet our projected housing needs. Times, 3.7.02

'Frank is parading right now, and so are all these mouthpiece critics that, you know, support him as "The Artist". Hogwash! Don't believe it.'

Richard Serra on Frank Gehry. New York

'Rogers comes across as less arrogant than a typical architect, but he's still an architect.'

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transparent, is housed under a single roof space, making the entire interchange visible from every entrance.

### Blair boosts public buildings education must try harder

Prime minister Tony Blair has given a boost to public buildings, and the PFI as a way of procuring them, by revealing a shortlist for his Better Public Buildings Award and backing a series of action plans from government departments setting out how they will raise their standards, writes David Taylor.

But the Department for Education and Skills and the Treasury have let the Whitehall side down by failing to produce plans. The new transport department and Office of the Deputy Prime Minister have also yet to produce plans, though one from the old Department of Transport, Local Government and the Regions was ready to roll before the reshuffle.

Blair released his shortlist for the award last week, the winner of which will be announced as part of the AJ-backed British Construction Industry Awards on 23 October. The award, jointly sponsored by CABE and the Office of Government Commerce, attracted 65 entries, including the £229 million PFI Norfolk hospital by Anshen Dyer.

Blair said: 'Quality design is essential in ensuring the long-term success and sustainability of community-based buildings, such as doctor's surgeries and schools... These are the projects that really matter to most people, most of the time.'

The education department and the Treasury failed to publish plans in time for the launch last week at Tate Modern, although education said it aims to get the guidance ready by the autumn. The plans set out how each department will aim to put design first in its decisions about estate. In the Department for Work and Pension's case, that means an expenditure of more than £500 million per year, with design champion Malcolm Wicks intending to 'vigorously oversee' its implementation. The health document, with a foreword by Prince Charles, reveals more than 100 new hospitals will be built by 2010, 500 one-stop primary care centres inside two years, and up to 3,000 doctors' premises built, replaced or refurbished in the same period.

The action plans are published online at www.betterpublicbuildings.gov.uk

The Better Public Buildings Award shortlist is: • the City Learning Centre, Bristol (Whicheloe

- Macfarlane MDP);
- · Conference Centre and Welcome Hall, Earth Centre, Doncaster (Bill Dunster Architects);
- Gateshead Millennium Bridge (Wilkinson Eyre Architects);
- Memorial Gardens, Peel Centre, Hendon, London (Churchman Associates);
- Juniper House, King's Lynn (Jeremy Stacey Architects);
- Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital, Norfolk (Anshen Dyer);
- Tamar Bridge strengthening and widening, Plymouth (Hyder Consulting); and
- Persistence Works, Sheffield (Feilden Clegg Bradley).

See editorial, page 20 🔾

#### ADJAYE LANDS NOBEL PRIZE

David Adjaye has won a commission to prepare a feasibility study for the new Nobel Centre in Oslo. The building will house an archive for the institution, a series of changing exhibitions, conference rooms and a ceremonial space for the presentation of laureates. The key site is in the port area Vestbahen, which is part of a wider area masterplanned by Rem Koolhaas' practice, OMA.

## PLAYING FIELD RESTRICTIONS

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is drawing up plans to restrict the development of school playing fields. The regulation change - expected to go through Parliament before the summer recess - will demand local authorities carry out a 'usage audit' to assess future demand for a field before making a planning application decision.

#### UPGRADE FOR ARTS BUILDING Levitt Bernstein has won a competition for the upgrade and extension of the Artsadmin building in London's East End for the arts agency. The scheme will increase and develop the rehearsal studio space, while a

rooftop dance space and ground floor cafeteria will also be built.

... of voters in a poll on the AJ's website think the housing price bubble is about to burst Respondents:82

This week's question: Which building should win the Prime Minister's Better Public **Building Award?** 

Register your view at www.ajplus.co.uk

# Abundance of quality in this year's RA awards

The judges for this year's AJ/Bovis Royal Academy Architecture Awards were very impressed by the general standard of exhibits in this year's summer show. The room was nicely hung and the height at which the many models were shown worked well. As usual, we followed a simple procedure: the judges walked the room individually, then collectively to establish a list of potential winners, and then once more to agree on winners and commendations.

This year, the judges comprised John Spanswick of Bovis, Will Alsop representing the RA, Isabel Allen representing the AJ, and Graham Stirk of Richard Rogers Partnership (last year's winner). The group was chaired by your correspondent.

The entries this year included material from two invited architects – Frank Gehry and Massimiliano Fuksas, which the judges admired but did

not take into account in the awards selection. Various other international stars were represented, including Richard Rogers Partnership, whose Torre Espacio in Madrid impressed, and Foster and Partners, whose entries this year were both for new city academies. There were good entries from academicians including Ted Cullinan, Ian Ritchie, Richard MacCormac and Michael Manser.

Striking models included a large-scale version of KPF's Heron Tower, and the Manchester Stadium by Arup Associates. Two models won commendations in the main prize category for the best work in the show: Christian Spencer-Davies of A Models, several of whose pieces were exhibited this year, won a commendation for an exquisite tiny metal model of Will Alsop's Rotterdam masterplan. And it was a model of a family house in Bavaria, also by Alsop, which won another commendation



Birds Portchmouth Russum's model of its competition entry for the Bellmouth Bridges in Docklands took the prize for best work in the show

by unanimous agreement of the jury, excluding the architect himself!
 In the first-time exhibitor category, a commendation was awarded to
 John Avery's project for a theatre at Piccadilly Circus, a bravura piece of design very well presented.

Models won the two main prizes. The first, for the best piece of work in the show – worth £10,000 – went to Birds Portchmouth Russum (BPR) for its competition entry for the Bellmouth Bridges in Docklands (Eva Jiricna also exhibited a striking entry for the same competition).

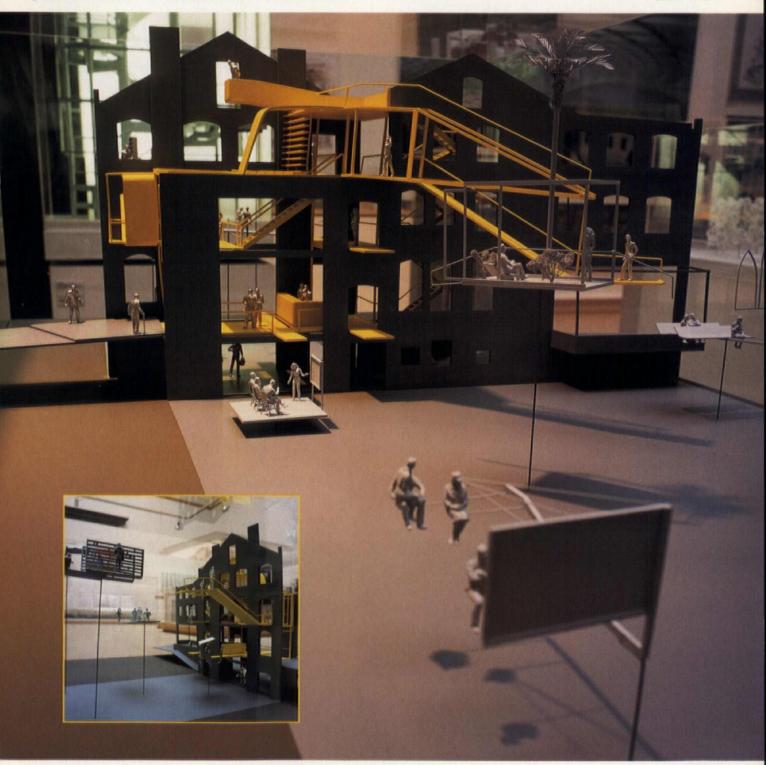
The design is a swing bridge in which a lower level, including a cafe, moves as the entire bridge opens. The model has other visual information printed onto the plinth, making it an excellent combination of design and presentation that would give one confidence in the finished product. The engineer was Matthew Wells of Techniker. BPR has become well-known

for its bridge designs, following the successful one for a school in Newham, east London, completed two years ago and also engineered by Techniker.

In the first-time category, the award went to the delightful Village Strategy Model, St Luke's, London, by Springett Mackay Architecture, a relatively new firm operating from London. The model suggests uses and activities at a variety of ground planes, and provides relief from the more serious models of real buildings surrounding it.

Given the high standard of the work selected for display, the only disappointment is that architecture continues to be shown in one of the more obscure rooms. It would be better if it could go back to its old prefire home behind the octagon. We shall see.

Paul Finch



Springett Mackay Architecture took the award in the first-time category for its Village Strategy Model for St Luke's, London



The RIBA has acquired the 1962 model of Basil Spence's seminal British Embassy building in Rome. The model (pictured), commissioned while Spence was RIBA president, will be on show at the new V&A gallery. Spence expert professor Brian Edwards said the model was 'priceless' and that it would now be given the care and attention it deserved.

FERGUSON ELECTION REFORM RIBA president-elect George Ferguson is to lead a review of the presidential election process and has spelt out that commercial sponsorship of candidates will not be allowed. The 'rule of engagement' - to be heard at RIBA council on 17 July - is a direct reference to Ferguson's chief rival in the election, Annette Fisher, who attempted to campaign using funds from companies. Suggested reforms include nominations coming from at least half of the regions and no more than half from any one region, and Internet voting.

#### **OLYMPIC VILLAGE COMP**

Messe Frankfurt and the Chinese University of Hong Kong have launched a student competition for the design of information/hospitality stations at the Olympic Village in Beijing for the 2008 games. The winner will be announced at the 'Arena 2002 – International Exhibition for the Design, Construction and Maintenance of Sports Venues', to be held on 13-14 November at the Beijing Exhibition Centre. Visit www.bciasia.com

#### ROYAL DOCKS APPROVAL

Jestico + Whiles' £80 million regeneration scheme at the Royal Docks in London's East End has won approval from Newham council. The scheme includes the refurbishment of a hotel, a new marina, and a 444-apartment complex with 88 affordable homes.

DLG SETS SIGHTS ON SURREY DLG Architects has won a competition to develop a 2.4ha site in Camberley, Surrey. The £45 million leisure scheme includes a cinema, fitness centre, bowling alley and a wide range of restaurants.

# Lord Rogers demands urgent action on urban regeneration

Lord Rogers has unveiled a 10-point action plan designed to 'galvanise' the massive reforms required to regenerate England's inner cities.

In the first session of the reconvened Urban Task Force, the Labour peer called on the government to 'act now' if it is to solve social exclusion and trigger the urgently needed urban regeneration.

In a speech at the session, which took place at a conference sponsored by *The Observer* newspaper on Tuesday, Rogers claimed the government's commitment to regeneration has slowed since 'Towards an Urban Renaissance' – the findings of the first task force.

The new task force, of which Rogers is chair, will be assessing government progress since the report. Rogers said: 'We require a clear commitment to long-term action by the government. We need a step change in the speed of delivery. We need to establish what can be achieved in the next two years, in the next five years and in the next 20 years.'

Rogers' 10 priorities for action include: a comprehensive action plan based on the 2000 Urban White Paper; increased power to local authorities; an increased institutional framework at regional level; greater use of public money to improve public spaces; a national advice and learning programme; fiscal incentives to encourage investment; and the prioritising of housing as the most urgent area for change.

'It is time the government built on the Urban White Paper and made urban renaissance a reality,' Rogers said. 'A housing-led urban renaissance focusing on brownfield sites and transport hubs is still our greatest challenge and our greatest opportunity. We need action, carefully tailored to local needs and local circumstances on regional and local levels.'

And he added: 'We do not have time to delay, or the leisure to concentrate on individual problems like the state of our rail system or our health service, to the exclusion of more complex issues of integrated urban renaissance.'

The Observer conference convened in London to discuss the way ahead for the government's urban regeneration policy. Also speaking were CABE's chief executive Jon Rouse, the economic secretary to the Treasury John Healey, the parliamentary under secretary of state for housing, planning and regeneration Tony McNulty, and the

head of housing at the London School of Economics Professor Anne Power.

Ed Dorrell

#### Surrey man charged with Brixton architect's murder

A Surrey contracts manager has been charged with the murder of a 41-year-old Brixton-based architect, who died last week. Kim Grant was taken to the East Surrey Hospital in the early hours of Saturday 29 June following a 'domestic incident' at Kevin Gibbens' home in Horley. She was discharged later that day but her condition worsened and after returning to south London she was admitted to King's College Hospital. She died on Tuesday 2 July.

Gibbens was arrested and charged with Grant's murder at East Reigate Police Station, where he was held until his hearing at South East Surrey Magistrates' Court on 4 July. Gibbens was remanded in custody pending a trial on 11 July at the Old Bailey.

Detective Chief Inspector Jonathan Johncox of Surrey Police, encouraged anyone who had been in the Horley area at the time to come forward.

• See letters, page 20.

#### Prince of Wales gives support to historic buildings scheme

The Prince of Wales has given his backing to a new campaign to get local communities involved in rescuing historic buildings.

The 'Revive to Regenerate' scheme – launched by the Architectural Heritage Fund – aims to champion the idea that saving local buildings is an effective method of triggering local regeneration.

The Prince's plea follows his comments on the Bishopsgate Goodsyard, when he called for an end to plans to demolish the building (AJ 2.5.02).

'This is not about the preservation of ancient buildings for preservation's sake,' the Prince said at the scheme's launch. 'It is about finding new uses for much-loved buildings – often community uses. The important thing is that these buildings remain used and loved, and part of the community.'

Arts minister Baroness Blackstone agreed that the process of preserving and then using old buildings often leads to an improved economic outlook. She told the launch: 'This scheme plays a valuable role, not only in the conservation of the historic environment, but also in enabling local communities and voluntary organisations to take part in the regeneration of their neighbourhoods.'



Toyo Ito has joined forces with Arup to design this year's summer pavilion on the lawns of the Serpentine Gallery in London's Kensington Gardens. Painted white steel sheets were welded together to create the main structure – the design of which is based on an algorithm. The shapes created in the roof and walls are filled alternately with glass and white aluminium panels. The pavilion opens on 12 July. For further details call 020 7298 1515.

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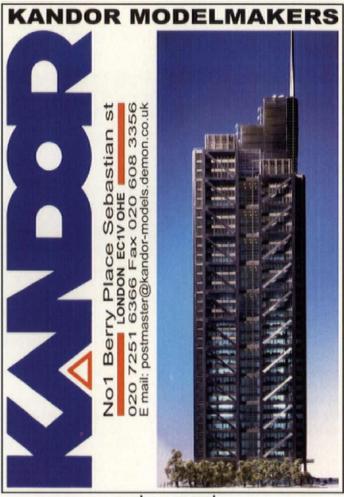
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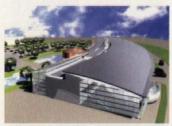
#### CONSENSUS OVER COURSES

The ARB and the RIBA have come to an agreement over procedures for the validation of architecture courses. The RIBA will run a new visiting board system that will validate courses without the input of the ARB. However, the ARB will require schools to provide evidence that their courses are of sufficient quality. The RIBA, which will now maintain a direct relationship with the schools, has agreed to create a modern system of peer review. RIBA president Paul Hyett said: 'Once again we are free to liaise with schools directly over the contents of their exams and the appropriateness of their courses.

GLA HOME GETS ROYAL VISIT The Queen will officially open Foster and Partners' new building for the GLA, City Hall, on 23 July. The building opens to the public on 15 July.

#### CABEGETS NEW DIRECTOR

CABE has appointed Chris Murray as its new director of partner-ships. Murray currently heads up the local authority cultural planning division at Milton Keynes council and is author of Making Sense of Place: new approaches to place marketing.



Sheppard Robson has submitted a planning application for Phase 2 of the new £23 million Centre for Engineering and Manufacturing Excellence (pictured). The scheme – set on London Development Land in Dagenham – is the flagship project in the Heart of Thames Gateway regeneration strategy.

DULWICH LOTTERY WINDFALL
Dulwich Picture Gallery has
won a £48,600 National Lottery
grant to help develop its education work to break down social
exclusion around the built
environment. The money will
enable it to organise workshops
and projects for schools and
families, and lifelong learning
programmes to raise understanding of architecture.

# Landmark 1950s education buildings facing demolition



St Albans College (1958-60): an uncertain future

A group of landmark educational buildings from the 1950s are under threat of demolition. The former St Albans College of Further Education, produced by the Hertfordshire County Architects Department during its heyday, could be torn down to make way for a residential scheme.

Developer Fairview has applied for planning permission to clear the site and erect 309 one- and two-bedroom flats and eight houses.

But a group of concerned architects has launched a campaign and is lobbying St Albans council and the Department of Culture, Media and Sport to step in and save the buildings, which were awarded a Bronze Medal by the RIBA shortly after their completion.

Campaigner Philip Nellis claimed the 'pivotal' scheme was a fine example of the work of the Herts County Architects Department and of project architect John Wakely, 'who did a marvellous job'.

The group of pavilion blocks, set within a mature wooded landscape, were built using a durable light steel structure with a window walling system infilled with plastic-faced composite panels and areas of brick and timber cladding.

Sir Nikolaus Pevsner described them in 1977 as: 'Excellently grouped buildings of different heights, with skilful use of varying levels, surfaces and textures, proving that a system building does not have to be dull.'

St Albans planning authority is considering its recommendation.

Zoë Blackler

# Aedas plans to double London office after Brummie merger

Aedas AHR has continued its drive to become bigger and better by sealing a merger deal with Midlands-based practice TCN Architects. But it is not stopping there – revealing this week an ambitious programme to also double its 50-strong London office and create a high-design 'bureau' to help change its image.

Aedas AHR, which only formed a major strategic alliance with Australian giants LPT and Asia's Peddle Thorp in March, will now add TCN's 40 staff to its 800 global figure.

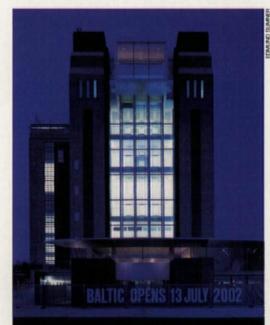
TCN was itself born from the merger in 1988 of Temple Cox Duncan, founded in 1970, and William Nicholls, which was set up in the early 1960s. And Aedas AHR has also resulted from past mergers and name changes – most recently from Abbey Holford Rowe – meaning the new rebranded outfit is experiencing rapid growth.

Aedas AHR chairman James Handley told the AJ he is hoping that Aedas TCN, as it will be called, can plug a hole both geographically – it has offices in Birmingham and Bristol – and sectorally in the Aedas empire. The firm said TCN's 'outstanding strength' lies in pharmaceutical work – mostly biotechs laboratories – along with strategic healthcare work, commercial, retail and industrial sectors.

'They've been looking for critical mass,' Handley said of TCN, 'and expertise in the London market and internationally. Now we're looking at the London work and want to increase the office in size and skills-wise. We want to double it in size inside two years.'

This could possibly come through Aedas buying up another practice, but Handley intends to push for high-end design of the sort the practice has not been known for hitherto by setting up a 'bureau'. 'It's a very ambitious programme and is all part of our improvement strategy,' he said.

Meanwhile, TCN's five directors, Roger Ingall, Tony Williams, Peter Chappell, Mike Walters and Dan Beddow, will remain as they are under the firm's new look, and the office is looking to compete more strongly in a 'buoyant' local market with larger practices in the region, armed with its new strength in depth. Recent wins for TCN include the job to design a new headquarters building in Birmingham for Marconi, before the communications company's financial problems meant it had to put the scheme on ice.

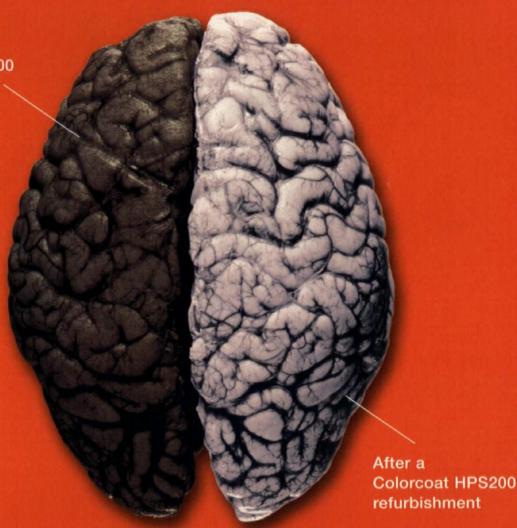


Ellis Williams Architects' £46 million Baltic Centre for Contemporary Arts in Gateshead will open on 13 July. The scheme – which began as a private project by Dominic Williams before he joined Ellis Williams – has restored the exterior of the 1950s grain mill and completely redeveloped the interior. The six-storey building now houses 3,000m' of flexible spaces including galleries, artist's studios, lecture spaces and a library. The scheme also adds a new glass restaurant to the roof of the main building. A new-build, two-storey building sits alongside it to provide the main entrance.

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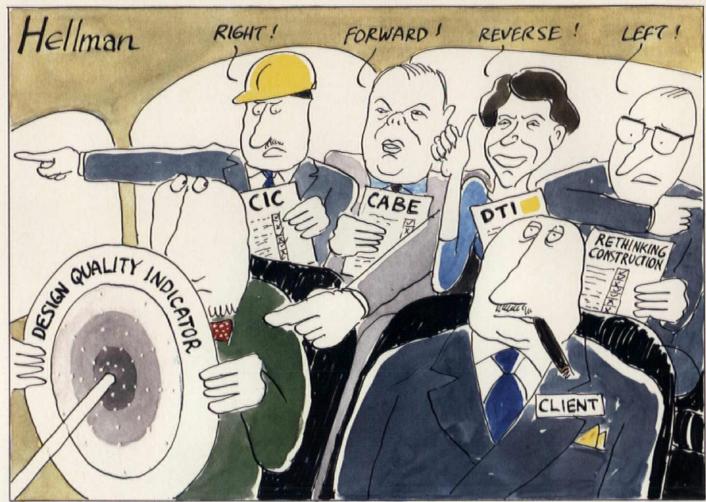
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### vital statistics

- Building tender prices are set to jump by 2.8 per cent in the next 12 months, according to forecasts by the consultancy firm E C Harris.
- Some 21 per cent more surveyors reported a rise in work in the past quarter than reported a drop, a Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors membership poll has claimed.
- Nearly 22,000 firms went bust in the first half of this year, up by 8.2 per cent on the same period in 2001, according to a new report from the business information company D&B.
- Some 70 per cent of office workers 'prefer' to stay at their desks during lunch and eat homemade sandwiches rather than go to a pub or restaurant or buy a sandwich, according to research by Abbey National.
- The earth's population will be forced to colonise two extra planets within 50 years if the current rate of resource exploitation continues, a WWF report has claimed.

## Clare Melhuish reviews...

# Hal Foster's search for new critical models

'No-brow' is the term Hal Foster uses to sum up contemporary culture – not an issue of dumbing-down intellectually, but rather one of wising-up to commercial culture. Foster describes the 'conflation of democracy with consumption' as a fantasy, 'complementary to the foundational myth of the US'. But, of course, we all get drawn into it. After all, Foster – himself a staunch academic and critic, by his own analysis 'banished from the field' as 'an obstruction' and replaced by curators and clients – was talking at the Institute of Contemporary Arts essentially to promote sales of his new book, Design and Crime (published by Verso).

One of the questions the debate focused on was whether we are victims of, or complicit in, this hegemony of consumption. But it came nowhere near even proposing an answer.

For architects and other designers, the particular concern must be that Foster points the finger of accusation specifically at design, as the partner of consumption crime. He maintains 'it abets a nearperfect circuit of production and consumption'. Everything is treated as design, to the extent that the commodity hardly exists as an object any longer, but more 'as a datum to be endlessly manipulated'.

Clearly, computer technology has provided the key to this new, post-Fordist world, where nothing has to be fixed any more in the realm of objects, and even buildings have a dramatically reduced life-expectancy. Foster asks: 'What can the criteria of architecture be in this situation?'

Foster develops the theme of the spectacle in his discourse, suggesting that architecture still 'has a loose centrality to cultural discourse', but that 'you have to have a big rock to make a big splash'. Hence the success of architects such as Gehry, who have made significant contributions to the 'corporate revival of the city... to make it safe for shopping, spectacle, and spacing-out'. But such projects are constituent parts of the new world of design which is 'all image', to the extent of being subjectless. These are 'experiences without the person who experiences them'.

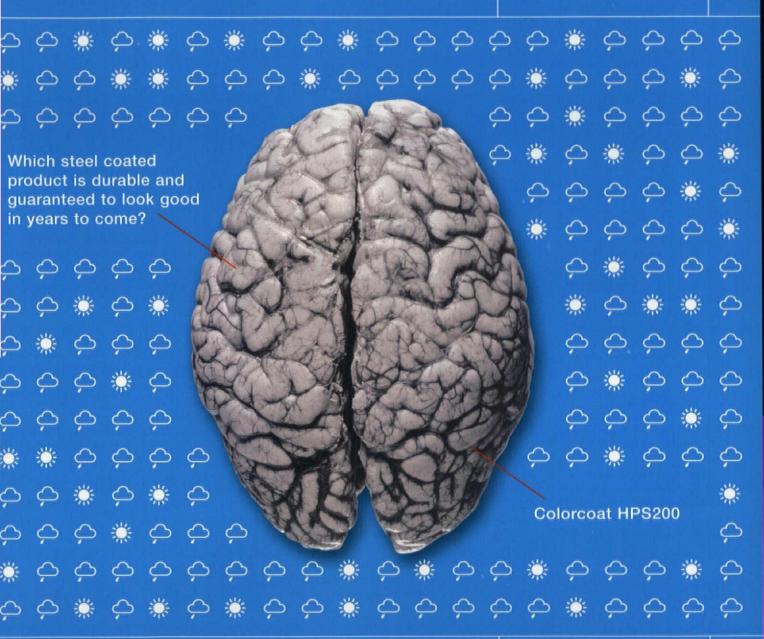
Foster is adamant that 'we need new critical models' to replace Post-Modernism and the new avant-garde, both of which have failed in their different ways, and that the role of the critic to inform and influence is vital to their development. The current marginalisation of the critic to the function of side-show in cultural matters 'needs to be challenged if it is not too late'.

But this implies an equal responsibility on the part of the critic – a resistance to being cast in, and living up to, the role of media pundit or showbiz host, and a willingness to stand up in favour of the intellectual and radical against the values promoted by an insidious, politically correct populism and commercialism pervading cultural and social life.

Hal Foster, speaking on 'Post-Modernism's Aftermath', was in conversation with Andrew Renton and Jonathan Glancey at the Institute of Contemporary Arts, London

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#### MAKING COMMUNITY GAINS

More community facilities can be achieved through planning gain, according to a new report commissioned by London mayor Ken Livingstone. 'Planning Obligations in London' explores the potential of planning obligations, set out in Section 106 agreements, to provide community benefits such as affordable housing, transport and environmental improvement and community facilities. The report found an increased use of agreements in the capital but called for a more consistent approach across the boroughs. Its findings will feed into the London Plan.

#### PLANNING PAPER ATTACKED

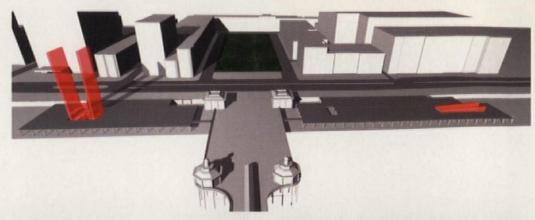
A House of Commons select committee has hit out at the government's Planning Green Paper. In a report published last week, the Town and Country Planning Select Committee concluded that the proposals 'will not for the most part achieve their key objectives of introducing greater speed, simplicity and certainty into the planning system'.

#### JACOBSEN'S PLATTFORM

An exhibition of the work of Arne Jacobsen will be held at The Plattform, the lower level at Saab's car showroom in London's Piccadilly, during August. For further details of the event, held to mark the 100th anniversary of Jacobsen's birth, visit www.the plattform.co.uk



Stock Woolstencroft's £25 million mixed-use Burford Wharf scheme in Stratford (above) has won planning permission from the London Borough of Newham. The project - designed for developer Holon - lies within a series of other regeneration schemes and comprises 58 live and work units, 62 residential properties, a retail component and a gym. The 0.51ha brownfield site is in the 'Stratford Arc of Opportunity', a special economic zone, and is situated near the proposed Burford Road Docklands Light Railway Station.





# Bennetts challenges KSS's designs for Brighton pier

Bennetts Associates is spearheading a campaign to halt KSS Sport and Leisure Design's proposed £34 million revamp of Brighton's historic West Pier.

KSS's plans have received harsh criticism from CABE, which called on the planning authorities to refuse the scheme in its current form (AJ 27.6.02).

Bennetts Associates, supported by local opposition group Save Our Seafront (SOS), is pushing for a reconsideration of its own proposals for the site. Its alternative scheme was one of a number of projects shortlisted in a competition in February 2000.

KSS's contested plan, for developer St Mowden, includes a number of buildings that rise two storeys above the Upper Esplanade. But Bennetts' associate director Julian Lipscombe claims these proposed new buildings would destroy the context of the pier and the character of the seafront.

By contrast, Bennetts' scheme, which sits below the level of the promenade, would deliver the same level of development 'in a more sensitive way', Lipscombe claimed.

KSS associate James Budd dismissed the challenge: 'Our clients and ourselves consider Bennetts Associates' proposals not worthy of any further comment. Furthermore, we consider there to be misplaced enthusiasm for a building which will not be commercially viable and will add nothing to the vitality and viability of either the pier or the experience of Brighton's seafront.'

KSS is currently revising its proposals in light of CABE's criticisms last month.

Zoë Blackler

# CABE in 'call to arms' to City to invest in modern homes...

CABE is set to launch a campaign to persuade City investors to plough money into modern, well-



End of the pier show? Bennetts' scheme for Brighton's West Pier (left and top) will provide large, open, public spaces animated by dramatic light sculptures (shown in red). Above: KSS's contested proposal

designed housing. CABE believes the City could play a crucial role in persuading housebuilders to employ architects.

The initiative, according to CABE's housing coordinator Alex Ely, will take the form of either a publicity campaign or a series of talks with investors in London, to take place in the autumn. 'We need to understand how they value good design,' Ely said. 'This campaign will be as much about us increasing our understanding of the investment process as anything else.

'When we have researched the area, we can take lessons from the investors that are interested in good design and spread the message to those who are more reticent,' he added.

# ...as it paves the way for big changes to our streetscapes

CABE has called for a sea-change in the design of streets and for changes to the Highway Code. In a new report, it identifies the barriers to successful improvement of streetscapes.

The report, 'Paving the Way', blames a shortage of design expertise within the professions that manage the streets and a lack of clear focus within local authorities. It also uses practical examples to illustrate best practice.

The report's author, Alan Baxter & Associates, argues the main problem lies with a 'prevailing bias' in government highway and design guidance towards motorists.

This problem leads to an 'exclusion' of the interests of other street users in the way streets are managed, it argues. And it calls for a revised Highway Code that makes roads more friendly to cyclists and pedestrians.

Utility companies also come under attack. The author believes they have failed to acknowledge their responsibilities for 'maintaining quality streetscapes'.

# RAIN **REIGN ON**

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#### RIBA COMPETITION CALL

The RIBA has called for entries for a new competition to design a £1.5 million, 10,000m² managed workspace in a business park in Stokesley, North Yorkshire. For details contact the RIBA competitions office on 0113 234 1335.

#### RICS AWARDS DEADLINE

The closing date for entries to the 2003 RICS Awards is fast approaching. Entries in the three categories – building conservation; urban, rural or coastal regeneration; and building efficiency – must be received by 26 July. The overall winner will be crowned Building of the Year. Call 020 7593 3333.

#### CRAFT SKILLS ON THE AGENDA The Construction History Society is hosting a conference on the

future of building craft skills in the UK. The event, on 25 September, marks the 125th anniversary of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings. For further details call 020 7377 1644.

#### **NEIGHBOURHOOD DESIGNS**

The Jerwood Space in Union Street, London SE1, is hosting a new exhibition showing the best of London's community architecture. 'Neighbourhoods by Design' runs from 19 July to 25 August. For further details visit www.ribalondon.com/exhibitions.html

#### STADIA START THE BIDDING

'Sport by Design', a RIBA-organised conference on stadium architecture, will form part of 'Bid to Benefit' – a symposium on bidding for and hosting major sporting events. It will be held at the Lowry Hotel in Manchester on 6 August. For details call 020 7861 2440.

#### HADID FINDS UTOPIAS

Zaha Hadid is curating an exhibition of architectural utopias to be held in Graz, Austria, from 26 October. The exhibition, at the Landesmuseum Joanneum Graz, will bring together experimental projects by both established and emerging, architects. Visit www.latentutopias.at for details.

#### ARUP OFFERS CAD TO PUBLIC

Arup's software house, Oasys, has made its custom-designed CAD tools commercially available to the public. It has put together a cooperative scheme to provide access to CADrebar, CADbatch and CADplot through a series of seminars. Contact 020 7755 3301.

# Broadway Malyan to rethink disputed Vauxhall skyscraper



Broadway Malyan is preparing for a major rethink of its controversial 49-storey Vauxhall skyscraper following widespread criticism of the scheme (pictured).

The practice is expected to withdraw its planning application to Lambeth council within weeks following six months of consultation. English Heritage and CABE have openly criticised the scheme while the GLA

is also understood to be pressing for changes.

The 180m-high residential Vauxhall Tower for developer St George was first revealed by the AJ last November (AJ 15.11.02). If built, it would be the second tallest in the UK after Cesar Pelli's 53-storey 1 Canada Square in London's Docklands.

English Heritage has raised concerns about the height of the structure, and CABE has voiced doubts about the building's green credentials. CABE's design review committee also questioned the value of the 10m-tall wind turbine on the roof and the landscaping at the foot of the building, calling for a redesign of the public access facilities.

Richard Saunders, planning officer for Lambeth council, said problems with the design were likely to have been 'a big issue' during consultations. He added he expected the application would be withdrawn by the end of the month.

Broadway Malyan's managing director Peter Crossley admitted the practice is altering the plan. He said: 'The truth is that this is an evolving design and we will be revising the project and resubmitting the application.'

But Crossley dismissed suggestion of problems with the environmental attributes of the project. 'Nobody has questioned the wind turbine nor the green aspects,' he claimed.

'The fact is we submitted the planning application as a way of getting the consultation under way,' he said. 'We are happy with the comments received and are pleased to be revising the design.'

Ed Dorrell

### New sick building centre to be based in Swedish capital

Stockholm is to be home to an international centre specialising in the study of Sick Building Syndrome (SBS). The Swedish capital, which is at the forefront of research into sick buildings, is considered to be one of the leading areas for tackling the problem. The centre is being established by Swedish consultant Carl Bro Barab, which specialises in the problems of sick buildings.

Tom Follin, a partner at Carl Bro Barab, will head up the new centre. He said: 'There is a wealth of knowledge in the research community over here and we will work closely with them. Access to research has always been an important part in our development work so we can find improved ways for examination and remedy.

Follin said the new centre will reinforce the opportunities for Carl Bro Barab to develop strategies to combat the SBS problem.

'Finding the causes and taking the proper steps to remedy them is a process requiring solid technical knowledge of construction, measurement technology, microbiology, chemistry, humidity physics and a clear investigation strategy,' Follin added.

# Treasury holds up Foster's revamp as sign of PFI success

A top civil servant has held up Foster and Partners' £490 million refurbishment of the Treasury building in London as an example of how PFI can improve design within the public sector.

Sir Andrew Turnbull, permanent secretary to the Treasury, hit back at accusations that PFI produces bad design at the opening of the flagship project last Friday. 'This project has delivered exactly what we wanted for many years – an efficient, modern workspace,' he said.

And he added: 'Nobody has ever proved to me that this procurement method leads to bad design. In fact, PFI projects ought to have a better chance of good design.' Turnbull claimed it was in the interests of contractors to demand it because they are responsible for servicing the building after completion. However, he admitted that a fundamental problem with public sector procurement is the failure to provide decent briefs: 'If you provide an extensive design outline that has involved the building's future occupants, then you can expect an excellent building.' And he added that the Office of Government Commerce is determined to push ahead with the initiative.

The project comprised a massive refurbishment of the west end of the Grade II-listed building on Great George Street, with wholesale changes to its internal fabric.

The scheme included the refurbishment of 650 rooms, 8.7 miles of corridors, and 1,750 windows, as well as the complete renewal of all mechanical and electrical services. It has created open-plan offices, bringing to an end the culture of individual offices that the Turnbull said had undermined healthy professional communication.



A treasure: Foster's revamp of the Treasury building has delivered exactly what the client wanted

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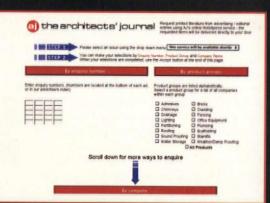
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## Making his mark on the presidency

RIBA president Paul Hyett celebrates one year in office this week. Zoë Blackler spoke to him about his achievements to date and his ambitions for the future

Paul Hyett says he feels pretty good about how the past year has gone. Immensely hard work, he says, but stimulating, satisfying, rewarding. Although he has tried to maintain continuity – building on the work of previous president Marco Goldschmied – he has also been working hard to make his own impact.

Hyett has marked his presidency with a succession of trips around the country to visit the RIBA's 90 chapters and societies. He rejects the idea that he is trying to 'revitalise' the regions as patronising, seeing it rather as shifting energy and attention away from Portland Place.

'The RIBA isn't about Portland Place or council but about its

membership around the country,' he says.

Though he acknowledges that London holds the political and economic power, he says his approach is 'to work from the centre out'.

'It's not for me to dismantle the London apparatus,' he says. 'But I am very critical of the appalling conceit that you must go to Clerkenwell or Hammersmith to find good quality design. The suggestion that good quality design only comes within the Circle Line is a fallacy.'

This shift of focus for the presidency is something Hyett can claim for his own. (He is the first president since Max Hutchinson in 1986 to visit Londonderry, as he points out.) But many of his other achievements build on the work of former presidents.

His immediate predecessor, Marco Goldschmied, championed the cause of sustainability and Hyett has picked up the baton.

The 'ecologically responsible design debate' has been one of his key concerns. During the past year, he has used seminars and conferences to get the word across. And he has worked with his opposite numbers at the ICE and the ISE, Mark Whitby and Max Fordham, to press for closer collaboration between the three institutes.

However, Goldschmied's flagship project – to install wind turbines on the roof of the Portland Place building – has been scuppered. Westminster council has refused to grant permanent planning permission for the scheme.

But if the addition of the turbines would have waved the green flag, Westminster's resistance to them provides a powerful enough symbol on its own, Hyett says. 'It demonstrates how moribund the planning system is in dealing with this.' he claims.

Though less visible, Hyett cites as his major achievement improved access to gov-

ernment and influence on the political scene, helped by the appointment of a government liaison officer under Goldschmied. 'Architects work in a socio-political context so we must have access to that,' Hyett says.

The result has been a series of formal and informal contacts with government. He is soon to make presentations to the parliamentary select committees on health, education and housing.

'It is the first time the RIBA has had these opportunities,' he says.

'We will be demonstrating the relationship between buildings and success in each of those areas.'

He acknowledges that the ideas he is championing have been around for some time, but says the key is to push government to take them onboard. We all want better hospitals, but how do you get one, how do you recognise it and how do you build a structure, a process to get it?

'It will mean hard work across the spectrum. It's not an easy agenda, this one.'

He is also particularly pleased with the agreement he has brokered with the Royal Incorporation of Architects in

Scotland. The reciprocal agreement – now signed by both institutes – resolves, finally, what has been 'a cancer, a sore running in our side'

He is also proud to have initiated the RIBA Annual Lecture – the first of which was given by the broadcaster Jonathan Dimbleby in May – and the revived RIBA conference that is set to become a major event every two years – 'a review of what we are and where we are going'.

But the last year has not been without its heartache. Last week's agreement over education (see page 10) has followed a long, drawn out process of negotiations with the ARB and wrangles with the regulator over PII have yet to be resolved. Hyett has at times been outspoken in his criticisms of the ARB.

Most recently, Hyett has engendered criticism for his 'state of the nation' speech at the RIBA conference in Birmingham. But he insists he was misunderstood. He was not arguing for an end to small practices, he says — an 'absurd proposition' — but rather that the profession must adjust to changing circumstances if it is to secure the opportunities available.

And while he has always been wellreceived in the regions, he often faces 'substantial debate' and 'firm exchanges' about what the organisation is up to. He denies, though, that he has faced hostility: 'It's less criticisms, than concerns,' he says.

For the rest of his term, Hyett promises to continue pushing his key causes.

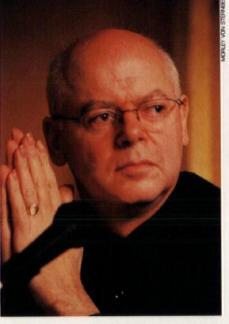
The Architecture For All project – to see the RIBA drawings collection securely housed at the V&A – will be a top priority and Hyett hopes to sign a contract with the museum within the year.

Also crucial will be the implementation of structural changes to the institute initiated under Goldschmied, and last month adopted by the membership. Three independent

bodies will look after public outreach, members services organisation and the institute's commericial interests. Hyett hopes all will be in place to bring the changes into practice by 1 January 2003.

Hyett is also forging ahead with talks with the American Institute of Architects about a reciprocal agreement to make it easier for British architects to find work in the US.

And, of course, work will continue to build good relations with government, which are 'absolutely crucial'.



'The RIBA isn't about
Portland Place or
council but about its
membership around
the country... The
suggestion that good
quality design only
comes within the
Circle Line is a fallacy'

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# Designs on best practice: opening doors in government

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## editorial

So action plans have been published for most government departments, serving as pledges that design will be near the top of their agenda when they act as clients. Best practice, it is often called, and they will be kept to their word. But it is interesting to compare the way each has responded and the projects chosen as 'exemplars'.

The best, with an AJ rating of 9/10, is architecture's department, the DCMS, which uses images of popular schemes – Baltic, Magna, Tate Modern, City of Manchester stadium, British Museum, Eden – and credits the architect every time. It is slightly let down, however, by the centre spread – Stonehenge – presumably because the visitor centre to come will be a championed project.

The Foreign Office scores 8/10 – well designed, with schemes such as ABK's British Embassy and Farrell's British Consulate General in Hong Kong, and credits tucked away in the small print at the back. Health scores 7/10 and is not bad, with pictures credited to practices such as Nightingale Associates, Avanti, Anshen Dyer, Guy Greenfield. And a foreword by Prince Charles, the healthcare supremo who wants buildings with 'soul'.

The DTI's plan has a dreary layout, is rushed-looking, very low on pictures, and has nothing on the powerful Regional Development Agencies' own design aspirations. A disappointing 6/10 for a department which now has design quality indicators. The Home Office also scores 6/10 with images of some poor-quality schemes. And lastly, Work and Pensions (5/10) talks of 'delight' in buildings but has dreary images: a desk in a room surrounded by chairs still in cellophane; another of a dull interior, as seen in *The Office*; and a soulless job centre on the cover.

As one top-ranking official put it, the documents all have the feel of something departments have been forced to do.

But, as CABE points out, this is no beauty contest – utility is as important as aesthetics. CABE has itself produced an admirable 'Better Civic Buildings and Spaces' document, with another this week on streets, backed by deputy PM John Prescott's office. And when Messrs Windsor, Blair, Prescott and Falconer are all talking buildings, architecture is making headway. RIBA president Paul Hyett is right – government relations are on the up.

David Taylor

## letters

## Goodbye to an architect who will be sorely missed

It is with sadness and anger that I write to tell your readers that Kim Grant, one of the most talented graduates of her year at the Polytechnic of Central London (1982), has met a premature, violent death at the age of 41. Kim gave up the ghost on Tuesday 2 July, in the intensive care unit of King's College Hospital.

Kim Grant was a fighter all her life, and until this last tragic battle she had won. She was working class, the daughter of a greengrocer, and had demonstrated early promise by winning a place at an exclusive grammar school, where she excelled in physics and maths.

At PCL her strong scientific bent was manifest in the supreme elegance of her structural resolutions to the most intractable problems. But what was so striking, to a fellow student like me, was the way she immediately took on and comprehended the artistic and literary sensibility which overwhelmingly directed teaching during that period, one of PCL's golden eras.

Kim Grant was the only person I have ever met whose design aptitude flowed utterly uninhibited from her fingertips. She was literally a born designer. It affected everything touched, from her glamorous sense of personal style which perilously, but successfully, involved knocking up ball dresses a couple of hours before making an entrance, to her rigorous and instinctive feeling for construction. Kim's work was outstanding - and that in a year which contained such future architectural luminaries as Alex de Rijke, Alan Dunlop, Brendan O'Neil and Joe Hagan.

Sadly, shortly after graduating, Kim's first love met with an untimely death. Kim carried on illuminating everyone round

with her indomitable courage and zest for life. In her own very successful one-woman practice, she worked on the sensitive reconstruction of period houses, using her ingenuity and flair to delight and ease numerous domestic lives. She was able to work very closely with developers and builders, using her imaginative capacity to truly understand the significance of other players within the industry. She had recently started to research the systematic abuse of asbestos by building firms and its effects on the workforce.

Her lack of architectural exclusiveness was another sign of her originality. Kim Grant was her own, and her best, creation, and it is the presence of that creation that her friends and the profession have now been so brutally denied. She leaves an adored daughter, Leonie, to whom the hearts of all who loved and admired Kim go out.

Katherine Shonfield, London N1

#### Alsop - try and stay to the end next time!



Thompson, Alsop and Yorkshire Forward's Alan Simpson

An open letter to Will Alsop: As you rightly pointed out in your recent article (AJ 20.6.02), something special was going on at the rethinking Barnsley weekend, involving as it did not only your practice and mine, but the combined talents of West 8, Koetter Kim, David Lock, Derek Latham, Urban Initiatives, EDAW and Landscape Design Associates - dramatic evidence of the way Yorkshire Forward is deploying its Urban Renaissance Ask Austin. If you have a technical query, look out the discussion forum to debate the latest issues, or discover the answers to problems from your peers - or from AJ technical editor Austin Williams.

Check out all the latest news stories, including Mediawatch - Astragal's wry look at the architecture stories covered by the weekend newspapers. Mediawatch goes up on Mondays. And read up on stories such as Terry Pawson Architect's submission this week of a planning application for the £7.4 million extension and refurbishment of the Cheltenham Art Gallery and Museum, currently occupying an 1889 Grade II-listed building in the town centre (see right).



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

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Panel across the region.

I enjoyed reading everything you had to say about the first two days of the event, but you were wide of the mark in your conclusions about what happened over the following three days of collective hard work which, due to prior engagements, you were unable to stay for. To close your article with a gratuitous swipe at both the Prince of Wales and a practice called JTA (which I cannot even remember being there) rather let the side down.

From your observation of the 5,000 hours of structured participation, you rightly concluded that a latent understanding of urbanism is universal. From our experience of working throughout the UK and in places as diverse as Belfast, Berlin, Prague, Paris, and Beirut, if you can facilitate a proper, collective dialogue, then a surprising consistency of aspiration emerges.

And it is funny how short our professional memories are in the post-PPG3 world we now live in. Unless my memory fails me, wasn't it the Prince of Wales, through the Urban Villages Forum, who started to seriously campaign, a dozen or so years ago, for the creation of properly designed, mixed-use urban quarters with a strong sense of place? As a lay person, he intuitively appreciated (as few planners had since la Ville Radieuse) that the social and economic well-being of a community can only be nurtured and sustained through a proper understanding of density and mix, focused around a welldesigned public realm.

The collective outputs of the Urban Renaissance panellists at the end of the weekend went beyond 'Rethinking' and moved forward into 'Remaking', echoing both your and the community's vision for the creation of a higher density, well-defined urban core,

concentrating in particular on how the existing elements of the public realm can be liberated from their current poor design and misuse, becoming springboards for social and economic regeneration and capable of being delivered in a relatively short time.

Whether higher densities are eventually provided through high-rise or through more compact forms of medium-rise urbanism, and whether Barnsley will one day become more akin to Paris, Pimlico or a Tuscan hill town, only time will tell. Above all, the effect of the weekend was to build a far greater bank of collective energy and understanding than any professional process can achieve alone. That is why we at JTP always include such a collective, creative process at a relevant stage of the urban change processes we are normally engaged in, including in Scarborough.

So when Yorkshire Forward's Urban Renaissance Panel gets the chance to work together again - please try and stay till the end. And, by the way, yes, the

whole team did produce everything on the spot - so no poaching!

John Thompson, London EC1

#### Planning procedures fail to see human suffering

Having this morning perused Brian Waters' article in the AJ (27.7.02), I must say it is disappointing. Waters is arguing for more intensification of our cities without considering the effect on the people who live there.

In the 1960s many good lowrise properties were demolished and high-rise intensive properties were built. They have proved unpopular, and many such projects have been demolished after approximately 30 years and replaced with more traditional construction.

Waters' article does nothing to address the human issues which many local authorities have had to deal with such as crime, vandalism and aggressive behaviour of people living in such a difficult and close proximity of each other.

Waters fails to mention that land in this country was first

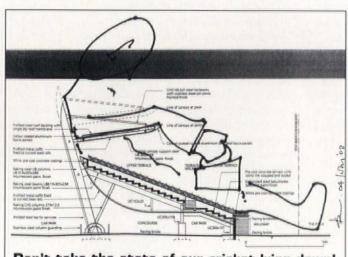
protected for agriculture after this country had been at war and food production was a major issue. This is not the case now. There are large areas of underused farming land which is now protected by a group or organisation who act under the banner of environmentalists, most of whom have been hijacked by people whose sympathies lie within bureaucracy and have trade union tendencies.

I say this simply because their arguments are about control. If local authorities are required to rebuild low-cost houses, they need departments to control their properties. Trade unions hate the motor car because it gives people freedom to move about. If we do not use the buses and trains, then the strike action becomes less effective and the unions become less important.

No mention was made of maintenance of high-rise property and the high cost of repairs, and how quickly high-rise developments become run down. How pompous to state that mixed development built intensively would be the kind of places where people would like to live and work. If this was the case, then lifting all planning restrictions, with no development control whatsoever, would again see beautiful towns appear, with parks and open spaces, along with individuals building better homes in places they wanted to live, as was the case before planning was controlled.

The sort of thinking Waters promotes has had a detrimental effect on the human soul by inflicting hardship. Through control, there is a lack of decent affordable properties, with a life of toil to pay off a mortgage with considerable human suffering along the way, all caused by the severity of our planning procedures and the thinking of organisations like Waters' own.

Robert Williams, via e-mail



## Don't take the state of our cricket lying down!

Does the clear inspiration for the new stand illustrated in the AJ's current issue (AJ 4.7.02, page 40) tell us about the state of English county cricket and the average spectator, or is it all in my imagination?

Bryan Scott, Knebworth



## will alsop

# Irreverent friends' legacies inform art and architecture

Since I started writing this column 18 months ago, three of my close friends have died, of which Malcolm Pollard, the artist, was the last (19 June). This is a sad and depressing fact, as they were all special people who, quite apart from their charm and beauty, lived dogged lives of principle, which often cast them outside the mainstream of their professions. In spite of this, all contributed a great deal to both art and architecture.

Anthony Benjamin was a painter whose description and exploration of light were extraordinary. Anthony created light by observing it, and spread light through his personality. Jaques Hordelatte was an architect from Bordeaux. His work was always surprising and poetic. I remember well seeing his student housing project clad in road barriers and other traffic paraphernalia. It was a perfect foil to the busy street in front.

All three were gardeners. Malcolm created many gardens behind his town house in Northampton. He would treat this patch of land as a room to be totally refurnished from time to time. The idea of creating a garden that would mature was not on his agenda. Two or three years of a particular colour could be changed, seemingly overnight, into a haven of wild flowers collected from the surrounding countryside. Many works could be in the making at any time, and some emerged almost without intent. A day on a beach with him and his wife, Elke, would turn into an evening of creating objects from the beach stones and detritus. The activity was the work, not the result which could be cast aside, having served its purpose in the

Anthony's garden, which nestles still in a valley by the sea in north Norfolk, is a much larger affair. His concerns were longer term and most definitively leave a legacy to those

that survive him. The garden is not attached to the house, which makes a decision to enter the garden into something special. The entry is marked by a rustic wooden bridge, past a large pond full of goldfish. Not just a few thousands of them - the colour and movement were important to him. The garden itself hovers in between the intended and raw nature. When the spring encourages the grass to grow, great masses of wild grass sway in the wind, which transforms the land into a dynamic plain of light. Routes to walk are mown carefully through this visual delight to carry the observer to other parts of this almost incidental place. His studios are in the garden. The garden offers both separation and inspiration to the artist on his way to work.

Jaques' garden is uncompromising. It is small and lies behind a former cow shed in the village of Flotte en Re on the island of lle de Re. This is a walled garden of rough stones, 2.5m high. It is wall to wall grass, punctuated by as many hollyhocks that might care to reside there. This garden could be defined as low maintenance, which perfectly suited its creator, who retreated to the island from Bordeaux to walk, eat well and sleep. The garden is a delightful maze of points of colour on vertical sticks – a 3D abstract painting.

I loved all these men for their irreverence; each had an intent to pursue their own vision of the world. As all three matured they relaxed into a world of their own making, which they enjoyed inhabiting. Although all were known, none succumbed to the convention of fashion and none was concerned with the dictates of theory-making.

I miss them all and often think of them as they whisper in my ear, reminding me of some superfluous mark or line I am about to draw. WA, from my new kitchen table

'Although all were known, none succumbed to the convention of fashion and none was concerned with the dictates of theory-making'

## people

Say the words De La Warr Pavilion, bandstand and planning meetings to Niall McLaughlin and he has a vivid recollection of an 'almost unimaginably old woman' waving an umbrella. 'She was saying: "I don't care if it was designed with the help of local children, I don't like your bandstand. It's bloody ugly, it's bloody ugly."

Thankfully, few others share this view.

McLaughlin's sinuous bandstand, at the De La Warr Pavilion in Bexhill-on-Sea, had a tough neighbour to live up to in Mendelsohn and Chermayeff's Grade Ilisted Modernist icon. It got the brolly waving treatment at the local planning committee meeting, at which schoolchildren who had helped architect conceive his vision looked on, bemused. But the granny was in the minority. McLaughlin triumphed enough with his futuristic, acoustically driven structure, featured in this issue of the AJ (see page 34), that it persuaded RIBA judges to give it an award. And it has slotted in with its famous neighbour with aplomb.

Much of its design owed to an approach one-time Young Architect Of The Year McLaughlin favours – getting on board people who are external to the design process to provide added creative 'oomph' and inspiration. In this instance, it was those local schoolkids, who were selected by their schools and 'prompted' to think about what a bandstand should be, how it should look, how it should sound, how it could deal with considerable wind loads, what imagery it should convey of being at the seaside and the space between it and the pavilion itself.

The 10-year-old kids were separated into six teams, each with an architectural student from Canterbury in tow as a prompter. They came up with designs and McLaughlin, used to teaching at the Bartlett and elsewhere, gave them an old-fashioned crit. Each scheme was very different, but McLaughlin managed to crit each so that the kids felt they had contributed, and ideas – its wave form, its portability, the shells, sails and seagulls aesthetic – made it through to the finished project. In short, people were involved.

'We found those kinds of things very easy to our understanding of Mendelsohn,' explains McLaughlin. 'The inside of the helical stair in the pavilion is very like the tailoring of the shell of the bandstand and it's very like the eyebrow window used on the Einstein tower.'

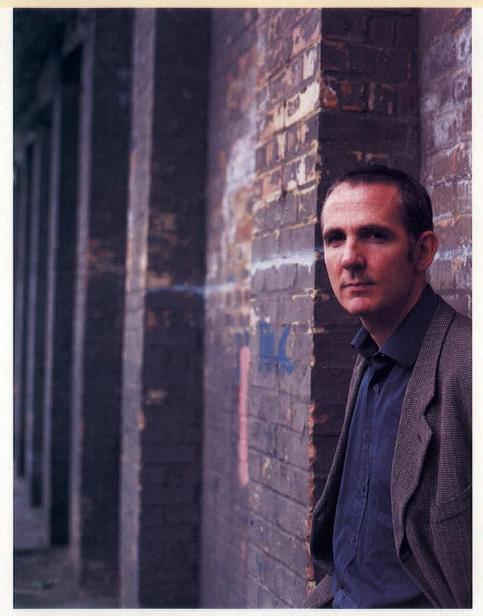
McLaughlin started at University

11 July 2002

# Niall McLaughlin is basking in the success of his bandstand at the De La Warr Pavilion in Bexhill. But his practice is not stopping there, regularly winning competitions using a wide-ranging, collaborative approach

by david taylor. photograph by guy jordan

## leader of the band



College, Dublin, graduating in 1984. From there he went on to work for Scott Tallon Walker – the subject of this week's building study, the Goulding Summerhouse (see page 26) – in both Dublin and London, for a couple of years. Then he started his own practice in 1991, teaching at the then Oxford Polytechnic at the same time. That synthesis between academia and practice has proved important, with McLaughlin choosing 70 per cent of his staff from students he has admired and taught at the Bartlett. 'The other 30 per cent are troublesome people I bring in to shake things up a bit,' he smiles.

The progression of the firm has been steady and gradual. From flat extensions to

loft conversions to the first private house, and thence the first public commission. But the firm never thought big projects – such as the Turner Centre it was shortlisted for – were beyond it. Nowadays, in the past two or three years, the practice has been doing 30 per cent refurbishment, 30 per cent private new building and about 30-40 per cent public buildings, McLaughlin estimates.

'We're in business to do architecture, not the other way around,' he says, and growing for the sake of it does not fit the bill. But every other week, the practice appears to win a competition. McLaughlin says that for 10 years it had a ban on such things. Why?

'I felt that in competitions you often get

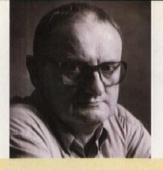
pulled around in second-guessing,' he says. 'You need to be very clear about what you are doing. We've got to be doing competitions for more than just the possibility of winning.'

Most recently the practice struck gold with the Finsbury Hub, a building which will be part crèche, part cafe, part exhibitions space in the north London borough near the park. Another is an open competition for housing in Silvertown for the Peabody Trust. The collaboration this time is with an artist, Martin Richman, who McLaughlin first worked with as a 'blind date' in the 1997 RIBA exhibition 'Fused'. Richman is developing the facade with radiant light film. This is like dichroic glass and should, McLaughlin hopes, allow the building to shimmer and mutate its colours with the changing effects of the day's light.

Again it is the collaborative approach. 'Almost every project we work on, we're looking for input that is going to, in a sense, ambush us and make us think about what we're doing in different ways.' Another scheme in research phase is for an Alzheimer's Day Care and Respite Centre in Dublin, in a country with a substantial ageing population. How do you design for people with fragile memories? Do you make your spaces more 'memorable'? More colourful? (Such spaces are often colour-coded in the US.)

McLaughlin is still seeking answers, still eager to hoover up as much medical thinking or examples he can pluck from the real world to inform his architectural solution - but there is almost no built paradigm. It is a completely different scale of sense of responsibility to that of working with Mendelsohn, he says. The building will be arranged around a series of social spaces, serene gardens and courtyards through which patients may wander. A number of sinuous paths naturally loop back on themselves, always bringing a person back 'home' again. Inspiration is coming from, among other things, Barragán's house in Mexico City, and the goal is to produce 'coherent, calm spaces which reduce enervating distraction, aid orientation and encourage mobility', along with 'really inventive' landscaping (help required).

Whatever results, you can be sure that it will be a thoughtful, considered response, forged from extensive consultation, research and possibly more of that 'open-ended collaboration'. Even if some umbrellawaving grannies might not like it.



# martin pawley

# Beware the great tide of waste that is coming to engulf us all

'None of us

wants to hear

a lecture about

how every day

we throw away

enough rubbish

to fill the Albert

Hall, but it is

true'

This month's *RIBA Journal* contains a more than usually interesting article. The magazine has questioned 127 architects on their use of innovative materials, and more than half of them have denied using any new materials at all. Without going too deeply into the reasons given – high cost, insurance problems, failures, lack of technical back-up – all of which are undoubtedly sound, it is nonetheless an astonishing result.

Either the grass roots of the profession turned its back on technology long ago, or the term

'new materials' has been widely misunderstood: especially by conservationists who can hardly deny that they use an array of laboratory products that would do a plastic surgeon proud. The whole thing reminds me of the time I interviewed Quinlan Terry many years ago and he said that Fosters' Renault distribution centre in Swindon would have been better with a good solid slate roof on it.

The thing is that 'new materials' is a surprisingly elastic sort of term. In one sense it obviously does mean membrane roofs, titanium cladding, PTFE, ETFE, translucent glass fibre and other rocket science, but it also includes substances that are part of chemical compounds including paints,

many types of adhesives, or finished assemblies such as window and door systems, fasteners, moisture barriers and other items.

Nor are these the true limits of the term. It could also include the sort of materials that might have to be used to build with if we ever got serious about solving the waste problem.

This is a difficult one. None of us wants to hear another lecture about how every day we throw away enough rubbish to fill the Albert Hall, but it is true. Just as it is true that the government is building another 70 waste incinerators around the country. Surely there must be a way to connect 'new materials' to things we throw away

that would not be entirely unmeritorious.

For some years the illogicality of crushing glass bottles before trucking the bits to landfill sites has offended environmentalists of a sensitive disposition – why not truck them straight to building sites unbroken to use as bricks? Glass bottles are certainly strong enough to build with.

In any case, that little offence against nature has now been joined by bigger ones – the great refrigerator mountain, the dumped TV jungle, and the discarded tyre swamp. Of course, a great deal of

rubbish is toxic, dispersed, impossibly uneconomic to sort and suitable only for compaction or incineration; but a lot is composed of steel, aluminium, plastic, glass, wood products and other high-quality materials. Stuff that in any other context would be recognised as having potential in the construction process. Right now would be an arresting time to start building out of refrigerators.

The expansion of the category 'new materials' to include new uses for waste would also greatly expand the range of possibilities for sustainable development. After all, it has been done before by indigenous populations – nothing could be more difficult than turning trees into houses –

and by Hippies in the 1960s, constructing the oncefamous Drop City geodesic domes in Colorado, made from the roofs of abandoned cars.

Of course, it is not really as simple as this. For a start, it would take a newer, more forensic approach to design to give waste materials sufficient value, and a vast arcane knowledge of alloys, synthetics, composites and their production processes to make sense out of what could probably only end up as a tuft of insulant or a minor piece of cladding.

How seriously 127 architects would view this prospect rather depends on how seriously they take the prospect of the huge amount of waste heading our way.

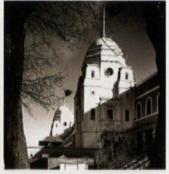
## a life in architecture

## jack charlton

Former football player and manager Jack Charlton OBE, now a pundit on TV and radio, says his favourite building is the Tower of London. 'I spent a lot of time there when I worked for ITV and had some good friends among the Yeomen of the Guard, who told me all about its history.'

In its time, the Tower has been, variously, a fort, a palace, a prison, an armoury, a mint, an observatory and a menagerie. Pevsner thought that the Chapel of St John in the White Tower was 'one of the most impressive pieces of early Norman architecture in England'. Today, the Tower houses the Crown Jewels and is among the most popular tourist attractions in the capital.

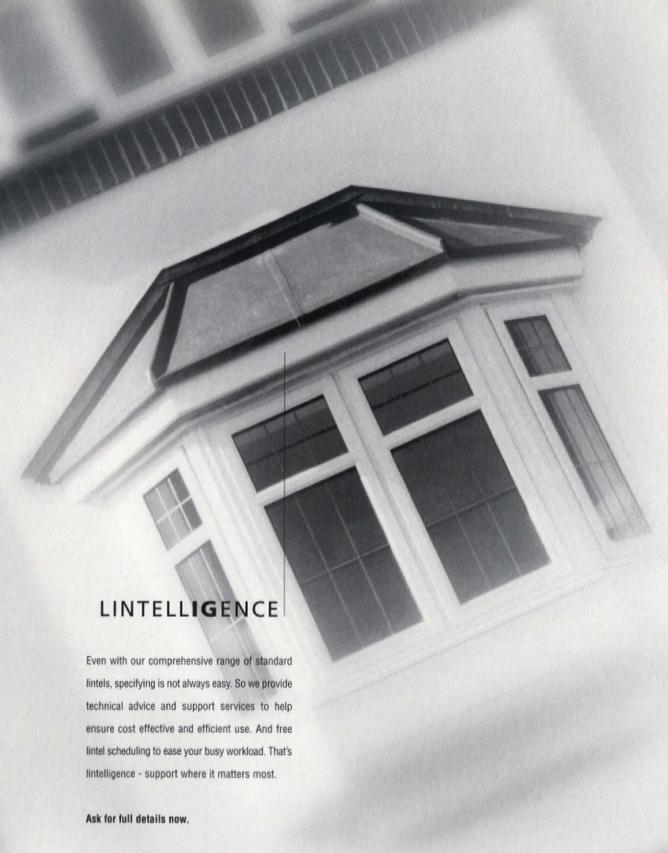
The ideal way to approach the Tower is by boat along the Thames, although throughout history this route has association with imprisonment and execution. Anne Boleyn, Henry VIII's second wife, was one of the most famous prisoners there.



Charlton's second favourite building – not surprisingly – is Wembley Stadium (pictured). 'Lots of memories there,' he says.

Football fans worldwide must share some of them. He played in defence for Leeds from 1952-73; was capped by England 35 times; and has been associated at different times with Middlesbrough, Sheffield Wednesday, Newcastle United and the Republic of Ireland. Most famously, he was in the England team in 1966, when it beat Germany to win the World Cup final.

Eleanor Allen

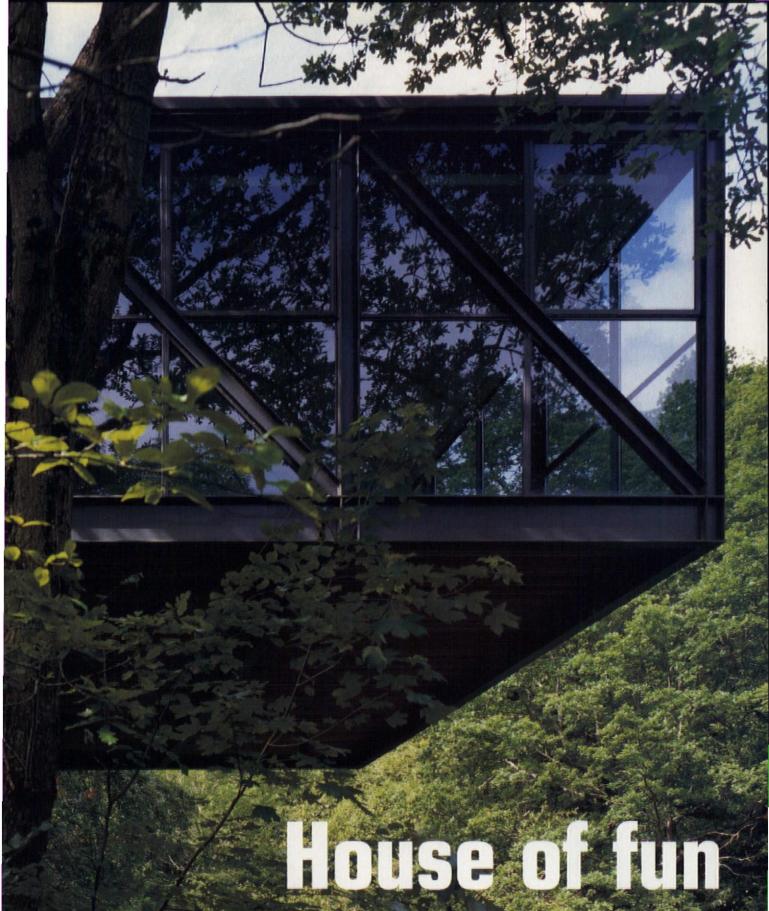




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High above an Irish river, the Goulding Summerhouse was built with parties in mind. Now renovated by its original architect, Ronald Tallon, its poetic nature is apparent too



the architect's account
Our brief was to restore the summerhouse
to its original condition. The building was
boarded up, with no window glass in place,
having been empty and unattended for a
number of years (see above).

A contractor was appointed on the basis of a preliminary specification. An opening-up procedure was carried out, removing flooring, suspended ceiling, and wall sheeting to allow assessment of the condition of the structural steel, the floor, roof and wall timbers, and the spanlock roof deck. All of these were found to be in good condition, except for localised areas of damage caused by leaking pipes or exposure to weather.

The reinstatement of the building was straightforward, following closely the original specification. The steel structure – shown in the top picture when being assembled in 1972 – was carefully gritblasted, leaving the original paint build-up intact, and repainted dark grey (in place of the former deep brown colour). The external wall panels were clad with T&G cedar siding, matching the original, over a breathing membrane onto the original softwood studwork. The inside face of these panels is finished with plasterboard, skimmed.

New ply flooring was laid on the original joists and covered with a woven carpet of undyed wool. The external soffit of the floor, open to the riverbank, was sheeted with rebated cedar boarding, laid between the exposed structural steel members. A new suspended plaster ceiling replaces the original mineral tile. The built-up roof was renewed with a torch-on felt laid on the existing roof deck.

Internally a new, larger core area was introduced, containing a bathroom, kitchen, utility space and a sleeping area with fold-away bed, absent in the original smaller core. This allows a more varied use of the building as party house, meeting room, or accommodation for guests. The stud walls of the core are clad with brown oak veneer panelling.

The original radiator heating is replaced by a ducted a/c system with heat pump units housed within the new core.

Frank Fahy, Scott Tallon Walker Architects

The Dargle River rises in the Wicklow Mountains, plunges down a 100m waterfall, and then flows towards Ireland's east coast through a steep wooded glen. Dublin is only 30 minutes away, though that is hard to believe. It was beside the Dargle, close to Enniskerry, that the businessman Sir Basil Goulding made his home, buying an existing building on a romantic site and developing its grounds over many years.

It is there that you find the remarkable summerhouse that Ronald Tallon, of Dublin practice Scott Tallon Walker, designed for Goulding in 1972; and even if you know it from a photograph, at first sight of it in reality you catch your breath. A trim box of steel, glass and cedar, cantilevered from the south bank of the Dargle, it soars high above the water, poised audaciously in mid-air.

The oblique view of the house from below, from the river's edge, could be among the iconic images of a light, adventurous Modernism, in perfect rapport with nature; but as the project was never published at any length, it is still not widely known. Now newly renovated, the Goulding Summerhouse can get the attention it deserves.

'Businessman' does not do justice to Goulding, though he certainly had business interests, inheriting a fertiliser company and serving on the board of the Bank of Ireland and companies such as Rio Tinto Zinc. Tallon particularly remembers him as 'a very enlightened collector of contemporary art — he must have had the best collection of that kind in Ireland at the time'; and it was in that milieu that they met.

Frank Fahy – site architect for the construction of the summerhouse and also its renovation – adds that Goulding was 'something of a Renaissance man'. He was, for instance, a frequent and amusing correspondent to the *Irish Times* on cultural and

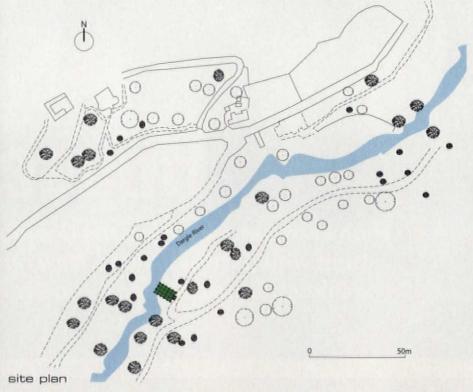
linguistic matters, and a passionate gardener.

There is a photocopied article in Scott Tallon Walker's archives (its source is not known) entitled 'An Irish Garden Built About A Ravine', in which Goulding describes the gradual transformation of his Enniskerry grounds. 'The promoter extraordinary of the garden's beauties is its spectacular site,' he wrote. 'It presents imagination with the garden of its dreams.'

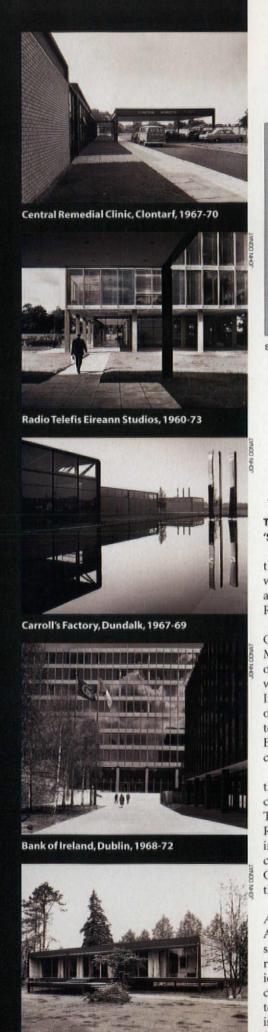
With his wife Valerie, he planted acacias, buddleias, magnolias, rhododendrons - all sorts of different shrubs - to counterpoint the dominant green of the glen with local flarings of colour. There are clumps of exotic-looking ferns, the kind of specimens one finds at places like Kew; and plants whose foliage is more muted, in shades of russet and brown. Terrace-like areas of lawn offer level footing where most of the land is at an angle. Turn a corner and you come across one of Ian Stuart's geometrical, abstract sculptures: 'They call nature's sensual abandon of shape to order - the schoolmaster rapping children over the knuckles with a ruler,' said Goulding.

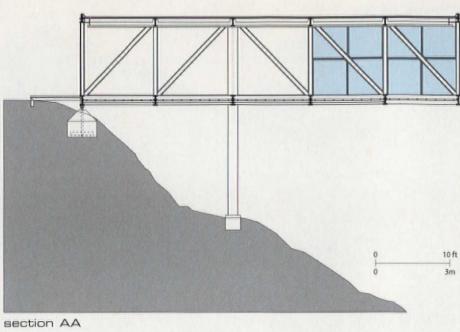
And with the garden as a backdrop, Goulding loved to throw a party; which is where the origins of his summerhouse lie. His favoured area for entertaining was close to the southern face of the glen, around a serpentine lake he had created – and on it too, for there were islets and stepping stones amid the water.

Given the volatile Irish climate, Goulding wanted a place where parties could continue if the weather turned rough: somewhere sheltered but still close to nature – essentially a garden pleasure pavilion. The forebears of such a building can be traced across continents and centuries, but, in choosing Tallon as his architect, Goulding knew that his would be a truly contemporary version of









Top: section of the summerhouse showing position of rock anchors. Above: Mies van der Rohe's 'Sketch for a Glass House on a Hillside', 1934. Opposite page, centre: Ellwood's Smith House, 1955

this long-established type; especially as his wife, in her professional capacity, was already a client of Tallon's for the Central Remedial Clinic in Clontarf (AJ 7.10.70).

Having worked after graduation in the Office of Public Works with Raymond McGrath, Tallon had joined Michael Scott's office in 1956, becoming a partner (along with Robin Walker) in 1958. Scott was the Irish pioneer of Modernist architecture: his own house at Sandycove (1938), largely unaltered, remains in private hands; his Central Bus Station, Dublin (1953), is among the city's most famous post-war buildings.

With Tallon and Walker's contribution, the practice's designs became very reminiscent of Mies van der Rohe, beginning – in Tallon's case – with the first phases of the Radio Telefis Eireann Studios (1960-73), and including the aforementioned Clontarf clinic alongside such major projects as the Carroll's Factory in Dundalk (1967-69) and the Bank of Ireland (1968-72).

Appraising the Carroll's Factory for *The Architectural Review* (January 1971), Fello Atkinson concluded: 'At Dundalk, where the scale and purpose are right, one's faith is renewed in the humanism of the Miesian idiom.' The Bank of Ireland in Dublin caused controversy at the time – a Georgian terrace of no great merit had to be demolished – but Lance Wright's critique in the AR (February 1973) was very appreciative: 'Spare, recessive, regular, classical, it repre-

sents a return to Europe of something which originated in Europe quite a long time ago. It is almost certainly the purest example of the style in Europe's off-shore islands, and is probably one of the most sensitive uses of the style anywhere.'

Who would argue? Today the Bank of Ireland looks decidedly distinguished – weathering well (a greenish patina on the bronze), with a dignified presence, and much more attuned to the scale of its Baggot Street neighbours than some photographs suggest.

These are all large-scale works, but Tallon must have had Mies in mind too when designing domestically: in the house to the south of Dublin where he still lives (1970); and soon afterwards in the Goulding Summerhouse, where the idiom is adapted with particular grace and precision.

Among the items in the Mies collection of New York's Museum of Modern Art is a 1934 'Sketch for a Glass House on a Hillside'. But the slope in this drawing is relatively gentle, and the position of the supporting columns reduces the drama of the cantilever – it is not a direct precursor of the summerhouse. In his book, *The Modern Steel House*, Neil Jackson suggests we should not just think of Mies. He turns to the American West Coast of the 1950s, and such buildings-on-a-hill-side as Craig Ellwood's Smith House (1955), pursuing this connection by arguing a resemblance between the Carroll's Factory and Ellwood's factories of the 1960s.

Ronald Tallon's own house, 1970

'Certainly we were totally committed to the philosophy of Mies van der Rohe,' says Tallon, who knew Mies' buildings both from publication and direct experience (including a period in Chicago, though his main focus there was Louis Sullivan). His fellow partner Walker studied planning in Chicago under Ludwig Hilberseimer, so for him too Mies was a dominant influence. 'But while we wanted to follow the principles, there was no question of slavish imitation - there were advances of our own which we could make.' As for Ellwood: 'Of course we were aware of his work - we knew what was happening around the world - but again not simply to replicate it.'

When it came to the summerhouse, says Tallon, 'Basil wanted something of our own time, so there were no restrictions on me – apart, that is, from the site'; and that did impose restrictions, confined as it was to a narrow strip of land in which Tallon 'could only find a couple of spots where there were decent foundations'. So the building, fusing simplicity with daring, is an instance of constraints encouraging a designer to take an imaginative leap; though Tallon is quick to acknowledge the contribution of Ove Arup and Partners as engineer.

The Goulding Summerhouse, designed on a 10ft square module, is 5 bays long and 3 wide. (To put its overall 51 x 30 ft dimensions in context, the enclosed part of the Farnsworth House is 61 x 29 ft.) Its singlestorey structural steel frame, braced diagonally, is supported on two I-stanchions

which are placed between the second and third bays, so that the greater part of the building projects into space, while rock anchors on either side tie it back into the riverbank. But with its minimal pin-joint connections, it touches the ground very lightly indeed, seeming to hover several centimetres above it.

The outermost two bays and both ends of the summerhouse are glazed, but the other bays have horizontal cedar siding. This is important visually, because it gives a sense of



solidity and weight which counters any disequilibrium induced by the off-centre cantilever.

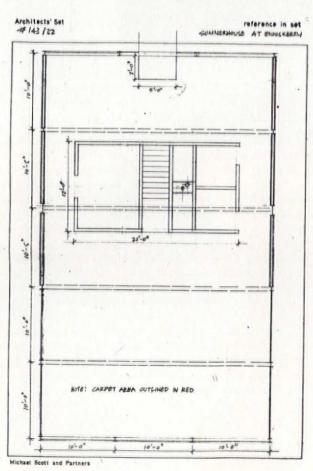
'One of my tasks was to stop Basil wanting outrageous things – like a glass floor, for instance,' says Tallon. With that in mind, and remembering that Tallon once wanted his own house to be fully glazed (his family was not so keen), I wondered if there was ever any thought of making this little building totally 'transparent'. 'Not at all,' says

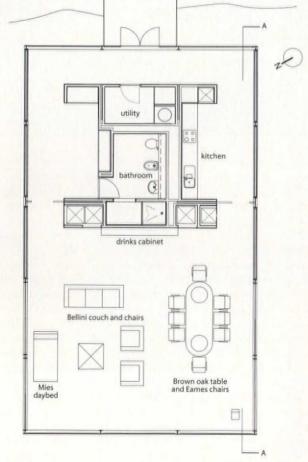
Tallon, because of just those visual considerations: 'It would have lost its relationship with the site, with the earth.'

Apart from a small freestanding core with a kitchen and bathroom, the summerhouse was open-plan - an uninterrupted space that lent itself readily to Goulding's parties. But after his death in 1982, its fortunes were less happy and, after a period of serving as a restaurant, it fell into disuse and began to deteriorate. Soon its windows had been smashed and the house looked destined to become a Modern ruin - the latest in that evocative category of buildings best typified by the overgrown wing of Duiker's Hilversum Sanatorium. An exhibition at the Architectural Association in January 2000 (organised by Ros Diamond and Renzo Vallebuona) gave just that impression.

But it was about this time that the developer John Ronan came to the rescue, buying the Gouldings' old property and estate for his own use, and asking the original architect to renovate the summerhouse.

'Though it appeared to be in a rather sorry state, the building overall was in excellent condition,' says Fahy. Structurally, it was 'intact – indeed, more or less perfect'; so the steel has simply been grit-blasted and repainted. The most obvious disfigurement was the shattered glass, which has all been replaced with laminated W20 sections. The external cedar siding was 'sound enough', but because it had become algae-stained over the years – no surprise in such a leafy setting – it was renewed. The goal has been





Above left: original plan of the Goulding Summerhouse. Above right: modified plan today with expanded core and proposed furniture layout



to create once more a pristine insertion into nature, not a weathered one.

The most significant alteration is inside the summerhouse, with the expansion of the freestanding core for improved kitchen and bathroom facilities, a retractable bed, and storage space. This partly consolidates changes that were made during the building's use as a restaurant, when its rudimentary services were upgraded. The core is largely concealed by full-height brown oak veneering, while new sliding doors on either side (satisfyingly weighty) allow this whole area to be separated from the main open space.

When the Goulding Summerhouse was first built, it had cedar siding indoors as well as out, but following the renovation the unglazed bays of the interior are filled with white-painted plaster panels. While the house may have lost the warmth that the cedar provided, the substitution probably makes sense, as the white walls minimise any

feeling of confinement that the expanded core creates.

It is floor-to-ceiling oak veneer that greets you when you enter; there is no instant visual connection with the glen beyond (and never was). But whether you turn to left or right, you soon see down the length of the summerhouse through the gap between steel frame and core; and the light from the last glazed bays beckons you on.

As you emerge into the open plan area and approach the limit of the cantilever, the drama of the building really makes itself felt. The Dargle River is rocky and broader than it looks in photographs, and on the late May morning that I visited, after a wet month and overnight rain, it was swollen – stained brown with the peat of the Wicklow Mountains (and noisy too). As you stand suspended above the rushing water, facing the far bank which is steep, high and covered with trees, there is a strong sense of immer-

sion in this vivid natural scene – despite the glass skin that surrounds you. Step back towards the oak-veneered core and that immediacy lessens, as the grid of glazing bars puts a frame around the outside world and turns it into a view.

'Think of a crowd of people dancing here, which they did – and all in rhythm!' says Frank Fahy, recalling Goulding's parties. But this pavilion, designed for pleasure, also has a poetic dimension. It could illustrate the concept of 'the restorative place in nature' that Alison Smithson explored in lectures during the 1980s and formulated in a pamphlet published by the German furniture manufacturer Tecta.<sup>2</sup>

'Amid the current pollution and mechanical noise of Europe, a piece of territory to possess with all one's senses is increasingly difficult to maintain,' wrote Smithson. She believed that an 'encapsuled', enclave-like space in a natural setting could make an



essential contribution to 'man's sense of well being', playing a revitalising role.

Just what role the Goulding Summerhouse will play for its new owner is still being determined, though it is likely to be used for entertaining and for meetings. The furniture layout in the plan is a proposition by Tallon, and at present there is no demarcation of the open space.

Certainly it is now more than a pleasure pavilion; with its upgraded facilities, it is at least an occasional home, whether as guest accommodation or the revitalising retreat that Alison Smithson envisaged. Might it be lived in more continuously one day? That must be feasible. Though Edith Farnsworth felt uncomfortably exposed in her too-transparent pavilion, the balance here between transparency and enclosure would prevent any occupant feeling always on display.

After such conscientious renovation of the summerhouse, only the bank over which

it is cantilevered bears the marks of the 30 intervening years. It was originally left wild, with just a path picked out in small stone slabs at the very edge of the river, but later when the restaurant was running - the slope was terraced and steps built down to a balcony looking over the water. This no doubt made sense when the building was in public, commercial use, but it compromises the original relationship between the summerhouse and its setting. The light touch on the earth has become more emphatic, the boundary between the built and the natural more blurred.

Despite this minor reservation, on a visit to the Goulding Summerhouse, one of Mies' comments in an interview still comes to mind. 'Nature should also live its own life... We should attempt to bring nature, houses and humans together in a higher unity." This dramatic little building above the Dargle River does exactly that.

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- 1 Neil Jackson, The Modern Steel House (Spon, 1996). Jackson explores in detail the post-war history of building on a slope
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- 3 C Norberg-Schulz, 'Ein Gesprach mit Mies van der Rohe', in Fritz Neumeyer, The Artless Word: Mies van der Rohe on the Building Art (MIT Press, 1991)

#### CREDITS

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Deirdre Conroy, Art and Space

MAIN CONTRACTOR

John Sisk and Son

## working details



# And the band played on...

The positive response of the local community was sweet music for Bexhill bandstand architect Niall McLaughlin

BY SUSAN DAWSON, PHOTOGRAPHS BY NICHOLAS KANE

The final moment in an almost continuous collaboration between architect Niall McLaughlin and the citizens of Bexhill-on-Sea, East Sussex, in the design of a new bandstand canopy, was one to remember.

'As the final section of the bandstand canopy was craned into place, a crowd of local people gave a spontaneous round of applause,' explains McLaughlin.

The canopy sits on the seaward terrace of the De La Warr Pavilion, listed Grade I and one of the finest examples of early Modern architecture. Designed in 1935 by the team of Erich Mendelsohn and Serge Chermayeff, it was the first welded steel frame building in Britain and is one of Mendelsohn's most significant projects. The Pavilion had suffered from neglect over the years but was saved from ruin by the efforts of local campaigners, and is now being restored in phases by John McAslan & Partners.

McLaughlin, who won the job in an RIBA competitive interview, involved children from six local primary schools in the outline design – they formed teams to design a bandstand and took part in sessions to discuss planning, structure and acoustics. The design process started with a relatively simple megaphone-like shape made from a curved A4 sheet of paper; this, it was found, would have distorted sound, so after consultation with acoustic engineer Paul Gilleron, it was given a

waved profile to break up the sound waves.

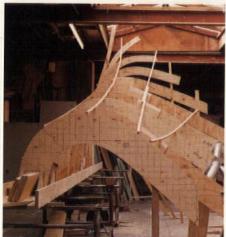
The terrace is used for tea dances during summer afternoons and the collaboration suggested the idea of the bandstand canopy as being like a dancer, moving about on the terrace to accommodate different types of performance or different weather conditions.

The result is a graceful, spread-winged canopy which, like a great seabird about to fly, seems barely to touch the ground; yet its shape is a practical shelter for bands, projects sound without distortion, and resists the fierce local winds which buffet the seafront. In very bad weather it can be turned 180 degrees and have its back to the wind.

The team investigated the possibility of using materials such as aluminium, steel or carbon fibre to construct the canopy, but was inhibited by the cost of the mould. Eventually, a relatively 'low-tech' construction, a combination of plywood and fibreglass was chosen, which fitted the cost guidelines and could be assembled in the builder's workshop. The canopy is









Orchestral manoeuvres: the canopy of the bandstand has been given a waved profile. It was constructed from curved ribs cut from plywood sheets clad with two layers of 4mm plywood sheet and glass fibre mat. The ribs are flitched to braced steel brackets to provide resistance to the elements

formed of plywood ribs and spars clad with two layers of 4mm plywood sheet and glass fibre mat that act compositely to form a semi-monocoque structure. The ribs taper from 75m at the front edge to 250mm at the rear, giving a delicate front edge to the canopy yet providing rigidity. To resist severe wind loads, the ribs are flitched to braced steel brackets concealed within the shell which are bolted to a steel chassis.

Four splayed legs limit rocking; the front two support curved plywood decks, rather like surfboards, and are laid in tiers for members of the band to stand on. As the surface of the terrace is also listed Grade I, a discreet docking plate anchors the structure to concrete foundations concealed below the terrace. The structure is mounted on a wheeland-bearing assembly taken from a standard forklift truck, which allows it to be moved to predetermined positions. This continues the dancing anology and means the show can go on, whatever the weather - music to the ears of the locals.

#### Utilising advanced computer modelling

Although the bandstand canopy is of relatively traditional construction, the detail design was established by means of advanced computer modelling techniques borrowed from the field of product design. Tim Lucas of Price & Myers 3D Engineering produced the original threedimensional form using AutoDesk Viz, a standard visualisation programme. When the decision to use a plywood semi-monocoque was taken, the design had to be translated to AutoCad in order to print out a set of 1:5 templates of the plywood ribs which the builder could then draw out at full size on a gridded plywood sheet.

To design the steel substructure, Lucas turned to SolidWorks, a software package used by industrial designers and introduced to him by Oliver Price, son of Price & Myers' founding partner. Products or components can be designed in 3D, visualised in realistic renderings and subjected to structural analysis by means of the Cosmos/Works plug-in. The programme also produces working drawings, which are automatically updated each time the 3D model is modified.

SolidWorks produces fabrication drawings which can be sent digitally to a fabricator's computerised production line, a process known as CADCAM (computer-aided design, computer-aided manufacture). Although this was not the case in the bandstand canopy fabrication, the programme offers the potential of simplifying design and fabrication process by the use of a single computer model.

#### **CREDITS**

#### ARCHITECT

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Price & Myers 3D Engineering: Tim Lucas **ACOUSTIC ENGINEER** Paul Gilleron Acoustics

MAIN CONTRACTOR Westside Design Workshops: Michael

## De La Warr Pavilion, Bexhill-on-Sea

## **Niall McLaughlin Architects**

D-shaped shackle to

600 x 600 x 1,000mm rc base below terrace

KEY ELEVATION

The bandstand canopy stands 5m high at its apex and extends for 8m across its wings. It is formed of plywood ribs and spars clad with two layers of 4mm plywood sheet, which act compositely to form a semi-monocoque structure. For ease of transport it was fabricated in three pieces and glued and bolted together on site.

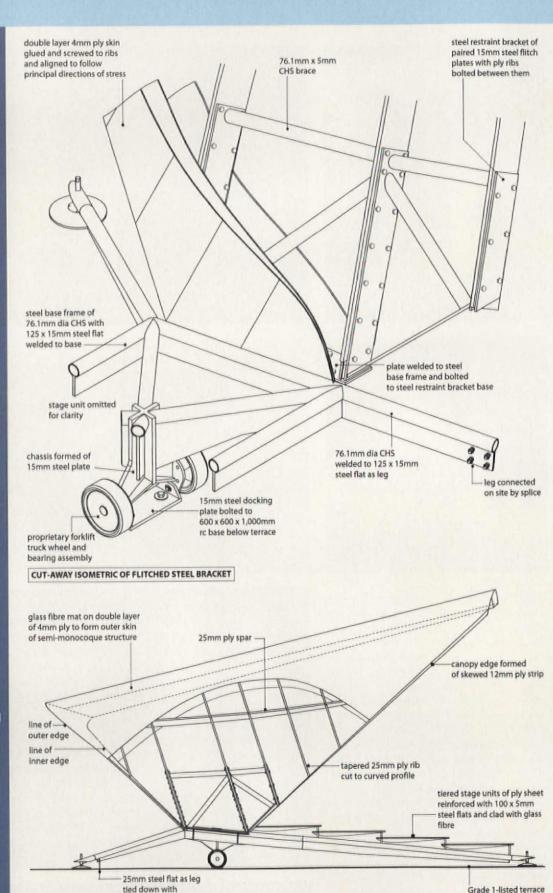
The 25mm curved plywood ribs, cut by hand in the builder's workshop, taper from 75m at the front edge to 250mm at the rear. They are spaced apart by 25mm plywood spars with staggered joints, which allow them to be screw-fixed at their ends to the ribs. The edges of the canopy are formed of 12mm plywood strips skewed to follow the curved profile.

The ribs curve down to the base on each side where they are flitched and bolted between the steel flats of a braced restraint bracket. The base of each bracket is bolted to the base frame which is formed of 76.1mm diameter CHSs welded to 125 x 15mm steel flats.

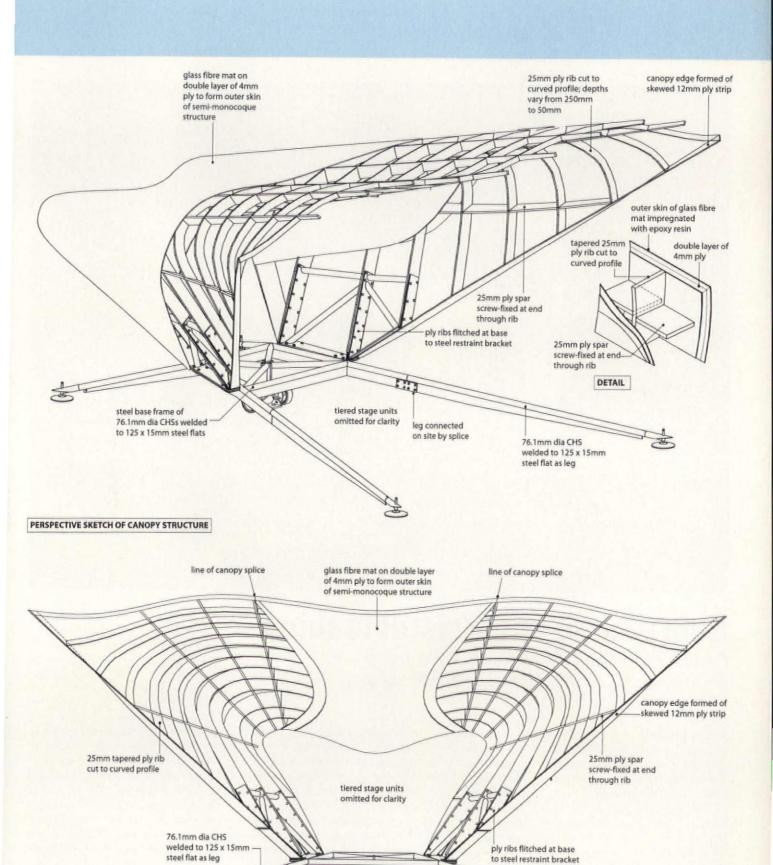
Two thin (4mm) sheets of plywood were laid over the carcass with staggered joints and aligned to follow principal directions of stress. They were glued and screwed to the ribs and coated with a glass fibre mat, impregnated with epoxy resin, to give additional strength and provide a waterproof finish. It was then filled, smoothed and sprayed matt white.

The canopy has four splayed steel legs, the front pair of which were spliced to the base frame on site; they rest on circular feet with threaded lugs to allow adjustment in height to accommodate uneven ground. A docking plate welded to the base frame is bolted to a concrete foundation concealed below the terrace.

Susan Dawson



11 July 2002



wheel and

docking plate

bearing assembly

steel base frame of 76.1mm dia CHSs welded

to 125 x 15mm steel flats



# Ship-shape and Bristol fashion

Creating a modern visitor centre while preserving an engineering masterpiece in an authentic setting

BY AUSTIN WILLIAMS

With interchanges becoming a modern preoccupation, it is interesting to consider that Bristol was an intermodal transport hub, in the truest sense, over 150 years ago.

The Victorian passion for engineering progress saw railways slash journey times across country and the revolution continued at sea with magnificent passenger steamers, the greatest of which was the SS Great Britain, built in 1843. She was the world's first iron-hulled, screw-propeller driven, steam-powered liner designed by Isambard Kingdom Brunel with Thomas Guppy, Christopher Claxton and William Patterson.

Above: computer image of the repaired dock with views through the waterline. Opposite top: the existing hull in dry dock propped along its length. Opposite middle: section through the proposal. Opposite bottom: the damaged keel

A journey from Paddington to Bristol on Brunel's Great Western Railway, which had been completed only two years earlier, would take three hours (instead of three days by carriage). On joining the ship at Bristol's portside, the traveller could then be in America in 14 days (instead of 50 days by sailing ship). Trips to Australia took just two months.

# Docklands development

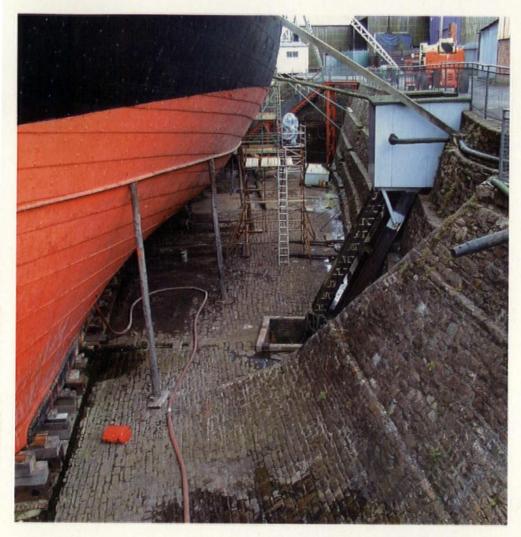
The SS Great Britain was built in her own specifically shaped dry dock (now a Grade II\*-listed structure) by the Great Western Steamship Company. At the time of her launch, she was

the largest ship in the world; 98m long, 15m wide and weighing 1,950 tonnes. Her propeller was 5m in diameter.

The ship had a relatively short - but adventurous - career, and was effectively abandoned at Port Stanley in the 1870s. One hundred years later, despite her parlous condition, she was refloated and brought home to Bristol. Currently, moves are afoot to renovate the ship and the surrounding docklands, and Julian Harrap Associates has pulled together a strategic plan of refurbishment, repair and transformation. Its report comprises a thorough condition survey of the vessel and dock, together with suggestions for remedial works; the provision of improved environmental protection; and design interventions to enhance the visitor experience.

# Water, water, everywhere

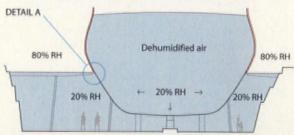
For a dry dock, the existing structure is incredibly wet, with ground water



leaching through the ashlar and random rubble walls. This has led to unsightly staining, algae growth and slippery surfaces, which may not have been an issue for working dockers but have led to some areas being closed to modern-day visitors because of health and safety concerns. The exposed conditions have also encouraged further deterioration of the ship's fabric.

Originally conceived as a 'stone boat', the dock has a cambered bottom and sloping sides to fit the basic shape of the ship design. However, this means that when the allowance for groundwater leaching through the sidewalls is stopped up (as is proposed by the remedial works) then the dry dock might begin to float, as the water table levels fluctuate. A series of perimeter drains are intended to alleviate the build up of water pressure.

Retaining the ship in its current location in the dry dock, Harrap proposes to close off the hull below a



section



sealed glass water line, where, 'instead of being a cool, dank space... it will be transformed into a temperate, dry controlled space', but in so doing, the essential authenticity of the dock walls will be retained. Visitors will still be allowed down to this level but by sealing the lower hull from the vagaries of the climate and maintaining an enclosed relative humidity of 15 per cent (+/-5 per cent), the ship will be protected against further deterioration.

The glass layer will further reflect the waterline by being washed with 50mm of flowing water to give the impression, from above, of being afloat. It wall also refract dappled light and shade for visitors below.

# Rust bucket

The original ship is a steel monocoque structure - incredibly thin in parts - fixed to a riveted steel frame and held together with steel struts and bracing. Probe tests reveal that the hull's steel plating varies in thickness between 22mm and 2mm (notwithstanding portholes and rust holes in the iron). This analysis has not been carried out over the whole ship, but a 2.4m wide strake near the front was chosen, to give a representative sample. The thinnest points correspond, in general, to 'the erosive action of oxygenated water at her waterline, and the tide in Sparrow Cove, where she lay scuppered for 33 years'.

The present resting place for the hull is provided by unsightly props and timber keel blocks, the latter of which have caused localised crushing to the keel.

Further to this, years of corrosion and decay – which have rotted many of the timbers and weakened the steel members – have reduced the lateral restraint and stability of the ship. This dictates that no new loads can be attached to the hull, meaning that the glass waterline/roof and the framework that supports the ship in situ has to be independent of her structure.

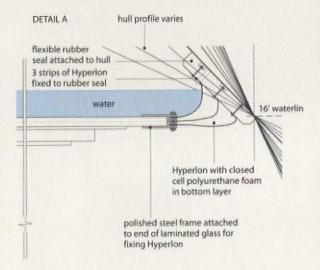
In conjunction with structural engineer Jane Wernick Associates, the structural integrity and performance of the ship design itself is being utilised to keep it upright. Notwithstanding the need for more sympathetic keel blocks, the ship will be laterally supported along her 5m

waterline, using horizontal props from the dockside to the hull.

Mindful of the incongruity of the existing struts holding the ship in place and the fact that columns supporting the glass waterline/roof might be too intrusive in such a narrow circulation space, the design team has resolved to minimise visible structural elements as much as possible, proposing cantilevered beams which will prop the ship and also carry the glass 'roof'.

The watertight seal between the glass and the hull is simple, complicated only by the three-dimensional interface geometry where the ship's hull twists. It relies on a sealed, bolted neoprene fixing capturing three strips of compressed neoprene that act as a triple failsafe to prevent water ingress from the pool above. The lower space between strips is filled with closed cell polyurethane foam and all layers are held within a proprietary polished steel glazing frame.

This watertight gasket is sized to cater for flash flood water levels as well as wind-blown waves. The washing action of the water above is intended to go some way to dispersing the solar gain to the void below. The horizontal glazing (comprising 12mm glass,



Detail of watertight seal between glass waterline and the resin-laminated to 6mm heat toughened glass), sits on the 300mm deep cantilever struts that support the ship and on intermediate toughened glass fins. The composite structure can take the weight of people for cleaning purposes only. As slender as possible, the beams only require mid-span supports where the distance from the ship to shore is greatest.

# Tincture of dock green

Even though the National Ship Committee has published SS Great Britain

in its Core Collection of the top 50 historic vessels, no statutory listing protection exists for ships, and Harrap has called for the SS Great Britain to be 'treated with the same degree of respect as a Grade I-listed building or scheduled ancient monument'.

As part of the overall schemeworks, the ship will be carefully restored to its former glory. Proposals for this work are at an early stage; analysis of more than 14 layers of paint, for example, are giving clues about the authentic colours of the ship in her original condition – indicating that dark greens and browns were used rather than the current black and white. Wrought iron decorations and timber figureheads will be reinstated from documentary evidence and the rigging, deck furniture, anchor chains, etc, will also be recreated.

In general, the survey indicates that, for all the lack of care and attention she has received during her lifetime, the shell of the ship is still structurally sound and capable of taking repairs. As the client continues to examine the architectural report, we need to remain optimistic that the design team will be allowed to implement their impressively detailed work.

## THE ARCHITECT'S ROLE

The shipbuilder builds not for aesthetic reasons, but in order... to sail on water; it is a matter of fact that the well-built ship will be beautiful, but it is not for the sake of making something beautiful that the shipbuilder goes to work.'

# Ananda Coomaraswamy - Indian art historian

It is that combination of utility and beauty which demands that the architect and the engineer cooperate in the repair and conservation of great ships. Shipyard repair is too utilitarian.

Conservators merely conserve.

Any treasured artefact requires detailed analysis to attribute cultural and engineering significance to alterations and repairs so that debate about risk to the structure or public safety can be conducted within a climate which fully endorses the cultural context.

The architect can mediate between the structural engineer and naval architect, whose combined inclination is to diagnose structural redundancy of the decaying fabric, currently held in a state of tenuous equilibrium. Why cradle a ship or add new internal framing when the monocoque of the hull can be gently reinforced to carry the light loadings demanded by museum uses?

The dynamic ship structure, exposed to the ceaseless battle with the ocean, has to be translated into a totally static artefact within the dry dock, and over-zealous repair to sustain a notional sea-going capability can damage the cultural value just as much as neglect.

The integration of new services in a maritime structure can readily contradict its integrity and legibility. Abstract performance criteria need to be modified to respond to the constraints of a historic ship. Fill the ship with ducts and structure and it is destroyed as an industrial archaeological artefact. It becomes a typical heritage boutique with the ephemeral falsework corrupting the original asset.

The establishment of three primary zones of appreciation is crucial. The forest of mast spars and rigging rising from the cambered deck of the iron-hulled ship; the interior of the hull, with its sepulchral light filtering through decks and bulkheads; and the dramatic below water space created by the introduction of a minimalist glass waterline plate over the rough walls of the dry dock in which the ship was created. Here, the curvaceous iron hull is the predominant element demanding attention.

Julian Harrap, Harrap Associates

## CREDITS

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Brown and Root: John Busby, John Abbott STRUCTURAL

# ENGINEER (GLASS WATERLINE PLATE)

Jane Wernick Associates: Jane Wernick, James Packer

# STRUCTURAL ENGINEER (DOCKSIDE BUILDINGS) Hockley & Dawson: Doug Murray IRON CONSERVATOR Eura Conservation: Robert Turner

## SERVICES ENGINEERS WSP South: Neville Rye, Anthony Davies DEHUMIDIFICATION SPECIALISTS HB Sorption Wheel Services: Syd Lankstead

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DESIGNERS
Robin Wade Design
Partnership
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CONTRACT COSTS

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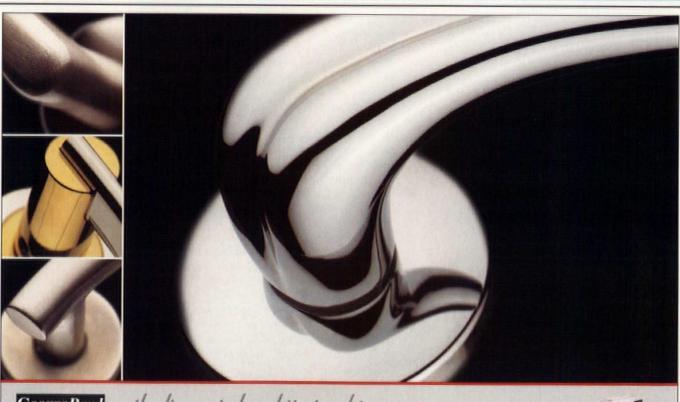








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# The brown, white and blue

Thanks to a court ruling, mesothelioma sufferers can now sue employers. But how much of a risk is asbestos?

## The fatal flaw

Further to the Astragal story on asbestos (AJ 23.5.02), the real scandal is not new EC directives about tighter regulations but the fact it has taken the asbestos industry nearly 100 years to come clean about the health risks.

In 1898, factory inspectors visited an asbestos works and linked the amount of dust in the air with the number of young women workers who were suffering epidemic levels of respiratory lung disease. No one did anything about it.

In 1931, the first Asbestos Regula-

"...the real scandal is not new EC directives about tighter regulations, but the fact it has taken the asbestos industry nearly 100 years to come clean about the health risks... Asbestos-related diseases in the UK kill 3,000 people a year"

tions were passed, regulating the amount of fibres in the air. People were beginning to die from airborne fibres; not just those who worked in mining and manufacturing but people who lived near the factory, children whose parents worked in the factory and wives who washed their husband's clothes. It would take a further 15 or more years before people started developing chronic illnesses for which there is no cure: blue asbestos causes mesothelioma; brown and white leads to asbestosis and lung cancer.

The breakthrough came in 1987 when lawyers working for Chase Manhattan Bank in New York linked deaths among NY construction workers and deaths among people who had worked in, and lived near, the factory – in Armley, Leeds –which manufactured the sprayed Limpet Asbestos.

One of the major problems of blue/crocidolite, brown/amosite and white/chrysotile is that the three main types cannot be identified by colour. Once used in building products, all types are white. Many products containing asbestos cannot be identified from appearance alone.

It was not until the UK was bound by EC directives on health and safety that we actually gained the protection that other countries had adopted many years before. Not only did the UK have less safe exposure levels, but we also imported asbestos that other countries had banned.

Asbestos-related diseases in the UK kill 3,000 people a year. Most of these are men who worked in the construction industry during the 1950s and '60s. That number could rise to 10,000 a year.

If reputable magazines such as the AJ carry such misleading information, is it any wonder that the government wants to impose a new head of ARB with special knowledge of health and safety?

Sam Webb, Canterbury

# Risk? What risk?

From a moral, or even judicial, standpoint (since Lord Bingham's revised ruling in the Fairchild case), the fact that workers who contracted mesothelioma from working with asbestos have received compensation, seems only fair and proper. This is probably not a point of contention. What should be argued against is the inflated level of anxiety about asbestos. In discussions on the topic, asbestos has become a generic byword for danger, resulting in (sometimes needless) expensive stripping out, or encapsulation, lest we suffer extreme health implications from mild exposure.

The British Asbestos Newsletter, (Issue 43, summer 2001), estimates that asbestos is present in 850,000 commercial properties, 400,000 flats and most houses built in the UK prior to 1985. But so what? All things considered, there need not necessarily be any health implication arising from this.

While visually it may be difficult to

differentiate between white, brown and blue asbestos, on discovering asbestos in a building the first course of action is not to strip it out but to send samples for analysis to confirm the nature of the problem (if any).

Unfortunately, even if it is shown to be the relatively stable chrysotile, brave is the client who decides to 'leave well alone' – as high-profile legal cases, and an increasingly litigious society, dictate that no one wants to take the responsibility of 'what if'.

Whatever the horrors of the asbestos industry in the past (as with other Victorian practices such as sending men down coal mines or boys up chimneys), the risks from white asbestos have been exaggerated. Mesothelioma deaths now are generally the consequence of severe exposures in heavy industries more

'The risks from white asbestos have been exaggerated... Mesothelioma deaths now are generally the consequence of severe exposures in heavy industries more than one or two generations ago'

than one or two generations ago. Experts vary on how long it takes for fibres to cause illness: the US Mesothelioma Information and Resource Group suggest 35-40 years; while Bill Callaghan of the Health and Safety Commission (HSC) estimates that it takes 60 years for the disease to manifest itself.

Given that Canada is the largest producer of asbestos, it is interesting to refer to McDonald's research\* which showed that of 11,000 workers studied, of whom 8,000 died during the study period, only 37 could be attributed to chrysotile mesothelioma. Importantly, no cases were detected in those workers with less than two years' severe daily exposure. These are low risks.

It is not the real implications of asbestos, but a 'know your rights' legal trawl for potential victims which has inflamed paranoia and uncertainty. The fact that not a single case of mesothelioma has been conclusively linked to chrysotile asbestos in this country should be a point of celebration. This does not mean that more research should not be carried out, in a rational way. But, at the moment, no evidence exists for it to receive such a high level of caution.

# Austin Williams, AJ

\* 'The 1891-1920 birth cohort of Quebec chrysotile miners and millers: mortality 1976-88', McDonald JC, Liddell FD, Dufresne A and McDonald AD, Br J Ind Med. 1993;60:1073

# Unhealthy odds

The danger from the release of asbestos fibres is something that many people in the building industry still fail to grasp, either from ignorance or a macho feeling that the whole issue has been greatly exaggerated. It is often argued that workers dying of lung disease were heavy smokers and it was that that was killing them.

There has been a continuous PR exercise to stress how white asbestos does not cause mesothelioma. This is, of course, true, although I seem to have read somewhere that some research has stated that the longer fibres of white asbestos could be a cause.

As the health and safety advisor at the Kent Institute of Art and Design, I noticed that every time there was some building work, asbestos was found – from sprayed Limpet asbestos round boilers and pipework to panels masquerading as plasterboard, or in some cases, pin-up board in studios. With the constant rearrangement of rooms and equipment, it was virtually impossible to prevent damage, with the subsequent risk of the release of fibres.

Often it is possible to 'manage' the asbestos. However, this requires a great deal of knowledge on the part of the management team running the properties.

Often an attitude of 'we'll cross that bridge when we come to it' prevails. At one estate, I was concerned at the possible danger to tenants, so I wrote to various medical experts and the BRE, but no one could, or would, say conclusively that asbestos in the home could kill the occupants. Then I found a tenant, a non-smoker, who had never

worked with asbestos, and who was dying from what his doctor suspected was asbestosis. After he died, the doctor wanted an autopsy but his wife did not, so the cause of his death was never established for certain.

I recommended that both these blocks had all the asbestos removed, be stripped down to the concrete core and steelwork, and then demolished.

Because of the strict interpretation of the Health and Safety at Work Act, some authorities would not even take steps to notify tenants about the dangers from damage to panels. This was most noticeable in hallways where prams and pushchairs had scraped along walls, exposing and releasing fibres at the very level where small children would breathe them in.

One of the provisos I made when I took on my new H&S role at KIAD

'Of course asbestos – all asbestos – can be dangerous. The difference between a cure and a poison is the size of the dose... The HSE tells us that white asbestos is a class 1 carcinogen – the euro coin is in the same group'

was that I undertook proper training in all aspects of H&S. The dangers from all types of asbestos to health have not been exaggerated. Indeed, I think they have probably been understated.

Sam Webb, Canterbury

# Where is evidence of harm?

As a researcher writing a book about asbestos for a PhD degree, I was once told that people who claim that chrysotile products are a danger to health fall into two groups: those who have not read or understood the scientific information; and those who hope to make a profit from it.

During the past seven years I have accumulated a vast amount of documentation about all aspects of the asbestos saga. However, one fact remains unaltered: the anti-asbestos groups steadfastly refuse to submit any creditable science or debate the

issue in public. In fairness to the many independent scientists, many of whom have been commissioned by the HSE, they have all cooperated brilliantly. They are as mystified as I am over the unwillingness of the authorities to publish these reports for public debate. Instead, we have to accept punitive and crippling costs from laws and procedures written with the use of junk science bought and paid for by the vested interests.

Of course asbestos – all asbestos – can be dangerous. The difference between a cure and a poison is the size of the dose. Chrysotile within our homes and commercial properties does not present any measurable risk to health. Of course, if irresponsible procedures are implemented, creating large amounts of breathable dust, then there are liable to be lung problems.

The HSE tells us that white asbestos is a class 1 carcinogen. While that is true, it has to be put into perspective: the euro coin — a nickel plated alloy—is in the same group.

A government briefing note on new asbestos regulations sent to MEPs says: 'The new proposals are likely to incur significant costs for British businesses in remedial measures, including compulsory building surveys of all commercial properties. There is strong evidence that both the EC directives and HSE regulations on this issue are based on flawed research.' [Document issued by the HSC dated 18.3.02, No 1593]

In the light of the growing public concerns about the high costs of these new proposals, with no benefit to health, we must have an independent debate. The HSE has clearly not done this. The 3,000 deaths from asbestos are not real ones, only a theoretical estimate. There is no record of any asbestos death from handling white asbestos products in the past 100 years.

Of even more concern is the information I have recently received about the selection of experts that have written the new laws. They all work for the industry that will profit from these new regulations and the HSE will not release any minutes of those meetings, or the names of the members.

John Bridle, technical consultant for the Asbestos Cement Product Producers Association (ACPPA)



# legal matters

# ⊕ .column

# Has the adjudication process been hijacked by the lawyers?

'It is not that

the lawyers

have hijacked

adjudication - the

government has

invited them along

to help fly the plane'

'The lawyers have hijacked adjudication just like they hijacked arbitration.' This is a familiar anti-lawyer mantra and, you might think, one with more than a grain of truth in it. Far be it for me to seek to defend my legal brethren, but closer analysis may suggest that there is another side to the story. Let's start with adjudication.

- Adjudication is a creature of statute, of legislative provisions, conjured by the government, not by the legal profession. The adjudication provisions of Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 were so uninformative as to how this statutory fledgling was going to take flight and save the construction industry from itself, that the more carefully worded provisions of the Scheme for Construction Contracts were required to plug many of the gaps.
- The industry was all in favour of this notion of quick, cheap justice until, of course, an ill-
- equipped tribunal with a poorly defined procedure made an unjustifiable finding against a blameless party requiring them, for example, to pay £3 million to a firm that was about to go into liquidation.
- Disaffected parties ran, inevitably, to their lawyers when their rights were violated and their profits threatened. Given the paucity of available information on which to advise clients, they were invari-
- ably obliged to go to court for the answer.
- The vast body of case law now available on adjudication is only there because the legislation did not foresee the circumstance arising.
- At the last government review of adjudication, the construction minister acknowledged that the courts were doing such a good job of shoring up the skimpy legislation that they should be encouraged to continue.

It is not that the lawyers have hijacked adjudication – the government has invited them along to help fly the plane. As for arbitration...

• The 1996 Arbitration Act now provides a complete, user-friendly code for the conduct of arbitrations. The Act was drafted by practising lawyers at the request of commercial clients. The Act's clear, no nonsense provisions, that enable arbitrators to get a grip of proceedings while

respecting the rights of the parties to agree how their dispute should be conducted, have been universally well received.

- Procedures are only as effective as those who operate them. Arbitrators with experience of legal procedures tend to be more adept at managing procedures to ensure the ultimate objective of avoiding delay and expense.
- A building dispute is only superficially about a building. It is really about the legal rights and obligations of those involved in its procurement.
   A good grasp of the legal principles of breach of contract, causation and recoverable damage is therefore an essential pre-requisite.
- If you want a lawyer to decide your construction arbitration, you may find it difficult to find one. The parties are, of course, free to agree on their arbitrator, but may be unaware of the choices. Well-known construction lawyers are

busy and do not come cheap, and not every dispute calls for a QC who is a professor in engineering. But how do you find a jobbing legal arbitrator?

The construction professional bodies have panels from which they appoint arbitrators. The most efficient and widely used is the RICS, which has numerous members with legal qualifications. Closer investigation reveals, however, that it has a limited

selection of arbitrators whose primary calling is that of a construction lawyer.

The RIBA fares worse. It does not retain lawyers on its arbitration panel unless they have an additional construction professional qualification and, as dual qualified lawyers are relatively rare, the list is very short. The solicitor and bar associations for the Construction Courts – TecSA and TecBAR respectively – can and do appoint lawyer adjudicators, but don't at present appoint arbitrators. The Chartered Institute of Arbitrators continues to appoint arbitrators from all professions, including lawyers, but is seldom named in construction contracts as the appropriate appointing body.

So, far from hijacking arbitration, the lawyers are held up in the departure lounge, hoping, against the odds, for their flight to be called.

Kim Franklin

# Are IT managers to blame for rise in warchalking?

Regular readers may remember my column on the topic of wardriving (AJ 21.3.02). This activity involves geeks driving around the world's financial districts with Pringles cans wired to their laptops surreptitiously harvesting the contents of the computer networks of great corporations. Now word comes of warchalkers.

Readers of Just William will be familiar with the secret signs drawn by traditional itinerants outside the houses of people most likely to stump up a few bob or the odd sandwich. Warchalking is the net-nerd equivalent. It seems that if you watch the pavement anywhere in the Square Mile you will see symbols chalked outside certain buildings.

This indicates that their occupants have not got round to installing security on their wireless network. Check it out – and some additional links – at www.vnunet.com/News/113055. And

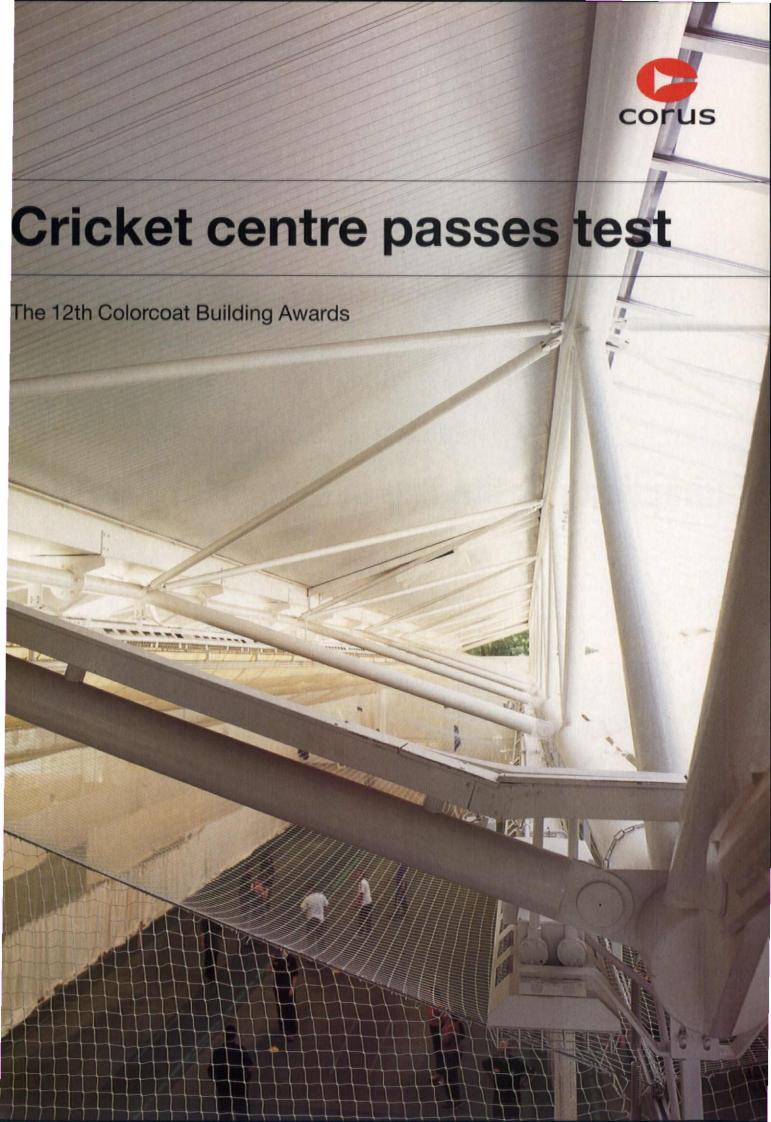
yes, since I first saw this on the
DesignArchitecture newsletter, I would
just now nip out and inspect the
pavement outside your office. You
subscribe to the newsletter,
incidentally, at www.design
architecture.com

I was set to search for some parallel experiences to mine with BT broadband. But they tumbled into my lap. There's the MD of a multimedia company in the August issue of PC Pro who never managed to connect, could not get through to the support desk, managed to find out how to cancel and was then presented with a demand to pay up for the full 12 months of the contract.

There are also several BBC News Online stories along the same lines '... risk of serious injury from repeatedly striking your head against a wall in frustration,' at http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/sci/tech/newsid\_2068000/2068204.stm.

Click on 'BT, broadband and me', outlining the frustrations of signing up for ADSL. In the meantime, Britain is at the bottom of the European and American broadband league.

sutherland.lyall@btinternet.com







# Simplicity is the key in Colorcoat Awards

Put two architects, a structural engineer, a university professor and an architectural publisher in front of 100 buildings and you are likely to get some pretty robust comments on design. So it proved at the judging for the 12th Colorcoat Building Awards.

The architects were Rab Bennetts, a past chair of the RIBA competitions group, and Paul Monaghan of Allford Hall Monaghan Morris. The engineer was Hanif Kara of the Adams Kara Taylor partnership. The professor (also an engineer) was Phil Jones, chair in architectural science at the Welsh School of Architecture. And the publisher was Paul Finch OBE, editorial director of *The Architects' Journal*. No shrinking violets there, then; and certainly no shortage of stimulating discussion and forthright opinion.

# **Aesthetic properties**

An eclectic range of buildings was put before them, ranging from very large schemes like the Odyssey Arena in Belfast to intimate projects such as a barn conversion in Yorkshire. All featured paint-coated steel in the building envelope: the competition is sponsored by Corus, maker of Colorcoat, the UK's most widely specified steel cladding material. Over the past 18 years, the Colorcoat Building Awards have played a major role in getting metal cladding recognised for its aesthetic as well as its functional

properties: at the beginning of the judging, Rab Bennetts observed: 'There's a lot to play for with these materials.'

The quality of many of the public buildings found little favour. Looking at one of the schools entered, Paul Finch considered it 'one of the few educational buildings we've seen that hasn't been repulsive', and the Clore Tikva School, Ilford, by the Tooley & Foster Partnership, went on to win a commendation. During the discussion that followed Finch's remark, the panel all agreed that they had seen 'quite a few depressing schools that are going to fail, like we were building 30 years ago'.

By general consensus, Private Finance Initiative (PFI) schemes were thought to be grinding down design quality. 'The case for cheap and fast diminishes design quality, and poor designs go through on the nod,' said one judge.

Another area to come in for robust criticism was the retail park. 'The challenge is to design a retail park that actually has some merit,' said Hanif Kara. The main point of concern was the proliferation of giant entrance canopies – 'all this fussy stuff on the front, urbanism gone to pieces'. The panel observed that a lot of people think metal cladding means cheap and nasty, so they add gimmicks, when simple, restrained design is all that is needed. Rab Bennetts

summed up: 'Utter restraint gets you a long way.' Everyone agreed that for Colorcoat as a material, simplicity is the key.

# Sardine tin

It was not just the canopies, but doors in general that caught the attention of the judges. Why not integrate entrance closures with the cladding – fold it, roll it or curl it like a sardine tin, they said. Right on cue, along came a scheme where the clever design of the doors did much to win it the Innovation Award. And the Indoor Cricket Centre for Warwickshire County Cricket Club, by David Morley Architects and Bryant Priest Newman, went on to take the top prize, the main trophy and £10,000.

Comment flowed fast and free. 'Interesting use of colour, and who would have thought that a simple roof like that would cover so large and complex a building.'

'Most of the entries use profiled sheet – seems like the love affair with flat panels has lost its passion.'

'The bigger the shed, the more likely it is to be designed by technicians, not designers.'

Finally, decisions had to be made. The field was whittled down to just 38. Then to 25. And finally to 17 considered worthy of nomination. From those, the judges chose the five category winners and the best overall. Congratulations to all concerned!

Published in association with

a) the architects' journal

For more details about the Colorcoat range of steel cladding materials, visit www.colorcoat-online.com,

call 01633 222211 or write to Corus Colors, Shotton Works, Deeside, Flintshire CH5 2NH.

# £2,000 Sustainable development award

# Sponsored by RIBA Journal

Bauman Lyons Architects for Longside Barns at Yorkshire Sculpture Park, Bretton, near Wakefield

A £1.5 million conversion of three barns into a sculpture gallery, creative industry studios and cafe, opened to the public in September 2001 with an exhibition of works by Sir Anthony Caro. The judges enthused over this one: 'Terrific re-use of the buildings. This scheme makes a great point.' The point, of course, being that modern steel technologies are readily adaptable to sensitive refurbishment and re-use.

The 615m2 gallery is lit by skylights set in a roof of Colorcoat HPS200 steel, a very attractive example of the appropriate use of materials. There is a clerestory on either side, and a flush panoramic window across the full width of the facade which faces across a valley. One off-centre bay window extends upwards, bringing views of the sky in addition to the broad sweep of the hills. This is a building, said the judges, that is perfectly comfortable in its context - with the new glazing, roofing and rendered walls adding refinement to what still looks to be a utilitarian building, whose former agricultural role is not in doubt.

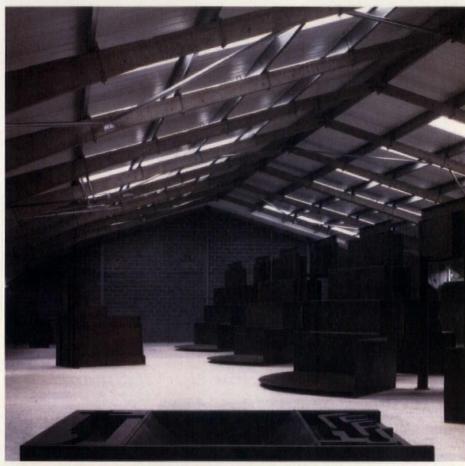
Profiler/panel manufacturer: Ward Building Components Cladding contractor: Ashbourne Roofing Contractors



Panoramic views across the valley



The original barns before conversion



Light enters the new sculpture gallery through skylights set in a roof of Colourcoat HPS200 steel

# Runner-up certificate

Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council Estates & Architectural Services Division for Astral Court, Baglan Energy Park, South Wales. An earlier building on the same development, by the same team, was successful in the previous Colorcoat Building Awards.

Astral Court might not be a 'fabulous-looking building', but its environmental features are creditable: its energy efficiency has been recognised by the award of an Excellence under the Building Research Establishment's Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM), and the large building shows careful attention to natural ventilation and lighting.

Profiler/panel manufacturer: European Profiles Cladding contractor: Pinnacle Structures

# Other nomination

Tony Mullen Architects for Bracken Court, Dublin. The judges said: 'If this were in Rotterdam, we'd all be cooing over it.' Sadly,



Baglan Court is environmentally excellent

however, the fact that it has air conditioning put this stylish refurbishment out of contention for the sustainability award. Profiler/panel manufacturer: Tegral Metal Forming Cladding contractor: H & E Costellos Roofing

# £10,000 Overall Awards Winner

Sponsored by Akzo Nobel Nippon Paint and BASF Coatings

# £2,000 Innovation Award

Sponsored by The Architects' Journal

David Morley Architects and Bryant Priest Newman for the Warwickshire County Cricket Club Indoor Cricket Centre, Edgbaston

'This is a very clever building,' said Rab Bennetts. 'It uses Colorcoat like an expensive material, not a budget material. There are really very few limits on this material if it's used intelligently, as it is here.'

The judges had no hesitation in making this scheme the overall winner, as well as handing it the Innovation Award. 'This really sets an example. We've seen plenty of nicely done cladding today – but this is great,' they said.

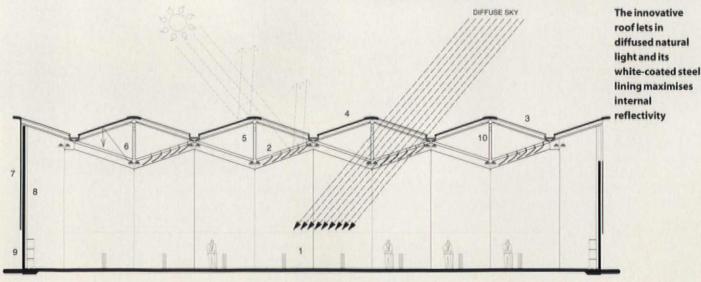
The innovative Colorcoat roof oversailing both the playing area and the pavilion attracted much favourable comment. It is cleverly engineered to let in diffused natural light, with an inner lining of white-coated steel to maximise internal reflectivity. The judges were lavish in their praise: 'Shape, light, everything's considered.'

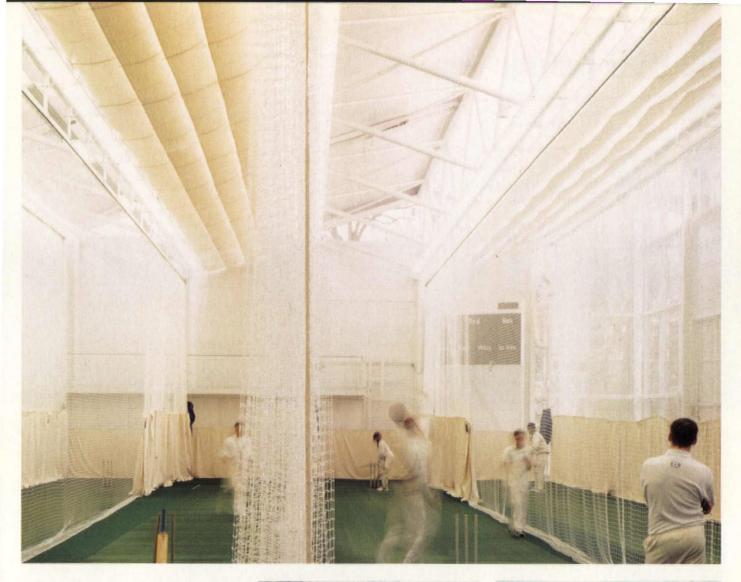
Large horizontally folding doors clad in coated steel can be opened up on warm days and for special functions. They also provide an elegant enhancement to the design integrity of the building.

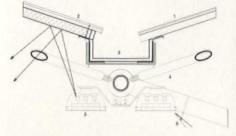
This is a low-energy, low-maintenance building, carefully and stylishly designed, eminently fit for purpose, and full of thoughtful touches. The playing area has support accommodation integrated into an indoor pavilion, which gives views down the line of play, and the profiled coated steel wall cladding nicely evokes the image of cricket pads.

Profiler/panel manufacturer: Kingspan Building Products Cladding contractor: Unique Industrial Roofing









The cricket school is full of thoughtful touches







# Runner-up certificate: Innovation Award

Mason Richards Partnership for McDonald's Restaurant, Redditch. The fast-food company is famous for its rapid construction techniques but at Redditch has also taken a new and contemporary approach to the design of an outlet. 'Great,' said one of the judges, 'a new way of doing McDonald's!'

Profiler/panel manufacturer:
Euro Clad

Cladding contractor: AEP (Steel Fabrications)

# £2,000 Colour Award

Sponsored by Akzo Nobel Nippon Paint

Wilson Architecture for Plot 1, Blarney Business Park, County Cork, Republic of Ireland



Despite some argument about the fenestration (which the entry brief described as 'randomly inset into the facade'), this signature project for a 28ha business park in a scenic area outside Cork city won over the panel with its finely judged use of colour. The intention was to replace the hedgerow with a curtain of colour-coordinated metal panels, the final selection being Svelte Grey, Olive Green, Moorland Green and Meadowland from the Colorcoat HPS200 standard range of 27 colours. The vertical profiles of the cladding echo the vertical form of adjacent trees and hedges.

The building is stepped on profile; this, together with the so-called random fenestration, breaks down the mass of a large-scale building, allowing it to sit very comfortably in its rural setting.

Profiler/panel manufacturer:

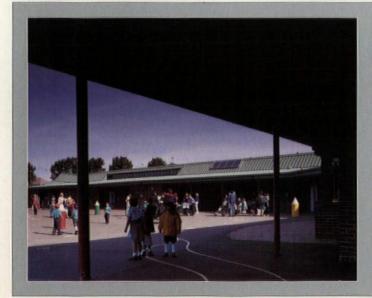
Kingspan Insulated Panels

Cladding contractor:

Multi-Roofing Systems



Finely judged coloured panels replace a hedgerow with an equivalent palette



# Runner-up certificate

The Tooley & Foster Partnership for Clore Tikva School, Ilford, Essex. The judges commented that the bold use of colour on the roof transforms the project: a simple application that creates a big impact.

Profiler/panel manufacturer: Ward Building Components Cladding contractor: Kelsey Roofing Industries

# Other nominations

Chetwood Associates for Project Image, Kodak, Hemel Hempstead.

Profiler/panel manufacturer: Kingspan Building Products Cladding contractor: Hathaway Roofing

WA Fairhurst & Partners (Engineers) for the Power House, St Kilda, Scotland.

Profiler: Ward Building Components Cladding contractor: Isleburn Structural

# £2,000 Detailing Award

Sponsored by Roofing, Cladding & Insulation magazine

Wellwood Roofing Services for the Versalift crane mounting factory and offices, Burton Latimer



The detailing award goes to the cladding contractor, not to the architect. But the judges made a special point of praising Scott Tallon Walker Architects for a building that displays 'the ideal Colorcoat aesthetic', and one which emphasises the point that for Colorcoat, simplicity is the key.

Scott Tallon Walker, incidentally, won the Profiled Sheet category in the previous

Colorcoat Building Awards for its Fyffes banana-ripening building in Livingston, Scotland. Like that one, the 3,000m2 Versalift building uses horizontal steel cladding in Colorcoat to considerable effect.

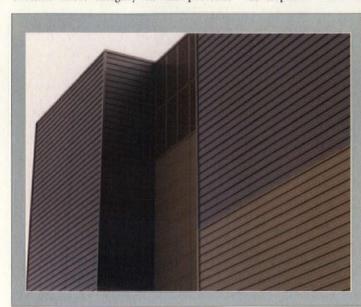
Rather than bury the small amount of office content within the large factory box, the offices have been pulled out slightly from the main building. This reduces the scale of the development when viewed from the nearby main road. But the real achievement of the scheme is in its attention to detail - simple but rigorous detailing has resulted in an elegant and extremely functional modern building.

# Profiler/panel manufacturers:

Corus Building Systems European Profiles Euro Clad

## Architect:

Scott Tallon Walker Architects



# Runner-up certificate

SIAC Construction for the Merck Sharp & Dohme pharmaceutical production building, Clonmel, County Tipperary. The judges praised the simple, clean lines and shapes, and commended the fact that no pipework had been allowed to penetrate the external skin.

Profiler/panel manufacturer: Kingspan Insulated Panels Architect: Wilson Architecture

# Other nominations

Prince Cladding BV for the Odyssey Arena, Belfast. Profiler/panel manufacturer: ame facades Architect: MHB Design and Consarc Design Group

Valent Roofing for Trafford Ecology Centre, Manchester. Profiler/panel manufacturer: SpeedDeck Building Systems Architect: Bareham Meddings Architects

# £2,000 Profiled Metal Award

Sponsored by BASF Coatings

O'Riordan Staehli Architects (ORSA) for the Merchants Group Call Centre, Cork

The judges' decision to choose a different winner for each category, plus the large number of entries using profiled cladding, led to considerable debate over this award. In the end, the choice of winner and runnerup was finely balanced, with O'Riordan Staehli just edging ahead of BDP Dublin.

The judges commended the use of varying cladding profiles (all in Colorcoat Celestia) for the Merchants Group Call Centre. The subdivision of the profiled sheets into panels articulates the elements of the building, making a sophisticated statement that enhances the image and profile of the whole.

Profiler/panel manufacturer: Tegral Metal Forming Cladding contractor: Hern Roofing & Cladding



At Merchants Group Call Centre, the cladding has been used in a way that articulates the elements of the building





# Runner-up certificate

BDP Dublin for the Smurfit/News International Press, Kells, County Meath. The panel appreciated the way in which the cladding is used to reduce the bulk of a building that is 130m long by 14m wide and 22m high.

Profiler/panel manufacturer: Tegral Metal Forming Cladding contractor: RS Group

# Other nominations

Watson & Batty Architects for Royal Mail West Yorkshire Distribution Centre. Profiler/panel manufacturer: Ward Building Components Cladding contractor: Keyclad

Shuttleworth Picknett & Associates LLP for the Suncrest Fire Surrounds production warehouse and offices, Peterlee.

Profiler/panel manufacturer:

Come Profiler Surtone Profiler Metal

Corus Building Systems Precision Metal Forming

Cladding contractor: Donkin Roofing

# diary

# London

New Designers 2002 11-14 July. At the Business Design Centre, 52 Upper St, N1. Details 020 7359 3535. American Beauty Until 13 July. American Minimalist works at Annely Juda Fine Art, 23 Dering St, W1. Details 020 7629 7578.

**The Uncanny Room** 19 July-25 August. The darker side of the domestic realm' – an exhibition at Pitshanger Manor, Mattock Lane, E5. Details 020 8567 1227.

David Adjaye Friday 19 July, 20.00. An Architecture Foundation discussion with Rowan Moore at Toyo Ito's Serpentine Gallery Pavilion. Seats are free – no need to book.

AA Projects Review 2002 Until 2 August. At the AA, 36 Bedford Sq, WC1. Details 020 7887 4000.

Julia Farrer: Towers & Bridges Until 2 August. An exhibition at the Eagle Gallery, 159 Farringdon Rd, EC1. Details 020 7833 2674.

Sittinghourne Cultural Centre Ideas
Competition Until 3 August. An
exhibition at the RIBA, 66 Portland
Place, W1. Details 0906 302 0400.
Hong Kong: A City on the Move Until
15 August. An exhibition at the RIBA

15 August. An exhibition at the RIBA, 66 Portland Place, W1, with a discussion on 12 July, 18.30. Details 0906 302 0400.

Rene Daniels and Karin Ruggaber Until 17 August. Paintings and sculpture 'with clear references to space, light and architecture! At Bloomberg Space, 50 Finsbury Sq, EC2. Details 020 7330 7500.

Till Exit Until 1 September. An architectural installation at Matt's Gallery, 42 Copperfield Rd, E3. Details 020 8983 1771.

**50/50: Crowning Achievements: Future Prospects** *Until 12 September.* An exhibition at the Building Centre, 26 Store St, WC1 (020 7692 6209).

England's Lost Houses Until 21 September. An exhibition drawn from the archives of Country Life at Sir John Soane Museum, Lincoln's Inn Fields, WC2 (020 7405 2107).

**Gio Ponti** *Until 6 October*. An exhibition at the Design Museum, Shad Thames, SE1 (020 7940 8790).

# Eastern

The Eco-Friendly Historic Building Tuesday 23 July. A craft day at Cressing Temple, nr Witham. Details 01245 437672.

Ben Nicholson: Drawings and Painted Reliefs 27 July-22 September. An exhibition at Kettle's Yard, Castle St, Cambridge. Details 01223 352124. Historic Barn Conversions Thursday 22 August. A one-day seminar at



# **PUT THE FLAGS OUT**

Bad news for republicans – a new exhibition at the National Monuments Record Centre features 'the celebrations, pageantry and commemorative structures which mark Royal coronations and jubilees'. Shown above is Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee in 1897. 'A Royal Celebration' is at Kemble Drive, Swindon, until 29 September. Details 01793 414797.

Cressing Temple, nr Witham. Details 01245 437672.

Construction Law Summer School 2-4 September. A three-day event (worth16 CPD hours) at New Hall College, Cambridge (01932 893852).

# East Midlands

Working at Heights Wednesday 24 July. A free seminar at ESS Shorco's new training centre in Wellingborough (0800 652 6603).

# Northern

**Are You Sitting Comfortably?** 

Until 28 August. An 'interactive seating exhibition' at Belsay Hall, Northumberland. Details 01661 881 636.

# North West

Simon Hudspith Thursday 25 July. A lecture at CUBE, 113 Portland St, Manchester. Panter Hudspith's winning Lincoln museum scheme is curently on show (0113 234 1335). Cultural Impact 2002 30-31 July. A two-day conference on architecture, tourism and urban development. At Liverpool. Details 0161 443 0100. Northern Exposure Until 20 August. An 'innovative' presentation of work by selected practices in the north west region. At CUBE, 113 Portland St, Manchester (0161 237 5525).

# South Eastern

Chris Drury 21 July-22 September. An exhibition of works made from natural materials at the De La Warr Pavilion, Bexhill-on-Sea. Details 01424 787900.

Timber Framing From Scratch 23-29 September. A hands-on course at the Weald & Downland Museum, Singleton, Chichester. Details Diana Rowsell 01243 811464.

Langlands & Bell at Petworth Until 29 September. An exhibition in Turner's studio at Petworth House, Petworth, West Sussex. Details 01798 342207.

# Southern

Douglas Allsop: Seven Sequential
Spaces 26 July-6 October. A series of
installations at Southampton City
Art Gallery, Civic Centre,
Southampton (0123 8083 2769).
Out of Line Until 1 September.
Drawings from the Arts Council
Collection at Artsway, Station Rd,
Sway, Details 01590 682260.

# Wessex

Part L Compliance Seminar Friday 19
July. A half-day NHER seminar at
Bristol. Details 01908 672787.
Juha Leiviska Until 2 August. An
exhibition at the Architecture
Centre, Narrow Quay, Bristol. Details
0117 922 1540.

Information for inclusion should be sent to Andrew Mead at The Architects' Journal at least two weeks before publication.

**Richard Long** *Until 22 September.* An exhibition at the New Art Centre, Roche Court, East Winterslow, Salisbury. Details 01980 862447.

# West Midlands

The Effective Management of Fast-Track Projects Tuesday 16 July. At Birmingham. Details 020 7222 8891. Part L Compliance Seminar Thursday 18 July. A half-day NHER seminar at Birmingham. Details 01908 672787.

# Yorkshire

Wakefield Summer School 2-4 August. Led by Will Alsop and Irena Bauman. At the Orangery, Wakefield. Details 01924 215550.

The Object Sculpture Until 1 September. An exhibition at the Henry Moore Institute, 74 The Headrow, Leeds (0113 246 7467).

# Scotland

The Great Divide Until 27 July. An environmental exhibition at the Fruitmarket Gallery, 45 Market St, Edinburgh. Details 0131 225 2383. Compass New Generation Show 2002

Until 7 August. At the Compass
Gallery, 178 West Regent St,
Glasgow and the Pentagon Business
Centre, Washington St, Glasgow.
Details 0141 221 6370.

The Alchemy of Light Until 7
September. An exhibition at the
Hunterian Art Gallery, 82 Hillhead St,
Glasgow. Details 0141 330 5431.

# Wales

Julia Brooker 12 July-23 August.
Paintings at the CBAT Gallery, Bute
St, Cardiff (supported by Powell
Dobson Partnership Architects).
Details 029 2048 8772.

Welsh School of Architecture End of Year Show Until 20 July. At the Old Library, Trinity St, Cardiff. Details 029 2087 4430.

# Northern Ireland

Memorials Until 18 July. Photographs of public memorials by Peter Richards at Belfast Exposed, 44 King St, Belfast. Details 028 9023 0965.

# International

UN Studio: Ben van Berkel/Caroline Bos 1987-2002 Until 15 September. An exhibition at the NAI, Rotterdam. Details 003110 4401200.

Image, Use and Heritage: The Reception of Architecture of the Modern Movement 16-19 September. The Seventh International Docomomo Conference takes place in Paris (contact.adcep@wanadoo.fr)

the architects' journal 45

# review

# **Making a statement**

**PHIL GRIFFIN** 

## **Northern Exposure**

At CUBE, 113 Portland Street, Manchester until 20 August

Graeme Russell, director of CUBE, says that the brief to the 10 contributors to this exhibition asked them to unlock, in some way, the creative processes that inform their work. An exercise in demystification, then, which is Russell's thing – he is constantly trying to take CUBE to a broader public while still keeping his architects happy. David Hands and John Novak of the University of Salford are guest curators, and the ambition is that 'Northern Exposure' becomes biennial, with different curators for each show.

Hands and Novak offered each of their creatives a three cubic metre pavilion, and the opportunity to show a short video about themselves within the space. Arkheion invited clients and collaborators to say to camera why they think the practice is tops. Sagar Stevenson drove a motorcycle-combination around the streets of Manchester's Ancoats and Northern Quarter, filmed the buildings and the people, and cut the footage to Jonathan Richman and Roger Miller. This exhibition mix is entertaining on a number of levels.

'Northern Exposure' exhibits 10 'emergent' practices; and you may need some clarification. Emergent means 'new' – Total Architecture's business cards are hardly dry



City masterplans on show in Urbed's area

yet – but it also means 'established in the north-west, and now being recognised further afield' (OMI, Urbed and Landscape Projects have been practising for years). In the future, it might be helpful if the rubric was a little more defined. Meanwhile, if you bear in mind that what you see here is, broadly speaking, the work of practices whose turnover and CV may not be the greatest, but who claim creative integrity to be paramount, you will not be far off.

The exhibition is a tight fit. The route begins with Arkheion on the ground floor, and ends with Sagar Stevenson in the basement. Arkheion almost closes the show before it opens. You enter its pavilion across an arching glass bridge. The practice came out of the Urban Splash in-house design team, and images of its previous projects, mostly warehouse-to-loft conversions, are printed on shower curtaining. The enclosure is suffocating, making *Psycho* feel like the softer option.

Next is interior designer Judge Gill, which has done various bars, clubs and shops in the north-west, and which here creates an enclosure of heavy chromium-steel pipes, suspended like wind-chimes, which you must enter to view a moody video, which resembles a parade of witnesses on *Crimewatch*. The pipes have got various things encapsulated within them, but I was still queasy from the shower curtain, and found them intimidating.

OMI presents a steel-wired cat's cradle that snares small tags, each naming a creative influence, such as Lego and Le Corbusier. Its amusing day-in-the-life-of-the-practice video features Mr Thomas's Chop House, a particularly fine Manchester pub, and helped me over the trauma of the curtain and the pipes.

Urbed shows its Brighton and Bristol masterplans, and a nifty overhead projection. Arca thoughtfully offers an assemble-theperspex-shapes, game-for-the-kids option. Shed KM (with The Collegiate and The Matchworks in Liverpool) is the second practice here to demonstrate the importance of Urban Splash as an imaginative client in





Each of the 10 practices in the exhibition has been given a free hand in the treatment of its allocated space. Above left: Judge Gill's suspended pipes

the region. (Total Architecture is the third.) Landscape Projects' pavilion is as ordered, thoughtful and well presented as you would expect of such an experienced set-up.

Wilkinson Evans Jeffries 'expresses' a prize-winning scheme for a Dutch nursery that, it seems, has been a long time coming. The pavilion is lined with giant tulip wallpaper, which may be clichéd, but will easily hook you in.

Finale: Sagar Stevenson and its motorbike video, which must be viewed from inside a motorbike caravan. This cheeky 1950s mini-Airstream-like-trailer is as cute as Doris Day. Inside it is a *Just William* den, lined with architects' pin-ups — Flatiron, Guggenheim — and on-the-road sketches.

Le Corbusier's journals this is not, but neither are these boys out to change the world, or even earn a living. They send you out with a smile on your face, rather than with an extended CV and three client references stuffed into your hand.

Once again Russell has introduced a show into CUBE that extends the repertoire. Like all true originals, 'Northern Exposure' now exists to be improved upon. So, in addition to defining the term 'emergent north-west architecture and design practices' a little more clearly, future curators should cap the budget, not just the volume, of each pavilion.

That done, we can look forward to enjoying the sequel at least as much as the original.

Phil Griffin is a freelance writer



Above: tulip time with Wilkinson Evans Jeffries

# In the mind's eye

**NEIL PARKYN** 

Realms of Impossibility: Air / Realms of Impossibility: Ground / Realms of Impossibility: Water

By C J Lim. Wiley-Academy, 2002. Each volume £14.99

The hand shoots up, the eyes are bright, the keenness unmistakable. We can all recall a fellow student or two whose deftness and devotion were hard to bear on a hungover morning, but who were singlemindedly set fair for the Best Portfolio prize. Nothing wrong in a well-tuned line, of course, yet as the Russian spymaster reminded his glum chum in Frankenheimer's *Manchurian Candidate*, 'Always with a little humour, my dear Zilkov!'

Zeal and zip on this scale seem often to survive into later life. In the case of this triad of volumes from the mouse of C J Lim – visiting professor at the 'Mac', unit master at the Bartlett, and a

flourishing footnote in architectural research – the assault on several of your senses at once can initially prove daunting, even unwelcome. Faced with fevered productions such as this, the great temptation is to reach down the Banister Fletcher or cuddle up with Auguste Choissy. These are not pages to be savoured in repose.

Call it coincidence or design, recent 'think pieces' on architecture and urbanism tend to arrive in user-unfriendly packaging, calling for muscle power in the case of Koolhaas (S,M,L,XL) or some deft wrist work to tackle Lim's three, very floppy and slithery paperbacks. Aside from the attention-grabbing affectation of a totally lower-case universe, the blocks of italicised text set solid and frequent instructions to rotate or upend the book, there remains the strong impression that here is a CD, DVD or whatever languishing as the printed page, imprisoned between covers and earthbound while some of its contents strive to soar. Not for the first time, format is fighting function.

The author's avowed intent, as well as his subtitle, is a 'celebration of unlikely things in a likely world', a quest which takes him across terrain already well travelled by other literary and graphic pilgrims. All the usual suspects are here: a sprinkling of Hadid; lashings of mysterious lines; and some of NASA's choicest hardware; not forgetting the obligatory 'fascinating facts' – enough to silence any

precocious schoolboy nephew.

But what does it add up to, or is indeed any ultimate sum of the parts intended? In perusing all this disparate material, some of Lim's readers may feel that the pages have been composed with a view to the author being thought of as more than 'just windswept and interesting' (to borrow Billy Connolly's immortal phrase). Certainly the juxtapositions and chance

meetings of architecture, cinema and literature in these pages do give pause for thought, but they are all too often mired in muddy graphics and clever-clever

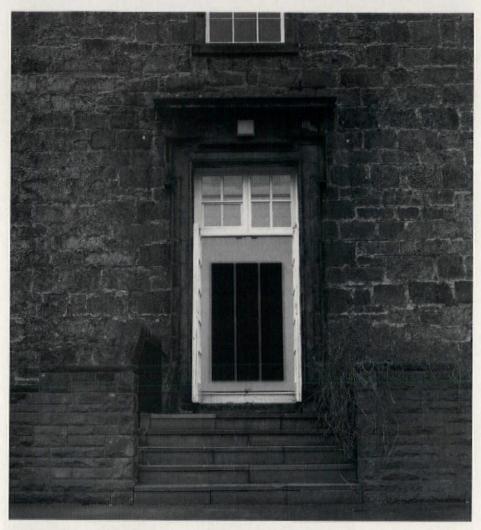
typography.

Yet the volumes are not without tantalising conceits and fancies, downloaded from the author's wide reading and fevered imagination. Several of the items involve a cast surely more comfortable in the pages of Wallpaper\* specifically, a well-presented Eurocouple called Marianne and Peter, whose edgy hobbies include 'border hunting', in which one half of their hotel double bed lies in France and the other in Switzerland, thus prompting musings on the nature of boundary conditions (much as a pair of half pints might straddle the Yorkshire/Lancashire border, but not immediately provoke topological concerns).

It is reassuring then, in this context, to see the author pay his dues to earlier urban visionaries. The influence of Archigram is acknowledged, as are the film-makers who have provided much of the imagery to form what the author describes as 'cities of our mind's eye'. References and cross-references resound.

But just as Archigram managed magically to create a fully formed – and surprisingly cheerful – future, armed only with Rapidographs and Letratone (remember that?), or Italo Calvino shape with words alone an imaginary urbanism in his masterpiece, *Invisible Cities*, so we are faced in this trilogy with the triumph of technique over content.

Neil Parkyn is a London-based architect and town planner who heads the consultancy Huntingdon Associates



# **Deceptive simplicity**

**NEIL CAMERON** 

**Alan Charlton** 

At Inverleith House, Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh, until 28 July

It was the American painter Ad Reinhardt who coined the phrase 'One surface, one colour', brilliantly encapsulating the purist, reductionist tendencies established by the Russian avant-gardists Aleksandr Rodchenko and Kasimir Malevich in the years following the October Revolution of 1917. Establishing these figures as artistic ancestors of Alan Charlton is not to imply that his work is entirely explained by aspects of 20th-century art history, but it cannot be divorced from this context.

Charlton's work maintains the Modernist aesthetic tradition of attempting to express the absolute through the minimal. Since 1969, his works have been constructed using standard 4.5cm-width stretchers and each canvas is painted a uniform grey. The tone varies between works but not within a single canvas, each being painted with mechanistic precision which denies mark-making as a form of implied expression.

Many of Charlton's works consist of a number of parts, characteristically all exactly the same size and hung without frames exactly 4.5cm apart, extending the use of the dimension established by the stretcherwidth. They are arguably relief-sculptures as much as they are paintings.

On one level they might be seen as fetishising their physical parts: stretcher, canvas, paint – the same ingredients in endless, different configurations but always with certain unvarying, fixed characteristics. Their precision and repetition seem to imply that they are building-blocks to

provide a bulwark against uncertainty. Charlton works six days a week with the regular habits of a salary-man.

But enough reading around the edges. This is one of those rare exhibitions which shows how paintings and architecture can have a genuinely symbiotic existence. Disposed in the wonderfully chaste spaces of the downstairs gallery of Inverleith House, one of the most inspirational settings for contemporary art in Scotland, Charlton's works create a quiet but insistent dialogue with their surroundings.

It is not just a question of his use of the essential forms of architectural trabeation. His resolutely vertical and horizontal forms, in their various rectangular configurations, make you look anew at the details of their present lodgings. And it is not simply the obvious elements – doors and windows – but the fielded panels of the shutters, the empty parts of the walls, the clash of wall and cornice. Charlton's paintings manage both to create and to fill in the blanks.

They also work on an almost decorative level, acting as different types of formal weighting in rooms otherwise defined by proportion, detail and what is visible through the windows. It is not to diminish them to say that some could form the backdrop to a smart Milanese interior in *Domus* c.1972.

The consistency of Charlton's work over the past three decades adds much to its power – nowadays we are far too obsessed with the idea that artists should always be in stages of flux rather than stasis. As in the music of Steve Reich and Philip Glass, there is still a definite sense in Charlton's work of that peculiarly 1970s asceticism which subverts everything that decade was supposed to stand for. Musical or notational analogies also connect closely with another distinguished British abstract painter of the same generation, James Hugonin, currently showing in Edinburgh at the Ingleby Gallery.

Some observers might well be underwhelmed by the apparent simplicity of Charlton's work. But if you think of the individual canvases not simply as providing the parameters of the work, but take them as one constituent along with the rooms they inhabit and the light that fills the spaces around them, you realise that they perform intriguingly contradictory roles. Charlton's paintings manage both to mollify and to interrogate their surroundings. They are - to borrow a phrase from the military - force-multipliers. Neil Cameron writes on art and architecture. Alan Charlton also has a work on display at Sleeper, 6 Darnaway Street, Edinburgh, until 26 July (tel 0131 225 8444)

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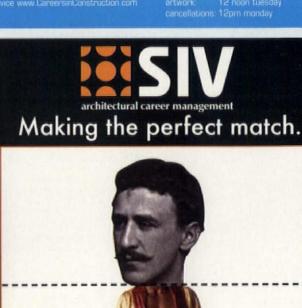
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# recruitment

# people & practices

Professor Peter Jacob has retired as head of the school of architecture and landscape at Kingston University, His practice, Peter Jacob Associates, has moved to Crackstone Mill House. Crackstone, Minchinhampton, Gloucester GL6 9BD, tel 01453 889684.

Oxfordshire-based practice West Waddy ADP has appointed Geoff Huntingford as senior planner.

Clive Pendlebury, Aida Bratovic and Adam Flowers have been appointed directors of Timothy Hatton Architects.

Martin Markcrow has left John MaCaslan & Partners to start his own practice, Martin Markcrow Architects, tel 020 7241 1899.

**Broadway Malyan** has appointed Mike Newton as regional director of its Weybridge office.

Architectural practice Hunter & Partners has moved its regional headquarters in West Sussex to Sussex Business Village, Lake Lane, Barnham, West Sussex.

Architect Pringle Brandon has appointed Alistair Downie and James Elliott as design directors. Downie joins from **ORMS** and Elliott from Swanke Hayden Connell.

Workplace specialist Morgan Lovell has appointed Derek Jones as southern regional

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# recruitment

# competitions

## RIBA-APPROVED

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

## **DESIGNED FOR LIVING**

Invited design competition launched by Swaythling Housing Society, in conjunction with Eastleigh Borough Council and CABE. The competition is to develop a prototype housing project, 'Designed for Life'. The project will demonstrate the potential for housing to enable and reflect the changing lifestyle choices of its occupants over time. Deadline for expressions of interest 30.8.02.

## **ROOM TO GROW**

MFI has launched 'Room to Grow', which seeks to explore the evolution of a child's room through each stage of childhood. The competition aims to stimulate discussions as to how design may address the requirements of a child's personal environment. Deadline 6.8.02.

# PAVILION, PLYMOUTH

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## MANAGED WORK SPACE

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 Richard Haut operates a weekly 'competitions' e-mail service, telling architects about projects they can apply for across Britain, Ireland and Europe. Tel 0033 673 75 02 76, e-mail hautrichard@hotmail.com, web communities.msn.com/ RichardHautscompetitions



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## The person

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For an informal discussion telephone Stuart Hutchinson, Head of Design and Development on 0191 553 8311.

If you believe you have the qualities we are looking for then telephone 0191 5255969/5965 for an application pack for all vacancies or e-mail recruitment@sunderlandhousing.co.uk Closing date for both of the above posts: Friday 9 August 2002.

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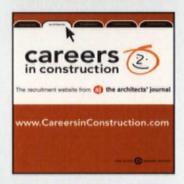
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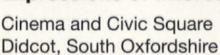
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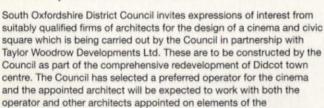
Please send CV and covering letter to: June Hobbs Widdup/Amer Architects 91 Bancroft Hitchin Herts SG5 1NQ E-mail: j.hobbs@widdupamer.co.uk



## TENDERS

# Invitation for Expressions of Interest\_





Expressions of interest, together with a supporting statement of technical competence (including experience in designing cinemas and civic spaces), of no longer than one side of A4, must be made to the address below by not later than 26 July 2002.

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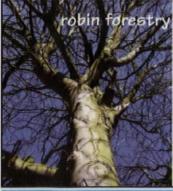
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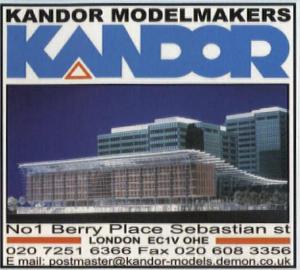


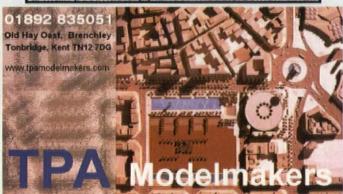
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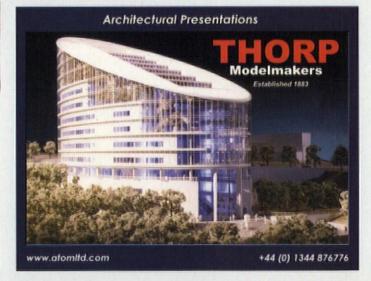
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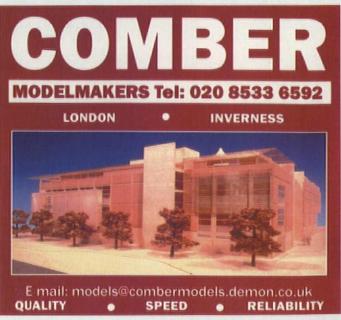
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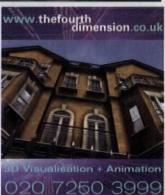
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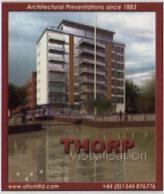
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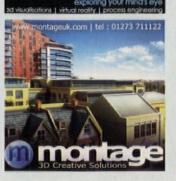
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# archicharades



Champagne goes to Chris Bowes of Campbell and Arnott Architects in Edinburgh, who correctly identified Michel de Klerk 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 O2O 75O5 67O1. The first correct entry pulled out of the hat wins a bottle of bubbly.

# Nick remembered

ore than 300 people attended the memorial event for Nick Hanika of Price & Myers at the RIBA in London last week. There were boards commemorating his engineering and sporting prowess (he was a triathlete and fearsome squash player). Most charming and idiosyncratic was a series of stick-man drawings from Sarah Wigglesworth and Jeremy Till, detailing how he helped them realise the vision of their strawbale house. Fearful that he would laugh at their unorthodox choice of materials, they found instead that he encouraged them to push their ideas even further. Speeches were compered wittily by Tom Taylor, project manager of Buro 4. Paul Williams of Derwent Valley said that, while many saw Hanika as the ideal architect's engineer, he thought of him as a developer's engineer - he often forgot to send in his invoice. Oliver Richards of ORMS recalled how, in his quiet way, Hanika had decided opinions about architecture and could be a ferocious critic. He would say: 'You can achieve that if you want to, but do you really want to do it?' He would then go on to suggest a, usually better, alternative. Bob Allies said: 'Nick helped us to realise not entirely rational ideas.' He recalled that Hanika was not always unassuming. At the party to celebrate the start of work at dance centre The Place, Hanika seized a pickaxe and eagerly started the demolition work. The affection of friends and colleagues was demonstrated not only in the high turnout but in the fact that so far more than £10,000 has been donated to the two charities nominated by Hanika's family, Médecin sans Frontiéres and Cancer Research UK.

# Award group

 here was an impressive turnout, especially on a Friday evening, for the launch of the Prime Minister's Better Public Building Award, which took place on the seventh floor of Tate Modern, courtesy of Sir Nicholas Serota, who announced the nominations. Other speakers were Sir Stuart Lipton, on ebullient form and full of praise for the Treasury (Lipton is their landlord!), the leatherbooted culture minister Baroness Blackstone, and Lord Falconer, who has retained his role as chairman of the ministerial architectural champions group despite moving to the Home Office. Charlie had a go at the architecture of the Home Office building (provided courtesy of Sir Basil Spence), and looked forward to the move to the replacement designed by Sir Terry Farrell for Marsham Street. Among the guests, I noticed Lord Howie of Troon, who as an engineer pretended to be shocked by the omission of any reference to engineers in the announcement of the shortlist; David Lunts, one-time Prince's Foundation chief executive but now responsible for urban regeneration, working for John Prescott; man-aboutconstruction Alan Crane; and a host of mandarins including Peter Gershon of the Office of Government Commerce, who won praise from Lipton for his support

on long-term value-versus-initial cost arguments. Food and drink were in abundance and we staggered into the pouring rain vowing to do this more often.

# In the country

woke up early on Saturday morning and turned on BBC News to hear an extraordinary argument between the AJ's Paul Finch and the president of the Royal Town Planning Institute, Mike Haslam. The debate was about the new wave of country houses and whether it has merits. The former argued that planning permission was always needed, based on excellent design, and was fine. But Haslam, showing all the attitudes of an old-style planner, declared it was 'inequitable' that millionaires should be able to build a house, when people with only £50,000 could not afford to do so. Finch suggested that if they had £50,000 they should think about designing a first-class extension. Haslam seemed to want to ban new buildings in favour of restoring old ones but, of course, these activities are not mutually exclusive. Whatever next? One consolation was that the item featured Kathryn Findlay's competitionwinning design in Cheshire, proving that not every new country house has to be Classical.

# Star time

avish party of the year award goes to Harry Handelsman and his Manhattan Loft Corporation, who threw an amazing 4 July special on all things American at Fulham Island in the capital last week – also celebrating the company's 10th anniversary. First came the 'Goddess of the Bronx' cocktails, then the smoked salmon, then the hundreds and hundreds of fresh oysters for the assembled throng to guzzle down. Then came glamorous stars-and-stripesbedecked girls on roller skates, video footage of the bash (very Sex, Lies and Videotape), the band, and, joy of joys, no less than chef Alastair Little fronting the food operation. All this continued upstairs at the do, where ice sculptures of the Statue of Liberty held salads to go with beef and tuna steaks and spatchcock chicken. I spied Jean Nouvel, Ron Arad, Will Alsop, Piers Gough, Ken Shuttleworth, Michael Squire, Kenneth Powell, Rowan Moore, Tim Evans of Sheppard Robson, Alan Davidson of Hayes Davidson, Peter and Will Murray of Wordsearch and Trevor Osborne, all enjoying the host's generosity. Astragal left the sounds of New York underground rock club CBGB November 1977 clutching a goodie bag. Inside was a bagel, natch, a bottle of Coke (old style), and a (reasonably) big apple. Neat!

# Wooden heart

RADA, which is embarking on a major marketing campaign to attract more architect members, signalled its changing image at its annual members' seminar at the Royal Society last week. Before delegates sat down, they were treated to the sight of TRADA staff looking very casual in branded polo shirts – and mime artists disguised as trees providing silent directions.

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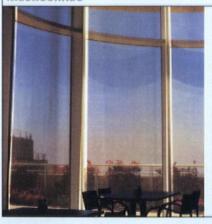


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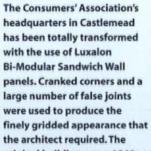
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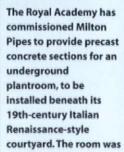
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