AJ

# 08.12.05 PRESIDENT'S MEDALS

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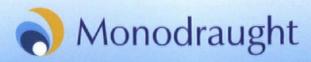


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### STUDENTS HABITUALLY CITE SPURIOUS RESEARCH AS THE KEY GENERATOR OF FORM

By Isabel Allen

This week, the RIBA launched the President's Awards for Research, aimed at practitioners and academics. The winners of this year's President's Medals (pages 25-40) suggest that students, too, are able to make intelligent use of research, and produce research which can be of real use.

This year's Silver Medallist, Yew Choong Chan, of the University of Westminster, has designed a power station which draws on (very real) research by Professor Marc Baldo of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), who is pioneering the use of spinach to generate electricity. The winner of the Dissertation Medal, Jessica Hrivnak, of the University of Cambridge, has used Inn the Park, the Hopkins and Partners-designed restaurant in St James' Park, as a starting point for an investigation into meaningful criteria by which to evaluate environmental performance.

Chan's entry is interesting in that it plunders research which has been developed outside the

world of architecture. Baldo, who specialises in electronic engineering and computer science, developed his 'spinach sandwich' in collaboration with electrical and biomedical engineers, nanotechnology experts and biologists. Hrivnak's is interesting in that it subverts the conventional relationship between research and design. Students habitually cite some spurious 'research' process as the key generator of form. But this project takes the building as a given, using it to generate and inform an entirely new body of research.

Perceived wisdom suggests that the measure of the success of our education system is the extent to which its graduates are prepared for life in practice. But it is just as important to encourage students to question the way architectural practice is defined. We'll know we're making progress if Yew Choong Chan gets invited to join Baldo's team at MIT and Hopkins offers Jessica Hrivnak a job.

### CONTRIBUTORS



Morgan Falconer, who reviews the Pedro Cabrita Reis exhibition at Haunch of Venison on page 54, is a writer on art and architecture based in London



Cristina Esposito, who writes a review of furniture designer Luke Hughes' lecture on pages 48-49, is the managing editor of the AJ's sister magazine AJ Specification

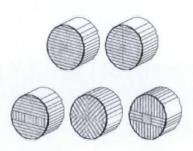


Phil Sayer, whose photographs feature on the cover and the President's Medals section on pages 25-40, has been photographing architects since the early 1970s

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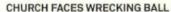
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### DAILY NEWS / WWW.AJPLUS.CO.UK

### CHANCELLOR CALLS FOR 200,000 MORE HOMES TO BE BUILT

Gordon Brown has responded to the Barker Review of Housing, upping the planned number of new homes to be built in the UK to 200,000. Speaking during his Pre-Budget Statement on Monday, the Chancellor told the House of Commons there was an overriding case for a massive acceleration in housebuilding. He said it was essential that more new homes be built to bring down prices and allow more people to buy properties. See page 12 for analysis.



A landmark Peckham church, St Mary's, is to be demolished after a U-turn by Southwark Council. The local authority originally backed a conservation area designation which would have saved Potter and Hare's 1962 building, but has now changed its mind. The Twentieth Century Society has launched a campaign to save the church.

### GAMES 'COULD TAKE HERITAGE CASH'

Fears are growing that the London 2012 Olympic Games could slash the amount of money heritage projects receive from the National Lottery. Last week the government began consulting on how lottery funding should be allocated to each of the three 'good causes' – arts, sports and heritage. Charity Heritage Link feels the paper comes down in favour of sports projects.



### CALATRAVA GOES TO VEGAS

Santiago Calatrava is on the verge of duplicating his famous Turning Torso building in Malmö, Sweden, in Las Vegas. According to Spanish sources, the Valencian architect has been approached by casino operator MGM Mirage to design two taller, copycat towers in the heart of the gambling mecca.

### ALSOP TO CREATE PAVILION

Alsop Architects has revealed the first images of the AI's Architecture Pavilion, at next year's Interbuild exhibition. The scheme will become the focal point for all architects and members of the design community who attend the event, which will be held on 23-27 April. It will also feature a bar and a lecture theatre. which will host a series of presentations from architects, designers and technical experts. For further information, visit www.interbuild.com.



### LISTED EDINBURGH BUILDING TO GO

A Grade A-listed 1960s building in the heart of Edinburgh is to be flattened to make way for a new mixed-used scheme by Allan Murray Architects. The Lothian Regional Council headquarters building on the corner of the Royal Mile and George IV Bridge – designed by RMJM co-founder Robert Matthew – will be replaced by a £35 million regeneration project.

### MILITARY BUILDINGS LISTED

A series of historic military buildings around England have been listed by DCMS minister David Lammy. The list of 19 structures includes many sites associated with the Battle of Britain and the Second World War air campaign. The only Grade I-listed building on the list is the bunker in Uxbridge containing the Group Operations Room from where the Fighter Group 11 was commanded in 1940.

### CABE ATTACKS PFI DESIGN

CABE has claimed in a new report that the poor design quality of PFI buildings is causing public service delivery to suffer. The design quango's publication Design Quality and the Private Finance Initiative, released last week, claims that the vast majority of PFI buildings commissioned to date have not been designed and built to a high enough standard.

### EDAW MERGES WITH GLOBAL DESIGN GIANT AECOM

International giant EDAW, whose London office had a key masterplanning role in the 2012 London Olympic bid, has merged with global design behemoth AECOM. AECOM is 20 times the size of EDAW. It has 22,000 employees compared to EDAW's 1,200, and a turnover of US\$2.5 billion (£1.4 billion) compared to the architect and planner's US\$150 million (£87 million).



### HAWKINS\BROWN PLAYS IT BY THE BOOK

Work has just started on this competitionwinning library scheme by Hawkins\Brown in Boscombe, on the edge of Bournemouth. An existing 1960s single-storey building will be replaced by a £2.2 million mixed-use development which will include 24 flats as well as a new library facility.

### BARBICAN COULD LOSE ROOF TERRACES

The Barbican could lose one of its 'most externally visible design features' if plans to redevelop external roof terraces are approved by the Corporation of London. Proposals that have been lodged with City of London planners, who are recommending approval, would involve losing one of the 'pivotal features' of the design.



### TRAHAN TAKES AR AWARD

The Holy Rosary Catholic Church Complex in Louisiana, USA, by Trahan Architects (pictured) has won one of three top prizes in the AR Awards for Emerging Architecture, awarded last night. The other winners were S(ch)austall, Pfalz, Germany ('Drop-in' showroom) by fnp-architekten and Forestry Hall Gymnasium, Tomochi, Kumamoto, Japan by Taira Nishizawa Architects.

### ZAHA SAYS SHE HAS OLYMPIC FUTURE

Zaha Hadid has hit back at speculation about her future on the London 2012 Olympic Aquatic Centre project – claiming she is still working on the scheme. Last week Olympics minister Tessa Jowell asked Hadid to rethink her plans for the 20,000-seat swimming pool in east London after it emerged the proposals had come in at nearly double the £75 million budget.

### **CHARLES IN PLANNING LOSS**

Prince Charles' Duchy of Cornwall has been left humiliated by a planning inspector's decision to throw out an application to extend Poundbury. The proposals, for a new apartment building by local architect Lionel Gregory have been opposed by residents. The inspector agreed in large part with their criticism, which argued that the scheme was too large, dense, overbearing and would bring too much traffic to the area.

### BREAKING NEWS DAILY AT WWW.AJPLUS.CO.UK

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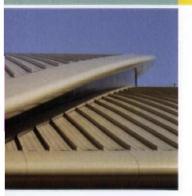


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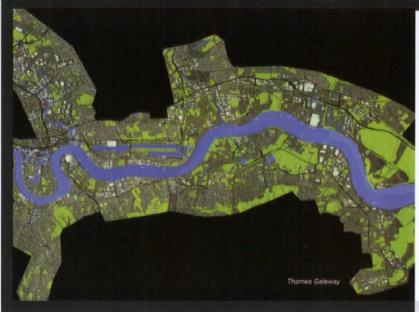




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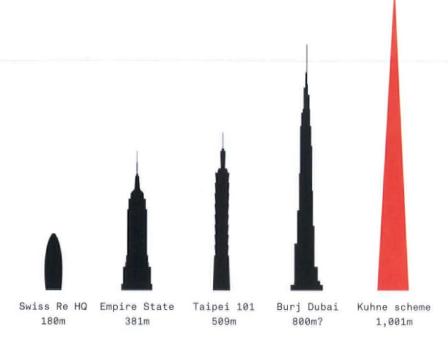
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### LONDON OFFICE TO SMASH RECORD

By Rob Sharp

A British practice is set to amaze the international architectural community by unveiling plans for the world's tallest building, the AJ can exclusively reveal.

London-based Eric Kuhne & Associates is in secret highlevel talks with senior Kuwaiti government officials about plans for a tower over 1km high in the Middle Eastern country.

The next highest building in the pipeline is the Burj Dubai, SOM's tower, which is currently under construction. Its height is a closely guarded secret, but it is thought it will be between 700m and 800m when completed in 2008.

According to Kuhne, his 1,001m-tall tower will form the centrepiece of the new Madinat al Hareer, which translates as 'City of Silk', forming a 'surrogate capital for the Middle East' to house 700,000 people. The architect claims constructing the city – including four ports – would cost US\$150 billion (£86 billion) and take 25 years.

The tower would blow apart current world records. The tallest building is currently Taipei 101 in Taiwan, a relatively meagre 509m.

Details of the designs of Kuhne's building are shrouded in secrecy, but the AJ has learned that it will take literal inspiration from the Arabic vernacular, and will 'operate on the principle of seven vertical villages stretching into the sky'. Assuming its floors are a standard 4m high, the building would have some 250 storeys.

The concept for the new city, Kuhne told the government decision-makers, will combine Arabic philosophy, culture and politics for the first time, to attract interest from across the region. It is hoped that the proposals, when complete, will enable Kuwait to bid for the Olympic Games.

Kuhne, the designer of the Bluewater shopping centre in Kent – the largest shopping centre in Europe – is known to like excessive projects. His £350 million proposals for three towers in Jersey attracted local opposition for being 'vastly out of scale' with their surroundings (ajplus 18.08.05).

Arup director Bob Lang said: 'The issues with buildings of this height now are the same as they were at the turn of the last century – how you move people up and down and how strong your materials are. If these criteria are fulfilled then there's no reason why you can't build super-high.'



1

### LEAVING DESIGN OUT IN THE COLD

By Ed Dorrell

One simple worrying fact: in his response on Monday to the Barker Review of Housing, the document that recommended a massive increase in housebuilding earlier this year, Gordon Brown, the Iron Chancellor, did not mention architecture once. Or architects. And the only time he mentioned design was in relation to the evercontentious design codes.

Afterwards, during a press conference statement, Yvette Cooper, the minister for housing and planning, only mentioned the 'D' word once and the 'A' word not at all.

One might ask what Brown was doing taking the lead on housebuilding in the first place? Surely, seasoned observers could point out, the supply of new homes has been very much the remit of the Deputy Prime Minister since the 1997 landslide that brought Labour to power?

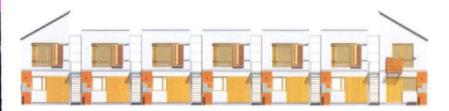
The official line is that the Barker Review, which itself was extremely light on design and architecture, was jointly commissioned by the Treasury and the ODPM. What better place than the high-profile Pre-Budget Statement for the government to also unveil its collective thoughts on Barker's conclusions, civil servants said. Surely this exemplified the government's commitment to the sector?

First things first – the government's response to the Barker Review, which apparently represents the combined thoughts of the Treasury and the ODPM, accepts that there is an overwhelmingly strong argument for more homes.

While the Communities Plan, which was unveiled in 2002, said there was a need for 150,000 homes a year, this has now jumped to 200,000 per year.

The rest of government also pulled itself together to make a series of announcements in the wake of the Chancellor's parliamentary appearance. Not least was the unveiling of four more projects that have won the support of the Design for Manufacture competition, also known as the £60k House Competition (pictured above).

In addition, the ODPM and DEFRA revealed the draft details of a Sustainable Code for Housing, which they seem determined to rush in for all new social and housing association homes by April of next year.



2.



Three of the new £60k house projects unveiled by Chancellor Gordon Brown:

- Make with ACD's plan for a former
   Territorial Army site in Aylesbury Vale
- 2. PCKO's design for a Dartford scheme
- 3. Broadway Malyan's design for Basingstoke

But back to Brown. What appears to have happened is that the Treasury and the Chancellor have in the last few months woken up to the massive crisis in housing supply. They also seem to have realised that a sudden hike in housebuilding would help Britain's slowing economy.

It does not take a massive leap of imagination to picture Brown, all dour and Presbyterian Scots, saying to Prezza: 'Let's not piss around here, John. I think we need a lot more homes, and so does Kate Barker, so let's get on with building them.'

And therein lies a potential problem. Has anyone ever really believed that Brown gives a damn about architecture and design?

Among the many outrageous claims that are made by spin doctors about the 'personal interests' of their political masters, few have ever tried to paint the Chancellor as an aesthete.

While, to some extent, the same might have been said by observers about John Prescott when he first took over the housing brief, advisors, civil servants and campaigners have made some significant progress in awakening the honourable member for Hull East's latent sense of appreciation for architecture. Oh for the Chancellor to be so malleable.

However, there are those who have leaped to the defence of the Chancellor. Not least Cooper herself. When asked by the AJ whether the Treasury's push for new housing would

come at the expense of decent design, the minister became quite irritable, citing a series of initiatives, none of them new, including the Design Code pilots, which are currently being overseen by CABE.

On the subject of the future influence of the Treasury, the minister insisted that the new alliance of Chancellor and Deputy Prime Minister on housing should be seen as a positive – as an example of joined-up government.

And there are others too who are keen to defend the government line. 'The Chancellor has really come round to the importance of architecture,' CABE chief executive Richard Simmons told the AJ in the wake of Brown's parliamentary performance. 'He has realised

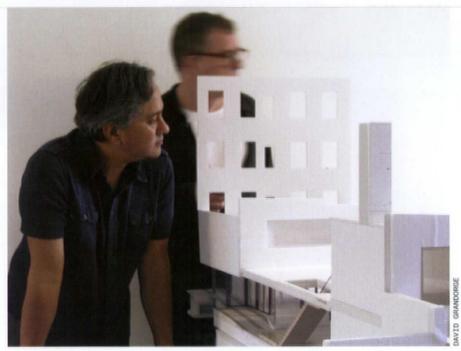
that the creative industries really help the economy.

'There is also the fact that a lot of these ministers, including Gordon Brown and Yvette Cooper, really believe in the idea of social justice and this can be expanded into the idea that all people, no matter what their wealth, should have decent homes.'

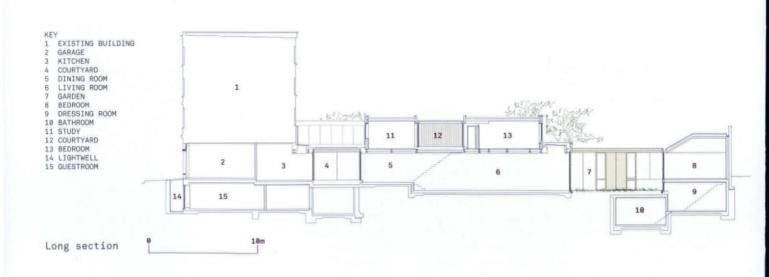
There is, of course, a chance that Cooper and Simmons are right, that Brown has indeed had a 'road to Damascus' conversion to good design.

But if the Chancellor was given a choice between 100,000 decent, well-designed new homes and 200,000 noddy boxes that, once built, would rein in house prices and aid his ailing economy, which option do you reckon he'd choose?

### **NEWS IN PICTURES**



1.





2

### FRETTON TO BUILD A HOME FIT FOR ANISH

Tony Fretton Architects has designed this four-bedroom house for world-famous artist Anish Kapoor and his family. The 600 m² home in Chelsea, west London, will extend beneath an existing apartment building along a tight plot to a small alley at the rear. At the heart of the 50m-long scheme is a star-shaped courtyard and garden to bring light into the lounge, dining room and large, 'workmanlike' kitchen on the open ground floor. A stone staircase will lead up to a study and bedroom — separated by a south-facing courtyard — and there are plans for another bedroom, bathroom and dressing room towards the back of the house. As well as polished stainless-steel metalwork, the project will feature Hopton Wood limestone and Mandale Fossil — stones used in British Modernist sculpture. Kapoor hopes to move into the house, which has already been awarded planning consent, in spring 2007. By Richard Waite

- 1. Anish Kapoor with Tony Fretton
- This model shot shows how the open ground floor is designed to capture plenty of light



Koolhaas's Kunsthal in Rotterdam epitomises his treatment of space and materials

### SERPENTINE GOES TO KOOLHAAS

By Richard Waite

Dutch superstar Rem Koolhaas has been picked to design next year's Serpentine Gallery Pavilion. His appointment effectively kills off the ambitious proposals by fellow Dutch architect MVRDV to build a 23m-high mountain over the gallery in Kensington Gardens, west London.

The ambitious scheme for a 200-tonne, grass-coated structure was due to go on site earlier this year, but the project had to be sent back to the drawing board for 'further development'.

Now Serpentine chiefs have admitted the MVRDV pavilion will almost certainly never be built because of 'outstanding technical and financial issues'.

Instead the gallery has offered Pritzker Prize-winning architect Koolhaas the chance to build his first structure in the UK. The founding director of the Rotterdam-based practice Office for Metropolitan Architecture (OMA), he has also been asked to come up with a programme of public events, which is scheduled to begin in July 2006.

Koolhaas is known around the world for both his radical writing and his buildings. Among his most critically acclaimed projects are the Seattle Public Library and his famous Kunsthal in Rotterdam (pictured).

The Dutchman will collaborate on the pavilion scheme with Cecil Balmond, the renowned deputy chairman of Arup who has worked on each of the gallery's five previous temporary pavilions.

The move will come as a disappointment to MVRDV,

which had expected to be asked to continue developing its scheme. Back in January, gallery director Julia Peyton-Jones vowed to support the practice's proposals and claimed that she was committed to delivering the 'visionary' designs 'without compromise' (AJ 27.01.05). However, Koolhaas' appointment dashes these hopes.

Every year the Serpentine Gallery asks an internationally renowned architect to draw up plans for a pavilion which will sit on the gallery's lawn for three months.

At the time of the invitation the architect must not have completed a building in the UK. Other designers to have this opportunity include Brazilian Oscar Niemeyer in 2003; Toyo Ito with Arup in 2002; and Daniel Libeskind with Arup in 2001.



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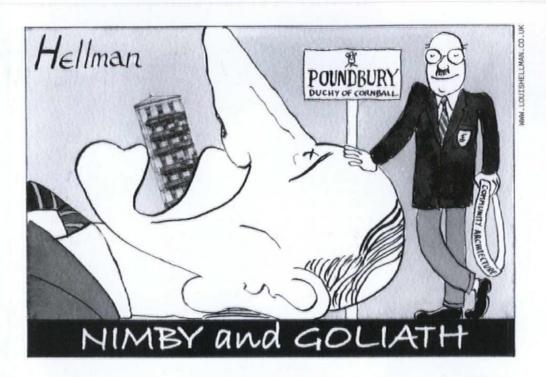
'I am enormously patronised. Men always introduce me at lectures as "a woman architect". Surely people can see I'm not a man in drag?'

You needed a bicycle to get from one end of the room to the other, and finding the toilet door handle was a challenge'

Former Turner Prize winner Grayson Perry on dining at Norman Foster's. Evening Standard, 02.12.05

'The flamboyant engineering effects and mechanical gimmickry of Calatrava are futuristic in a way that went out of fashion circa 1965'

Martin Filler. New York Review of Books, 15.12.05



### STANTON DELIVERS

The crowds crammed into the Hayward Galley last week to help Stanton Williams celebrate an award-winning year. For many, the muchpraised landscaping scheme around the Tower of London has become the practice's 'jewel in the crown'. However, Astragal hears whispers the firm is unhappy with how its gem is being handled, with the arrival of 'unsumpathetic' plastic bins and the Yeoman of the Guard apparently raising hackles. Hopefully a new commission to design an exhibition about Sex and Art will put the smiles back on their faces.

### PRAISE WHERE IT'S DUE

And so to the AJ100 Breakfast Club, soon to become a regular event. The speaker was Argent's

ever-entertaining Roger Madelin. The man behind the vast proposed redevelopment of King's Cross Railway Lands was in his usual robust form. Many interest groups have drawn fire from Madelin over the years, but the most passionate part of his presentation last week was when he chose to praise rather than attack. Many in the hungry crowd gasped with astonishment when Madelin described English Heritage as 'the most professional consultee' that he'd had to deal with on the entire King's Cross project. Could he possibly be trying to get something out of the Fortress House mob, Astragal quietly wonders?

### A YEAR IN PICTURES

As AJ readers, you evidently appreciate the very best in

architectural photography, but the opposite also has a weird attraction, as evidenced in publishing phenomena such as Crap Towns and Boring Postcards. Lawyers, who often view images of evidence, are privileged to have access to some of the most banal photography around and the clever people at TEC, the construction barristers' association, have had the nous to take advantage of it - for charity, of course. They have produced a limited-edition calendar, spiffily designed by Studio Myerscough, that features such intriguing elements as a pair of scissors stuck into dodgy mortar and a piece of distorted metal labelled 'the outer topography between the two perforations'. Visit www.tecbar.org to get your copy.



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## IN NEARBY DIDSBURY THESE HOUSES WOULD BE WORTH £250,000 EACH. IN LONDON THEY ARE CALLED 'MEWS' AND SELL FOR MILLIONS OF POUNDS

We are just starting work on Chimney Pot Park: the restoration of 350 Coronation Street-style terraces in Langworthy, Salford.

The locals have christened it 'Goneanation Street' and it's not hard to see why. By and large, anybody who was able to (ie, anybody in employment) has voted with their feet and moved out.

This was once a thriving part of Greater Manchester. It was largely first-time-buyer territory, but in the '70s and '80s first-time buyers generally chose 'modern' houses and Langworthy became populated by renters, many of whom were students. In the early '90s, many of the students moved out to purpose-built blocks and increasingly the people who moved in were those on benefits who couldn't find anywhere else to live.

The area got a reputation for antisocial and criminal activity. Negative equity led to an increasing number of houses being abandoned.

The council was put under pressure to do something and started by buying the empty houses. This only added to the problems, leaving more properties boarded up.

I was first introduced to Langworthy when talking at a conference about Urban Splash's work in Salford city centre. Some clever so-and-so would always ask the question: 'Yes, but transforming the city centre is relatively easy, what are you going to do about Langworthy?' My stock answer was: 'I have no idea, Urban Splash is not here to answer all the world's social problems! We are a private-sector developer and you would never ask such a question of Barratts, Wimpey or Bellway.'

It was Hazel Blears, the Labour MP for Salford, who finally got us involved in Langworthy. She asked Urban Splash on several occasions to have a look at the project as she was chairing the local Partnership Board. We were reluctant to get involved, but Blears is not a woman who takes no for an answer.

We went to have a look and discovered that the council's plan was to demolish all the houses it had bought and build half as many 'modern houses' to replace them. When asked why, and what form these 'modern' houses would take, nobody was quite sure.

In Didsbury, a couple of miles away, similar terrace houses are being sold for £250,000 each. In London, they are called 'mews' and sell

for millions of pounds. There is nothing intrinsically wrong with the architecture; in fact it's quite attractive. The homes needed some practical solutions to do with kitchens, living accommodation, bathrooms, parking and gardens, but most of all Langworthy's problem is one of perception.

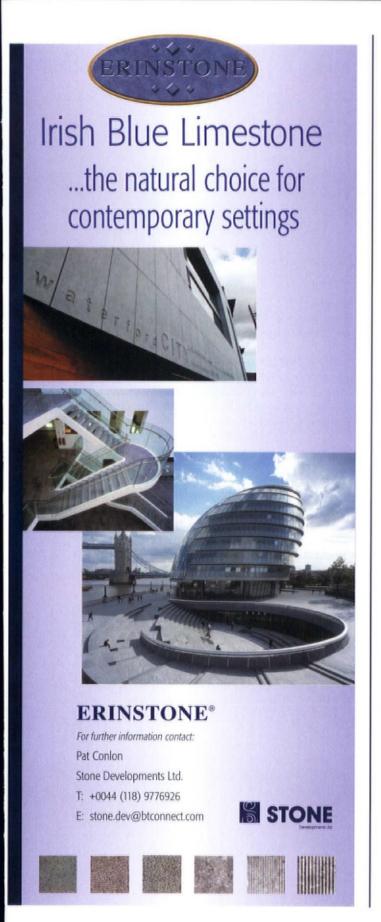
The problem wasn't actually that nobody wanted to live in a Victorian terrace; it was that nobody wanted to live next to hundreds of boarded-up houses.

We hope our solution will bring new life, new people and a sense of excitement and revival to this part of Salford, so that new and existing residents can enjoy the attractive Victorian streets once again.

Our homes go on sale early next year, so I will let you know whether or not our hunch that Langworthy can be restored is right or not.

Last month's fee went to Disability Aid Fund. Any suggestions for this month's fee will be greatly appreciated.

Tom Bloxham is the chairman of Urban Splash. Email: ajcolumnists@emap.com





### **LETTERS**

### LOW-RISE LONDON IS A LUXURY WE CAN ILL AFFORD

I have long considered the Corporation of London's obsession with protecting the views of St Paul's Cathedral as entirely laudable (AJ 10.11.05), but with the capital's growth continuing seemingly unchecked, tough decisions will have to be made about how inner-city housing and business density can realistically be increased – and mayor Ken Livingstone is absolutely right to look upwards rather than outwards to the future of the citu.

St Paul's Cathedral is undoubtedly a great building, but maintaining the sight-lines of this historic masterpiece cannot be done at the expense of checking the sprawl of the capital – a sprawl which is currently threatening to spill over the boundary of the M25 and engulf the whole of the South East in a great swathe of low-density housing and offices, each of them surrounded by postage stamp-sized gardens and 'public' spaces so small as to be rendered completely meaningless for residents.

The Corporation must accept that the price to be paid for London as a financial and economic powerhouse is to consider it as a limited space. Hong Kong and New York, with their natural boundaries, have found out that the only way is up when it comes to growth. The prospect of a high-rise city may fill today's architects with dread, but I would suggest the alternative is far worse.

\*\*Joseph Donahoe, London SW2\*\*

### LIBESKIND OVERLOOKED IN TOWERING ADVERTISEMENT

The full-page advertisement for Autodesk and SOM (AJ 01.12.05), which refers to the Freedom Tower scheme, says that 'it takes a firm like SOM to conceive such a project'.

I really thought that Daniel Libeskind won the competition with his concept and made reference in his entry to the height of 1,776 feet.

I wonder what students of architecture feel about this. Clyde Malby, Purley

### MISSING FROM THE MENAGERIE

Louis Hellman was on typically fine form with his cartoon investigation of the architect/animal interface (AJ 17.11.05). But I can't help but feel slightly disappointed that he missed out some obvious examples (and 'Norman Rooster' was a little forced).

Where was Piers Moth? Beaver Jiricna? Sharks Barfield? David Chipmunk-erfield? Glen Meerkat?

And, for that matter, wherefore Leopard Robson? Hedgehog & De Meuron? Pony Fretton? Frank Bear-ey?

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And surely Kangaroo-so St John will be hopping mad at being omitted.

Michael Roberts, London NW5

### WHY DOES METRIC STILL NOT MEASURE UP?

Although the building trade has been metric for over 30 years, it is impossible to get a pocket tape in millimetres (or a 30m tape for that matter).

Any ideas? Anthony Grimshaw, Wigan

### LAYING THE FOUNDATIONS OF THE GOTHIC AGE

The photo caption of Santa Maria Del Fiore in Jonathan Foyle's piece on the Gothic Age (AJ 13.10.05), states that the cathedral was built in 1296. This implies it was completed in that year.

In fact, only the foundation stone was laid then. Building work continued until 1436, with the completion of the dome. David Rust, London NW1

Please address letters to: The Editor, The Architects' Journal, 151 Rosebery Avenue, London EC1R 4GB, fax 020 7505 6701, or email angela. newton@emap.com to arrive by 10am on the Monday before publication. The Architects' Journal reserves the right to edit letters.



Santa Maria Del Fiore: completed in 1436

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## THE RIBA PRESIDENT'S MEDALS



THE PRESIDENT'S MEDALS IN ASSOCIATION WITH ATKINS

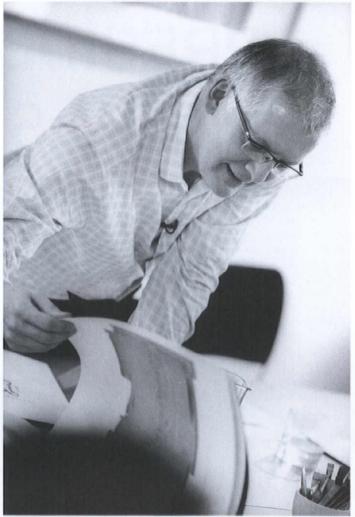
### THE PRESIDENT'S MEDALS / DESIGN JUDGING

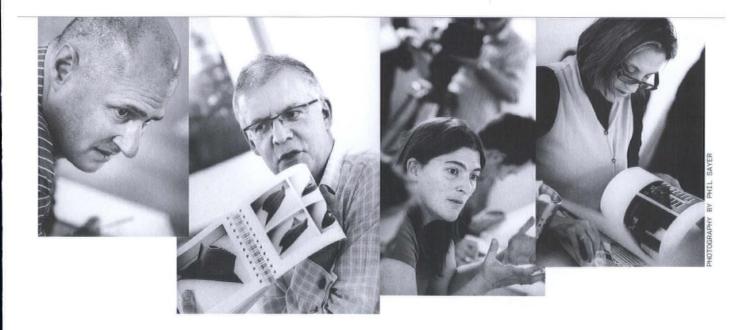


### PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT

The President's Medals are the RIBA's international student awards scheme, celebrating the talent of students nominated by schools of architecture throughout the world. This programme, with its origins in the 1850s, has attracted entries from over 100 schools this year, coming from a larger group than has ever been invited. A panel of internationally renowned judges selects the award winners, including the Bronze Medal for Part 1, Silver Medal for Part 2, and the Dissertation Medal. The winning projects in this supplement offer a unique insight into the best student work in architectural education. The institute strongly believes in investing in the future through championing architectural education. With a growing group of now over 7,000 student members involved in validated professional architectural education, the institute is continually supporting members to develop the capacity to join and lead the chartered architects of the future. By highlighting the excellent work done by students in professional architectural education, these awards present an exciting and provocative picture of the future of architecture. The RIBA works closely with partners and I am very grateful to those who have generously contributed to all stages of this programme. I wish to especially thank our sponsors and supporters - our main sponsor, Atkins, and also iGuzzini, the SOM Foundation, Paul Davis & Partners and several architectural practices - without whom this spirited event and publication would not be possible. Jack Pringle, RIBA President







### SIMON ALLFORD

Simon Allford co-founded Allford Hall Monaghan Morris (AHMM) in 1989. AHMM is an award-winning practice that has designed a broad range of buildings and is also involved in masterplanning. Over the last 15 years, the office has grown from four to 60 people, with budgets ranging from £2 million to over £50 million. Allford is visiting professor at The Bartlett, UCL, and honorary treasurer of the Architectural Association Council. He is chairman of RIBA Premises Committee and RIBA vice president of education. He is also an advisor to the RIBA's President's Medals Student Awards and the Policy and Strategy Groups. Allford is a member of CABE's Design Review Committee and has chaired and judged numerous international awards and competitions. Simon Allford is non-voting Chair of the Design Project Judging Panel

### KEN SHUTTLEWORTH

Prior to the creation of MAKE Architects, Ken Shuttleworth worked for Foster and Partners where he worked on several highprofile projects including the HSBC headquarters in Hong Kong and 30 St Mary Axe. He has an extensive portfolio across all types of architecture. In 1994 Shuttleworth received an honorary doctorate from De Montfort University and became external examiner for architecture there. He has been a judge for the BCO awards scheme, and was made a CABE Commissioner in 2002. In April 2004 he became chair of CABE's Design Review.

### LIZA FIOR

Liza Fior is one of the founding partners of the collaborative practice of muf architecture art. The firm was established in 1995 with the explicit intention of working in the public realm, an eccentric decision at the time. The work of muf moves from the detail to strategy and back again and encompasses masterplanning, civic and urban design, buildings, landscape design, exhibition design and temporary and permanent art commissions. The firm is known for pioneering techniques for widening the definition of who constitutes the client. Fior taught at the Architectural Association between 1989 and 1995 and the RCA between 1999 and 2001. She continues to lecture nationally and internationally.

### MARTHA SCHWARTZ

Martha Schwartz is a landscape architect and artist with a major interest in urban projects and the exploration of new design expression in the landscape. As principal of Martha Schwartz Partners, her goal is to find opportunities where landscape design solutions can be raised to a level of fine art. She has over 25 years of experience collaborating with a variety of world-renowned architects on a diverse portfolio of projects. Schwartz is the recipient of numerous awards and prizes including a fellowship from the Urban Design Institute, several design awards from the American Society of Landscape Architects, and visiting residencies at Radcliffe College and the American Academy in Rome. Schwartz is also an adjunct professor of Landscape Architecture at Harvard University's Graduate School of Design.

### THE PRESIDENT'S MEDALS / PART 1



### 'beautifully done, I've never seen anything like it'

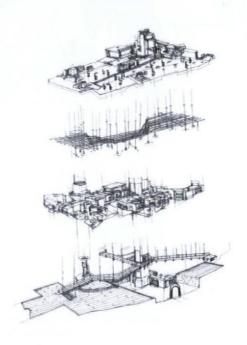
Ken Shuttleworth

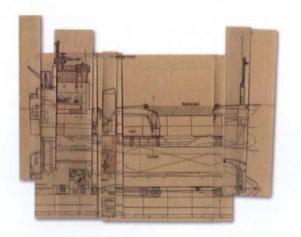
### WINNER / BRONZE MEDAL

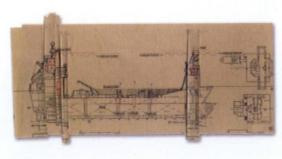
### **LUKE PEARSON**

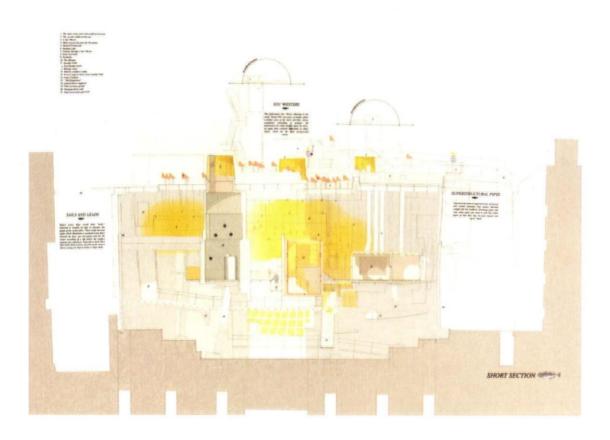
THE BARTLETT SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE Collingwood's Vessel: A Retirement Home for Elderly Fishermen, Bigg Market, Newcastle Tutors: Laura Allen, Mark Smout

The scheme houses a retirement home and a working men's club for members of Newcastle's fishing community. Taking inspiration from the unique nature of the society, the scheme takes the notion of the ship in an architectural context, to create an *ersatz* environment which interacts with the city around it as if it were a dry-docked vessel.









# CONTRACT Contra

### THE PRESIDENT'S MEDALS / PART 1



Ken Shuttleworth

COMMENDATION / BRONZE MEDAL
WINNER IGUZZINI TRAVEL AWARD

### **BENJAMIN KOREN**

first principles'

ARCHITECTURAL ASSOCIATION

Harmonic Proportion in Amorphic Form: A Music Pavilion

Tutors: Charles Walker, Lip Khoon Chiong

WINNER SOM FOUNDATION TRAVELLING FELLOWSHIP

has done a great job, it is done from

Koren wrote the '3-D Digital Harmonograph' software that generated the pavilion. It is based on a mechanical device said to visualise musical harmony by drawing apparently spatial graphs. He developed 3-D single-looping line graphs by adding a dimension, employed Fibonacci number ratios and harmonics, and translated them into proportionate continuous surface-meshes.

### 'he enjoyed it; a self-absorbed project like early Frank Gehry'

Martha Schwartz

### COMMENDATION / BRONZE MEDAL

ADAM FURMAN
ARCHITECTURAL ASSOCIATION
The B's

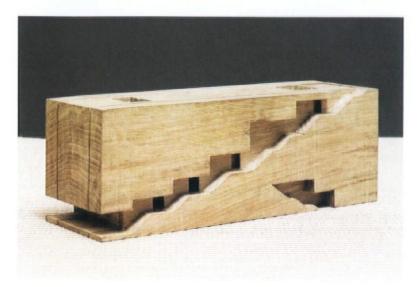
Tutor: Katrin Lahusen

This project uses narrative to bring together structure and occupant in a time-based relationship where the architecture becomes the beheld. Rather than superimposition over reality, the occupants' imaginations create space and structure. This alters their routines and leads them to create new spaces, which changes them again until the occupants' habits and routines become inextricable from the physical fabric.









### 'the analysis is pretty sharp'

Liza Fior

COMMENDATION / BRONZE MEDAL

NICHOLAS LOBO BRENNAN LONDON METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY Luftkastellet

Tutor: Daniel Serafimovski

The project is for a new arts centre on a waterfront site in Copenhagen, in response to research about the nature and potential of contemporary forms of 'sacred spaces'. 'Luftkastellet', which translates as the 'Air-Castle' or 'Lofty Castle', is the name of an existing 'alternative' cultural venue on the site. Brennan envisages a combination of warehouse typologies and rooms/ 'atmospheres' for art performance/ practice on the site.

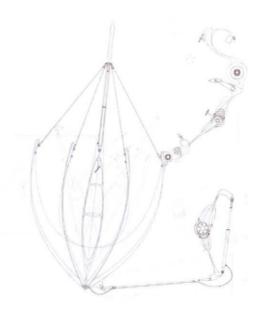
### 'the drawings are gorgeous'

Ken Shuttleworth

WINNER / SERJEANT AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN DRAWING

RUSSELL PEARCE
UNIVERSITY OF NOTTINGHAM
The Scrap Lung
Tutors: Jonathan Morris, Phil Watson

This is a theoretical project based on the concept of a 'predatory fish machine' with walls created through the movements of hung 'urban prosthetics'. It involves 'conversations formed amongst degrading machinery and hydrolysis limbs' and deals with issues of leakage and the relationship between movement and time. In conclusion, writes Pearce's tutor, 'The architectonic shall no longer have a means or an end'.



### THE PRESIDENT'S MEDALS / PART 2

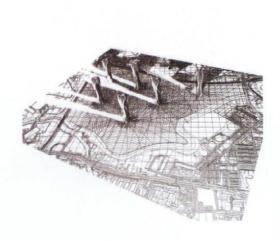


'a grim, dark, fantastic project' Martha Schwartz

WINNER / SILVER MEDAL

YEW CHOONG CHAN
UNIVERSITY OF WESTMINSTER
Vertical Energy, Lea Valley, London
Tutors: Simon Herron, Susanna Isa

This draws on the work of Professor Marc Baldo of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, who is pioneering the use of spinach to generate electricity. The scheme combines a power plant and a park, with five 60-storey towers housing the pods that grow the spinach. They will also burn it after extracting the protein. Marshlands will be reintroduced to the area, to benefit wildlife. The hydroponic towers will also increase oxygen levels in the area and absorb pollution.







### THE PRESIDENT'S MEDALS / PART 2



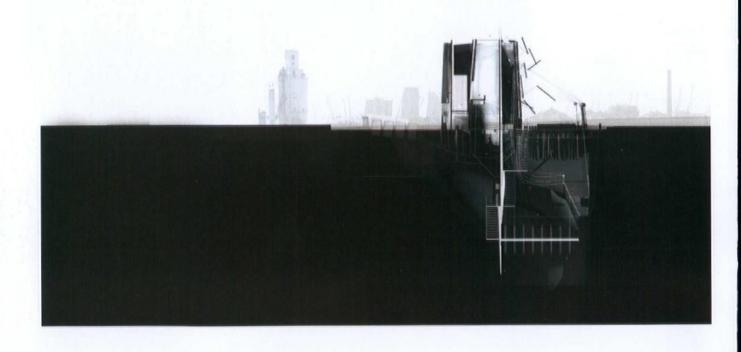
'careful manipulation of light and shade – a sensitive response to the peculiarities of a complex site'

Ken Shuttleworth

COMMENDATION / SILVER MEDAL
WINNER IGUZZINI TRAVEL AWARD
WINNER SOM FOUNDATION TRAVELLING FELLOWSHIP

JOHAN BERGLUND
THE BARTLETT SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE
The Royal Victoria Colourworks
Tutors: Niall McLaughlin, Yeorya Manolopoulou

This project deals with the point where ground meets water. The site is a former docking bay next to London's Royal Victoria Docks, now a paintworks. The laboratory is complemented by studios and accommodation for three resident artists, who test the paint produced. Sitting below ground level, the studios use different ways of bringing light into the space.







'this is a real piece of architecture'

COMMENDATION / SILVER MEDAL
SERJEANT AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN DRAWING

PAVEL COSMIN
ION MINCU UNIVERSITY OF ARCHITECTURE AND
URBANISM, ROMANIA
Archaeological Museum, Troglodytic Study Centre
Tutor: Zeno Bogdanescu

The purpose of the project is to produce an act of architecture in order to extend the underground dimension of the site. Following a dynamic of simple gestures, the architecture is grafted into the relief, and produces an inlay – a delicate scratch on the limit-surface. Entering a soft fluctuation process, the museum mixes with the topography and ends up becoming topography itself.

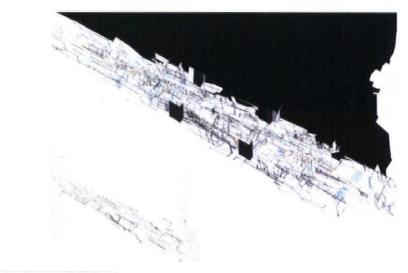
'very energetic, well explored – an exciting project'

Martha Schwartz

### COMMENDATION / SILVER MEDAL

NIGEL PEAKE
UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH
Grand Galata, Bazaar Bridge
Tutor: Dorian Wiszniewski

This is an investigation of the gesture and personal exchange of the Grand Bazaar, Istanbul. Peake's hypothesis is that gesture exists before language. With Galata Bridge being the physical borderland bridging the Eminonu and Galata sides, his proposal is to inhabit this in-between condition and to revitalize the bridge in the way that a delicately inserted 'slab' mends a stair. By bringing the Grand Bazaar to the bridge, the project breathes new life into the crossing.





### THE PRESIDENT'S MEDALS / DISSERTATION JUDGING



Judging took place over a four-month period from July to November 2005. Since 2001, the dissertation judging panel has always made an initial shortlist. An international judge then joins the panel to discuss the final selection and establish the dissertation medallist. Previous international judges were: Professor Edward W Soja (UCLA), Professor Christine Boyer (Princeton University), Kim Dovey (University of Melbourne) and Professor Kari Jormakka (Vienna University of Technology). This year's international judge was Professor Arie Graafland, Professor of Architectural Theory at the Faculty of Architecture at Delft University of Technology. One Dissertation Medal and three commendations were awarded by the judging panel. All prize-winning dissertations are kept in the British Architectural Library at the RIBA in London.

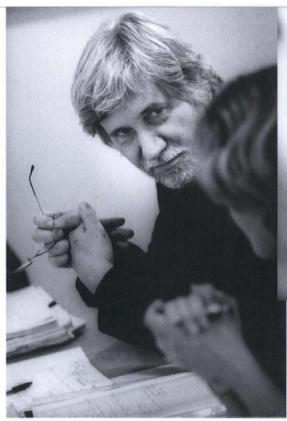
### SARAH CHAPLIN

Sarah Chaplin is head of the School of Architecture and Landscape at Kingston University. She is a qualified architect and has a Masters in Architecture and Critical Theory and is also a director of the design consultancy evolver. She was previously senior lecturer in Visual Culture and Media at Middlesex University, where she set up the MA Digital Architecture course in 1998. She is currently finishing a book about Japanese spatial culture, and working on a book about post-urban environments with Eric Holding.

### ADAM SHARR

Adam Sharr is a practising architect, lecturer at the Welsh School of Architecture and associate editor of the journal arq, published by Cambridge University Press. His research concerns the way contemporary architectural theory, influenced by movements in philosophy and literature, seems to be distancing itself from the sort of architectural practice that happens in many offices. Current writing projects focus on notions of place, expertise and the everyday.





#### ANDREW BALLANTYNE

Andrew Ballantyne is professor of architecture at the University of Newcastle. He qualified and practised as an architect before going into research. His most recent book is Architecture Theory, published by Continuum.

#### ARIE GRAAFLAND

Arie Graafland is professor of architectural theory at the Faculty of Architecture at Delft University of Technology. After a three-year technical education in Rotterdam, he studied sociology and philosophy in Amsterdam. He then worked for several years in urban research for the city of Arnhem. In 1978 he joined the department of urbanism at Delft and in 1986 he received his PhD in architectural theory. He now mainly works in architectural theory and urban theory and has published extensively in both these topics. He is the editor of The Critical Landscape Series (010 Publishers), and co-editor of the Delft Annual. He is Course Director of the Delft School of Design, a PhD programme at the faculty of architecture. He lives in Amsterdam.

#### VICKY RICHARDSON

Vicky Richardson became editor of Blueprint in March 2004.
A graduate of architecture from the University of Westminster, she also studied fine art at Central St Martins and Chelsea School of Art and Design. Previously deputy editor and practice editor of the RIBA Journal, she has also been editor of Public Service Magazine. She regularly contributes to exhibition catalogues and speaks at public events about architecture and the city.

#### THE PRESIDENT'S MEDALS / DISSERTATIONS



'a really clever and sophisticated approach to the theme of sustainability'

Vicky Richardson

#### WINNER

JESSICA HRIVNAK
UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE
Is Relative Sustainability Relevant? A discussion of 'Inn the Park'
as a 'sustainable' restaurant

Tutor: Mike McEvoy

Hopkins' recently completed 'Inn the Park' building has been heralded as an environmental flagship enterprise. Taking it as a case study, this thesis scrutinises the environmental standards and criteria by which the building can be assessed. It seeks to highlight some of the conflicts and tensions between energy expenditure, efficiency and economics. It also demonstrates the influence architects can have and how they can contribute positively to achieving more sustainable buildings.







'the passion with which it is written makes it a brilliant and inventive piece'

Arie Graafland

#### COMMENDATION

FIONA SHEPPARD
THE BARTLETT SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE
The Stolen Kiss
Tutor: Jane Rendell

By mixing genres, combining aesthetics with seduction and narrating while theorising, this proposal debates aspects of psychology, sensation, affect and desire. The initial trilogy of research matter – the history of Peter the Great and his wife Catherine with Kadriorg Palace; an investigation into a first kiss; and therapy for couples – have all diversified to accommodate a broad thesis on the construction of emotions in space.









#### COMMENDATION

MATTHEW WICKENS
UNIVERSITY OF BATH
The Modern House in Bath: Peter
Womersley's Valley Spring
Tutors: Jeremy Gould, Vaughan Hart

This dissertation examines Peter Womersley's career, his influences and education, and his search for a new domestic style. Womersley's English buildings bracket his residential work well, since they embrace his first and last houses. In particular, this dissertation examines the relationship between Womersley's smaller-scale work and his larger-scale projects.

'a thoughtful and deliberate discussion, a clear voice...'

Adam Sharr

#### COMMENDATION

ANNA ROSS
UNIVERSITY OF NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE
Reading Between the Lines: An analysis of the role
of text in the work of Daniel Libeskind
Tutor: Hentie Louw

Daniel Libeskind is a prolific writer and speaker – an example par excellence of the architect as, in the words of Mark Wigley, a 'public intellectual'. This dissertation seeks to establish what role Libeskind's own spoken and written words, the 'text', have in his architecture and, importantly, the effect they have on how his buildings are approached, interpreted and understood.





#### THE PRESIDENT'S MEDALS / SPONSORS

#### SENSE AND SUSTAINABILITY

In an environment where energy supplies are becoming increasingly scarce and sustainability is high on the policy agenda, sustainable architecture is no longer an extra – it is becoming a given. Our clients are demanding it, therefore our architectural schools should be demanding sustainable and renewable thinking from students as part of their response to project challenges.

Sustainability has introduced a vital third element into the formand-function design equation. Architects must increasingly acknowledge the broader agenda, harnessing new sustainable technologies and looking at ways that buildings can be adapted – for example, generating their own energy from renewable sources.

The buildings we create should treat their waste on site, incorporate materials with low-embodied energy and exploit natural – and free – resources to heat, cool, ventilate, and provide light.

Far from being a constraint on design, the sustainability imperative encourages architects to apply creative intelligence to overcome major challenges as they bring a design drawing to reality. All around us, sustainable designs are becoming world-class examples of inspirational and effective architecture.

Does sustainability come at a cost premium? It can do, but it doesn't always have to. Careful design and planning can have a genuine impact on sustainability performance, free of charge. For example, building orientation can achieve cross-ventilation and enhanced daylight penetration. Sustainable materials are also becoming more affordable – increasing demand combined with greater availability means costs are no longer so high.

As architects, it is our role to keep bang up to date with sustainable best practice and add to its ongoing innovation. We also need to help boost understanding of sustainability on a wider scale and to drive public acceptance. I say this not just because it is right to incorporate sustainable practice in our work for social reasons, but also because it is rapidly becoming a key commercial driver. Ignore it at our peril. John Cherrington

Design director, Atkins

Marks Barfield Architects
Kohn Pedersen Fox Associates
Donald Insall Associates
Studio Bednarski
Rolfe Judd
Ian Ritchie Architects
Pentagram Design
ORMS Architects and Designers
Pringle Brandon
Edward Cullinan Architects
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Michael Aukett Architects
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### **TICK MY BOX**

By Austin Williams

If you are a business, as architects' practices tend to be, how can you best make sure that you maximise your chances of getting the next job over all the other architects touting for the same crumbs? How, in short, can you beat the opposition?

One way is to provide an indispensable service; to raise the bar; to improve every day in every way and make sure that prospective clients know you, covet you and recommend you to others. The other way is to stitch up the opposition through gamesmanship, rumour, chicanery and physical violence. Both of these business strategies, in varying degrees, have made the corporate wheels go round for at least a centuru or two. Businesses sort themselves out one way or another.

There is now, as they say in the era of New Labour, a 'third way', which portrays businesses as hard done by by the vagaries of the market. This victimcentred perspective has resulted in employers, instead of fighting their business corner, simply calling for legislation to police strict new performance standards. New codes of conduct are regularly put in place to overwhelm those with slightly less rigorous (and self-righteous) values.

The new clamour for official correctives designed to squeeze the competition comes in a wide range of guises these days. Whether it's on environmental grounds or health and safety, sustainability strictures or risk management, big business is now calling foul on the small guy. There is something unsavoury about this: it points to the inability of business to survive without state aid or technical support.

Many of the big construction players most associated with PFI projects – WS Atkins, Serco, Capita, Amey and Amec – get over half of their revenues from the public sector. This gives them a stable income, but their reliance on state funding is not the best foundation for real business dynamism.

Not that there are direct similarities, of course, but it is interesting to look at RIBA's proposal for a new Chartered Practice Scheme (CPS) in this light. The CPS seems to have been designed to safeguard the big architectural players. There's nothing wrong with that if only it didn't pretend that it was a model of virtue.

It has been set up to frame 'quality criteria to provide an assured service to clients'. In fact, it will root out the competition on the basis of its inability to comply with the weight of the new bureaucracy in a similar way to the government's Quality Mark Scheme for contractors a few years ago. The CPS has nothing to say about design standards, just performance appraisals. It is reminiscent of the ISO 9000 dilemma, whereby the quality of the

manufacturing processes can be rock solid, saying nothing about the quality of the out-turn product at all.

Most of the documents will already be in your quality assurance armoury anyway, so it shouldn't be too much of a hardship to package it into a new file marked 'CPS'. But that just shows how inured we have become to paperwork. The rise and rise of audit culture – or 'transparency' as the third wayists have called it – is giving rise to a belief that form-filling has inherent merit: I tick, therefore I am.

The CPS, which replaces the Registered Practice scheme, comes into force on 31 December 2007, so it's still a long way off and not yet obligatory. But if you don't sign up, registered practices 'will not benefit from any of the marketing support offered by the RIBA'.

For more information, telephone the RIBA on 020 7307 3600.

## ARCHITECTURE WAS NO LONGER LEARNED FROM THE BOTTOM UP

By Jonathan Foyle

This month, we explore the careers of the early modern architects of the Elizabethan age. Who better than Jonathan Foyle to document the rise of the 'gentleman architect'?

Architects might naturally hold multiple careers and broad interests because experience surely enriches perception. An interest in music should inform architectural rhythm in space and structure; a skilled photographer may heighten contrasts of light and shade to animate volumes, and perhaps medical work would instil a sense of user-friendliness. A sculptor understands the potential of finishes, whereas a scrap merchant knows the value of building materials. Architect-hairdressers should be excellent at detailing thatch.

The point of this list is that the emergence of the modern architect as a pure designer of buildings has become a bit of a cliché in historical writing. Any epochal 'before and after' is usually a dangerously simplistic scenario, unless a meteor strike is involved. So, in the search for the origins of architectural practice, it is curious that when we explore the notion that architecture suddenly became a distinct profession during the Italian Renaissance — an isolated pursuit as expounded by Alberti in *De Re Aedificatoria* in 1452 — this age coincides with the emergence of the *Uomo Universale*, the omnipotent Renaissance man as painter, sculptor and architect (in Alberti's case, his athletic leaps were also considered worthy of his readers' consideration).

How can this momentous emphasis on the professional specialisation of the architect be reconciled with lauded characters

like Michelangelo and Leonardo – who between them span poetry, technology, architecture, sculpture, drawing and painting – to represent a burgeoning ideal not of specialism but of artistic diversity? We need to know which stages in the Renaissance period set architects on a path toward architecture as a contained professional discipline. Have we really been living among modern architects for half a millennium?

As a result, we have to be careful to determine what we're looking for when we say 'modern architect'. Was there ever a time when building designers didn't hustle for clients, mustering a mixture of book learning and practical experience to propose resolved whole structures, according to the terms of an illustrated contract? The many Medieval frescoes of designers presenting patrons with models suggest not. Then again, if we're looking for the architectural profession as an independent regulated body of practitioners, we have to wait several centuries yet.

Now, there is a phenomenon which undoubtedly marks the Renaissance era as a new phase: attitudes to architecture changed so that the pursuit of designing buildings became appropriate for the well-rounded noble type and so the practitioner's status was transformed. Architecture was no longer to be a craft tradition to be mastered from the bottom up through apprenticeship wherein the expression of structural technology remained paramount, but it was now to be understood intellectually, from the lofty principles of published book-learning





 Burghley House, thought to be mostly designed by its owner, Elizabeth I's Lord High Treasurer, William Cecil, between 1555 and 1587

2. Hardwick Hall, Derbyshire, by Robert Smythson

down, so that technology was relegated to a means of realising a pre-ordained ideal form.

That gradual shift created a profound difference in professional structure. It's true that many of the arts were elevated: painters, once akin to saddle-makers, could now become exalted artist/courtiers, from Mantegna to Van Dyck, but few rulers wanted to be painters. By contrast, architecture was authoritative: to command space and dictate the movement of people and to understand how vast, princely investments in construction were suitably realised were altogether different matters.

If the terms 'socially elevated', 'intellectual' and 'authoritarian' define the character of the early modern architect, then the founders of the profession were indeed the 'gentleman architects', creatures of the later sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries. It was a Frenchman who wrote the first unequivocal account of a gentleman architect. Philibert Delorme published his Premier Tome de l'Architecture (Book II, f. 31) in 1567, wherein he stated more clearly than anybody before him that: '...we have sufficiently advised the architect and the Seigneur, or whoever would like to build, of their positions and duties as the two heads of the building enterprise. It remains in this second book to turn our pen to the third class of persons, without whom no building can be perfect. These are the master-masons, the stone cutters and the workmen (whom the architect must always control) who as well must not be deprived of our labour and instruction here, since it has pleased God for us to give it.'

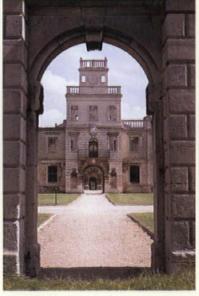
In England, most ecclesiastical building commissions had dried up by around 1540 at the Dissolution of the Monasteries, so the skill-base of the waning Masonic guilds needed to diversify. Henry VIII had accrued so many properties that Elizabeth I built little, while famously encouraging her courtiers to build so they might put her, and perhaps 500 courtiers, up for a few nights.

Harbingers of DIY, many of the new British patrons (such as John Thynne of Longleat from 1554 to the 1580s) were taking control of the appearance of their own residences: if they themselves did not design they usually worked closely with an architect (like William Cecil, who directed his mason-foreman Roger Ward in building Burghley House while complaining that 'we are meant to exceed our purses in this'). In doing so, they set standards for their social circle and created the era of the country house, many of their estates having been carved from monastic landholdings. One might call it a secularised landscape, or one forged by Protestant crusaders. In any case, the centuries dominated by the 'outside-in' design discipline of modular Classical house facades began here.

Elizabethan-to-Jacobean England was home to a couple of notable surveyor-architects who made their sole living from domestic buildings and who might qualify as architects in the modern sense.

Robert Smythson (1535-1614) is the first name to conjure with. He was the subject of an excellent monograph by Mark Girouard (Yale, 1983) that chronicles his career as designer





of many of the finest Elizabethan country houses of the Midlands. One of Smythson's drawing books survives, once owned by Byron and now at the RIBA, packed with thrilling tinted plans and elevations of his catalogue of built achievements. Smythson was probably born in the last year that Anne Boleyn lived and the monasteries still stood: his training was as a mason. His was a world infused with physical allegories and symbolism, but not 'so transparent that every mean mechanic might understand it' (Paolo Giovio, 1555).

Architectural jokes needed to be incorporated into some transmutation of the native traditions of large fenestration along with the Classical pattern-books then arriving from Europe. A heady brew indeed, one which required a talent for abstraction and a learning that would be out of the reach of an ordinary person. And where was a mason to accrue this knowledge if not from his own initiative and effort? Books were expensive pieces of equipment and, of course, they presumed literacy.

By his late 20s, Smythson had found patronage in high places: he had worked on a lost brick house at Caversham for Sir Francis Knollys, the cousin of Elizabeth I and her vice chamberlain. After a devastating four-hour fire at Longleat which started at 3pm on 21 April 1567, Smythson's arrival the following year is recorded in a letter of reference addressed to the owner, John Thynne, from Humphrey Lovell, the Queen's master mason: 'According to my promes I have sent unto yowe this bearer Robert Smytheson, freemason, who of laytt was with Master

Vice Chamberlaine, not dowting hem to be a man fett for youre worshepe [suggesting a wage of] VIII s a weke and a nage.'

A nag – the equine version of a company car – would undoubtedly have been welcome to Smythson, for he had to travel long distances to supervise men and materials. The design of Longleat wasn't his – for a wooden model was already made for Thynne's approval – but the experience was invaluable towards his first commission as an architect.

That first commission was Wollaton House in Nottinghamshire. Smythson's monument in the nearby church records that he was 'Architector and Surveyor unto the most worthy house of Wollaton with divers others of great account', and this testimony is unique for an Elizabethan monument. His drawing book features a design for the house as occupying the central square in a three-by-three chequerboard containing square gardens to the rear, service courts to the side and a cloistered entrance courtyard for the centrepiece of the front three squares. The bizarre rectangular tower-on-platform arrangement of the house itself was begun in 1580, but we first hear of Smythson's involvement in an account book that happens to survive from 1582/3. This marks a transition in his professional status, for he is no longer regarded as a freemason but as 'Mr Smythson'.

Among his attributed later designs of the 1590s, Hardwick Hall was built for the serially widowed Elizabeth Countess of Shrewsbury and stands out for its simple, bold massing. In the account books lurks a payment for 20 shillings given to a





5.

3 & 4. Kirby Hall, Northamptonshire, by John Thorpe 5. Audley End, Essex. Drawing of John Thorpe's outer court of c. 1615 6. Audley End. Same view as per drawing, Thorpe's court removed

'Mr Smythson the surveyour' and 10 shillings to 'his Sonne'. Robert's son, John Smythson, (c. 1570s-1634) would go on to work at Bolsover Castle and described himself as both 'gentleman' (on his marriage register of 1600) and 'architecter' (in his will).

John Thorpe (c. 1560s-1655) is the second of these gentlemen architects and one of his drawing books also survives, at Sir John Soane's Museum. In it, a plan of Kirby Hall in Northamptonshire, labelled 'Kirby, whereof I laid ye first stone ad 1570' led early historians to believe he was the designer of this sophisticated house, until calculating that he must barely have been out of nappies. Evidently, his father was a Northamptonshire mason-architect (and one familiar with French architectural books) before him and so young John's role must have been as a mascot for the inaugural block.

In his adolescence, Thorpe was not apprenticed through the Masonic lodges, but was employed in the Office of Works as a surveyor of the Tudor royal palaces, such as Richmond and Greenwich. His house was near St Martin-in-the Fields, London, within a few hundred yards of the largest English royal residence: Whitehall Palace.

After 1601, Thorpe became a freelance surveyor (his friend Henry Peacham called him 'an excellent geometrician and surveyor' in 1612) and it was probably during this time that his drawing book was compiled. Of the 150 or so images, some are for new designs: conceits such as a house formed of two blocks – 'IT', the Latinised initials of his name. Other drawings are surveys

of existing structures and some are duplicates of other people's new designs. Perhaps the most spectacular is his vast outer court of Audley End house in Essex, designed c. 1615 for Thomas Howard, Earl of Suffolk and Lord Treasurer to James I. The court was dismantled, but the illustration gives an idea of its size and effect as the largest example of the 'prodigy house', as Sir John Summerson labelled them.

Beyond his graphic and imaginative skills, Thorpe was also an academic, translating Hans Blum's Latin compendium of the orders (Zurich, 1550) into *The Booke of Five Collumnes of Architecure*, 1601, and also preparing an English copy of Du Cerceau's treatise on perspective of 1576.

With Robert Smythson and John Thorpe, we have met two men whose careers were focused on architecture, albeit in all its complexities and breadths. They were freelancers, providing a service over a whole site from survey to design with all the fashionable knobs on. During this they supervised workmen whom they had instructed according to their practical and theoretical knowledge, resolved in plans, elevations and details. Sometimes they would sketch away at a house plan or perspective for amusement's sake. Occasionally they'd copy someone else's design to learn from it and adapt it: in sharing designs they were part of a circle of professionals. And in the search for a highly personalised architectural manner which could be adapted to express the ambitions of their patrons, the reputations of architects as artists in form and space was set to rise.

#### **TECHNICAL & PRACTICE**

# RESEARCHERS HAVE IMBUED MOLECULES WITH INTELLIGENCE

By Liz Bailey

Fiction writers have long postulated the emergence of intelligent molecules a billionth of a metre in diameter that determine their own shape in order to best serve their structural purpose. Two engineers at University College London have evolved mass production of materials into customisation to make this reality.

Working at the millimetre – rather than the nanometre – scale, architect and research engineer Sean Hanna and roboticist and computer scientist Siavash Haroun Mahdavi have developed evolutionary algorithms that create self-supporting forms that adapt themselves to maximise strength while minimising weight.

They have combined this with cutting-edge rapid prototyping technology (stereolithography) to generate a 3D scale model from a digital image using a low-powered laser to 'cure' photosensitive polymers. They also use laser sintering, which melts thin layers of a polymer-and-sand powder with a CO<sub>2</sub> laser.

Structural optimisation is nothing new to architecture, which deals with structures containing hundreds or thousands of members. For example, the British Museum has about 5,000 elements to it.

'You consider each element linearly, calculating how it would behave given certain loading conditions and determine what the stresses will be,' says Hanna. 'Using an analysis loop you can change it and gradually improve it. But if you want to make something that goes into a larger scale, with millions of members, as big as you want it to be, the computation time to optimise it goes up exponentially.'

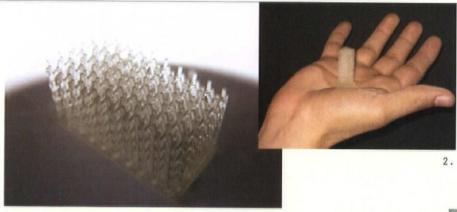
Accordingly, Hanna and Mahdavi have built a simulation imbuing molecules with a modicum of intelligence. Explains Hanna: 'It lets each molecule look at the overall loading demands or stress at that particular point and then adjusts its form.'

Their work closely approximates the way nature produces organic building blocks. 'Draw the analogy with bone, or wood,' says Hanna. 'Wood is very strong because of the arrangement of fibres. The tree distributes the fibres in a way that's optimal to carry the forces it has to support. The ends of a bone are denser than its interior as that's the most efficient way of carrying a load.

'By evolution, cells have the "intelligence" to reorient themselves or change their shape, size or structure depending on where they sit. Our model uses genetic algorithms to do the same.' Currently, though, it's only an algorithm and once the material is built using rapid prototyping, the molecule can't actually change.

The pair are no strangers to practical applications. Mahdavi is using similar algorithms to build robots that adapt themselves if broken, while Hanna developed, with Foster and Partners, a light-controlled roof composed of louvres that twist into different orientations to follow the path of the sun.

Their modelling technique also has practical implications. Most immediately they see their method being applied to small mass-customisable products, such as medical implants and high-end sports equipment, both moulded to an individual body. They have already used their model to produce customised orthotics (shaped arch supports for trainers) that cost about £20 to manufacture.



1.

1 & 2. Small stereolithography models showing the complexity algorithms 3 & 4. Prototype palmtops that roll up to the size of an iPod



But until demand – not for rapid prototyping but for rapid manufacturing, increases, the high cost of rapid prototyping limits this sort of application for the present time. We've made some one- or two-centimetre blocks using stereolithography that cost  $\pounds 1$  or  $\pounds 2$  each, says Hanna. Algorithms are cheap, but the costs for the model add up.

But, says Hanna, by using their adaptive algorithm, which learns how to optimise itself, 'the calculation for millions of members becomes more feasible. You can use this sort of technique to give you an optimal solution very rapidly.'

The pair hope eventually to deploy this technique to build structures where every unit is unique. 'You'd give each element limited intelligence so that it can go off and build itself; it's autonomous, like a living cell,' says Hanna. 'It could cover a metre or even a whole city, or you could then shrink it down and manipulate the behaviour and structural capacity of individual building elements.'

Blue sky? This is real-life nanotech. 'Small units with a little technology that reconfigure themselves to create any shape you like, a lump of material that reshapes itself at the level of tree or bone cells,' says Hanna. He also hopes to develop materials with controllable dynamic properties to create, for instance, one with a zero Poisson's ratio (so if compressed in one direction it does not expand in another). Watch this (compressed) space.

www.sean.hanna.net/microstructure.htm

www.sean.hanna.net/signf/S.HarounMahdavi/

#### COMING SOON TO SCREENS NEAR YOU

Philips Research has developed the Polymer Vision flexible screen; a 'rollable display'. It may soon be used for screens for palmtops, GPS devices or portable screens, rolling down to almost nothing.

The screen consists of Thin Film Transistors (TFTs), using plastic as a substrate. Plastic must be processed at low temperatures in order not to melt, but making silicon-based TFTs requires very high temperatures. The TFT layers are 25 micrometres thick. A flexible display similar to Philips' electronic ink goes on top.

The possibilities seem limitless. Might we see entire media suites of wall-sized flexible displays? Might you carry interactive blueprints with you and unwrap them as you would a poster?

A4 sizes should be feasible soon, but bigger screens are some way off. Also coming soon are techniques to use the display as a sound baffle and giving the display a touchscreen capability.

Over the longer term, Philips Research's HomeLab has numerous 'Ambient Intelligence' projects that aim to integrate technology into our lives. One concept, Aurora, is an interactive light surface for the home that lets you draw and erase with light over an entire wall. Another, Photonic Textiles, turns fabrics into intelligent displays.

Polymer Vision: www.polymervision.com

Photonic Textiles: www.research.philips.com/initiatives/photext/ Ambient Intelligence: www.research.philips.com/technologies/syst\_softw HomeLab www.research.philips.com/technologies/misc/homelab/ Liz Bailey is a writer on technology

## HEALTHY MARKETS FOR WOOD WILL HELP PREVENT DEFORESTATION

By Cristina Esposito

Furniture designer Luke Hughes' lecture on designing with sustainable hardwood was a fascinating discussion on the benefits of this exquisite and unpredictable material – not least for the ensuing debate on responsible sourcing and deforestation.

#### SAFE SOURCING

Timber, we are told, is back in vogue. The diversity in the grains and hues across a huge variety of species ensures that every designer can add a unique signature to their buildings. And in an age of rapidly depleting construction resources, timber has the added benefit of being a naturally regenerating material. So rich are the planet's resources that the American Hardwood Export Council (AHEC), the primary American hardwood lobbying group, estimates that there are more than 295 million hectares of available hardwood in the USA alone. But while few would question timber's environmental credentials, the issue of sustainable sourcing continues to rattle cages across all camps.

Luke Hughes used Greenpeace's own data to argue that only 1.01 per cent of all tropical 'forestry' is used for industrial purposes, including construction and furniture. Of this figure, only about 18 per cent (or less than 0.2 per cent of all tropical forest depletion) enters international trade. The major causes of deforestation are identified as poverty, population pressures and shifting agriculture. Persuasively, he explained that healthy markets for wood products will actually help to prevent deforestation,

encouraging those countries to follow carefully monitored forest management. Suddenly it's relatively simple economics: boycotts may only serve to decrease the value of the land, thus endangering the future of those very same forests that could be a nation's economic saviour.

'And the one power that is truly irritating,' stated an incensed-looking Hughes 'is the Forest Stewardship Council. All this drive for certification has done is to add a margin onto timber costs, making the situation worse. It's riddled with bureaucracy and anyway, certificates can always be bought.'

'So what do you suggest architects do?' piped up a slightly confused Bill Gething of Feilden Clegg Bradley Associates, who, incidentally, is also RIBA's advisor on sustainability. 'Do we just take their [the suppliers'] word for it?' Absolutely not, was Hughes' retort: 'Look at the data on websites, check sourcing by region and state, look closely at the policy and systems followed. With European and USA sources there is a 95 per cent chance it is certified – even if it doesn't say it.' Hughes also recommended looking at guidelines set by, among others bodies, the American Tree Farm System (ATFS) and the International Tropical Timber Organisation (ITTO).

#### THOUGHTFUL FIT-OUT

Responsible sourcing isn't the only way to follow sustainable ambitions and it didn't take Hughes long to broach the tricky subject of office refits. 'We are now in our third generation of



Certified forest by system (in the world)

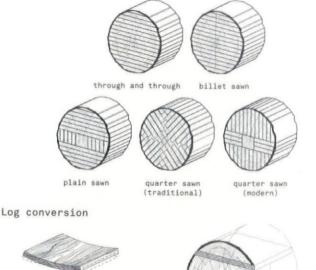
Canary Wharf fit-outs,' he lamented. 'That's rather extreme, but you can expect most offices to have an overhaul every 12–15 years or so, usually when a new CEO takes over or at the end of a lease. Considering timber furniture can have a life expectancy of centuries, depending on use, it's a terrible waste.' One way to avoid costly wastage is to use veneers, on table tops for example. Although these don't take kindly to impact and are difficult to repair inconspicuously, slip matching allows boardroom table tops to achieve uniform colour and design and alleviates the heartbreak of disposing of beautifully crafted solid-timber units.

Where furniture is desired for institutional buildings, such as museums, colleges or churches, the intended life may be 50-100 years. In these cases, there really is no substitute for solid timber, especially where resistance to knocks and abuse is specified as standard.

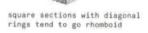
#### KNOW YOUR WOOD

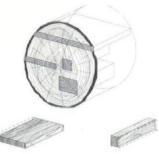
Being able to predict how timber will behave is another good way to eliminate not just wastage but potentially destructive problems to do with distortion once the material is in use. It is important to remember that:

- Timber expands and contracts in width not length;
- Movement is related to humidity, not temperature. An oak-top table 1m wide (if made when the moisture content is at 20 per cent), will shrink by 2cm when the moisture content is reduced to 12 per cent\*; and



these boards tend to cup away from the tree's original heart





growth rings perpendicular to the face give optimum stability and suffer minimum shrinkage and distortion

Typical distortions

• Boards tend to cup away from the tree's heart, so look for perpendicular rings to guarantee optimum stability (see diagram).

Hughes also explained that timber sourced from densely planted areas is less likely to distort because the trees grow straighter. So use the most appropriate cut of timber and if you do use solid sections, keep them to the most feasible dimensions. Hughes stipulated that it is vital to know what sizes are available. Also, be aware that all exposed timber surfaces will change colour upon exposure to light and air: light timbers tend to get darker and vice versa, while sunlight will have a dramatic bleaching effect.

\*Taken from Furniture Factors: Designing around materials, by Luke Hughes & Company, Telephone 020 7404 5995 for a copy.

The Luke Hughes lecture was sponsored by the American Hardwood Export Council (www.ahec.org)





## A SATIRICAL SITE FOR SORE EYES

It would be wrong of me, at this time of approaching good will, not to remind you of the pleasures of www.spa. uk.net, the work of nearpolymath satirist Ian Martin, with whom I first had the honour to work as a journalist 25 years ago. At the time he also ran a band, now a distant memory, although it probably accounts for the fact that he now wears dark glasses even during the evening.

SPA originally stood for small practice architect but, I suspect, the grinding nature of this sector of the industry, plus Martin's inability to take things other than extremely unseriously, means that the site has transmogrified into the world's premier architectural satire site.

It is, of course, more than that. There is a Spot the Fake competition section, a series of tile games, a take on Corb's inflated prose and a critic's section with sub-topics such as 'The War on Retroism', 'Classic Interiors' and Jazz Architecture'. The archive section is a wonderful mine including random clerihews about contemporary architecture. To subscribe to the free SPA newsletter, send a blank email to subscribe@spa.uk.net

Ok, here is one from the normally hard men of the AJ news desk: www.sr.se/p1/ src/sing/index.htm# sutherland.lyall@btinternet.com Mr Justice Rupert Jackson, the new judge in charge of the Technology and Construction Court (TCC), has made a few changes since his arrival, writes Kim Franklin. The conclusion of his first year is as good a time as any to review them.

Judge Seymour, infamous for his judgment in cases such as CWS v ICL, no longer sits in the TCC. In that case, the judge had found against the claimant retail group, who claimed losses of £11 million from the defendant computer company, on the basis that CWS had harboured a festering grievance against ICL and wanted to engineer a breakdown in their commercial relationship.

This conspiracy theory, which affected the judge's whole approach to the claim, had not been argued by anyone in the case nor put to the parties by the judge. The Court of Appeal condemned the judge's approach as 'unsupportable'. The risk of their case being allocated to Judge Seymour had put claimants off using the TCC. Now they can breathe again.

Jackson has also seconded no fewer than five High Court Judges to try such TCC cases as warrant their senior expertise. The aptly named 'Jackson Five' have been called upon to decide cases such as Gerling General Insurance v Canary Wharf on construction insurance and

Hackwood v ADS (2005) on letters of intent.

Two specialist construction silks have also been elevated to the bench. Peter Coulson QC is now perhaps the youngest TCC judge ever and has proceeded to dispatch cases with his usual no-nonsense style. Vivian Ramsey QC, the popular and prolific senior construction silk, has given up his lucrative international arbitration practice to become a more humbly paid High Court Judge. He took this decision, apparently, drinking champagne and flying first class, when he asked himself whether he really wanted to be doing this for the rest of his life.

And then there's the TCC Guide – a truly collaborative document, with contributions from the London and provincial TCC judges, specialist solicitors, the Technical and Construction Solicitors' Association and the Technological and Construction Bar Association. The Guide gives bang up-to-date guidance on all aspects of practice in the TCC, reducing specialist procedures to writing, in some instances, for the first time.

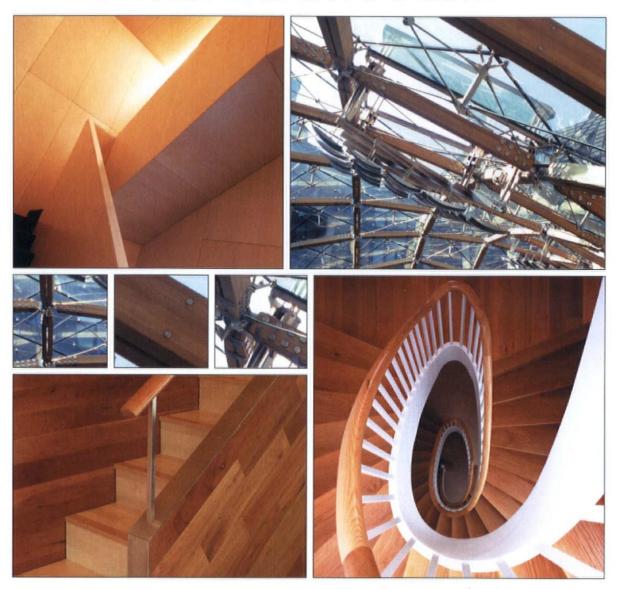
Jackson's input has not been limited to administration of the TCC. He has also given some clear steers on the law. He informed a meeting of the Society of Construction Law that adjudication may not be suitable for sizeable and complex claims. In Amec v
Secretary of State for Transport he
distilled the jungle of authority
to just seven criteria for
determining whether there
was a dispute capable of being
referred to arbitration or
adjudication.

In Carillion v Devonport he warned against finding that adjudicators had acted in breach of the rules of natural justice. In Surefire Systems v Guardian he emphasised the difficulty of appealing to the court against an arbitrator's award.

It seems that Mr Justice Jackson has really taken the TCC by the scruff of the neck in 2005. One can only wonder what the next year will bring.

Kim Franklin is a barrister and chartered arbitrator at Crown Office chambers in London. Visit www.crownofficechambers.com

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#### REVIEW



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2.

#### **EXHIBITION**

By Andrew Mead

David Chipperfield: Idea e Realtà At the Palazzo della Ragione, Padua, until 19 February

If David Chipperfield has sometimes felt hard done bu, his talent more appreciated abroad than here, he shouldn't, for coming to terms with other cultures has only enriched his architecture - as this new retrospective in Padua makes clear. It fills the huge hall of the Medieval Palazzo della Ragione, which once housed the city's courts: a grand but apt location because Chipperfield, whose career began with shops and galleries, is now involved with major civic schemes (including, in Barcelona and Salerno, two Cities of Justice). For the quality of work on display, the elegance of the installation and the splendid setting, it's an exceptional show.

Chipperfield presents 35 projects on square panels which are linked together horizontally in groups of 10 and suspended at intervals in four gently zigzagging lines down the length of the hall; a spatial strategy that echoes one of the schemes in the exhibition, his Baijun Residential District in China, whose housing blocks are angled in a similar way. The panels are of canvas on wood, the matt finish eliminating any glare or reflections.

Photographs are consciously underplayed: the first panel for each scheme contains just a band of them with an explanatory text beneath, while adjacent ones give floor plans, sections and site plans. At times the amount of white space is certainly 'generous' but, with five continuous tiers of frescoes around its walls, the hall is already full of images, and this recurrent spareness in the installation helps you to focus.

Down the centre of the hall are models, some in plaster, the rest in a beautiful grey stone, pietra di Vicenza. The latter in particular remind you of Chipperfield's studied handling of materials; which, in the absence of material samples or full-scale detail mock-ups, only emerges in the photographs and text, where brick, stone, timber, glass and concrete (rose-tinted in the Villaverde housing) all make their presence felt.

As these models aren't collocated with their panels, they form a separate episode in the show – one which confirms that, despite a liking for the orthogonal and for concision, Chipperfield has resisted a 'signature' style. In this he's a 'global' architect who doesn't peddle a global product but has the intellectual curiosity to engage with varied contexts,

built and cultural, and to abstract from local conditions.

So as well as, say, a response to the vernacular in projects as different as the Henley River & Rowing Museum and the Kaistrasse Studios in Düsseldorf harbour. there are surprises: the lobed, organic form of the central building at the City of Cultures in Milan, a streamlined quatrefoil. Contrast this with the latest version of the Hepworth Gallery in Wakefield - a crystalline cluster of trapezoidal rooms - with which Chipperfield (rightly) must be pleased, for it appears on the cover of the catalogue.

Amid his practice's current projects that, given how dispersed they are, must be keeping BA in business, some seem especially significant: the two Cities of Justice and the



3

- 1. A detail of the Padua exhibition
- 2. View down the length of the hall
- 3. One of Chipperfield's far-flung cultural projects: the Anchorage Museum, Alaska

Museum Island buildings in Berlin. In both Salerno and Barcelona there's an attempt to redefine the public face of the law by dismantling the usual overwhelming monolith into component parts – parallel blocks and courtyards at Salerno, a more irregular arrangement of solids and voids at Barcelona – while making a new slice of city with a strong sense of place.

In Berlin, where
Chipperfield is collaborating
with Julian Harrap on the
'soft restoration' of Stüler's
war-damaged Neues Museum,
he's pursuing an alternative to
Scarpa's now routine dialectic
of old and new. But in the
shadow of Schinkel, whose Altes
Museum inaugurated Museum
Island, Chipperfield has two
more buildings in prospect —
a new entrance block and the

Hinter dem Giesshaus gallery. For these related Berlin projects, both museology and history (of the site and the city) have set the bar high.

Back in Padua, the Palazzo della Ragione has butcher's shops on its ground floor and is flanked by markets. When you leave the big hall, there are voices, smells and clutter, and the world of Chipperfield's show can seem perfected and Platonic by contrast, with all its best intentions intact. The photos in it, though relatively few, are all 'authorised versions' of the buildings, before the users or occupants get to work, which eventually, in the Cities of Justice, they will. A test both for Chipperfield's humanism and his architecture will come when they do: it would be great if a future retrospective featured them as buildings in use.



#### CRITIC'S CHOICE

By Andrew Mead

What limited success the Modern Movement enjoyed here before the Second World War owed much to the photographs of Dell & Wainwright which the Architectural Review published throughout the 1930s. Along with the archives of other fine photographers, such as Edwin Smith, today they form part of the collection of the RIBA British Architectural Library. Now at a Screen Near You: RIBApix, an exhibition at the RIBA until 17 December, marks a new venture by the institute to make its holdings more accessible (and boost its revenue, of course). Some 6,000 images (20,000 by 2007), including highlights from the RIBA's Drawings Collection (Piranesi, Voysey, Lutyens), are now online at www.ribapix.com, where they can be both viewed and bought.

The photograph above, however, is not one of RIBA's. Taken by *Sue Barr*, it shows the Church of the Assumption of the Virgin at Bechyne in the Czech Republic. It's in an exhibition at the Architectural Association which closes on 9 December, but the AA has published an excellent book to accompany it – Zoë Opacic's *Diamond Vaults:*Innovation and Geometry in Medieval Architecture (£,12.50) – which includes everything in the show, indeed more.

Apparently anticipating the forms of Czech Cubism several centuries later, these 'diamond vaults' were in fact a late flourishing of Gothic in parts of Northern Europe. Barr's photos capture their sculptural quality well, but it's the drawings that really convey their great geometrical intricacy.

The book can be bought from the *Triangle Bookshop* in the AA's basement, which has extended opening hours (10am-6.30pm, Mon-Fri) in the run-up to Christmas (www.trianglebookshop.com). Prominent on the shelves there at present is Robert Cowan's *The Dictionary of Urbanism*, enthusiastically reviewed in AJ 28.04.05. Because new words and phrases in this field crop us so frequently, Cowan also edits a website, www.urbanwords.info, to keep us up to date. New additions include *frog-kissing* ('getting to know people in the hope of advantage – most frogs never do become princes'), *Glesga kiss* ('a headbutt') and *sustainababble* – no definition needed for that, I would think.





#### **EXHIBITION**

By Morgan Falconer

Pedro Cabrita Reis At Haunch of Venison, 6 Haunch of Venison Yard, London W1, until 17 December 1. True Gardens #4

2. Compound #3

Although these new works by Pedro Cabrita Reis are among the few he has made that are not site-specific, they so flatter their surroundings that the Haunch of Venison's old curving banisters and polished wood floors have never looked better. And that works both ways. Set against the aged and gentrified industrial interiors of the gallery, Reis's new materials - glass and aluminium, light bulbs and cables - feel all the more like the fabric of familiar shops and offices, of the here and now.

The sculptures Reis showed at Camden Arts Centre (AJ 09.12.04) didn't engage emphatically with the exhibition spaces, though the long iron girders he used did stretch out to fill them. In contrast, his new works are fiercely compact. The stacks

of metal lattices – dark in the rusted steel *Compound #3*, shining new and apparently weightless in the aluminium *Compound #4* – remind one of Donald Judd's Minimalism in the way all their energy seems gathered into themselves.

True Gardens #4 (London) is given all of the first floor. but again it feels compact: four large aluminium window casements holding doublelaminated glass lie horizontally, propped up crudely from the floor with blocks of wood and pieces of metal. Below them are four more glass panels, which this time are filled with painted monochromes (two orange, one greu, one black). Around them lie a series of fluorescent light bulbs and sprawling heedlessly over the whole arrangement are the thick black flexes which power

all the bulbs. It's an enthralling reprise of the old Minimalist duality of matter and spirit. Look past all the flexes and deep into the monochromes, and you see the bulbs have set off reflections like ladders of light emerging out of the floor.

That Reis has a lot of faith in the metaphorical possibilities of new materials is further confirmed in the installation of five monochromes on the second floor. They are lent their colour by expanses of dyed cotton fabric which sit behind double-laminated glass in imposing aluminium frames.

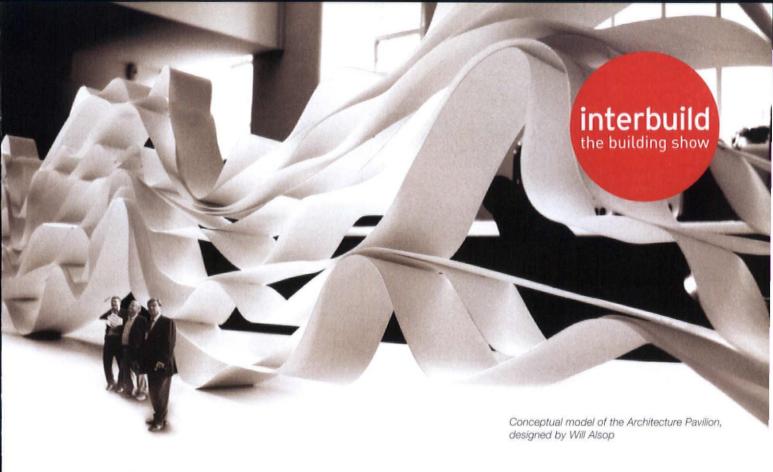
That's strange, perhaps, when the titles insist that they are paintings, but a work like *Painting #2 (Oxblood)* recalls the enveloping expansiveness of some Abstract Expressionism. Stand before it and you're reflected in a field of colour.

the detail of your surroundings
– angles and textures of walls –
all misted out in an impression
of voluminous empty space.

There's drama in these pictures and alongside *True Gardens #4* they make for a much more strident presentation than at Camden last year. The change in tone is in some measure down to the use of newer materials – Camden had distressed old doors and desks, flaking paintwork – which have less of the human touch and allow for more showmanship.

Reis was warmer last year, more personable, less distant, and somehow more appealing, but he remains just as impressive as ever.

Morgan Falconer is a writer based in London



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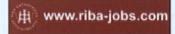


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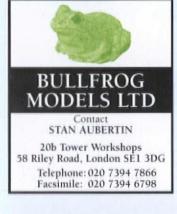
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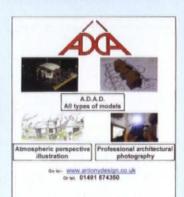
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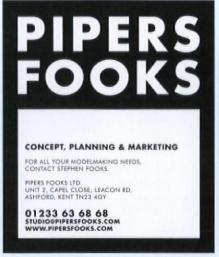
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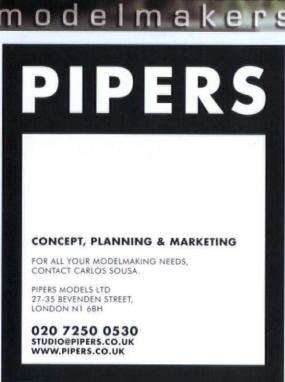


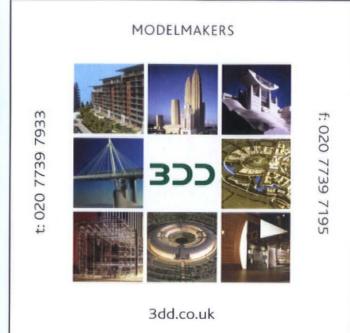




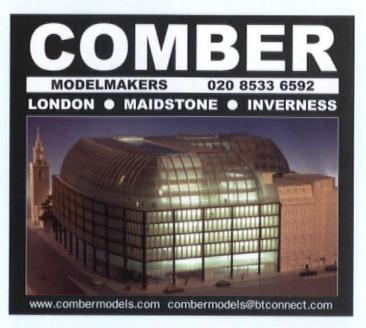












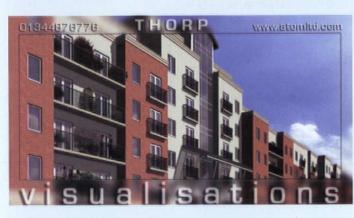




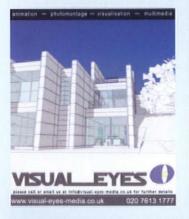
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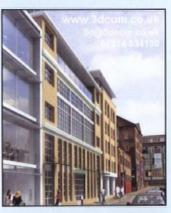
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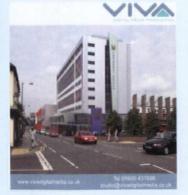














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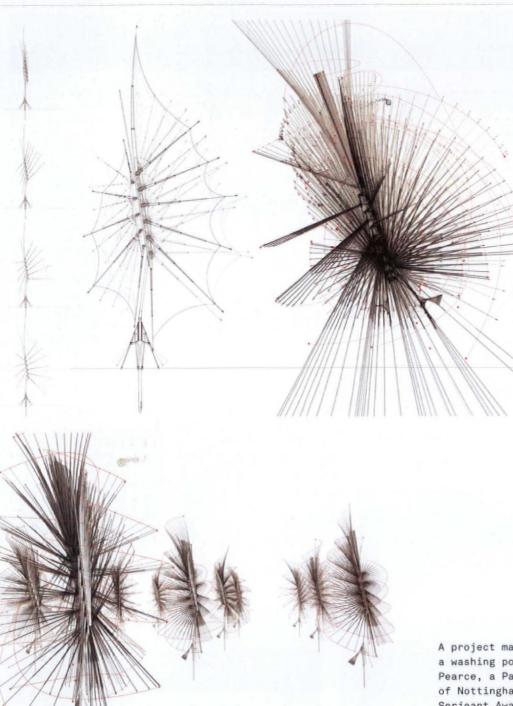


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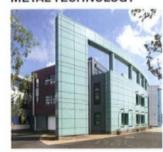
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