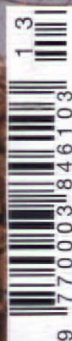


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BRITISH CLIENTS PREFER THE SECURITY OF A TRIED- AND-TESTED PRODUCT

By Isabel Allen

Every so often an architect strides onto the architectural stage with a building which belies their inexperience: Brisac Gonzalez with the Museum of World Culture in Gothenburg; LAB Architecture with Melbourne's Federation Square; and, at a more modest scale, Lars Gitz with offices for the World Health Organisation in Copenhagen (see the *Building Study* on pages 23-35). Such projects are rarely commissioned by British clients. We prefer the security of a tried-and-tested product and the clearly-defined promise of a well-respected brand. As with designer clothing, the label is deemed to bestow a certain status on the client.

The British susceptibility to designer names is explored in the book *Affluenza* by clinical psychologist Oliver James. Drawing on extensive research into the values and emotional well-being of comparative cultures, James argues that materialism and unhappiness go hand in hand. The Danes are, apparently, the least affected by

the affluenza virus. James illustrates the extent to which they are concerned with personal fulfilment, rather than keeping up with the Joneses, with the quaint observation that Danish women are more likely to choose their own sartorial style than to follow particular designers or trends.

Despite identifying 'security (emotional and material), connectedness to others, authenticity and autonomy' as fundamental human needs, James sees fit to assess national well-being without so much as a passing observation on, say, the design of communities, the attitude to public space, or the quality of the housing stock. So it is little surprise that he fails to draw a relationship between susceptibility to branding and the extent to which a populace is taught to recognise and value good design. In clothing, and in architecture, designer labels provide a security blanket for those who lack the confidence to make judgements of their own.



CONTRIBUTORS



Richard Weston, who writes the *Building Study* on the World Health Organisation on pages 23-35, is professor of architecture at the Welsh School of Architecture, Cardiff



Neil Bridge, whose photographs feature in the *Building Study*, is a photographer whose work has also appeared in magazines *Monocle* and *Intersection*



Edwin Heathcote, who reviews *European Church Architecture 1900-1950: Towards Modernism* on pages 46-47, is the architecture critic for the *Financial Times*

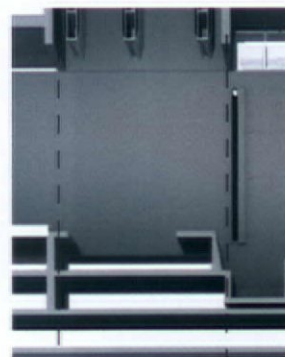
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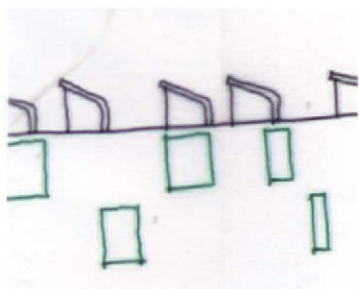
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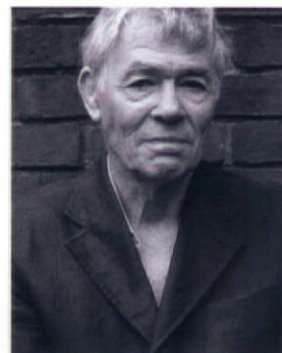
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- *East Riding of Yorkshire* – principal project officer
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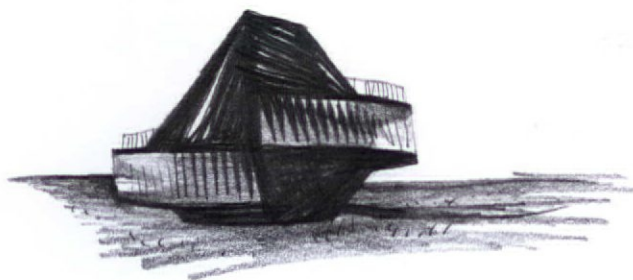
THURSDAY 29 MARCH

- CZWG finally triumphs over Aukett in bitter Vaux Brewery Battle
- HOK wins planning for Dublin's Lansdowne Road stadium
- Richard Rogers unveils images of first scheme in his home country of Italy
- Simpson's super-casino in jeopardy after shock Lords opposition to Manchester scheme



FRIDAY 30 MARCH

- Exclusive first glimpse of new Serpentine Pavilion (below)
- Denton Corker Marshall's Stonehenge scheme wins go ahead – at last
- David Cameron in last-minute bid against new construction regs
- ODA brands claims of contractor disinterest in Hadid's Aquatic Centre 'pure speculation'

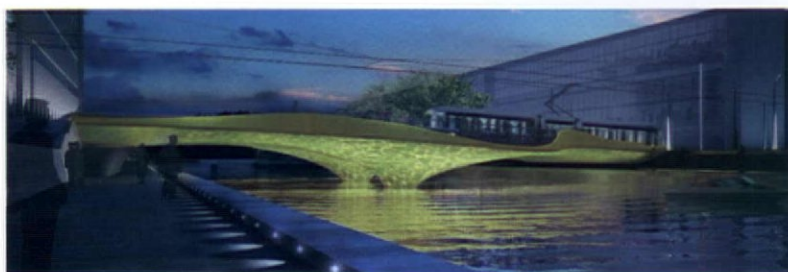


MONDAY 2 APRIL

- Norman Foster's employee share purchase under scrutiny
- Feilden Clegg Bradley appeals against Mildmay 'social housing' refusal (above)
- RTKL named on development team for massive Blackpool overhaul project
- Olympic sailing proposals become marginally clearer

TUESDAY 3 APRIL

- FaulknerBrowns' Snow Mountain project in Sheffield on verge of collapse
- Turner Contemporary costs battle heads towards mediation
- DLA proposes New West Quarter for Dewsbury (below)
- CABE and Design for London back Olympic Park – but with reservations



WEDNESDAY 4 APRIL

- Future Systems unveils first picture of new Dublin bridge (above)
- Pallant House on shortlist for £100,000 Gulbenkian museum prize
- RIBA councillor Assael calls for more representation from the big boys
- Allies and Morrison, Manser and McAslan among finalists in British Consulate Nigeria comp



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1. James Gorst's plans for a Hampstead private house have fallen to a judicial review brought about by opponents including Borat actor Sacha Baron Cohen

GORST LOSES BORAT COURT BATTLE

By Richard Vaughan

James Gorst's proposed Garden House scheme in north London is in tatters after a High Court judge ruled in favour of a group of opponents including Marco Goldschmied and Borat actor Sacha Baron Cohen.

Gorst won planning for his scheme in Hampstead in January 2006, but it was met with fierce opposition from the Heath and Hampstead Society, backed in part by former RIBA president Goldschmied and Ali G creator Baron Cohen.

The campaigners forced a High Court judicial review of the contentious plans, which were eventually thrown out by Mr Justice Sullivan on 3 April.

Gorst had proposed replacing an existing 1951 house, which is located on privately owned Metropolitan Open Land (MOL), with a new, one-off residential development.

Under Planning Permission Guidance 2, a house on privately owned MOL – which has the same protection as green-belt land – can only be replaced by a house which is not 'materially larger'.

Gorst's scheme, supported by Camden Council, was two to three times larger than the existing building, but Camden Council believed it had less visual impact than the original house, as most of the massing was to the rear.

Mr Justice Sullivan said that size alone was the criterion by which to interpret the words 'materially larger', and that should the proposals be granted it would see MOL 'suffer the death of a thousand cuts'. He therefore ruled that the application be 'quashed'.

The news came as a massive blow to Gorst, who has

been fighting for the scheme for more than two years.

He said: 'It's an outrage, we're all very disappointed. This ruling strips all local authorities of the responsibilities or powers to decide any development on its individual merits. It will have massive repercussions.'

'Our scheme was mathematically larger but the volume of it was nowhere near the numbers they were claiming. Besides most of the extra volume was to the rear of the building, using up dark, dank, hidden space.'

Camden Council was ordered to pay the Heath and Hampstead Society £18,000 in legal costs including VAT.

The council said it would appeal the decision, although Mr Justice Sullivan said any appeal application would be 'utterly hopeless'.



1.

SECOND CHANCE FOR CITY HOSTEL

By Richard Waite

On 16 August 2005, a man thrust a baby into the face of Arc Light project director Jeremy Jones, and accused him of wanting to kill his son.

The incident was indicative of the heated reactions that followed an open day for local residents to discuss plans for a controversial new hostel for the homeless in Clifton, York.

Homeless charity Arc Light wanted to build a £3.5 million, 34-bed homeless centre – designed by Leeds-based practice Bauman Lyons – in a former secondary school as a replacement for the organisation's existing, rather Dickensian, city-centre hostel.

Part of the government's £90 million Hostels Capital Improvement Programme, the innovative scheme looked likely to be the first flagship project to make it off the ground.

Yet the anti-hostel clamour from concerned locals and, more importantly, from local politicians, was so great that Jones felt he had no choice but to withdraw the application, pulled on 30 September 2005.

Now, almost two years later, Bauman Lyons is about to begin on site with Arc Light's all-new hostel proposals (pictured) – a remarkable turnaround for the project, the charity and the practice.

The new £3.4 million building – the Centre for Change – will also provide accommodation for 34 people, plus a café, training rooms and the charity's offices.

However, unlike the original Shipton Street proposals, this three-storey brick building will not sit among York's Victorian terraces. Instead it will occupy the

north-west corner of the city-centre Union Terrace car park – a design challenge in itself.

The car-park plot was one of more than 30 sites considered by Jones and city planners after the demise of the initial project.

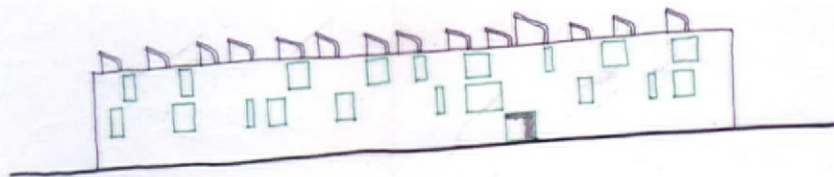
Fundamental to the success of the second attempt was the 'opening up' of the tricky selection process and the securing of cross-party backing for the proposals. As a result, the application passed through the planning process almost unchallenged, except for a bizarre discussion over potential drainage issues.

Jones, a retired rock-band manager, said: 'The day after the open day [for the first scheme] was the only day in seven years of developing Arc Light that I wondered whether we would ever be able to change people's minds.

'The second time around, a public announcement of cross-party political support and a broad and transparent public consultation during the site selection stage went a long way towards minimising the risk of failure.'

Jones is convinced that the design of the new building will accelerate the process of helping the homeless 'to take that next step' towards permanent resettlement. He says: 'The building overlooks the former Bootham Park mental hospital at the rear. This Classical, quasi-Palladian facade hides what is going on behind.

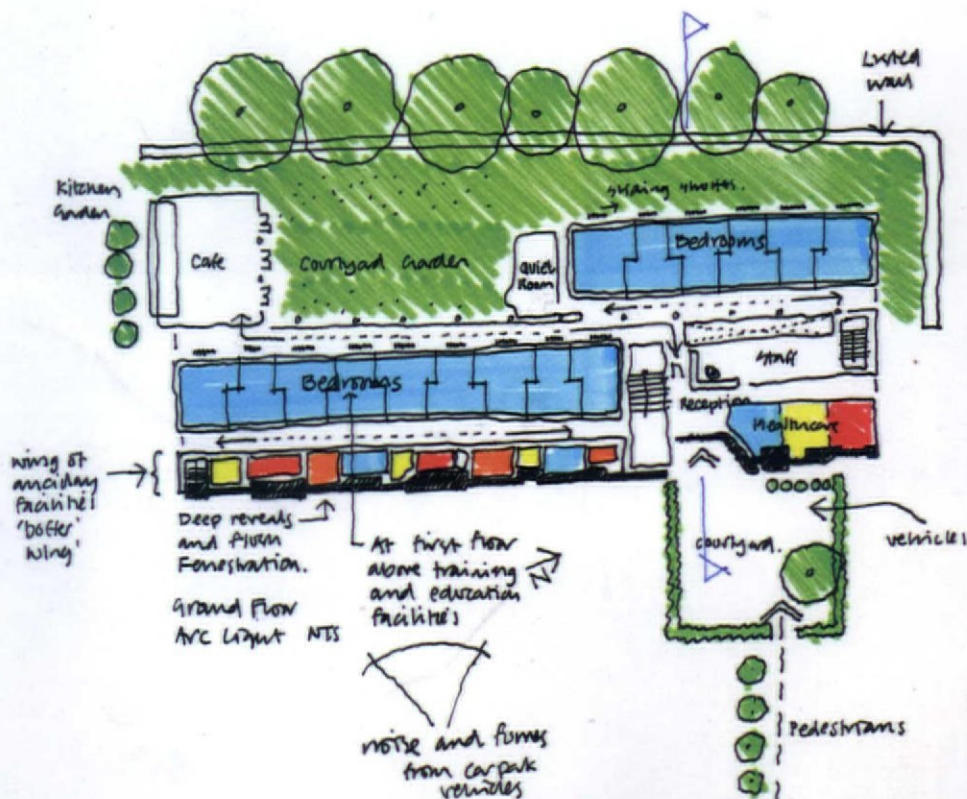
'Our apparently random fenestration [towards the car park] reflects that all sorts is going on here... The recessed windows which point to the city show we are truly part of the city too.'



Bauman Lyons Architects Ltd
 Design Tender Evaluation Option C
 553/YAL/YKA-18/000906
 1:200 App
 York Housing Association

1, 2 & 3. Bauman Lyons' new proposal for a York homeless centre replaces a scheme which was dropped following fiery local opposition

2.



3.



1.



NICK HUFTON/VIEW

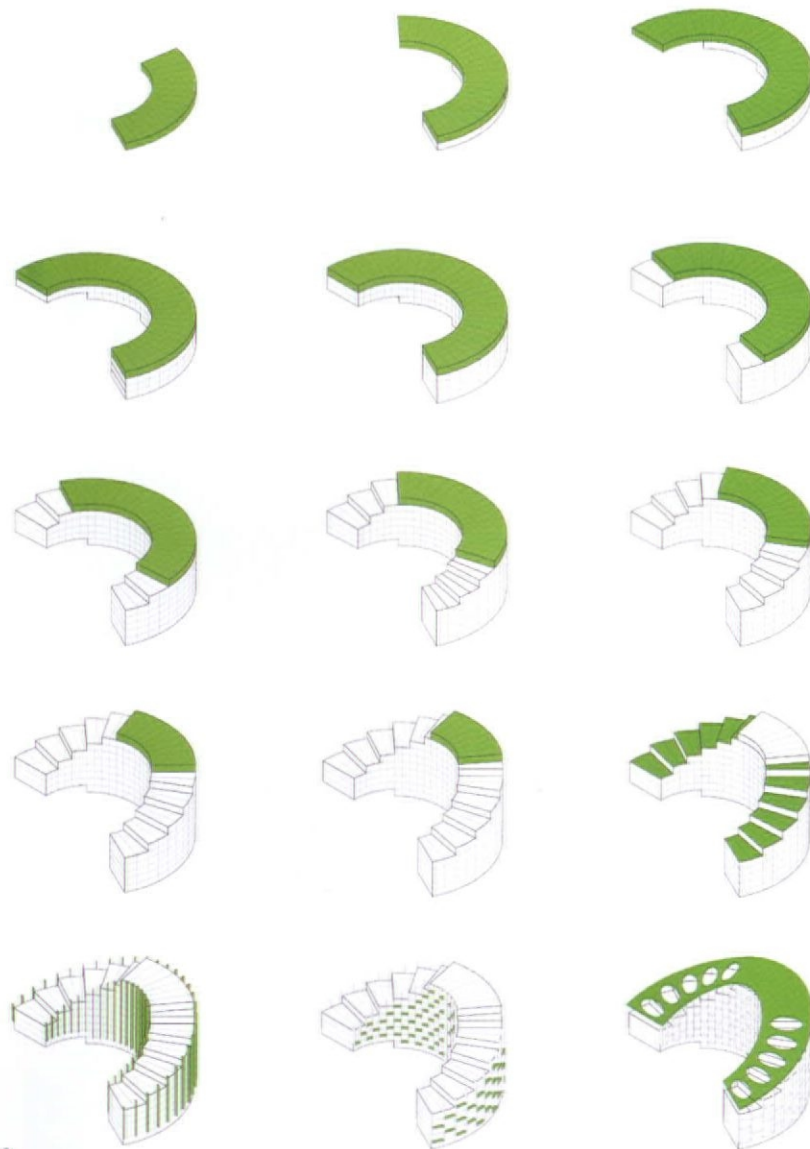
2.

1. Architecture 2B's replacement for the doomed CASPAR housing scheme in Leeds takes some cues from its predecessor - including its orientation

2. The CASPAR building was evacuated in 2005 due to structural problems

3. Architecture 2B concept sketches

4 & 5. Architecture 2B site plan



3.



4.

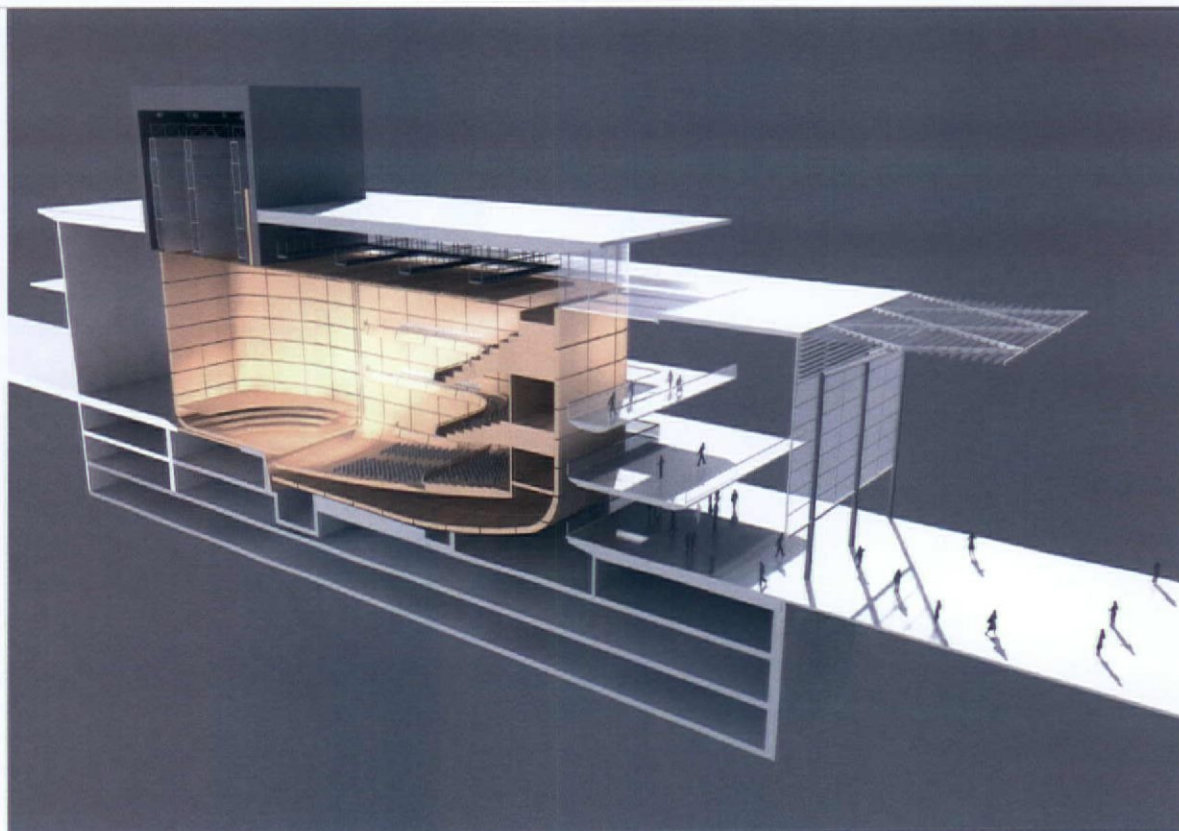


5.

CASPAR REPLACEMENT REVEALED

The AJ can exclusively reveal the proposed replacement for Levitt Bernstein's doomed CASPAR city-centre apartment scheme in Leeds. Designed by local practice Architecture 2B, the new scheme takes a number of cues from the original prefab housing development for the Joseph Rowntree Housing Trust, which was evacuated in 2005 after the discovery of 'potentially catastrophic structural problems'. As well as mirroring the orientation of the existing semicircular block, the replacement project will also be constructed from lightweight modular units. However, unlike Levitt Bernstein's scheme, the new building will boast a steel, rather than timber, frame. It will deliver 187 flats of one, two and three bedrooms. Access will be through a central core and internal corridor instead of along external passageways – a key feature of the previous, Kajima-built development. Architecture 2B founder Nick Brown says that other differences have been generated by the building's relationship with its 'new' context – the site's surroundings have changed dramatically since Levitt Bernstein designed its scheme more than seven years ago (Building Study, AJ 03.08.00). Backed by developer LifeHomes, the new development is expected to cost £10 million – £7 million more than the original CASPAR building, which is due to be demolished later this summer.

By Richard Waite



1.

CURTAIN UP FOR CYPRUS CULTURAL CENTRE

Hopkins Architects has unveiled these images of its recent competition win in Nicosia, Cyprus. The scheme for a new cultural centre is part of a planned wider cultural quarter in the island's capital, and will sit close to a new art gallery designed by Feilden Clegg Bradley. The €80 million (£54 million) centre will be used for performing arts, showcasing national and international performances in music, dance, opera, ballet and theatre. It will seat up to 1,400 people, with a secondary 500-seat chamber for smaller live music events. The scheme will also deliver an outdoor theatre space with a capacity of up to 2,000. London-based Hopkins will work alongside a local firm, Virdas and Patsalosavis, and will lead a team including Arup and acoustic experts Kirkegaard Associates. Completion is due at the end of 2010.

By Richard Vaughan



2.

1 & 2. Hopkins' Nicosia scheme will host dance, opera, ballet and theatre performances



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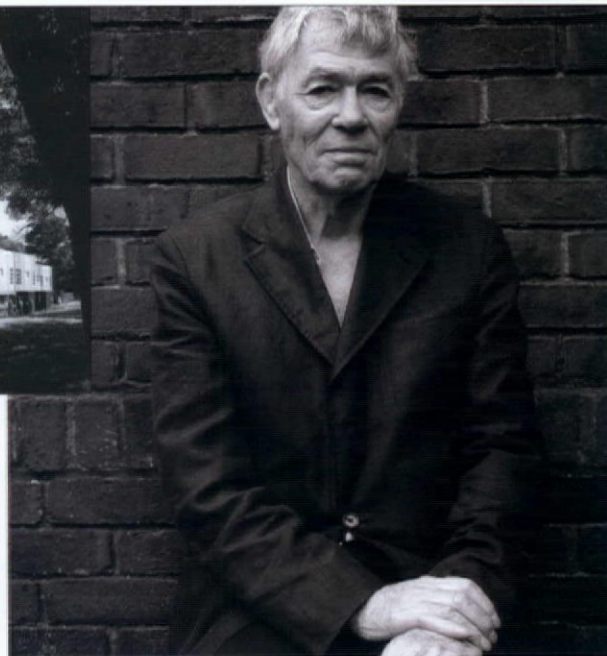
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1.

1. Over Minnis, New Ash Green, Kent (1967)
2. Cunningham photographed in 2005



TIM CROCKER

2.

IVOR CUNNINGHAM 1928 – 2007

By Alan Powers

Ivor Cunningham's name will always be linked to that of Eric Lyons, whom he joined in 1955, and whose practice he continued after Lyons' death in 1980. Over the last six months, propelled by the dynamism of Barbara Simms, Ivor's project of documenting the work of the practice and sparking interest from a younger generation of historians and practitioners came to fruition in the RIBA exhibition and book, *Eric Lyons and Span*. These portrayed the long association between Lyons and the development company founded by his former architectural partner Geoffrey Townsend.

After Dartford Grammar School and Medway School of Art, Cunningham studied at the AA, and gained experience in landscape architecture in The Netherlands and Sweden. He

worked with Sylvia Crowe and Brenda Colvin, bringing to the Lyons practice the knowledge and talent for layouts and planting that helped to set the Span housing developments on which they worked in a league of their own. 'An important aspect of landscape design is to satisfy the functions of space; to express or underline certain aspects and even on occasion to obscure some of these functions,' a promotional brochure for the Eric Lyons Cunningham Partnership explained. 'The spaces in between the buildings are not left to chance, and this integrated design process leads to a cohesive outcome where the buildings help create the settings and the settings enhance the buildings... Our aspiration is to create places that people will enjoy.' Preben Jakobsen, who joined the

practice in 1961, contributed detailed planting plans to Cunningham's layouts.

Span went into eclipse with the withdrawal of GLC funding for New Ash Green in 1969, but returned in 1976. Lyons took time out to act as RIBA president 1975–77, while Cunningham carried on the practice, which formed a temporary alliance with HT Cadbury-Brown and John Metcalfe as executants for the World's End scheme. Cunningham was largely responsible for the final Span commissions in Blackheath; the large housing estates in Westbourne Road and Delhi Street, Islington; and for Mallard Place, Teddington, completed in 1984 – all with pitched roofs and more traditional elevations. This late work demonstrated what

Cunningham called his 'Damascene moment' shared with Lyons, when they worked on a holiday town at Vilamora in the Algarve (1971). 'They thought [it] such fun they wanted to repeat the vibrant designs in Britain,' a Historic Housing Design Award in 2005 stated, adding: 'Anyone seeking an irresistible higher density model need look no further.' Cunningham also designed a training complex at Warren House, Kingston Hill for ICI and many other projects before closing the practice in 2003.

Ebullience and theatricality with a social mission were qualities that Lyons and Cunningham shared, and which enlivened the office at East Molesey, with its close connection to family, garden and river. Ivor Cunningham died on 15 March, aged 78.



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*'The lesson?
Don't let an
architect design
your chocolate
packaging'*

Axel Simon on a slump in Nestlé's sales since Jean Nouvel's involvement. *A10*, March–April 2007

*'It's raw,
confusing,
impersonal,
uncomfortable,
oppressive. If this
building were
fulfilling the
acclaim heaped
on to it, all we'd
be talking about
is joy'*

Lawrence Cheek on Koolhaas' Seattle Library three years on. *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, 27.03.07

*'The architectural
equivalent of
colonic irrigation'*

Stephen Bayley on Herzog & de Meuron's Tate Modern extension. *Observer*, 01.04.07



CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR

Brighton and Hove Council's decision to give **Frank Gehry's** King Alfred scheme the green light seems less surprising when you consider the quality of some of the objections raised at the council meeting two weeks ago. **Valerie Paynter** of Save Hove, one of the project's most vociferous opponents, presented two buildings by FAT to prove that 'Frank Gehry is not cutting edge any more.' She then explained how the original King Alfred building was built at almost exactly the same time as Tate Modern and therefore could be regenerated to the same effect. Not by the same architect, granted. But hey, it's either a vintage year or it's not. There was also concern that Gehry would not be able to deliver the Kalzip roof in the colour represented in the

planning documents. Gehry Partners' response? 'Somebody always says we can't build our buildings. And you know what? We always do.'

SLEEPING BEAUTY

Astragal was fortunate enough to attend the *Architectural Review's* annual conference, which was bursting with high-profile names such as **Peter Cook, Terry Farrell, David Mackay** and **Zaha Hadid**. The stars trooped on and off the RIBA stage like an architectural Band Aid, but even this feast of designer names didn't stop one hapless delegate from nodding off during a Mackay solo. The snores were low and monotonous at first but grew into a rattling din, waking even the dozer himself. Perhaps 40 winks during the break would have been wiser?

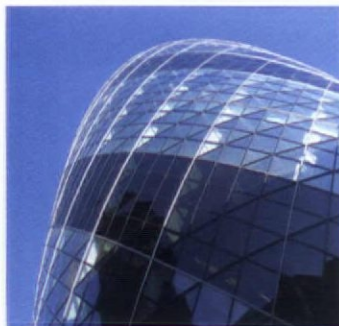
SHOP TILL YOU DROP

We all know about reality TV, but now reality shopping has arrived. Last week, Astragal's New York spy sneaked in to the opening of 'BY', a new showroom and interior design service from Italian designer **Piero Lissoni**. Lissoni has transformed a top-floor SoHo loft into a sumptuous apartment, fully appointed with pieces from the Boffi, Living Divani and Porro collections. The showroom is sprinkled with accoutrements like newspapers and DVDs, and engaging with the furnishings is encouraged. As Astragal's spy kicked off her Salvatore Ferragamos and sank into the creamy leather sofa, she felt ready to snatch up the entire store. But with the Corian 'Po' bathtub running at about \$25,000 (£12,700), her wallet rapidly saw sense.

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CALLS FOR A MORE PROFESSIONAL ARB DEBATE...

Munkenbeck and Marshall v Kensington Hotel (AJ 22.03.07) suggests that an accurate description of qualifications is required and that the use of designations such as 'trainee architect' without qualification is not satisfactory. Dispute resolution specialist Brewer Consulting states on its website: 'It is clear that professional firms should always be careful when describing their staff... failure to accurately represent qualifications or experience could potentially be used by the client to dispute fees'. Surely this simple fact should worry the profession, just as much as the rights and wrongs of the ARB's interpretations?

As I write this letter, I wonder if the advert I have just seen in Wycombe District Council's local guide from a company that provides 'residential architecture: from extensions to new buildings' and 'design, planning, building regulations and project management all under one roof' would confuse either a professional or a layman. I think it would. Would a layman appoint this person thinking they are an architect? Maybe. Is the person registered? Not according to the ARB. Does the styling use a construct containing the term 'architect'? Yes, more than once. Does this matter? Not if the profession thinks the protection of title or the general public is not important.

Surely, rather than knocking the ARB, we should move on to the wider question of what it is to be a professional in 2007? What should our professional standards be, and should the profession have a duty of care to the public? It's a question that Part 3 students have to consider. Once you are a registered architect the question of professionalism does not disappear. How can we suggest changes to the ARB when the profession has not considered what it is to be a professional?

Mark Longworth RIBA, Bicester, Oxon

...WHILE MORE 'ARCHITECTS' SLIP THROUGH THE NET

I see that football hooligan 'trainee architect' Timothy Smith made it into Astragal (AJ 29.03.07). I read in the *Observer* property supplement recently that one Kevin McCloud is also an 'architect'. Funny, I can't seem to find his name on the ARB register!

Louis Hellman, by email

PLAYGROUND PARTNER HAS BEEN OVERLOOKED

I was delighted to see Lynn Kinnear's article 'Landscapes of Play' (AJ Specification 02.07) about the experimental playground at Daubeney School. But I was surprised that she didn't mention us, Snug & Outdoor, the designer and artist of the project.

Snug & Outdoor was commissioned by the Hackney Wick Public Art Programme to devise and deliver the highly innovative experimental playground project, which led to the brief for the permanent playground design. We were responsible for the experimental playground project that transformed the large bleak space into an animated flexible environment. Kinnear Landscape Architects was then invited to collaborate with Snug & Outdoor to

develop the ideas and designs for a permanent experimental playground.

Daubeney School was our first experimental playground project and since then Snug & Outdoor has gone on to develop this way of working in all sorts of public spaces with both children and adults. For the last two years we have been funded by NESTA, the Arts Council and the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, to develop a kit of large-scale modular objects that has the potential to transform school grounds throughout the UK into flexible playscapes.

At Snug & Outdoor we have fond memories of working with Lynn. How sad that she seems to have forgotten us entirely.
Hattie Coppard, director, Snug & Outdoor

THE POLITICAL LANDSCAPE OF BRAZIL

I'm an AJ subscriber – not an architect but a development surveyor. I wasn't a great fan of the redesign in 2005 but I would very much like to congratulate you on your Alvorada Palace Building Study (AJ 22.03.07).

I went on a tour of Brazil last year. I survived Sao Paulo and had my hotel room broken into in Brasília, but it was well worth it to see this Niemeyer masterpiece. Well done on a great piece of writing. Are they refurbishing any other bits of Brasília or is it all too politically embarrassing? President Lula may be the people's man, but he's certainly not universally hailed as Brazil's saviour. And well, Brazil is Brazil!

Niteroi was closed for refurbishment when I was there – perhaps another candidate for a Building Study?
Alan Cook, Jones Lang LaSalle

PEDDLING BACKWARDS OVER GLOBAL WARMING

In Kate Mackintosh's letter about people peddling 'disinformation' on Channel 4's *The Great Global Warming Swindle* (Letters, AJ 29.03.07), she signed off as 'vice chair, Scientists for Global Responsibility'. Like the *Guardian's* George Monbiot, instead of offering properly referenced refutations of the claims made (which we would all like to see), her letter is a McCarthy-esque rant about the people who made the programme.

Oddly enough, around three quarters of the 13 bigwigs in her Scientists for Whatsit organisation appear to be architects and engineers, with a retired physics teacher and a secretary thrown in for good measure. Doubtless extremely kind, committed and thoughtful folk. But not exactly what you and I would call 'scientists'.

Disinformation eh? Hmm.
David Barker, Kent

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.

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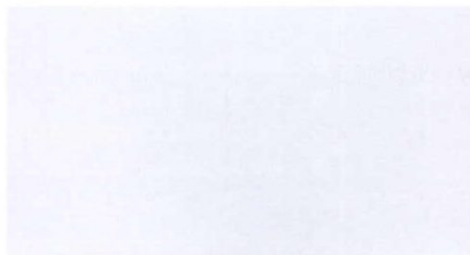
Ian Guest, Henkel Building Systems.

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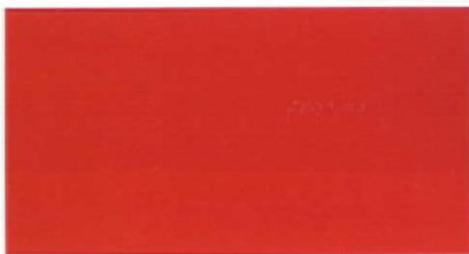
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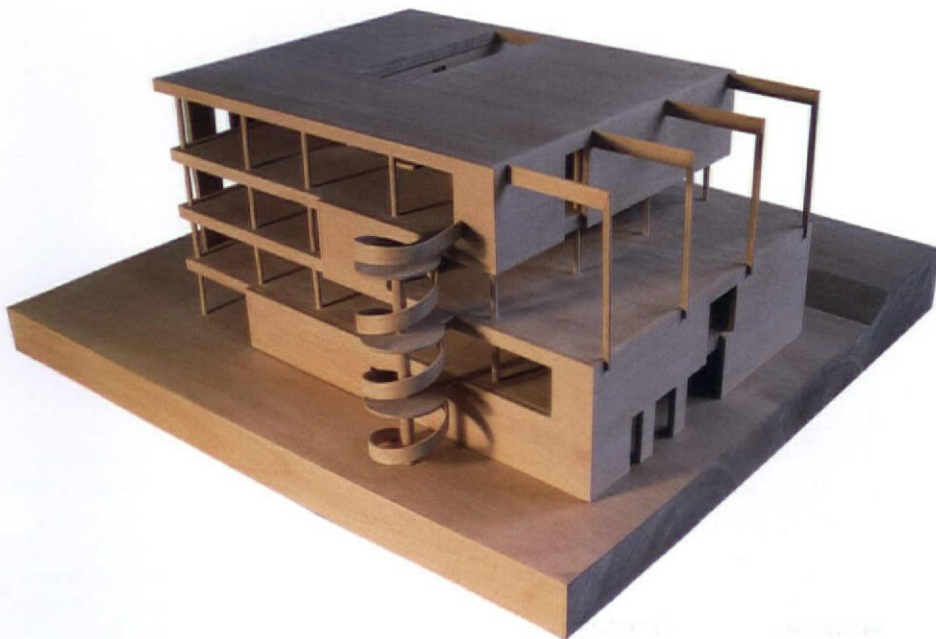
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LARS GITZ/ WORLD HEALTH ORGANISATION



A SYNTHESIS OF HUMANISM AND MINIMALISM – A KIND OF ‘HUMINALISM’

By Richard Weston. Photography by Neil Bridge

Lars Gitz Architects is an international studio for architecture, planning and design, based in Copenhagen, Denmark. The practice was established in 1997 by Lars Gitz after he won the first prize in a competition to design housing for students while he was still studying at the Royal Danish Art Academy. Recent projects have included a luxury villa in Spain, apartment complexes in Copenhagen and proposed designs for a 10,000m² hotel and restaurant complex, also in Copenhagen.

Speaking to a largely student audience many years ago, David Chipperfield advised that it was important to choose your point of entry into the profession carefully: get known for cheap kitchen extensions and it could prove hard to move upmarket seemed to be the basic message. As points of entry go, Lars Gitz's building for the World Health Organisation's (WHO's) Copenhagen offices, won in competition with two other Danish practices, would be hard to better. At 2,000m² it is both small enough to master – feeling as much like a large villa as an office building – and large enough to flex serious architectural muscles.

Gitz came to attention in Denmark some 10 years ago when, while still a student at the Royal Danish Academy, he won a competition for young people's housing in the Danish region of North Zealand. That came to nothing, but he established his own office and has spent much of the intervening time working as a consultant on long-term plans for Copenhagen's celebrated Tivoli Gardens area – of which Norman Foster's recent competition-winning hotel is, internationally, the best known outcome to date.

The WHO building is in the north of Copenhagen on Scherfigsvej, just inland from the sea near the start of Strandvejen, where Arne Jacobsen's pioneering Bellavue complex and nearby petrol station remain objects of architectural pilgrimage. It sits between contrasting neighbours, with traditional villas to the east, and a low, somewhat Miesian building to the west; it is entered from the south, while to the north mature trees screen an area of medium-rise housing.

At first sight the organisation appears conventional in both plan and section: a horseshoe of open-plan office spaces is wrapped around an atrium and service core, and the offices stacked on largely uninterrupted floor plates of uniform height. The offices are naturally ventilated, with both heating and – for occasional summer use – cooling provided in the ceilings. A covered parking area is tucked underneath one side and, as if in response, the upper floors are cut back on the other, to the west, to create a large terrace. Only the variously angled, regulation-defyingly long stairs hint that something rather more inventive might be going on.

Intriguingly, neither the plans nor sections immediately disclose Gitz's organising idea for the building, which was to allow the various functions, surfaces and spaces a degree of autonomy, while also combining them into a unified composition. All becomes clear in an oblique view from the south east. The three floors of accommodation to the east, above the covered parking, are treated as a single, cedar-clad volume with vertical louvres,



1. Southern elevation: a continuous zinc-clad ribbon rises from the ground to crank around the top two floors

while the remainder of the accommodation is articulated by a continuous, zinc-clad ribbon. Working with the manufacturers of Rheinzink cladding, Gitz was able to eliminate both vertical and horizontal standing seams, lending the surfaces the combination of smoothness and variability in changing light and seasons that he was pursuing.

The zinc ribbon begins as the broad, return-end of the west elevation, wraps across the second-floor slab and then cranks up and across the top floor to float above the projecting cedar-clad volume. The second floor, sandwiched by the zinc ribbon, is fitted with solar-control glass, while the floors above and below have external horizontal louvers. The glass alone cannot quite cope with the full effects of the sun, but the uninterrupted glazing has its compensations: a member of staff who complained about the warmth also declined the offer of moving to a workspace elsewhere in the building.

Volumetrically, therefore, the building can be understood as an extrusion of its long section. The majority of visitors, arriving by car, enter at ground-floor level from the covered parking directly into an open reception area. The architectural promenade through the atrium, however, is announced by an external stair that rises from the edge of an elliptical paved area and lands the visitor on an entry bridge placed at right angles to the main facade. This traverses a rectangular pool – symbolic, in Gitz's mind, of leaving Copenhagen behind to address the problems of the wider world within – before sliding into the atrium. From there a

bridge to the right enters the cedar-clad volume and a 'bridgelet' to the left leads to the other offices and core. Ahead rises the first of the angled stairs, the vertical journey beginning on a regulation-contravening broad step before settling into the repetitive rhythm of risers and goings.

Nineteen uninterrupted risers later you arrive at – or rather a riser above – the second floor, on another wide, landing-like step. This unusual celebration of arrival brings to mind a restaurant by Morris Lapidus in which guests were led up on to a low platform from where, after being the centre of attention for a few seconds, they descended to dine. Here, however, the aim is primarily to reinforce the overall architectural strategy. Like the zinc ribbon, the precast-concrete entrance bridge and stairs can be seen as a continuous slab of reinforced concrete, cut and folded to link the different floors, on to which the stairs seem literally to have been dropped. The angling of the stairs offers a dynamic contrast to the orthogonal structural grid. Treating them as elements placed on – rather than simply leading between – the floor slabs both intensifies our physical engagement with the building and emphasises its volumetric composition.

Compared with many, understood-at-a-glance office atria, Gitz's is a spatial *tour de force*, opening and closing ingeniously, and beautifully lit. It is also, as one expects of Danish buildings, immaculately detailed. Horizontal light and views are filtered by glass blocks, and to achieve the required one-hour fire rating, their vertical and horizontal joints are reinforced by steel. Walls, columns



2.



3.

2 & 3. The atrium. Only the variously angled, regulation-defyingly long stairs hint that something more inventive might be going on

and beams (made of precast concrete almost entirely throughout – hence the necessity of the small column bay to support the projecting timber volume) are painted white, and the floors are clad in ash, save for the precast-concrete stairs and bridges, which are immaculately smooth and grey – this contrast between the different finishes is doubtless crucial in ensuring that people take note of the unusual arrangement of risers.

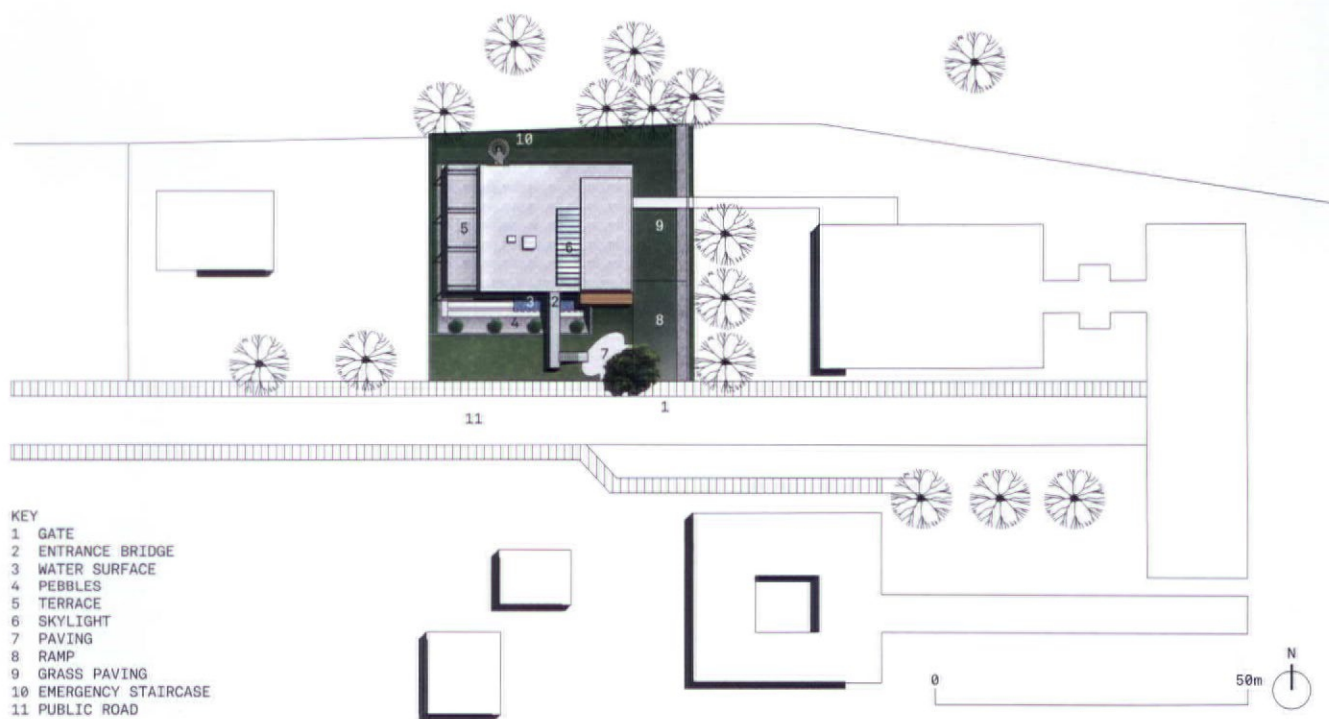
The steel balustrades are far more open than British – or for that matter, Danish – regulations are supposed to allow. Like the continuous, landing-free runs of the stairs themselves – vital to the architectural idea – they were a concession from normal requirements. The building inspector, Gitz explains, liked the architectural concepts and was happy to make 15 such dispensations to ensure that they were not compromised.

The doctors and researchers who make up most of the staff at the WHO were at first reluctant to leave their familiar cellular offices, and to help make them feel at home with the open-plan floors Gitz developed a new office system, which he named 'Flexus'. Its design began with a circle, ergonomically subdivided into three 120° segments, which in turn are elaborated with convex and concave curves to wrap around the user. Slender corner posts support storage units at various levels, computer monitors, low screens and, above, a delicate parasol. Screens and parasols combine to provide a measure of acoustic damping, and the units can be arranged in compact circles or allowed to sprout jaunty-looking 'wings' – intriguingly reminiscent, in plan, of an

aggregation of cellular automata encountered in computer simulations of artificial life.

Seen in its Danish context, where a cool, sometimes forbidding minimalism has been the favoured mode of serious architectural expression since the mid 1990s, the WHO building represents Gitz's determination 'to bring man and architecture together again' in a synthesis of humanism and minimalism – 'a kind of huminalism', he suggests. The term may not be destined to enter the architectural history books, but studying his building you sense what he means by it: the varied volumetric organisation, physicality of the stairs, combination of materials, atmospheric responsiveness of the zinc – all combine to render the building more approachable and engaging than most essays in seamless minimalism.

In an international architectural culture that prizes novelty, little in the WHO building may appear especially original. With rainscreen cladding as today's technical norm, the combination of timber and metal is familiar. And compositionally, the 'big idea' of linking floors and walls to form a continuous folded plane has been explored in many recent projects by, amongst others, Diller and Scofidio in New York, MVRDV in The Netherlands and, closer to home, by Foreign Office Architects for the BBC. The catalyst for all these surely lies in Rem Koolhaas' early work – the Kunsthal in Rotterdam, or the Educatorium in Utrecht – and they in turn, like most of Koolhaas' major spatial ideas, stem from Le Corbusier: from the Villa Savoye, ultimately,



4. Site plan

perhaps, but more directly, I suspect, from the late project for a Congress Hall in Strasbourg.

One could go on: might the entrance stair and bridge, for example, be distant relatives of the similar arrangement that leads out into the garden of the Villa at Garches? Despite obvious differences, the atrium brings to mind Terragni's Casa del Fascio, while the rhetorically exposed columns and beams that frame the second-floor terrace recall a fragment of Aalto's Paimio Sanatorium – which in turn was indebted to Dutch, and probably also Russian, models and is encountered frequently in Richard Meier's work. Gitz's expressive handling of the stairs evokes Herman Hertzberger's 'invitations to use', while to me, at least, the geometry and detailing of the office furniture brings back other Dutch memories, specifically of Aldo van Eyck's delicate ESTEC complex at Noordwijk.

To suggest that many of these specific 'references' or 'precedents' were active in Gitz's conscious mind would almost certainly be wrong, and the building is anything but wilfully eclectic. But they, or others like them within the broad, still-growing tradition of Modern architecture were essential to the making of the WHO building, and it is within that tradition that the building must be understood and assessed. My only quibbles are with details.

The contrast between the rhetorical start of the architectural promenade and the 'real' principal entrance tucked into the corner of the covered car park seems slightly unresolved.

Likewise, the contrast with the zinc ribbon might have been better emphasised by detailing the ends of the projecting, cedar-clad volume as a slice through the construction (as Jean Nouvel did on the screen-like facades of the Cartier Foundation in Paris), not wrapping the timber over the walls and slabs. This might also have relieved the slight feeling that it weighs rather heavily on its diminutive pilotis. And once inside, I personally find the way the timber handrails are threaded through the flat steel balusters slightly awkward, because they interrupt 'the network of touch' – as George Baird described the detailing of such elements by Aalto – and seem to be governed by visual rather than tactile considerations.

But these are minor issues, and ultimately matters of preference. What is so satisfying with the WHO building is the fact that its success lies not in a pointless search for novelty in a now conventional building type, but in a convincing and, for a 'first' building, impressively mature ability to assimilate and work within the modern tradition to create a life-enhancing workplace that is both visually elegant and experientially rich. On this evidence, Lars Gitz is clearly an architect to watch.

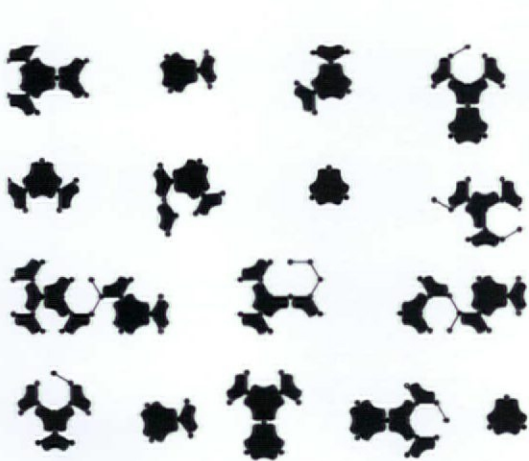
5. An external stair rises to an entry bridge at right angles to the main facade



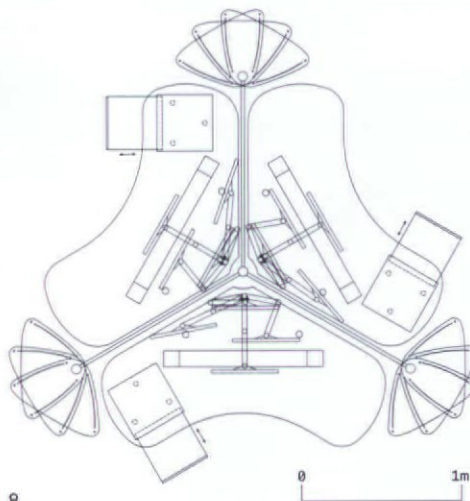




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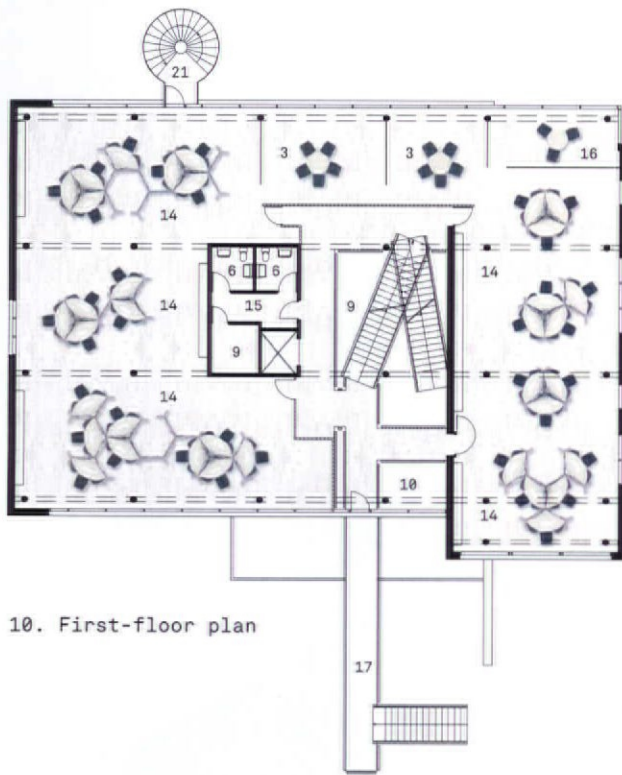


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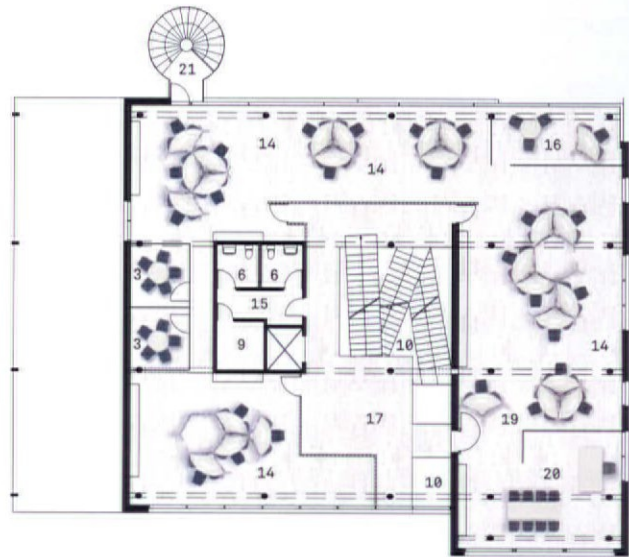


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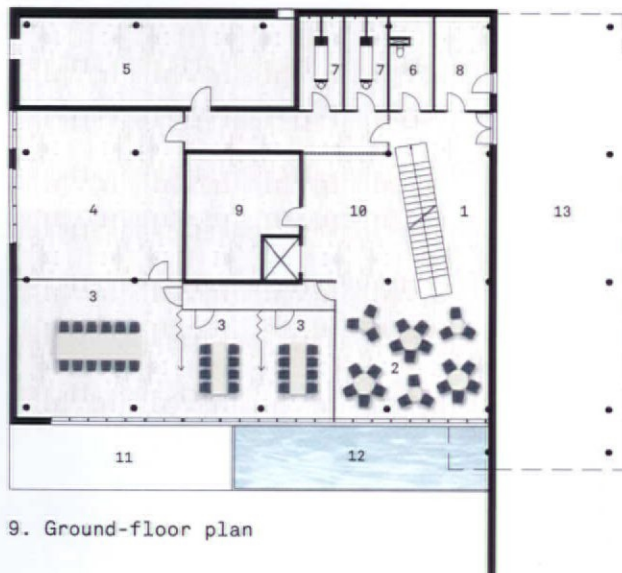
6, 7 & 8. 'Flexus', the bespoke office system, is based on a circle, ergonomically divided into three 120° segments, and allows for numerous configurations



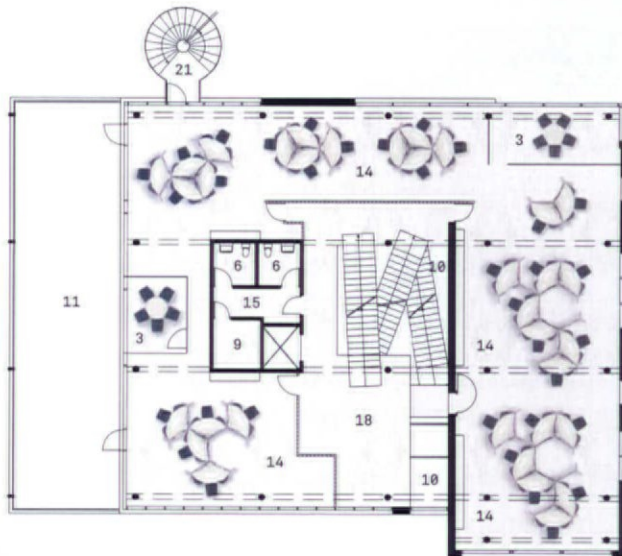
10. First-floor plan



12. Third-floor plan



9. Ground-floor plan



11. Second-floor plan



- | | |
|-----------------------|------------------------|
| KEY | 11 TERRACE |
| 1 RECEPTION | 12 WATER SURFACE |
| 2 CAFETERIA/CANTEEN | 13 PARKING LOT |
| 3 MEETING ROOMS | 14 OPEN-PLAN OFFICE |
| 4 AEROBIC | 15 WARDROBE |
| 5 WORKOUT | 16 DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR |
| 6 WC | 17 ENTRANCE RAMP |
| 7 CHANGING ROOMS | 18 LOUNGE |
| 8 DISPOSAL/DEPOT ROOM | 19 SECRETARY |
| 9 TECHNICAL ROOM | 20 DIRECTOR |
| 10 ATRIUM | 21 EMERGENCY STAIRS |

STRUCTURE

The building's main supporting system comprises a classical column/beam construction. The choice of the structural system has allowed considerable freedom in the selection of facade material. The structure enabled the use of elements such as large window sections in aluminium and glass, sun blinds and sheet cladding. The columns and beams are made of prefabricated concrete elements and the floor divisions are prefabricated prestressed hollow-core slabs. The stability of the building is ensured by a panel effect in the floor divisions, which transfers the horizontal loads to the central core. The stabilising central core contains lifts, WCs and plant. The skylit four-storey atrium maintains its light feel through the use of prefabricated fibre-concrete elements to connect individual floors. These elements have a concrete strength of up to 100 million Pa. This strength removes the need for bulky floors which could detract from the atrium's feeling of spaciousness. The building is founded on drilled piles on top of non-controlled fill and organic freshwater deposits, which made a traditional replacement and incorporation of a sand blanket too costly. A self-supporting double-reinforced concrete ground slab was chosen in a mushroom design. The combination of the architectural design, the varied choice of materials and considerable movement in the facade made the building vulnerable to considerable thermal bridging. In an attempt to minimise these effects, a high level of detail was pursued in the design of the facades. The large two-storey steel-framed frontage provided the final structural design challenge. To allow for thermal expansion and contraction, the joints must be able to absorb lengthwise expansion of the steel while having sufficient anchoring to withstand wind loading in the lateral plane. A gliding joint was chosen as the best solution.

Jill Strømsholt, Midtconsult A/S

13. View to the south

14. Columns and beams are made of prefabricated concrete elements, and the floor divisions are prefabricated prestressed hollow-core slabs



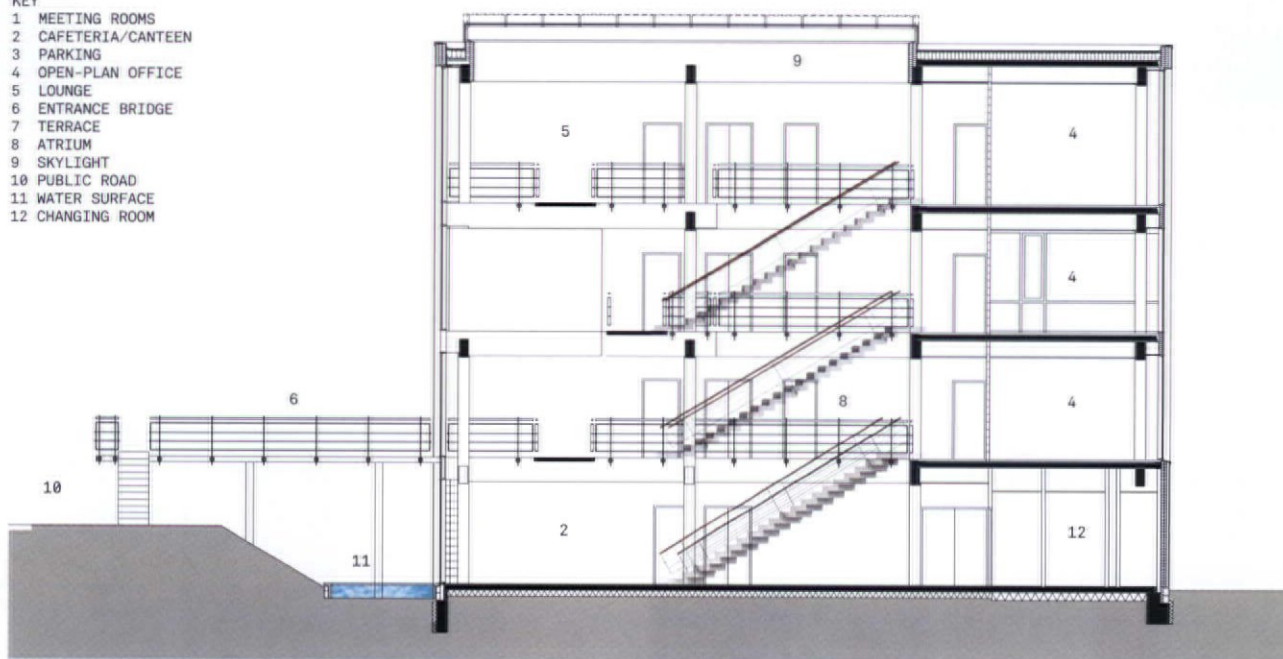
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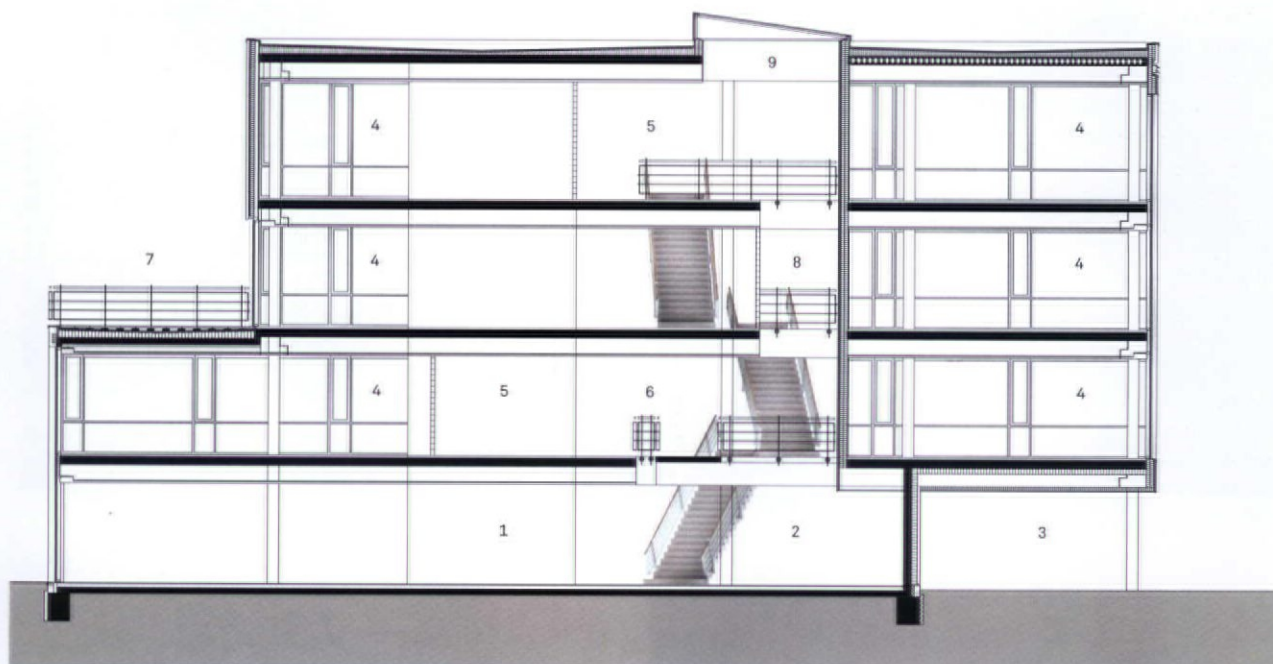
14.

KEY

- 1 MEETING ROOMS
- 2 CAFETERIA/CANTEEN
- 3 PARKING
- 4 OPEN-PLAN OFFICE
- 5 LOUNGE
- 6 ENTRANCE BRIDGE
- 7 TERRACE
- 8 ATRIUM
- 9 SKYLIGHT
- 10 PUBLIC ROAD
- 11 WATER SURFACE
- 12 CHANGING ROOM



15. South-north section



16. West-east section

0 10m



17.



18.

17. The three floors of accommodation to the east are treated as a single cedar-clad volume

18. Northern elevation and escape stair

Credits

Tender date

1 April 2004

Start on site date

1 November 2004

Contract duration

17 months

Gross internal floor area

2,010m²

Total cost

2.97 million euros (£2 million), land not included

Client

Conceptor

Architect

Lars Gitz Architects: Lars Gitz, Samuel Staalgren, Jon Clausen and Sanne Bentzen

Structural engineer

Midtconsult A/S

Selected subcontractors and suppliers

Electrician Hareskov Elektrik; *plumbing and heating service* Ramso VVS; *ventilation* Pro Ventilation; *flooring* Miko Gulve; *ceilings and walls* Deko Loft + Væg; *painter* Jørgen Pedersen; *bricklayer* Vesla; *chartered surveyor* Landinspektørfirmaet Vektor; *road and landscaping* Einer J Jensen; *concrete staircase* Hi-Con; *concrete-slab delivery and assembly* Spæncom; *exterior spiral staircase* Scan-Trapper; *concrete panel assembly* Stabilo Montage; *rendering of garden wall* RW Byg; *facade (aluminium windows and exterior doors)*; *roof covering* Nordisk Tagentreprise A/S; *flooring* Miko Gulve; *painter* Jørgen Pedersen; *zinc work* Rheinzink DK; *heating* Ramso VVS A/S; *lift* Otis

A PRECAST-CONCRETE STAIRCASE WITH A STEEL BALUSTRADE

The three-storey office building has a central atrium flanked by landings which give access to open-plan work spaces. Precast-concrete staircases rise through the atrium space, placed asymmetrically for 'a dynamic contrast to the building's stringent 6m column grid'.

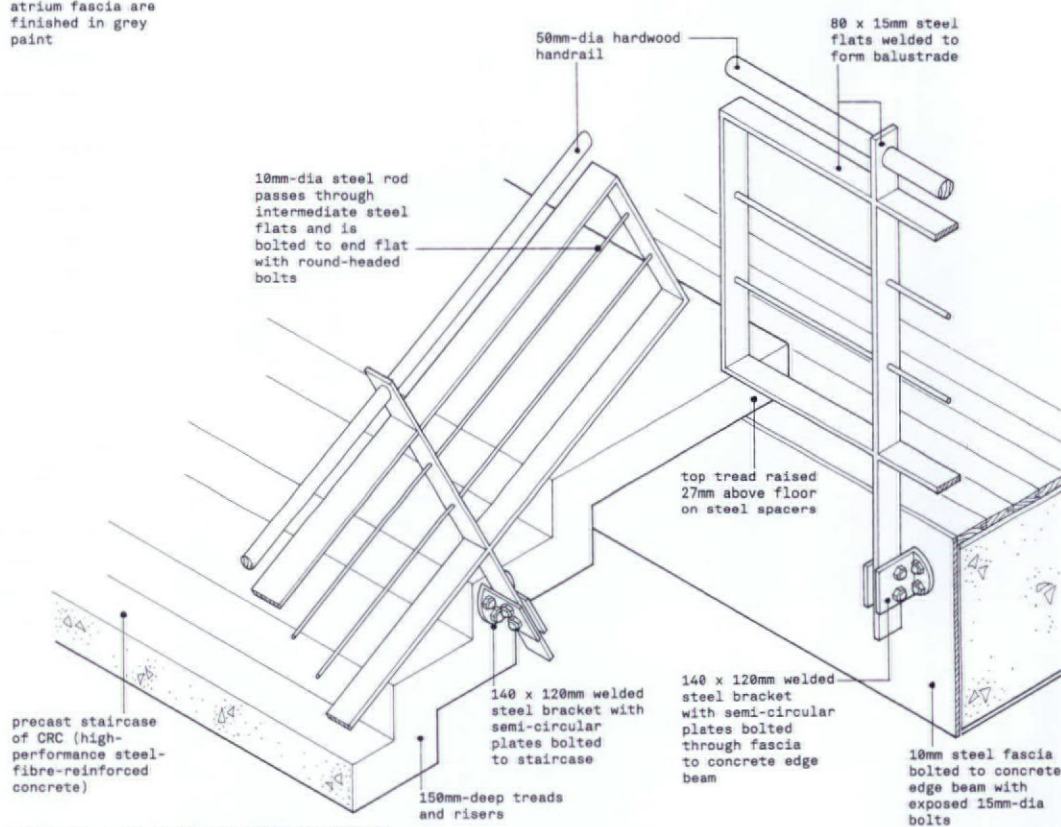
Each staircase, with treads and risers only 150mm deep, rises 3.37m and spans 7.35m from one side of the atrium to the other. To achieve the span, CRC (high-performance steel-fibre-reinforced concrete) was used. The staircases were cast in timber moulds in a vertical position, so that only one of the short sides was handled.

The top and bottom treads of the staircases are extended and 'float' over the atrium landings, supported on steel spacers. Balustrades to landings and staircases are virtually identical. They consist of a series of 80 x 15mm steel flats welded to form a frame; the intermediate vertical flats extend above the frame to support a tubular hardwood handrail. Two rows of 10mm-diameter steel rods pass through the intermediate steel flats and are bolted to the end flats with round-headed bolts.

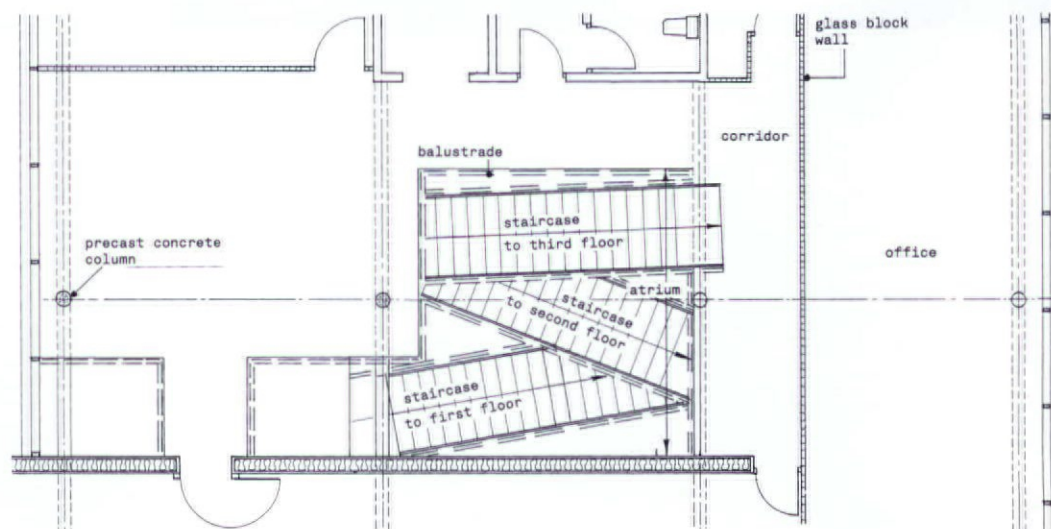
The landing edges are clad with 10mm-thick steel fascias, bolted to the edge beams with round-headed bolts. All bolted connections are of exposed polished stainless steel to contrast with the grey-painted fascia and balustrade steelwork.

By Susan Dawson

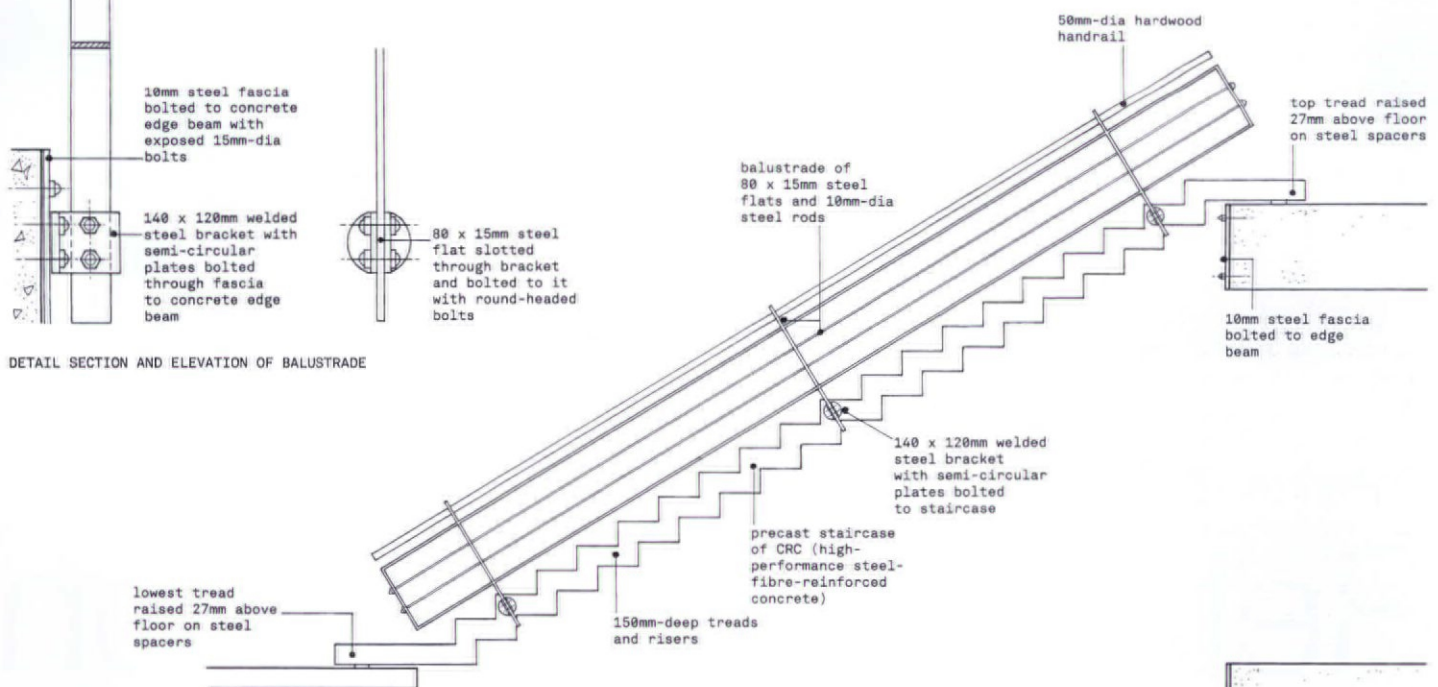
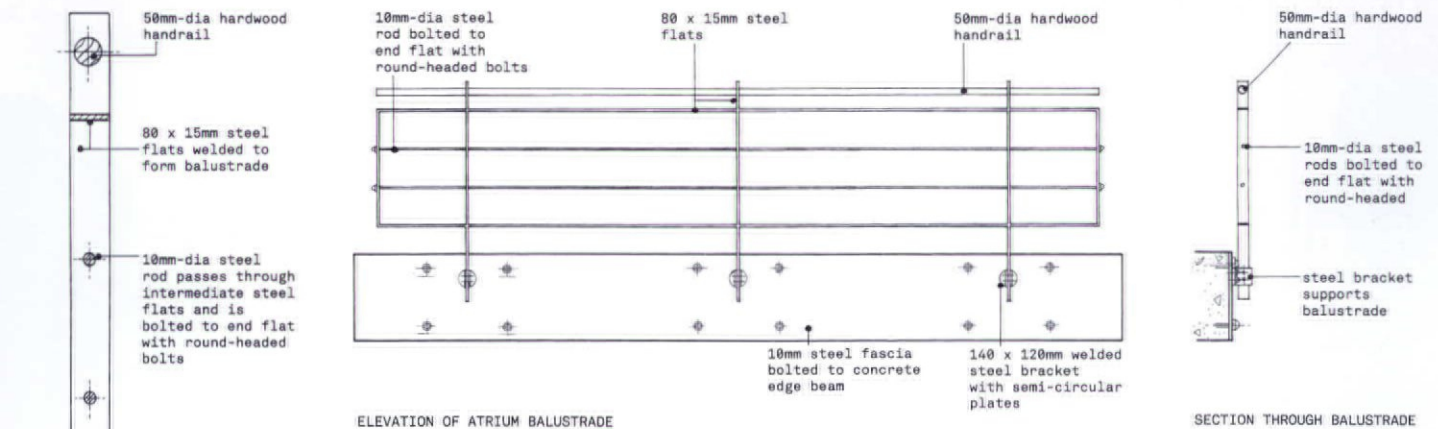
Note: steel balustrades and atrium fascia are finished in grey paint



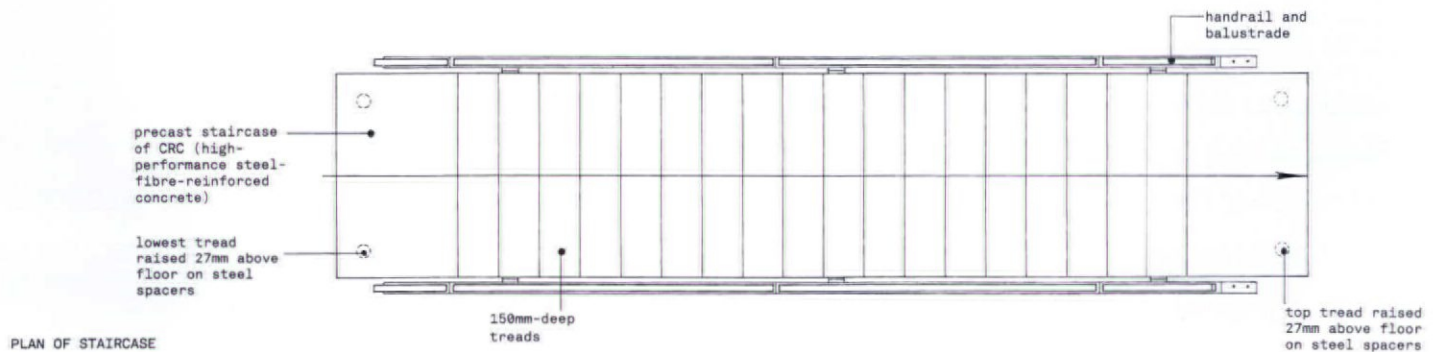
ISOMETRIC OF STAIRCASE AND ATRIUM BALUSTRADE



KEY PART-PLAN OF THIRD FLOOR SHOWING ATRIUM AND STAIRCASE



KEY SECTION THROUGH STAIRCASE



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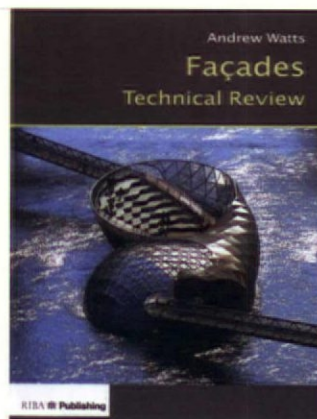
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1.

1. Fuel cells powered Trafalgar Square's Christmas lights (Online)
2. Documentation of facades (Books)



2.

THIS WEEK ONLINE

• Fuel Cells is a new briefing in the Renewables part of our Sustainability coverage. We look at what fuel cells are; emissions; setting up fuel supply infrastructure; and a range of emerging applications. It is early days for this still relatively expensive technology for generating electricity, but trials are under way and significant sales are forecast. See www.ajplus.co.uk/sustainability. This coverage of fuel cells adds to our existing briefings on renewables, which are on biomass, ground-source heating and cooling (both heat pump-based and labyrinths), wind, solar electric (photovoltaic) and solar thermal.

TECHNICAL NEWS

• At a recent Building Centre seminar on Density, David Rudlin of URBED noted that highly dense cities such as Paris and New York often build more generous accommodation than UK developers, who are building high and small. June Barnes, of award-winning social landlord East Thames (with Jestico + Whiles), cautioned that often tenants do not opt for density – rather it is the only option available – especially as the majority of urban social housing is now built by developers under S106 agreements. Another challenge is achieving a mix of families with children of different ages so that high-density developments can mature into balanced communities.

TECHNICAL EVENTS

Sustainable Refurbishment
10 April, 4.00–6.00pm
 Port Talbot, Wales
www.bre.co.uk/events

Sustainable Design and the London Plan
11 April, 8.00–9.30am
 Building Centre, 26 Store Street
 London WC1
 Alex Bax, GLA
www.buildingcentrereust.org

Lime Rendering Workshops
11–13 April, 16–18 May, 20–22 June
 Cromer, Norfolk
www.edwardsecobuilding.com

Hemp and Lime Conference
28 April, 9.00am–5.45pm
 Centre for Alternative Technology, Wales
www.cat.org.uk/courses

Designing with Nature: Better Buildings
20–25 May
 Schumacher College, Devon
www.schumachercollege.org.uk

BOOKS

Facades: Technical Review
 Andrew Watts
 RIBA Publishing, 2007, £15
 First in a new series, this is a gem of a book packed with easily digestible technical information – including clear detail drawings by the author – about ‘architecturally ambitious and technically complex’ facades. Each of the six chapters (Metal, Glass, Concrete, Masonry, Plastic and Timber) examines recent innovative facades from around the globe. Examples are well chosen and explained in a way one only finds in the back end of architectural journals, delving into ‘design considerations and solutions’.

Upcoming titles later this year include *Lighting* and *Roofing*. This is definitely a series to watch, and the price is hard to beat. These modest books are likely to become useful desktop references for the current state of architectural craftsmanship.

ALL BUILDINGS EXCEPT SINGLE- FAMILY DWELLINGS MUST BE ASSESSED

Written and illustrated by Austin Williams

The fifth in our series of NBS Shortcuts looks at the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order. On 1 October 2006, fire safety legislation changed under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. From that point onwards, with no transitional arrangements, fire certificates were abolished and ceased to have legal status.

Under the Fire Precautions Act 1971 certain classes of building – those with designated uses such as institutional, entertainment, recreational, teaching, research and workplaces, as well as some residential buildings (but not dwellings) – required a fire certificate. This would be issued only after the fire authority had proved itself satisfied that the provisions for means of escape, fire fighting equipment and warning systems were all adequate. In December 1997, the Fire Precautions (Workplace) Regulations came into force. They were amended in 1999 to take into account a wider range of premises. All this applied in England, Wales and Scotland.

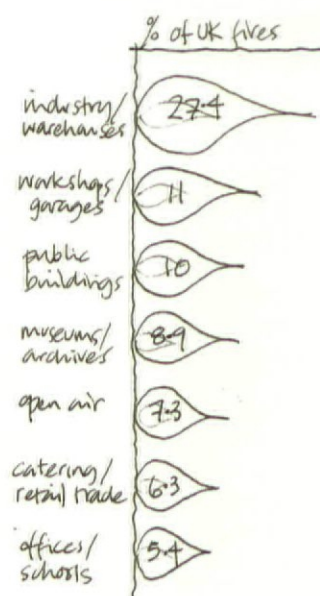
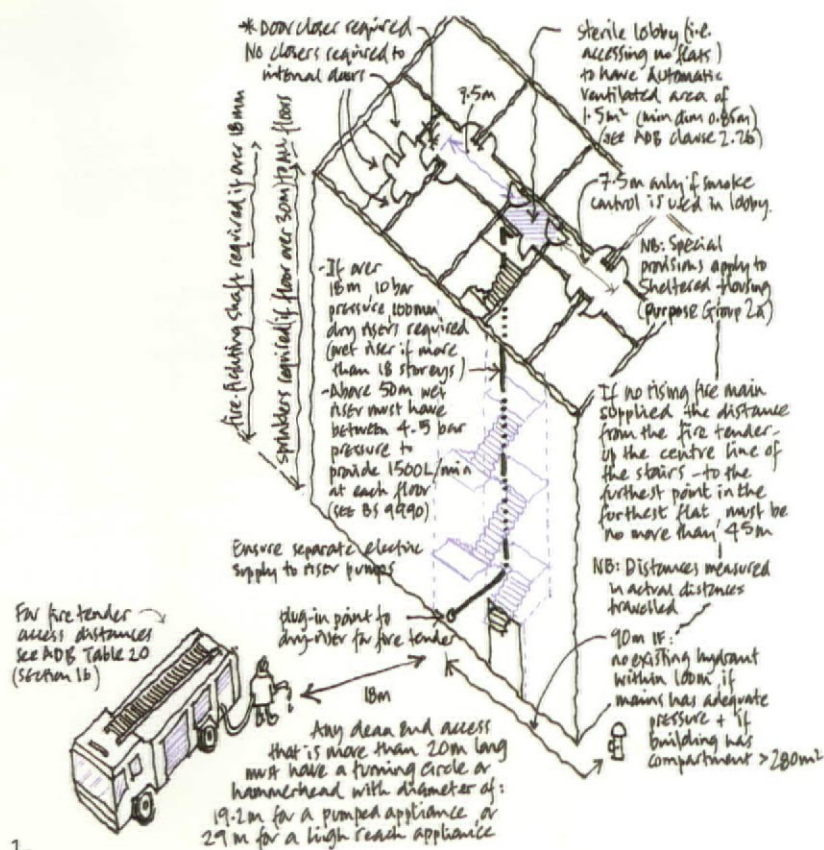
But on 1 October 2006, fire-safety legislation changed under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (RRO). In one fell swoop these two substantial Fire Precautions Acts were replaced and around 118 other separate pieces of legislation were amended or replaced. In addition, the RRO only applies to England and Wales, with Scotland and Northern Ireland under similar but different requirements. In Scotland, for example, the Fire Safety (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (FSSR) are now in force. The differences between the FSSR and the RRO are slight – primarily concerning the need to reference Scottish Parliament documents as

opposed to the RRO solely referencing UK Parliament legislation – but there are some important differences. For example, the FSSR addresses houses in multiple occupation and as such has a different definition of a 'domestic premises'.

The RRO defines domestic premises as 'premises occupied as a private dwelling (including any garden, yard, garage, outhouse, or common appurtenance of such premises which is *not* used by the occupants of more than one such dwelling)' (my italics). As such, it does not apply to domestic premises. The FSSR also does not apply to domestic premises defined as 'premises occupied as a private dwelling including specified parts *used* in common by the occupants of more than one dwelling' (my italics). In Northern Ireland, the Fire and Rescue Services (Northern Ireland) Order 2006 came into force in July 2006, but it contains little of substance as yet. It intends to phase in the various orders relating to definitions, responsibilities, powers, etc, over 2007.

In terms of both the Scotland and the England and Wales legislation, the main effect of the changes will be a move towards greater emphasis on fire prevention in all non-domestic premises. The Fire Certificate is now a thing of the past and the government hopes to save around £1.7 million from the withdrawal of certification procedures alone. The main purposes are to:

- create a single regime for simplicity and ease of understanding;
- use risk assessment as a central means of fire prevention and mitigation measures;
- shift the burden of compliance, in order to encourage compliance;



2.

1. Residential flats are now included in Approved Document B2, rather than B1, which deals only with dwelling houses
2. Graph showing the likelihood of a fire in a given building type

- focus on those premises that present the greatest risk; and
- ensure that compliance responds to actual circumstances and that maintenance procedures are factored in.

The legislation covers 'general fire precautions' and other fire-safety duties which are needed to protect 'relevant persons' in case of fire in and around most 'premises'. 'Relevant persons' are those affected by a fire and used to refer to occupants and those directly involved in the building. Now it also means 'any person in the immediate vicinity of the premises who is at risk from a fire on the premises', such as passers-by and the owners of neighbouring buildings. They must be considered in your plans. Bear in mind that when it comes to speculative developments, some relevant persons (e.g. the actual user group) may be unknown!

Interestingly, a firefighter is *not* a relevant person. The Scotland and the England and Wales legislation requires fire precautions to be put in place 'where necessary', and to the extent that is reasonable and practicable in the circumstances to minimise harm and hazard to those relevant persons. In all workplaces with one or more employees, a full risk assessment and an emergency plan must be in place. Where there are more than five employees, those considerations must be recorded.

Responsibility for complying with the Fire Safety Order will rest with the legally designated 'responsible person'. In Scotland this position is known as the 'dutyholder' and in Northern Ireland the name and duties of this quasi-legal entity will not be decided upon until later in 2007. The responsible person must

ensure that a fire-risk assessment has been carried out by a 'competent person' (one who is demonstrably competent so to do, having attended one or more courses). In a workplace the responsible person is most likely to be the employer or any other person who may have control of any part of the premises, e.g. the occupier or owner. In all other premises the person or people in control of the premises will be responsible. If there is more than one responsible person in any premises, all must take all reasonable steps to work together to produce a harmonious risk assessment.

The risk assessment and emergency plan should pay particular attention to those at special risk, such as the disabled or temporarily disabled, and must consider any dangerous substance likely to be on the premises. As with statutory health and safety obligations, fire-risk assessments should identify the hazards; the risks that can be removed or reduced; and the nature and extent of the general fire precautions needed to protect people against residual fire risks. In the past, if there hadn't been a material change, the fire and rescue service couldn't demand upgrades on buildings with fire certificates even if the certificates had been obtained, say, 50 years previously. Now they can.

Risk assessments must be carried out on all premises and buildings other than dwellings in single occupation. The fire and rescue service may visit the property, but they will not carry out a risk assessment – they will simply audit the procedures in place. In general, the competency expressed in the assessment will determine the level of suspicion, driving more detailed physical inspection.

DAILY CHECKS (NOT NORMALLY RECORDED)

ESCAPE ROUTES

- Can all fire exits be opened immediately and easily?
- Are fire doors clear of obstructions?
- Are escape routes clear?

FIRE WARNING SYSTEMS

- Is the indicator panel showing 'normal'?
- Are whistles, gongs or air horns in place?

ESCAPE LIGHTING

- Are luminaires and exit signs in good condition and undamaged?
- Is emergency lighting and sign lighting working correctly?

FIREFIGHTING EQUIPMENT

- Are all fire extinguishers in place?
- Are fire extinguishers clearly visible?
- Are vehicles blocking fire hydrants or access to them?

WEEKLY CHECKS

ESCAPE ROUTES

- Do all emergency fastening devices to fire exits (push-bars and pads etc) work correctly?
- Are external routes clear and safe?

FIRE WARNING SYSTEMS

- Does testing a manual call point send a signal to the indicator panel? (Disconnect the link to the receiving centre or tell them you are doing a test)
- Did the alarm system work correctly when tested?
- Did staff and others hear the fire alarm?
- Did any linked fire protection systems operate correctly (e.g. magnetic door holder released, smoke curtains dropped)?

The government has written a set of guides that describe in some detail what is needed in order to comply. These cover a variety of buildings and even though there is a considerable amount of duplication, each includes a range of very helpful diagrams showing the typical layouts for emergency egress; as well as various escape distances to suit occupancy rates, demographics and building classifications. They also include generic fire risk assessments and maintenance checklists.

The graph showing the likelihood of a fire occurring in a given building type (*see page 41*) may be used to prioritise the level of detail applied to a building's emergency plan. Note, for example, that industry/warehouses has five times the risk of a fire occurring than a school or office. The fire and rescue service tends to prioritise its inspection resources accordingly.

Even though firefighters aren't deemed to be relevant, architects should consider the practical implications of poor design on their call-out efficiency. Firefighters carrying heavy equipment are helped in their duties by accurate directional signage; clear and accessible alarm indicators (to help pin-point the location of the fire); minimal obstructions in the form of security gates, etc, that may require cutting equipment; uncomplicated access routes; and ensuring that risers and hydrants are located in convenient and obvious positions.

Austin Williams is the author and illustrator of NBS Shortcuts. For more information visit www.thebuildingregs.com

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THE ARCHITECT OF ITS OWN DOWNFALL

Please don't mention www.styfahls-partners.be to the ARB or we'll have some Hallam Street jobsworth reporting the naughty Belgian practice, Styfahls & Partners, to someone in Brussels. Its offence? Describing members of the practice variously as 'assistant architect' and 'architect in training'. Ooo-er.

But hang on. The whole computer industry seems to have decided that 'software engineer' is not nearly as posh as 'software architect'. There are now hundreds of computer-related affixes to the title, whose use the ARB so jealously guards when architecture graduates are involved. Microsoft even sponsors The Architecture Journal – that 'independent platform for free thinkers and practitioners of IT architecture' – and runs a Microsoft Certified Architect programme with a review board of 'previously certified architects'. Interesting how the word 'software' slipped off so easily.

Yet do we hear of the ARB writing to Microsoft UK about its hijacking of the profession's title? Odd that, isn't it? Try googling 'architect' with words like 'computer', 'software' or 'Microsoft'. You may conclude that bullyboy ARB has lost the battle it was too craven to even start.

sutherland.lyall@btinternet.com

NO VINDICATION

In trying to overturn the ARB Professional Conduct Committee's (PCC's) findings against her, Senka Vranicki's case (*Judgment 16.03.07*) has highlighted how the appeal system works, writes *Sue Lindsey* (ajplus 27.03.07). Vranicki was charged by the ARB with both aspects of professional misconduct set out in Section 14 of the Architects Act 1997, namely unacceptable professional conduct and serious professional incompetence. The PCC brought what they described as seven charges, each relating to a specific aspect of Vranicki's work in relation to a house extension. It made findings of serious professional incompetence against her in respect of two out of the seven charges. The findings mainly related to a failure to put in place appropriate contractual arrangements to deal with a main contractor and a specialist glazing contractor, as a result of which Vranicki was unable to retain proper control in her capacity as contract administrator.

Vranicki appealed to the High Court, using Section 22 of the Act (there is no further appeal from the findings of the court). Like many other appeals from disciplinary tribunals, the form of the appeal allowed by the act is not limited to errors of law, but is a complete reconsideration of the evidence.

As is usual, the court relied on verbatim transcripts of the evidence given to the PCC, rather than hearing it all again.

The judge, Mr Justice Collins, explained that there had been a misconception as to what amounted to a charge. The PCC had wrongly described the seven allegations as charges. They were in fact particulars of matters that might substantiate the two charges of unacceptable professional conduct and serious professional incompetence provided in the act. According to the judge, the PCC should have formed a view about each of the seven matters and then decided whether, when taken together, either of the statutory charges were made out.

The judge also considered the various other relevant documents produced by the ARB, including the PCC Rules, the Code of Conduct, and the ARB's guidance on what constitutes unacceptable professional conduct and serious professional incompetence. He was critical of the guidance note that describes serious professional incompetence by using the phrase 'when an architect's standard of competence falls dramatically below that expected', saying that this suggested a somewhat higher standard than that of 'serious' which is imposed by the act.

However, this clarification, while of interest to the profession as a whole, did not vindicate Vranicki. Having explained that the court is reluctant to interfere with findings of fact unless persuaded that they were not justified by the evidence, the judge upheld the PCC's view of the facts. He went on to say that it is the job of the PCC to set the standard applied by practitioners, and that the court should not interfere unless it is unreasonable to conclude that the standard has been set properly.

Despite the problem that the PCC had treated the seven allegations as separate charges, the judge used the guidance provision that a number of events, though not serious in themselves, may together demonstrate a pattern of incompetence. Although he expressed sympathy for Vranicki, the judge was not persuaded that the PCC was wrong to have found that serious professional incompetence was established.

Sue Lindsey is a barrister at Crown Office Chambers in London. Visit www.crownofficechambers.com

BOOK

By Elain Harwood

Re-Forming Britain: Narratives of Modernity before Reconstruction
By Elizabeth Darling.
Routledge, 2007. £27.50



1.



2.

1 & 2. Owen Williams' Pioneer Health Centre, Peckham, 1935

Elizabeth Darling is annoyed that no book on English Modernism in the 1930s has poked beneath the stylistic surface. Her method is to concentrate on a fistful of the most socially ambitious buildings of the period – the Pioneer and Finsbury Health Centres, Isokon flats, Sassoon House, Kent House and Kensal House – and relate them to the people who commissioned them. By studying the 'do-gooders' and voluntary organisations who sought to improve the living conditions and the health of the working classes, Darling helps us to understand the architecture and the growing maturity of men like Wells Coates and Maxwell Fry behind it.

Ignore the polemical introduction of *Re-Forming Britain*, and the occasionally

awkward editing, and enjoy the way in which these familiar stories are linked together with new insight. Darling also shows how organisations – whether charities like the St Pancras House Improvement Society or the commercial Gas Light and Coke Company seeking new markets for its products – argued for reform through better methods of propaganda such as photography, pamphlets and films. Their work tied in with that of the Design and Industries Association: it was a decade in which pressure groups could really chip away at traditional mindsets.

Architects similarly argued for greater cleanliness and better planning in the exhibition they organised in March 1938 as the MARS Group, headed by Coates and Fry. This featured a study by

housing expert Elizabeth Denby, the real heroine of the book, and was significant as a first collaboration between younger architects such as Hugh Casson, Ralph Tubbs and H T Cadbury-Brown, who would go on to design the Festival of Britain.

In conclusion, Darling looks at a still younger generation, who studied at the Architectural Association in the late 1930s but only practised after the war. Architects like Anthony Cox took the messages of research and collaborative working further, into large-scale schemes that prefigured post-war housing estates and New Towns.

Could health clinics and better-planned flats have been built without recourse to Modernism? The detail of labour-saving planning, cheap

furniture schemes, nurseries and social clubs advocated by Denby was indeed realised in schemes of more traditional appearance around St Pancras, and at Leeds' Quarry Hill Flats. Darling argues, however, that there was a need for such reforms to express themselves in a Modern image, and that architects and reformers came to share a common mission.

A greater worry is the image of Darling's book, which is illustrated with a few poorly reproduced contemporary photographs. The disparity in publishing between the pretty and the meaty is the real reason why there have been so few decent books on 20th-century English architecture in the past 25 years.

Elain Harwood is a historian with English Heritage

BOOK

By Edwin Heathcote

European Church
Architecture 1900-1950:
Towards Modernism
By Wolfgang Jean Stock.
Prestel, 2006. 224pp.
£40.00



1.

This book is the companion volume to the very good, very Germanic *European Church Architecture 1950-2000*, by the same author (AJ 01.05.03). And like that book its faults are almost identical to its strengths. It is dry, thorough and biased towards the German-speaking countries and central Europe. Luckily, that also happens to be where the best churches were built during this period. So, no great damage done.

This was a time when church building was absolutely at the forefront of progressive architectural thinking (there was an Expressionist cathedral on the cover of the Bauhaus manifesto), even if the examples can seem to be airbrushed out of conventional histories.

It is also, despite the apparently random and impossibly convenient dates of

1900-1950, a relatively coherent period which spans, very roughly, the retro-radicalism of the Arts and Crafts period to the sculptural wilfulness of Ronchamp, while en route embracing Secessionism, National Romanticism, Nordic Classicism, Expressionism, Rationalism and Functionalism.

It was a busy, busy time – and the selection here is admirably eclectic. Earlier histories have tended to concentrate on the rational buildings – mostly Germanic – which were closely allied to the functional tradition: the work of Rudolf Schwarz, Otto Bartning, Auguste Perret, Dominikus Bohm, Karl Moser. By contrast, Stock picks out (and, more importantly, treats equally) such central European eccentrics as Jože Plečnik, Pavel Janák and Ödön Lechner.

This makes for a far more interesting book to flick through, although it doesn't help to create any sense of flowing narrative. While Plečnik was building a proto-Cubist concrete crypt in Vienna, and while his former master Otto Wagner was building a super-hygienic, whiter-than-white church for a mental asylum outside of the city, most of the rest of Europe was making do with sub-Gothic stage sets. Then, within a decade, Functionalism emerged as the built expression of the liturgical avant garde, just as it emerged as the natural language of social housing and manufacturing.

Yet there was a point, around the late 1920s, when spiky Expressionism, nascent Functionalism and a curious blend of Cubism, Gothic, Neo-

Classical and Art Deco suddenly combined to make the church arguably the most interesting of architectural typologies.

It was a brief but wonderful moment which threw up some absolute gems, most of which are featured here: for instance, Bohm's spectacular St Johann Baptist in Neu-Ulm and St Engelbert in Cologne, and Plečnik's Church of the Sacred Heart in Prague. It seemed to promise an inclusive, pluralistic and regional Modernism which never fully emerged.

Despite the book's inclusivity there are some problematic gaps. Lethaby's proto-Expressionist, mystical church at Brockhampton is absent, as is the mad-Modernist Neo-Gothic of Paul Tournon's Saint-Thérèse-de-l'Enfant-



2.

1. Auguste Perret's Church of Notre-Dame, Le Raincy, 1923

2. Fritz Hoyer's Church on Hohenzollernplatz, Berlin, 1933

Jésus, the polychromatic Neo-Gothic of Dom Bellot, and the Brobdignagian not-very-Neo-Gothic of Gilbert Scott's Liverpool Cathedral. Also missing are the extraordinary churches of Fascist Italy (although they at least are mentioned) – buildings which managed to create a strange and enchanting synthesis of the historical and the modern, which was generally not achieved elsewhere.

This would be unforgivable if it looked like part of some greater conspiracy to remove buildings which don't fit in to the bigger narrative. But it doesn't seem to be that. In fact, the book is such a delight to leaf through precisely because of its omnivorous appetite. The essays here are good, if brutally short and staccato, while the individual entries are as brief

and functional as they could possibly be.

The author does touch on liturgical reform, politics and the differing approaches of Catholic and Protestant institutions, and what he says is solid and correct, but it is not enough. On the other hand the photographs, whether contemporary black-and-white ones or newly commissioned colour ones, are uniformly superb. It is these, as well as some of the most endlessly fascinating and unfamiliar buildings in the history of Modern architecture, that make this book a real (if not unqualified) pleasure.

Edwin Heathcote is architecture correspondent for the Financial Times. His book, Contemporary Church Architecture, will be published by Wiley later this month



CRITIC'S CHOICE

By Andrew Mead

For much of the past decade, Rem Koolhaas and his students from the Harvard Project on the City have kept returning to Lagos, which is slated to be the world's second largest city by 2015, smaller only than Tokyo. From the material gathered on these trips, which was published in *Mutations*, Lagos looks chaotic to say the least, but in his usual perverse and provocative way, Koolhaas maintains that it 'works'. Its 'shortcomings in traditional urban systems' can't obscure its vitality: 'We think it possible to argue that Lagos represents a developed, extreme paradigmatic case-study of a city at the forefront of globalising modernity,' says Koolhaas.

A fuller presentation of Koolhaas' Lagos research was due to appear this spring from publisher Lars Müller but it has slipped back to the autumn. In the meantime, though, Lagos is the subject of an exhibition of photographs by Paul Seawright called 'Invisible Cities'. The title, of course, comes from Calvino's fixture on student reading lists, which Seawright takes in two ways: that African cities are still largely invisible to the West, and that cities are defined not just by their buildings and infrastructure but by the evanescent life among them – the improvisations and adaptations that Koolhaas is so keen on, 'glimpses of the everyday in the hidden recesses of the city'. So Seawright's photos alternate between the panoramic and the intimate, as in the alleyway scene above. They're at Ffotogallery, Turner House, Penarth, until 6 May (www.ffotogallery.org).

In both Koolhaas' and Seawright's Lagos, much is temporary and in flux – a recurrent theme in the projects of German artist Wolfgang Weileder. Perhaps recognising that scenes of construction or demolition always gather an audience, Weileder stages semi-sculptural 'house projects' in which structures are built and dismantled in quick succession, ever-changing in their form. One of these projects bemused commuters outside Milton Keynes railway station last autumn, and from 3 April to 3 June a time-lapse film of its three-week life will be shown on four screens in the Milton Keynes Gallery Project Space at 900 Midsummer Boulevard, Milton Keynes (www.mk-g.org).

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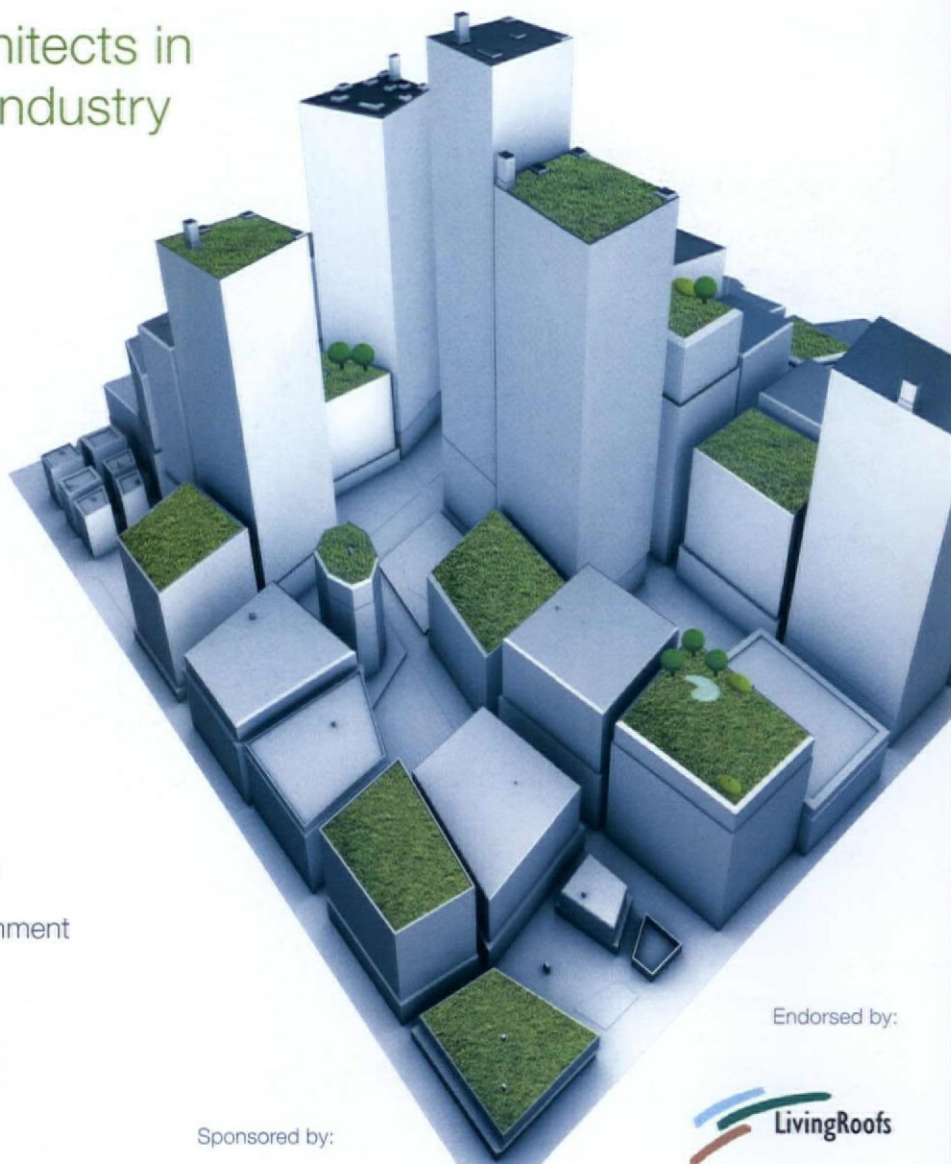
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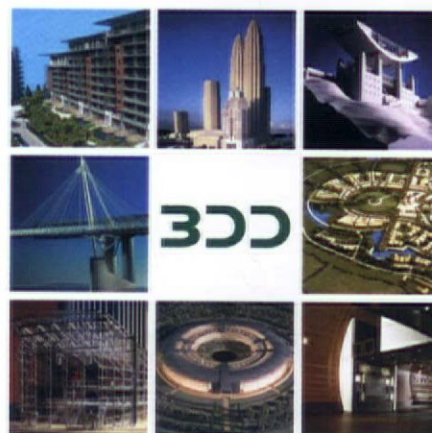


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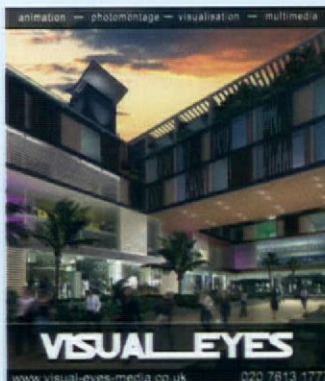


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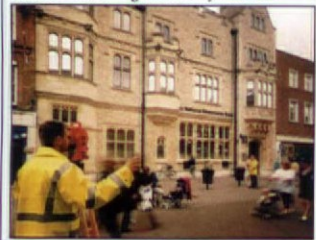
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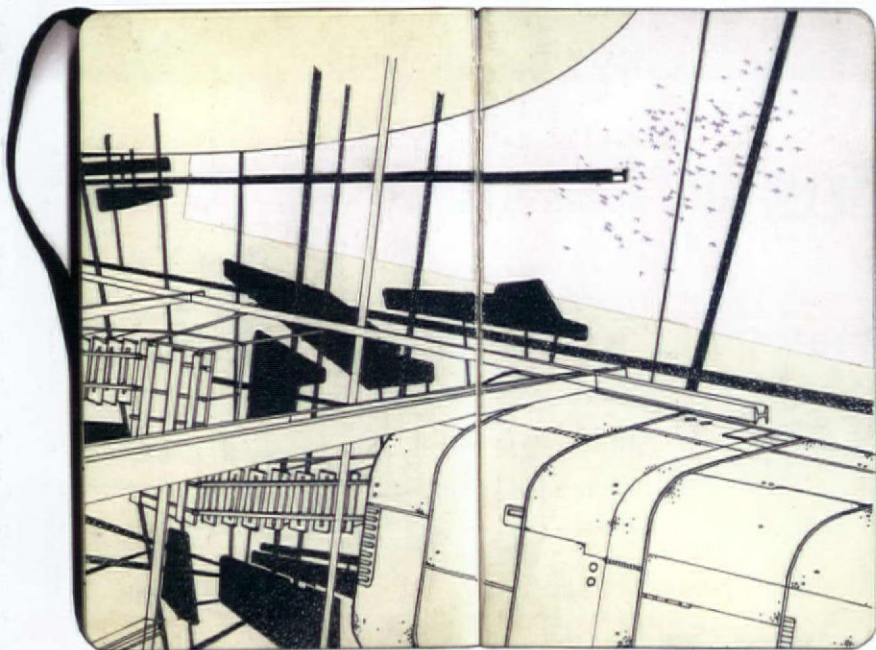
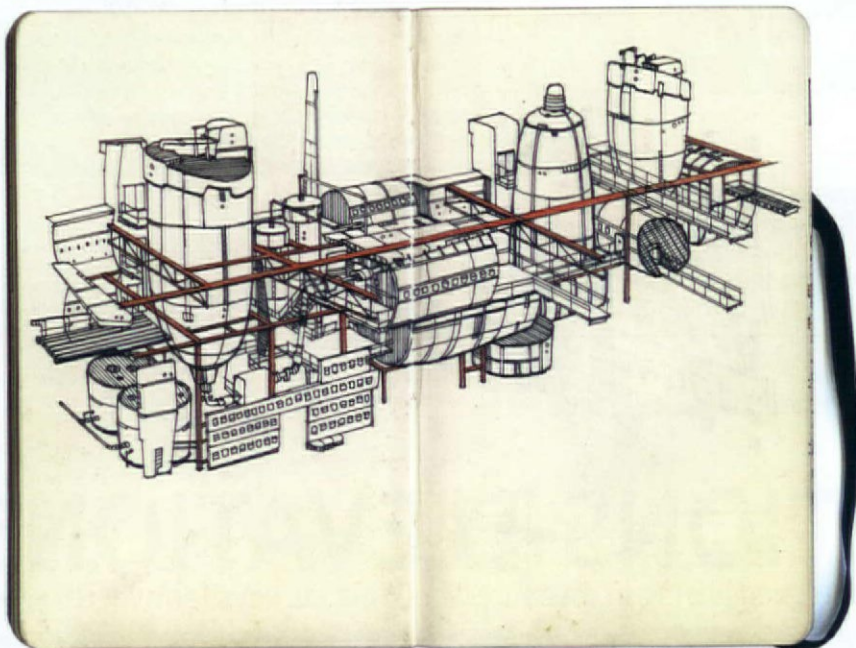
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Sketches for a proposed whisky distillery in Arizona, USA, to be constructed from salvaged aeroplane parts. Part of a final project for the Bartlett BSc architecture course. By Richard Hardy

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METAL TECHNOLOGY



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Part of Belfast's regeneration plans, the eight-storey City Exchange office development features a glazed corner in System 17 curtain walling, incorporating aero-foil horizontal cover caps and louvre infill panels. The building has over 500 System 4-20 casement windows with anti-sun glass.

INTERFACEFLOR



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CONTITECH UK



AJ ENQUIRY 204

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BRETT MARTIN



AJ ENQUIRY 205

Dual- and mono-pitch Xlok Ultra rooflights, manufactured by Brett Martin Daylight Systems, have been used in a winter garden at the Sisters of Mercy development in Athlone, Ireland. The rooflights have 20 electrically operated top-hung vents to provide controllable ventilation.

BUDERUS



AJ ENQUIRY 206

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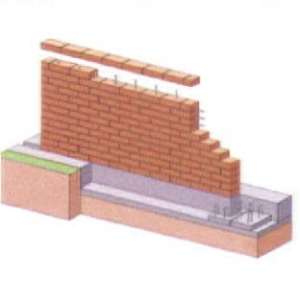
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Maggie's Cancer Centre in Inverness has been named best building in Scotland by RIAS. The envelope of the building is finished in Cetol Novatech to protect external wall areas which are clad with birch-face plywood. The Natural Balance Colour Collection was used to match the wood's original colour.

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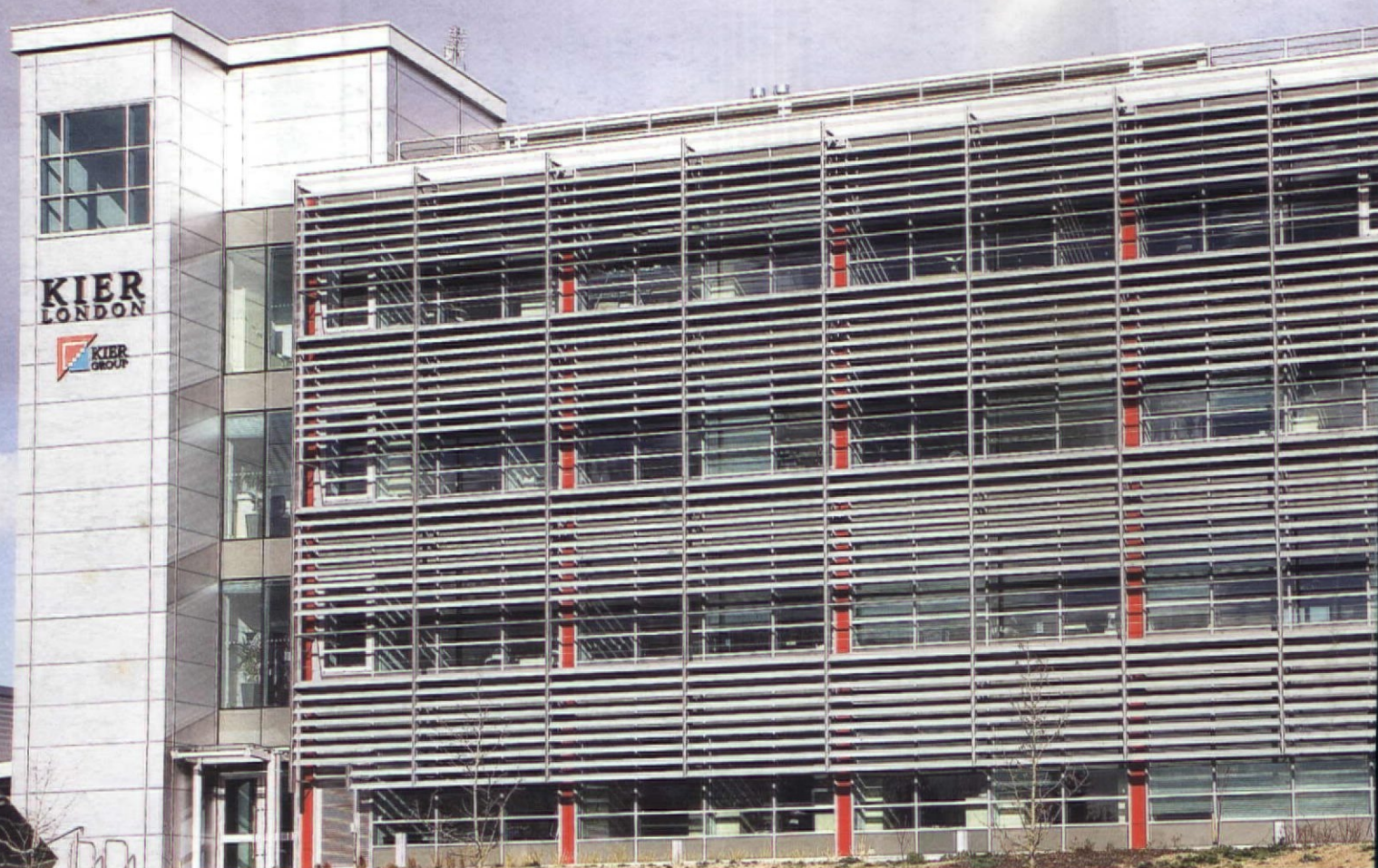


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