17.05.07 WEEGEIS/ DE LICHTENBERG



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EDITORIAL

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IF THE JURIES HAD BEEN DIFFERENT, THEN SO WOULD SOME OF THE CHOICES

By Ruth Slavid

On this issue's letters page (see page 22), John Lyall takes the AJ to task in part for not editing out Alan Dunlop's negative criticism of Penoyre & Prasad's Moorfields Eye Hospital (see the Building Study, AJ 26.04.07). Since it is not Lyall's building, he cannot be accused of sour grapes. Instead, he seems to feel that it is unfair for the architects of a building that he admires to suffer negative comments from their peers which will, in turn, be read by their peers.

Although we only present buildings of interest and merit, that does not mean that they are beyond reproach. Of course we edit our authors' writing – a flawless piece of prose is even more rare than a flawless building. But we relish allowing our reviewers to express their opinions – and we relish even more having other people disagree with them.

After all, one of Lyall's companions on the Letters page is Patrick Hodgkinson, who scores a double by taking issue with both the author and the reviewer of a book about his Brunswick Centre, even though they were both largely positive about it. While we all believe that we can tell the difference between good and bad design, there are certainly no absolutes.

Last night (16 May) the winners of the RIBA Awards were revealed. Juries in each region picked a total of 63 buildings that they believed to be worthy of recognition. They did this after a series of visits and, doubtless, heated discussions. Nobody disputes that if different people had been on the juries, at least some of those choices would have been different. Neither can we believe that they are all buildings devoid of flaws.

The best of these buildings will go forward to be considered for the Stirling Prize – when another set of judges is likely to have a robust and unpredictable debate. In an age where effort is made to render almost everything countable and measurable, the variability of human opinion is to be relished, not resented.

CONTRIBUTORS



Christine Sullivan, who photographs De Lichtenberg for the Building Study on pages 25-39, is an artist based in London working in photography and video



Alan Powers, who reviews Evocations of Place, the Photography of Edwin Smith on page 47, is an architectural historian and teaches at the University of Greenwich



Neil Elliott, whose drawing for a housing scheme near Gorton Monastery is on the Sketchbook on page 58, is an architect in the Manchester office of Taylor Young



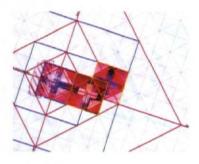
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- Edinburgh College of Art
- lecturer in landscape architecture

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- technician • Ibstock – design advisor
- Architects for Aid architectural assistants
- University of Bath teaching fellow

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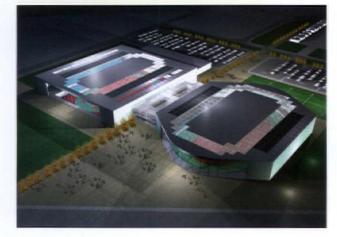
THURSDAY 10 MAY

- Foster ends months of speculation by selling minority stake to investor 3i
- Birmingham calls for starchitect to design city skyscraper
- Austin-Smith:Lord keeps Manchester museum scheme and reveals new proposals (right)
- Atkins unveils 'real life SimCity' with massive Panama masterplan



FRIDAY 11 MAY

- Corstorphine and Wright accepts out-of-court
 settlement in legal battle with contractor
- Let battle recommence: CZWG's Vaux Brewery win to be challenged in High Court
- CABE launches broadside against Atkins' Olympic marina plans in Weymouth
- Sports Concepts and Reid unveil 2014
 Commonwealth Games velodrome (below)





MONDAY 14 MAY

- Keith Williams chases yet more work in Scandinavia following Norwegian shortlisting
- Louisiana Museum of Art designer
 Vilhelm Wohlert dies (left)
- PM-in-waiting Gordon Brown promises eco-friendly 'Brown Towns'
- Libeskind and Hadid both unveil new chair designs

TUESDAY 15 MAY

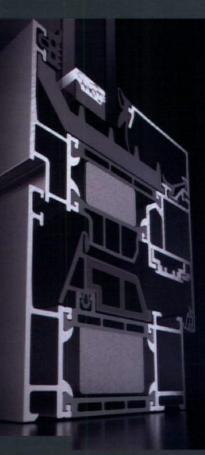
- Pellings sued for £2.5 million over fire-risk fears in Croydon flats
- D5 Architects picks up another bus station commission after victory in Chatham competition
- Benson & Forsyth to rework
 Watford FC's stadium into £1 billion health-campus masterplan (right)
- Zaha to redesign and expand longawaited Hoxton scheme



WEDNESDAY 16 MAY

- Antony Gormley opens new Blind Light exhibition – with help from Carmody Groarke
- Make hits headlines with contentious Monument scheme
- Architect given six months to clean up act by ARB after misconduct conviction
- Penson Group reveals scheme for Old Kent Road

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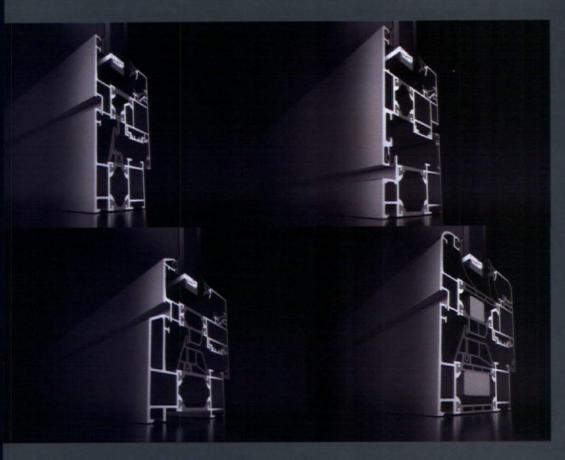
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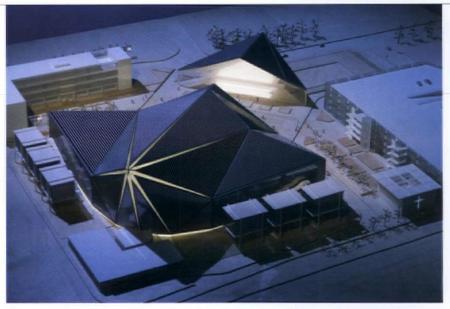
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Sheppard Robson's east London church for the Kingsway International Christian Centre will accommodate over 10,000 worshippers

MEGA CHURCH TO DWARF ST PAUL'S

By Richard Vaughan

Sheppard Robson is designing the biggest church in the UK, the AJ can reveal.

The massive scheme, in Havering, east London, will accommodate a congregation more than double that of St Paul's Cathedral and Westminster Abbey combined.

Sheppard Robson says the \pounds 70 million project will deliver a 'stadium-esque' 9,000-seat auditorium, and will be able to house more than 10,500 people at any one time.

Backed by one of Britain's biggest Christian groups, the Kingsway International Christian Centre (KICC), the new church will dwarf both St Paul's and Westminster Abbey which have capacities of 2,300 and 2,000 respectively.

KICC – an independent church – boasts a following of more than 12,000 people and attracts 10,000 mainly Afro-Caribbean followers every week.

The Christian group was originally based in a 4ha converted warehouse near Hackney Marshes, but recently relocated after the land was bought through a Compulsory Purchase Order to make way for the site of the 2012 London Olympic Games.

With the help of the London Development Agency and the Olympic Delivery Authority, the church will utilise Beam Reach, a 4ha brownfield site east of the Olympic Park.

The scheme will be built over five phases and will not be completed for another four years, with the first phase involving a temporary structure to provide an initial 5,000 followers with worship space. If completed, KICC's new home will become the second biggest place of worship in the UK, after Mangera Yvars' Abbey Mills planned project, dubbed the 'mega mosque'.

And the church's future seems more secure than that of the mosque. Although originally designed to accommodate 70,000 worshippers, it is understood the Abbey Mills scheme is being significantly downsized due to growing opposition to the scheme.

Recent reports have also suggested that architect Mangera Yvars may also have been dropped from the project, although practice principal Ali Mangera has vehemently denied this.

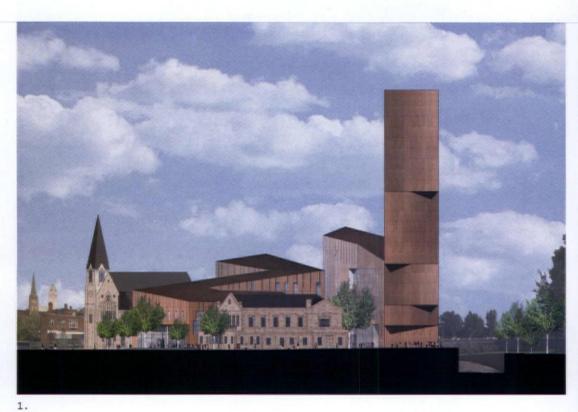
However, KICC is no stranger to controversy either. The church group was recently investigated by the Charity Commission, which found evidence of 'serious' financial misconduct, and ordered senior pastor and church founder Matthew Ashimolowo to repay the charity $\pounds 200,000$.

KICC encourages worshippers to donate a 10th of their salaries to the church, and sermons allegedly centre on praying for wealth, with Ashimolowo regularly giving 'prosperity gospels'.

Sheppard Robson is part of a team including UK project-management firm Gleeds, which has recently completed a 7,000-seat First Baptist Church in Alabama, US.

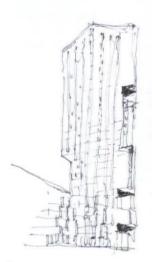
Sheppard Robson's designs will be submitted for planning approval next week.

NEWS IN PICTURES





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2.

AJ 17.05.07



1. Feilden Clegg Bradley's student-housing and academic complex for Leeds Metropolitan University will sit in Broadcasting Place, the BBC's former West Yorkshire home

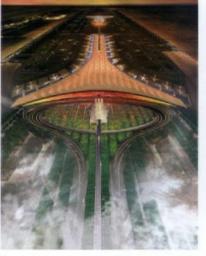
2. Concept sketch

3 & 4. The scheme comprises two main blocks which will be clad entirely in Cor-ten steel

FEILDEN CLEGG BRADLEY REPLACES BBC IN LEEDS

Feilden Clegg Bradley Architects (FCB) has won the green light for this high-rise student-flat and academic complex on the site of the BBC's former West Yorkshire home at Broadcasting Place in Leeds. Clad entirely in Cor-ten steel, the £45 million scheme for Leeds Metropolitan University will feature two main blocks - the largest a 23-storey accommodation tower housing around 400 students. Developer Downing Developments originally won planning for a smaller, mainly residential, scheme on the site off Woodhouse Lane. The revised plans offer significantly increased teaching and office space - around 10,000m² - for four of the university's departments, including the department of architecture. The existing Grade II-listed Broadcasting House will be retained as part of the development, which will also see the creation of a new baptist church, café and major public square. During the design process, FCB carried out extensive research on the facade to optimise daylight within the blocks. The practice said the solution will provide generous natural lighting while avoiding the dangers of overheating. By Richard Waite

AGENDA





1.

FOSTER SECURES HIS LEGACY

By Max Thompson

Norman Foster is used to media attention and, in the 40-year history of Foster + Partners, has become adept at avoiding it.

But not on Wednesday last week. An excited call from the 71 year old's PR to the AJ's news desk ended with these words: 'Get down here by four; the deal is being signed at quarter past...'

'Here' is Foster + Partners' riverside HQ in Battersea, south London, and the 'deal' was private-equity investor 3i's decision to buy a minority stake in the firm, valuing it at $\pounds 300$ million.

So to 22 Hester Road where, after passing a row of around 40 stylish and mostly young architects squeezed into a long, narrow café bar, the familiar tanned face of Lord Foster of Thames Bank materialises and we are steered into the inner sanctum of Foster + Partners.

Foster's love of skiing, running and a healthy lifestyle have kept the ravages of age at bay, but by just how much is surprising. With his 72nd birthday looming, Foster could easily be mistaken for a man in his 50s.

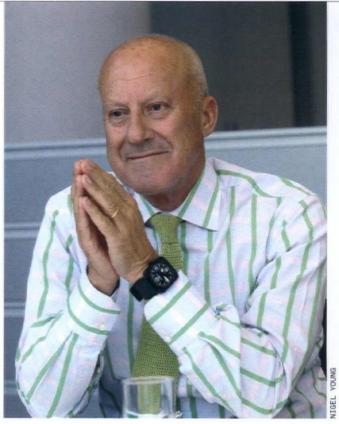
At a sprightly pace we walk past champagne-laden trestles through a huge and busy open-plan office to a table at which are seated Fosters stalwart Mouzhan Majidi and 3i head of UK capital growth, Steve Nichols – two men at the heart of the radical changes that Foster is about to announce.

As well as marking the 40th anniversary of the firm (on 9 May), the meeting has been timed to coincide with two other events: the broadening of the firm's ownership and the signing of the much-talked-about 3i cashinjection deal.

Taking advantage of an expectant hush, Foster begins: 'Before today we were four shareholders and now we are 14. Simultaneously we have broadened the financial base of the company and created a platform for the future with 3i coming in as minority investor.'

Those structural changes are a progression from the firm's 2005 shake-up, which saw the creation of six new 'Design Groups'. Even then, on the back of his success leading the design of Stansted Airport and his role on Hong Kong Airport, Majidi was a clear contender to take over the running of the Foster empire.

Foster says: 'Mouzhan has moved into that position and Foster + Partners' Beijing Airport
 Designs for the world's first zerocarbon city, in Abu Dhabi
 Norman Foster says the restructuring of his firm will enable him to concentrate on 'design and strategy'



3.

that for me is absolutely fantastic. He will take over quite a lot of the day-to-day running of the company and I will be able to concentrate on a lot more design.

'I will also look strategically at the bigger picture,' he adds.

That 'strategic picture' covers a large canvas including 22 offices across the globe which, according to the softly spoken Majidi, control around 200 projects at any one time.

In addition to tackling the opportunities available in mass markets such as India, China and the Middle East, Foster says the 3i money would enable the company to consider other ventures.

'We are aware we could significantly increase our skills by acquisition, the bringing in of specialist engineering skills, and maybe we could control better the execution of our projects by developing project management; that would be fantastic and attractive to our clients,' he says.

Although Foster says he is 'not going to leap into anything,' by his own admission he is relishing the next stage of Foster + Partners' development.

'I'm really excited by the fact it liberates me to do more of what I want to do,' he says.

'I will travel more and I like the idea of travelling to some of the places where we have a "pot" we haven't tapped. It is not a step back for me – it's a step forwards.'

Talk of the future causes Foster to pause as he takes stock of his momentous rise from the early days – including his Team 4 partnership with Richard Rogers – to the practice today which employs 1,000 staff around the world.

Foster says: 'At the beginning of those 40 years I really did everything, from making the tea to opening doors. There are one or two buildings from that time where I can tell you the dimension of every steel member and the tolerances on the window system. I could write a bible on those projects.'

Foster's iconic buildings are all testaments to his skill, but what he is perhaps most proud of is the dissemination of these skills to a new generation.

He says: 'Over that time what inevitably has happened is that I have sought to use [my] skills to be able to work with others and to encourage others to share the excitement and the quality of those buildings in a broader team.' Making reference to his days as a student at Yale University, Foster pays tribute to the teaching skills of architectural legends Paul Rudolph, Serge Chermayeff and 'Bucky' Fuller.

But it is to the next generation of architects that Foster is really looking and, as if to prove it, he leafs through the brochure of the company's forthcoming graduate show, oblivious to questions as he proudly reels off project after project that his new generation of architectural starlets have submitted.

And who knows, one of those starlets may even be a Foster: 'I'm looking forward to my children joining the firm,' jokes Foster, before rushing off to join those already tucking into the celebratory champagne.

NEWS IN PICTURES

YOUNG VIC SHINES AT RIBA AWARDS

Haworth Tompkins' redevelopment and expansion of the Young Vic Theatre has been crowned London Building of the Year by the RIBA. The theatre was one of 63 buildings handed RIBA awards at ceremonies across the country last night (Wednesday 16 May). The RIBA National Awards will be drawn from these winners, with the eventual victors to be announced at a celebratory dinner at the London Hilton on Friday 22 June. The National Awards, along with some of the EU Awards, will form the longlist for the Stirling Prize. As well as making the Young Vic Theatre its Building of the Year, the London Region also singled out two more of its 20 award winners for special recognition: a special award goes to BAA for the Heathrow Control Tower, designed by Rogers Stirk Harbour + Partners; and the English Heritage Award for a building in a historic context goes to the Roundhouse in Camden, north London, redeveloped by John McAslan + Partners. The Roundhouse was the venue for last year's Stirling Prize, and will also be the venue for this year's prize. In total there are 63 RIBA awards for projects in Great Britain. They break down as follows:

- · East: 4
- · East Midlands: 1
- London: 20
- North East: 3
- Northern Ireland: 3
- North West: 7
- Scotland: 3
- South East: 4
- South: 9
- South West: 1
- Wessex: 3
- West Midlands: 4
- Yorkshire: 1

Unlike last year, when Richard Rogers' Welsh Assembly made the Stirling shortlist, there were no awards for projects in Wales. To see the winning projects in full visit www.ajplus. co.uk/stirling By Ruth Slavid 1.



 Haworth Tompkins' redevelopment of the Young Vic Theatre won London Building of the Year
 BAA won a special award for the Heathrow Control Tower by Rogers Stirk Harbour + Partners
 The Roundhouse, redeveloped by John McAslan + Partners, won London's English Heritage Award



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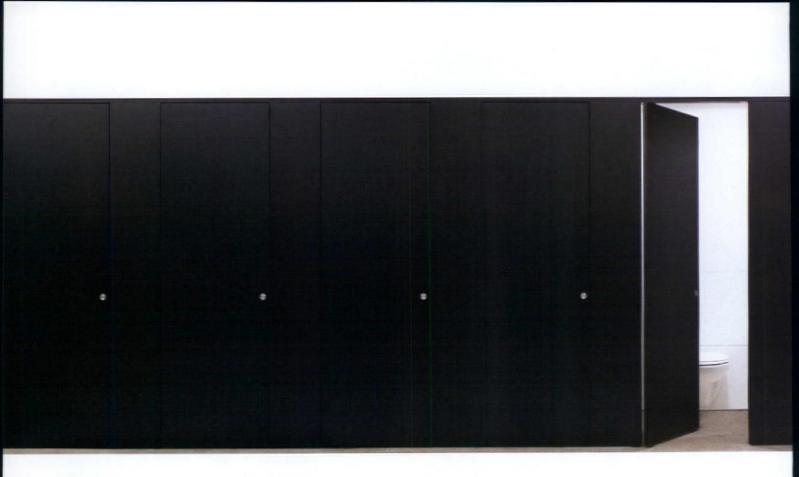
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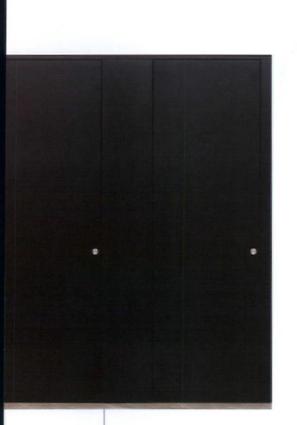


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ASTRAGAL

'The pity was that he mistook building the Dome for enlightened patronage, and John Prescott for a wise and profound thinker on town and country planning'

Rowan Moore on the Blair years. Evening Standard, 10.05.07

'We're noted for innovatory buildings but we're really quite cautious' Norman Foster. Sunday Telegraph, 13.05.07

'A gargantuan toy town, with savagely regular avenues and public art of exquisite ugliness'

Will Self on Canary Wharf. Independent, 12.05.07



WELL VERSED

It's been too long since Astragal was last treated to some good verse. It was with some eagerness then, that on a recent trip to Bilbao, he pulled up a pew with a bevy of Irish architects, including Brian Brennan, Alan Jones and 'the Kevin McCloud of Irish telly', Our House presenter Duncan Stewart. Hiding his puppyish enthusiasm and deploying red wine with vigour, Astragal mentally dusted down his favourite limericks in anticipation. The men from the land of Heaney, Wilde and Yeats did not disappoint. Soon one was on his feet. A respectful silence fell as he cleared his throat. Even Astragal's finest bons mots couldn't compete with this man of letters. Recalling an inscription (chalk on brickwork) from his college

days, he began: 'Drains and ditches, walls and piers, this is the stuff of engineers. Wine, women, art and sex, this is the stuff of architects.' Astragal couldn't agree more...

UPS AND DOWNS

Astragal has just received the latest programme from Amenity Space, the architectural radio show hosted by Tony Broomhead and Nicky Kirk on Resonance FM. Broadcasting once a week from 17 May, quests include Bartlett teacher and theorist CJLim and Architecture for Humanity's Cameron Sinclair. But Astragal is most excited by 7 June's special on architecture and rollercoasters. As the publicity material says: 'Woooo Tune in at 104.4 FM or visit www.amenityspace.co.uk

LEGACY LET-DOWN

Astragal enjoys nothing more than to sit down with a nice cup of Horlicks and read RIBA president Jack Pringle's blog at www.architecture.com. The latest instalment sees our Jack looking back on 'Ten Years of Tony' - and discussing his views on the outgoing Prime Minister's legacy to architects. Jack paints Blair as a PM who promised architects the world but failed to deliver - that'll be a politician then Jack. According to Pringle, Blair - in architectural terms - got off to a fine start with the formation of CABE, but with PFI ended up crashing and burning in spectacular style. Looking to the future, Jack appears to be of the opinion that Gordon Brown doesn't 'get' architecture, although fortunately he believes Yvette Cooper does.

it's your call

The new 2007 CDM Regulations came into force on 6 April with important implications for architects, their clients and contractors on projects of all sizes.

With CDM 2007, health and safety hazards must be highlighted and resolved at the earliest stage. Identifying and managing risks from falls during maintenance should form a key part of the design process - as reinforced by the 2005 Work at Height Regulations.

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LETTERS

MOORFIELDS REVIEWER ONLY HAS EYES FOR HIMSELF

I was pleased to see Penoyre & Prasad's new Moorfields Eye Hospital building featured in AJ 26.04.07. It looks great, appears to function well and is a good civic addition to Islington.

I was less pleased with Alan Dunlop's review, which was rather begrudging in its praise, and committed the cardinal sin of blowing one's own trumpet! The first four paragraphs describe Dunlop's own work and his approach to designing for sensory impairment. It left this reader with the impression that he considers himself something of an expert at this type of project and that he would have done something better. This is both unfair and irrelevant, as is his withering final sentence: 'RDCEC is not cutting-edge architecture – but then I suppose it doesn't need to be.'

What is Dunlop really trying to say? Can't the AJ edit reviews like this?

John Lyall, John Lyall Architects

BUILDING REGS PLEDGES MUST NOT BE ABANDONED

All architects, especially those in small practices, will welcome the invitation to comment on the proposed overhaul of the Building Regulations (AJ 03.05.07). May I urge those who speak for architects to firmly hold the government to its commitment to cut the burden of red tape on businesses by 25 per cent by 2010?

Whatever else may or may not be achieved by the proposed reforms, if an actual 25 per cent cut in administrative costs is not experienced by architectural practices in complying with the Building Regulations, then pledges made by Gordon Brown and Tony Blair will have been broken. This must not be allowed to happen.

Maritz Vandenberg, London SW15

A NONSENSICAL REVIEW OF A FLAWED BOOK

Julian Holder's review (AJ 03.05.07) of Clare Melhuish's often unscholastic and mealy-mouthed booklet on the Brunswick lacks sense. He is wrong, even stupid, about Sant'Elia, the original building on site, and New Brutalism. I prefer a quote from a Brunswick resident: 'I've loved every minute of being here... there's no way I'd fault it... the actual places themselves to live in, I think they'd be fabulous, I really do.'

So much for the people who know and matter, rather than those historians who, just guessing, frankly don't. Melhuish can't tell the difference, but she makes things worse by quoting from Banham's dreadful *Megastructure* book. Lack of scholarship? *Patrick Hodgkinson, Bath, Somerset*

SUSTAINABLE? MAYBE - AFFORDABLE? CERTAINLY NOT

I have just read about Jeremy Paxton's Lower Mill Estate (ajplus 08.05.07) and am intrigued by his perception of 'affordability'. Assuming that a prospective purchaser has saved up $\pounds 25,000$ (5 per cent of the purchase price) their mortgage will be $\pounds 475,000$. Assuming that one can borrow five times one's income, this would

require an income of \pounds 95,000 a year. This might be 'affordable' to the high-profile architects who are designing the scheme, but few mere mortals could afford it.

When it comes to house-buying, the government defines affordability as 3.5 to 4 times earnings. The same source quotes average incomes in rural areas in 2004/5 to be \pounds 17,400, which would give an affordable home cost of just under \pounds 70,000. A wage rise averaging 3 per cent in the three years since would raise the affordability definition to about \pounds 76,000.

Paxton may be spinning his project as affordable housing, but the AJ should not be perpetuating this fiction. Better to celebrate good sustainable design, though how well Paxton's proposals perform in sustainability terms also remains to be seen. Verity Bird RIBA, senior lecturer in architecture/interior design, Southampton Solent University

ARCHITECTURAL PATRON JOHN ELDRIDGE REMEMBERED

I write to commemorate John Eldridge, who has died aged 56 following a traffic accident. John's full time job was real estate partner at solicitor SJ Berwin, but he also found time to be a passionate enthusiast and patron of architecture.

John carried out a number of projects with Seth Stein, including the interior of SJ Berwin's new headquarters in the city, which is a remarkable departure from the staid atmosphere of most big City law firms. At the time of his death he was hatching further schemes with Seth, Future Systems and David Adjaye.

A patron of the Architecture Foundation (AF), John personally sponsored two of the AF's forthcoming exhibitions. He was a member of the development committee of the Design Museum, and had just joined the board of Artangel. John was motivated by a love of architecture, insatiable curiosity and a spirit of adventure. He will be very sorely missed. *Rowan Moore, director, Architecture Foundation*

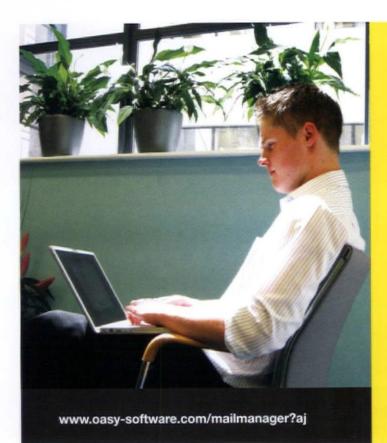
ASTRAGAL'S NORTH POINT STORY IS APOCRYPHAL

I fear Astragal has been had (AJ 03.05.07). I first heard the story about Irish/Pakistani/African contractors building the north point on the drawing sent out from Britain, usually as a pool, in the early 1960s, and have heard it several times since then. Today, of course, it's contractors from the Middle East. File it under racist apocrypha. *Louis Hellman, by email*

CORRECTION

Renzo Piano's Shard of Glass Tower at London Bridge has been designed to be 306m high, not 448m high as we reported on www.ajplus.co.uk

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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lan Guest, Henkel Building Systems.

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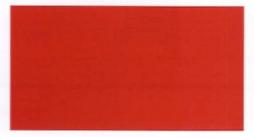
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WEEGELS/ DE LICHTENBERG



BUILDING STUDY

THE ATMOSPHERE IS BENIGN, AS IF IT WERE SOME OLD ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE

By Andrew Mead. Photography by Christine Sullivan

In 010 Publishers' new Architectural Guide to the Netherlands (AJ 14.12.06), there's an intriguing entry on a 1950s scheme called De Lichtenberg, which reads as follows: 'Its architecture, a mix of Corbusian Modernism and Modern classicism, must be unique in the Netherlands. A large part of the ensemble has fallen into disrepair but the remainder was recently rediscovered, which may yet save it from being demolished.'

De Lichtenberg – a cultural and recreational complex which includes an open-air theatre seating 2,200 people – was absent from earlier editions of the guide, so it really is a rediscovery. It was only in 2003 that a group of enthusiasts, Behoud de Lichtenberg (BdL, Save the Lichtenberg), began campaigning to secure its future. But today De Lichtenberg is a locally listed monument, the Dutch chapter of Docomomo is involved, and students from Delft University have been drawing up potential schemes for its reuse. So is this complex just a curiosity or something more? How did it come to be forgotten? What happens to it now?

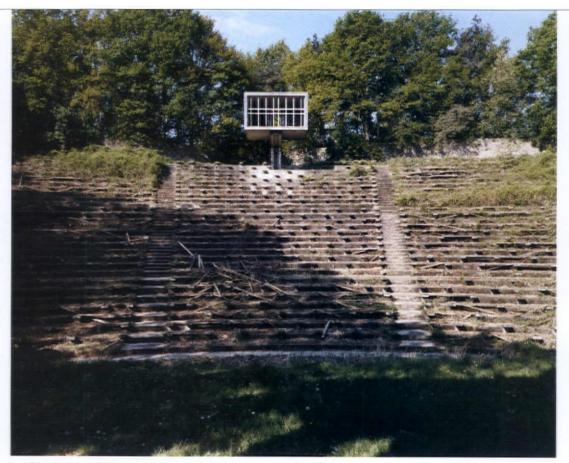
The story begins with the post-war expansion plans of a Catholic school, Bisschoppelijk College, then situated in the centre of the town of Weert in the very south of the Netherlands. With no room to grow there, it found another site on the south-west edge of Weert, where construction of new school premises began to designs by Architectenbureau Boosten of Maastricht. In tandem with this came the development of an adjacent site for the De Lichtenberg complex – the name means 'mountain of light', and echoes that of

a farm there, though its origins are obscure. The architect for the theatre (1961), chapel (1957) and peripheral buildings at De Lichtenberg was a local man, Pierre Weegels (1904-66), active in and around Weert since the late 1920s, though apparently not elsewhere.

But the school's expansion plans foundered with only part of the new scheme realised, and by the late 1960s much of De Lichtenberg was already in decline. Though the theatre was deemed important enough to be opened by Queen Juliana of the Netherlands in 1962, it was never published in any architectural magazine, and simply slipped from view.

'We knew there was something there but we always thought it was private. It was like a secret garden for animals and nature,' says Rita Grichnik, long-time resident of Weert and a BdL member. Particularly instrumental in bringing the complex back into view was architect Rob Langeslag, who went to Bisschoppelijk College as a boy but later left Weert to practise elsewhere in the Netherlands. Returning to the town a few years ago, he was 'angry to see this beautiful architecture in decay'. He wrote a letter to the local newspaper and so the campaign to save De Lichtenberg began.

As Grichnik says, there's no knowing from the nearby road just what lies beyond the embankments and canal that mark the boundary of De Lichtenberg – it was conceived as an enclave. There's a significant landscape dimension to this project, with earth excavated for the tennis courts making a mound against which the



1. Tiers of ruinous seating in the theatre at De Lichtenberg

theatre was constructed, and part of the auditorium lying below existing ground level, so its scale wasn't instantly apparent.

An open-air theatre of this size might not be out of place by the Mediterranean, with the scent of thyme on the breeze, but it seems slightly optimistic to build it in the Netherlands, given the local climate. It was meant for community as well as school use, but even so there can have been few occasions when all its seats were full.

Today those seats are mostly gone, though a few of their timbers still rot away in situ, and the concrete fixtures that supported them jut out starkly. Meanwhile, weeds and mosses thrive amid the mulch of last year's leaves.

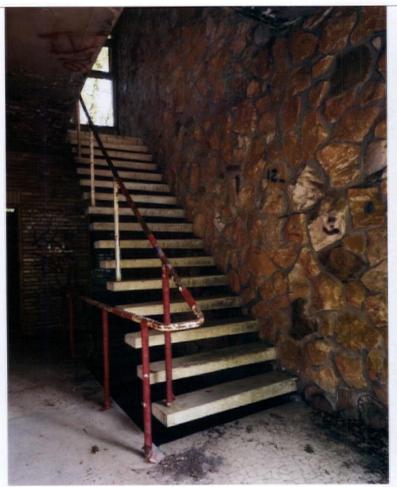
The backdrop to any performance here was Weegels' permanent stage building – the source then and now of the most striking images of De Lichtenberg. Its portico of elongated concrete columns is stripped Classicism at its most laconic: lucid, spare and sober. There's more than a hint of 1930s Italy, Rationalist or Fascist: perhaps the portico of Marcello Piacentini's main building for the Città Universitaria in Rome, or the colonnade of Gaetano Minucci's Palazzo degli Uffici dell'Ente Autonomo at EUR. But instantly apparent too is a resemblance to a much more recent work – David Chipperfield's Literature Museum at Marbach am Neckar (AJ 16.02.06).

At close quarters, subtleties of detail emerge – the oblongsection columns are slightly chamfered at each corner – but you see too that the portico is endangered, with patches of exposed reinforcement and spalling concrete. On the wall behind are sgraffito decorations by Harrie Martens (artist-architect collaboration is another theme here), but then a surprise is in store as you circle the building and find that it's more hybrid than the portico leads you to believe. The side walls combine concreteframed windows with coloured glazed brick, while the gently concave rear wall is of blank sandstone rubble.

Overlooking the amphitheatre, and focused on this stage building, is an abruptly cantilevered concrete 'box', from which performances were directed. There's a strongly aerial sensation when you look out from it, like being on the flight deck of a plane as it comes in to land, but if what you see has an air of dereliction, the overall effect is different from that of another Catholic property in disrepair, St Peter's Seminary, Cardross (AJ 14.09.06).

Certainly there are plenty of graffiti, from exuberant tags to plaintive messages ('I've much problems but no-one cares what I say'), but there hasn't been the same delight in destruction that makes Cardross disturbing. The atmosphere of De Lichtenberg is more benign, as if it were some old archaeological site. And it's easy to imagine how magical a production would have been here, with birdsong not traffic the only accompaniment.

Of the other constituents of De Lichtenberg, the most notable architecturally is the small chapel, meant for the school's staff, near the eastern boundary. An approximate half-oval in plan, with rubblestone walls, an overhanging roof, and a far-projecting canopy, it has an organic feel; the most conscious artistry comes in



2.

Staircase in the stage building
 The stage building's portico









Martens' mosaic panels that chequer its front. Inside, up the shallowest of steps, the altar is toplit.

So what are the alternatives to continuing decay? The members of BdL believe that it will take 1.5 million euros (\pounds 1 million) to repair and stabilise the complex, considerably more to ensure a viable new use. We want to give this back to the public,' says Grichnik. At the same time, the solution should not be too commercially driven: We want people to enjoy the nature and the silence – to be able to recuperate here,' she adds.

Langeslag has sketched some possibilities to stimulate discussion. On the assumption that there's no future for so big a theatre, he suggests that just a portion of it be enclosed temporarily by demountable structures, so it's still a place for performances (including cinema). An area beneath the stage building could be excavated to create a small all-year-round auditorium, while the rooms within might host workshops, concerts, and the like.

Shedding more illumination on the possibilities and problems are the recent projects by Delft University students, with Rotterdam-based architect Lucas van Zuijlen as their tutor. Less outlandish than it might seem at first, one scheme sees De Lichtenberg becoming a cemetery (perhaps prompted by thoughts of Asplund's Woodland Cemetery in Stockholm). Others pick up on the original mix of culture and recreation to propose a sports centre, a music centre, or a sauna complex.

What emerges from these is the importance of keeping the theatre intact, especially the connection between the tiers of seats

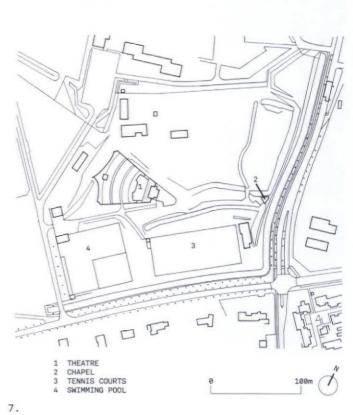
and the stage building. At present that connection is reinforced by the converging stone walls either side of the auditorium and the tall trees that surround it: if De Lichtenberg as a whole is distinctly an enclave, this is a further enclave within it. But as soon as the walls are broken, as they are in some of the student projects, that sense is lost, and it's arguably the key to the site's appeal.

In this respect, one image that comes to mind is of the Roman amphitheatre at Spoleto in 1962, when works by the sculptor David Smith were placed at intervals on its seats and stage – a different kind of performance. There's considerable scope for such installations here, which could sporadically complement more conventional stagings (assuming questions of security could be dealt with satisfactorilu).

De Lichtenberg's architect Weegels remains a somewhat shadowy figure – his personal archive is lost – but BdL is steadily piecing together his career and identifying his buildings. He specialised in houses and churches, at first in a quite conservative brick idiom, but with individual touches in the handling of windows, eaves and framing devices. After the war Weegels made increasing use of concrete in his buildings – in the vaults and lantern of the O L Vrouw van Fatima church, for instance – before employing it liberally at De Lichtenberg, where he does appear to have raised his game. With its fan-like nave penetrating a circular chancel, the Fatima church has some formal similarities to the theatre at De Lichtenberg, while its toplit altar anticipates the one in the chapel there.

4.





Whether Weegels was much influenced by Le Corbusier, as the 010 guide suggests, is open to question. The combination of concrete and 'rustic' rubblestone – encapsulated in the concrete staircase cantilevered from the stage building's inner rear wall – may hark back to the Pavillon Suisse, but this mixed palette of materials had become quite pervasive in mid-century Modernism. Not in doubt is Weegels' thoughtful eclecticism; he drew from disparate sources and can't be neatly typecast.

The rediscovery of De Lichtenberg makes one wonder what else still lies concealed in other parts of Europe; the full story of 20th century architecture is yet to be told. De Lichtenberg is more than a footnote to it. Though today the complex is moribund – the theatre and chapel derelict, the swimming pool filled with contaminated earth, the surrounding canal stagnant – it differs once again from Cardoss Seminary, because the challenge to find a reuse is not so great. De Lichtenberg is a place that still has a purpose, an enclave that can enrich lives to come.

For further information on the campaign to find a new use for De Lichtenberg, visit www.behouddelichtenberg.nl

4. House by Weegels at 14 Sint Paulusstraat, Weert

5. House by Weegels at 440 Jan van der Croonstraat, Weert. Note the accentuated frame around the larger of the ground-floor windows

- 6. Preliminary design for De Lichtenberg
- 7. The De Lichtenberg complex as built



8. The rubblestone wall at the back of the stage building



9. Stone walls and tall trees surround the theatre



10. The cantilevered 'box' from which performances in the theatre were directed



11. A place for future performances - or for what alternative?

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12. Interior of the small chapel for use by staff of the adjacent school



13. The chapel's exterior includes mosaic panels by artist Harrie Martens



14. The former swimming pool is now full of contaminated earth



15. The tennis courts are still in use

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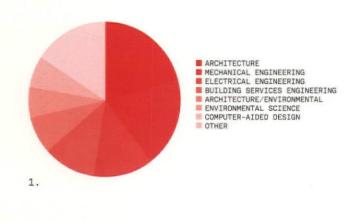
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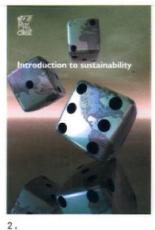
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TECHNICAL & PRACTICE / UPDATE





 Pie chart of skills at Atelier Ten's London and New York offices (News)
 CIBSE goes green(News)

TECHNICAL NEWS

· According to the Sponge sustainable development network and environmental engineers Atelier Ten, there is a dearth of qualified professionals who have a strategic understanding of performance and analysis techniques for designing sustainable buildings and communities. This is a key growth area with big opportunities for architects. Paul Monaghan of Allford Hall Monaghan Morris says that the new 'sophisticated compliance requirements... are changing the way we design', and that environmental engineers must be involved from the outset. Patrick Bellew of Atelier Ten says that modelling techniques are evolving rapidly, and a different combination of sustainable strategies is appropriate for each project. Early modelling and an iterative process which brings in different analyses are key to making projects smarter and greener.

www.atelierten.com www.spongenet.org The Institution of Structural Engineers has released 'Temporary Demountable Structures: Guidance on Procurement, Design and Use'. This third edition includes new information on resistance to wind loads, and guidance on statutory control, ground conditions, inspection and erection. £40.
 www.istructe.org.uk

• Recognising that buildingservices engineers have a crucial role to play in reducing energy consumption in buildings, CIBSE has released 'Introduction to Sustainability', which explains the background and statutory framework for sustainability. This will be followed in June by a full guide to best practice. Free. www.cibse.org

• Nemetschek has released IFC Viewer, which allows VectorWorks users to view building models more easily. Free to download at www. nemetschek.com/ifc

TECHNICAL EVENTS

All Planned Out? The Worldwide Impact of the British Town and Country Planning System 18-19 May

The Building Centre, 26 Store Street, London WC1 Speakers include John Habraken and Will Alsop www.buildingcentretrust. org

Inclusive Design: Development of Access Strategies and Fire Strategies 19 May, 9:30am-4:30pm The Building Centre, 26 Store Street, London WC1 riba.london@inst.riba.org

Greening the Further Education Estate

21 May, 2-5pm One Great George Street, London SW1 www.bre.co.uk/events

CDM 2007 for Designers – Training the Trainer 21-22 May CIRIA, 174-180 Old Street, London EC1 www.ciria.org.uk/events. htm Sustainable Healthcare Buildings: Briefing and Specification 23 May, 1:45-5:15pm CIRIA, 174-180 Old Street, London EC1 www.ciria.org.uk/events. htm

RIBA Appointment Documents 24 May, 2-5pm Truro, Cornwall mail@ribawessex.com

Site Inspections of Building Works during Construction 24 May, 2pm Building Design Partnership, 16 Brewhouse Yard, London EC1 riba.london@inst.riba.org

Under Foot and up the Wall: Ceramic Tiling – Our Other Craft 24 May, 2:15pm Garry Weston Library, Southwark Cathedral, London SE1 The Worshipful Company of Tilers and Bricklayers www.architecture.com

TECHNICAL & PRACTICE

VUE IS AN INTUITIVE WAY OF CREATING LANDSCAPES

By Tim Danaher

Vue is a new program which can be used to create landscapes and which streamlines and pulls together the process of visualisation with a series of intuitive new functions.

Site modelling and entourage, vital to a successful visualisation, is often left to the last minute. Wouldn't it be great if there was a program that could streamline the process, leaving you with more time to get the building model right? Well, now there is.

Vue, from French developer e-on Software, is a mature and sophisticated solution for generating landscapes of all types and is used in some of Hollywood's top visual-effects houses. In addition, it does much of the thinking for you.

Version 6 has had a makeover, abandoning its garish, pearlescent interface for a more sober dark-grey look, but the icons remain too small. Speaking of interface, the program can now adapt itself to the shortcuts and interface colours of your preferred 3D program – be it Maya, XSI, 3D Studio MAX, Cinema 4D or LightWave. Other interface elements have also been improved, most notably the Transform 'widgets' for scaling, moving or rotating objects. These act more like those found in Maya or Modo, with all three functions embedded in the same widget – a great time-saver.

The first indication of Vue's way of doing things is when clicking on the 'New Scene' icon. You are immediately presented with a proprietary dialog with large full-colour thumbnail views of various 'Atmospheres'. This is what Vue calls 'Sky Environments'. As standard, Vue ships with over 200 of these environments readymade. Adding them to your scene is a matter of a single mouse click. But you shouldn't make the mistake of thinking that these are simply backdrops to your scene: they are true, physically accurate, volumetric atmospheres that will illuminate and cast shadows onto your model.

Many of the atmospheres in the browser are tagged with the legends 'AO', 'GI' or 'GR'. These show that the illumination models are Ambient Occlusion, Global Illumination or Global Radiosity, respectively, which are currently the most accurate models for real-world lighting and can reproduce effects such as scattered light and colour bleeding. However, their benefits are more readily seen in interior scenes than exterior – something to bear in mind given the longer render time of these lighting models compared to standard raytracing.

In addition to the Standard and Volumetric atmosphere models, Vue 6 has added a third model – Spectral. This allows for more interaction between various elements in the atmosphere – sunlight diffusing through water vapour, for instance. Vue's ability to set up these complex and accurate environments with a single click can't be overestimated.

Terrains can be set up in a number of ways. The standard method is to 'sculpt' a landscape using the Terrain Editor. This allows you to use the mouse – or better still, a pressure-sensitive graphics tablet and pen – to mould your terrain. You can raise or dig out land, set erosion parameters and choose base terrains as



1.



PROS

- One-click setup of complex environments;
- direct import of DEM data for site modelling;
- advanced, non-repetitive vegetation system;
- · paint-on Ecosystems;
- · ability to render huge data sets; and
- · faithful import of geometry in most formats.

CONS

- No FBX import;
- interface lacks polish and can be slow;
- · camera manipulation tools tricky to use; and
- · some content must be paid for.

ADVICE

Vue 6 Infinite is an extremely capable package, although it lacks polish in the interface. While it may seem geared towards visual effects, its ability to use DEM data will make site modelling more straightforward. The cheaper Vue 6 Esprit covers most of the features of its stablemate. Top-flight hardware is mandatory to avoid frustration.

1. Each palm tree is different thanks to Vue's SolidGrowth technology 2. Vue's import capabilities are extremely quick and robust

starting points - all great fun. But perhaps of greater interest to architects is Vue's ability to import existing data and use it to generate a site model. If you set your site contours as a greyscale bitmap, where white is highest and black is lowest, you can generate a terrain with just a few clicks.

Vue can also import DEMs (Digital Elevation Models) the standard used by the US Geological Survey. One thing you won't see yet is the ability to pull terrain data from Google Earth .kmz files - although e-on Software has said that it is looking into the possibility.

The package doesn't feature any modelling tools apart from a few primitives, instead offering a wide variety of import options including the usual DXF, OBJ and VRML. It does have native 3DS import, complete with textures, although it is surprising that there is no FBX import. The real eye-opener in the import function, however, is the Poser import. It can preserve Posergenerated walk cycles, which makes dropping animated figures into your scene a breeze - although you'll probably be eyeing a render farm at this stage.

Planting has traditionally been a bugbear in visualisation. True 3D plants take up a lot of memory and computing power. 2D plants (cut-outs) save on resources in 3D scenes, but just look wrong. Again, Vue rides to the rescue with its patented Ecosystems and SolidGrowth technologies.

A quick word here about Ecosystems. This is what Vue calls a collection of plants, rocks, water, etc. Vue 6 now enables you to paint your Ecosystem elements directly into a scene - in earlier versions they had to be expressly defined as a material. This is a more intuitive way of doing things, but you'll need a fast machine (2GHz or faster) to get the most out of it.

SolidGrowth generates trees, bushes, shrubs and plants using algorithms that ensure no two plant instances are ever repeated. Again, plant types are accessed via a browser, with a broad selection to get you started. Further plant types can be purchased at e-on's online store: www.cornucopia3d.com

Once a plant is placed, all its parameters can be tweaked via the Plant Editor dialog. As with Atmospheres, you can use any plant type as a basis for designing others and thus grow your library. The one parameter that seems to be missing is plant age - it would be nice to see how a planting scheme varies over time.

For more information about Vue see www.e-onsoftware.com Price: £,461 excluding VAT (floating license)

TECHNICAL & PRACTICE



IF THE DOG EATS YOUR HARD COPY, YOU ALWAYS HAVE A BACKUP

By Tim Danaher

The AJ takes a look at a new series of titles which aims to provide a comprehensive quide to SketchUp for users of all levels of aptitude.

SketchUp has a reputation for being an extremely intuitive program to use, but there's no denying that if you're used to more traditional modelling packages, you can end up feeling a bit wrong-footed. A PDF user guide has been available from SketchUp for some time now, but it's a fairly dry affair that describes each tool's function but doesn't tell you how best to use it.

Enter a series of titles from Bonnie Roskes that aims to take the user through all aspects of the program in a tutorial-based format. And when we say series, we mean it. Since these books are available in print-on-demand or PDF format, they're offered in a number of combinations: Basic and Advanced, in black-and-white or colour. There are also delta manuals that only cover changes between the new and previous versions. It makes for a giddying choice, but allows you to choose the title that best suits your needs.

We chose the PDF versions of the Basic and Advanced tutorials. This came in at 69.95 (£35.00) for over 600 pages, which, with the current exchange rate, makes it a bit of a bargain. By choosing the PDF route the option to print out hard copy is always there, but the PDFs are fully searchable and hot-linked. This means that if you double-click on a highlighted search result you're taken directly to the relevant page in the manual, which makes finding information a breeze. And, of course, if your dog eats your hard copy, you always have a backup.

The emphasis is very much on the visual, with every step in the process clearly illustrated. The basic tutorials cover the essentials of SketchUp and then move on to a discussion of components which are vital if you are to use SketchUp efficiently.

In the Advanced Tutorials section, subjects that appear in 'Basics' are covered more extensively: Advanced Intersecting, Materials and Textures, and Advanced Components. In the latter section, several solutions are given for that old SketchUp problem of making components cut walls with thickness. It's in areas like this that you can see that Roskes really knows her stuff.

Also covered in the advanced manuals is the potentially confusing new Styles feature. A good job is made of demystifying this and you're even shown how to open up a style file and modify its basic attributes directly. An entire chapter is given over to LayOut, SketchUp's new page-layout and presentation module, which is still in beta and so not fully supported by Google.

The quality and clarity of the information contained in these titles makes them a must-have for people who are serious about SketchUp.

SketchUp Basic and Advanced tutorials by Bonnie Roskes available for $$39.95-$122.95 (\pounds 20-\pounds 62)$ depending on format. See www.flhelp. biz. For more information about SketchUp see www.sketchup.com

Tim Danaher is an architectural-visualisation specialist. www.vizarch.blogspot.com Sponsored by:

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LUNCHING ON GREEN MONKEYS AND BIZARRE PR

PR is the grease which smooths a thousand lunches. And we journalists love it. Sometimes.

Poor old Adam Richards has set up a new website. His PR emails us 11, yes 11, attachments, but without a nice direct link to the site. Some of the attachments are marked as empty. One reads, '<color><param>0000,0000,FF FF</param><smaller><x-tadsmaller>Sign-Up.to</x-tadsmaller></smaller></ color><smaller><x-tadsmaller>: Right Person. Right Place. Right Time.</x-tadsmaller>:/smaller>:

Straight into the dustbin with that lot. But should we damn a site just because of bizarre PR? A swift Google reveals that the site is www. adamrichards.co.uk and that it is designed and built by Little Green Monkey.

I mention this because there is no such credit on the site itself. I wonder how the firm feels when its buildings aren't credited properly? Don't get me wrong, these guys are respectable designers, but generous they obviously aren't.

The home page has a slow-moving slide show. I suppose the idea was to tantalise the visitor, but can I make a plea? If images are crap, don't bother putting them on your website. sutherland.lyall@btinternet.com

TIME AT LARGE

It is a common misconception that the extension of time provisions within construction contracts are there for the benefit of the contractor, writes *Kim Franklin*. When the project runs into delays, a contractor who is granted an extension of time is released from the obligation to pay liquidated damages for the period of overrun – surely a good thing for the contractor.

This line of thinking reckons without the mindset of the 19th-century judiciary. In those days, contractual provisions that imposed liquidated damages for delay were seen as a penalty against the unsuspecting contractor, and were to be enforced only in the rarest of circumstances.

Thus, if the employer could in any way be responsible for the delay – by ordering variations or otherwise preventing the contractor from completing on time – the contractual completion date would go out of the window and the penalty clause be struck down. Or, as the lawyers would say, the operation of the 'prevention principle' would put time at large and render the liquidated damages clause unenforceable.

Employers, who were keen to hang on to their completion dates and their liquidated damages, introduced a mechanism by which they could extend time for any delay for which they were in any way responsible. So, you see, the extension of time provisions is there for the benefit of the employer and they have developed increasingly intricate contractual mechanisms over the years to ensure that they can extend time.

Times have changed, and now liquidated damages are seen as a good thing. It is far easier to pre-estimate your losses in the event of delay than to go through the grisly process of working them out and proving them. Employers have become sloppier when wording their extension of time clauses. Why bother with a long list of unlikely events, when you can simply refer to 'anything for which the employer is responsible'.

Nineteenth-century judges would have turned in their graves at such laxity and hastened to put time at large. But how would a 21st-century judge respond to such a catchall provision? Would he defenestrate the completion date, and the liquidated damages to boot?

The answer is to be found in Multiplex Construction v Honeywell Control Systems (No. 2) (Judgment 06.03.07), the latest piece of litigation to be generated by the new Wembley Stadium. Honeywell argued that variations to its contract caused delay and that as, on its reading of the contract, it did



not allow Multiplex to extend time, the completion date was put at large.

Mr Justice Jackson was keen to adopt a 21st-century approach and leaned in favour of permitting the contractor to recover appropriate extensions of time for events causing delay. He rejected Honeywell's argument. On his reading of the contract, Multiplex could extend time for issuing variations and preserve the completion date.

Like I said, extension of time clauses are there for the benefit of the employer.

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

REVIEW

BOOK By Alan Powers

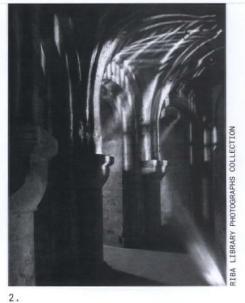
Evocations of Place: The Photographs of Edwin Smith

By Robert Elwall. Merrell, 2007.

176pp. £35.00



1.



St Lawrence, Didmarton
 Crypt, Canterbury Cathedral

The front cover of this book shows the gardens of the Villa Garzoni at Collodi, Italy, in a photograph of 1962. In oblique view, a faun, seated on one end of a Baroque scroll, raises an arm to support the upper volute. Receding planes of exotic foliage lead to a high wooded horizon, over which glows a break in the clouds.

It's a typical Edwin Smith image: placing architecture in nature; relishing lichen and moss; sensually recording a place that has been selected by an expert eye and an intrepid traveller, not for the sake of pure art, but no doubt in fulfilment of a commission to illustrate a book. Through a series of cultural frames, it evokes a 20th-century English romantic response to 18th-century and Renaissance responses to antiquity. Smith, with his polymath scholar wife Olive Cook at his side, would not have missed any of these nuances. These photographs are works of art loaded with associations that Robert Elwall lovingly unravels, setting them in a biographical and historical context to which he brings new information and insights.

He rightly celebrates Cook's achievement, from Smith's premature death in 1971, in making the photos available to publishers, writing a monumental book in 1984, organising exhibitions and much more. An artist in her own right, she concentrated on writing texts for collaborative books and articles that form a counterpart to the photographs. The books she and Smith jointly produced for Thames and Hudson in the 1950s, printed by photogravure, marked a pivotal moment in the *détournement* of Modernist vision into the celebration of the humble arts as well as the grand.

A more complete life story emerges of Smith as an attractive, self-educated and indefatigable seeker of visual stimuli, who won a scholarship to the Architectural Association but never qualified as an architect. In his own mind, he was a painter who used photography to make a living. He was also a writer on diverse subjects - a typical freelance jack-of-all-trades. His archive at the RIBA, which Elwall now manages, contains 6,000 negatives from a working life of 40 years, mostly concentrated in the last 20, and the bibliography records two or three major books a year in the

same period, many involving arduous foreign travel.

Other photographers may, in part, have shown the way to the distinctive subjects and styles that Smith made his own, but he need not fear comparison. Elwall questions whether his relative lack of fame might be due to being 'incurably infected with the peculiarly English disease of sentimental nostalgia or too narrowly parochial'. The answer is, not surprisingly, no, and this book, with its highquality reproductions, if rather small on the page at times, will surely open a new phase of appreciation and reappraisal.

Alan Powers is an architectural historian



EXHIBITION By David Wild

A Slap in the Face! Futurists in Russia At the Estorick Collection, 39a Canonbury Square, London N1, until 10 June

In 1909 the Italian poet and proto–Fascist spin doctor F T Marinetti had his Futurist manifesto published on page one of *Le Figaro*. His subsequent trip to Moscow on the eve of the First World War is the starting–point for this exhibition at the Estorick Collection, which gives an opportunity to compare the work of the self– styled Futurists in two very different cultures, while putting some of the Estorick's holdings in a fresh context.

It's a strange sensation to look back so far at the work of these artists, and not without pathos given how fast their future was used up; 'The Last Futurist Exhibition: 0, 10', where Malevich's *Black Square* first appeared, closed in 1916. Aggressively radical, Marinetti's manifesto called for the dynamism of the first machine age to be represented in the arts, while at the same time promoting some of the worst aspects of the 20th century: speed for its own sake; the glorification of war as 'hygiene'; contempt for women; and liberation from the 'fetid cancer' of professors, guides, archaeologists and antiquarians.

So today we sip wine at the private view as curator John Milner holds forth in front of Mikhail Larionov's Quarrel in a Tavern. Apart from this example of Marinetti's demand for aggressive art, it's easier to warm to the Russian Futurists: buffoonery and face-painting rather than bombast and fisticuffs, as poetry is read in the streets.

Italian Futurism, coming from a technologically advanced urban culture, ended by embracing Fascism (fitting Trotsky's description as 'the petit-bourgeois run amok'), while the Russian version was rooted in peasant culture, at once both primitive and metaphysical. Natalia Goncharova's Angels and Aeroplanes from Mystical Images of War (1914) is a perfect example, deriving as it does from peasant woodcut and icon traditions; or, instead of Marinetti's 'screaming automobile', an oil painting of 1913, The Cyclist.

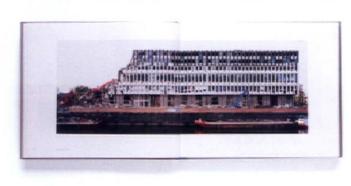
For a brief period after the 1917 revolution, such works enjoyed state support as Russia became the first country to exhibit abstract work on a nationwide scale. This was cut short in 1921 with the introduction of the New Economic Policy, and by the 1930s Socialist Realism became the art of the state.

The term Futurist has been stretched here to include both traditional as well as Futurist costume design, Cubism, Rayonism, Constructivism and even the curator's own model of Melnikov's 1925 Paris pavilion. El Lissitzky's Black Sphere collage, with its precariously suspended figure, uncannily presages a future which saw such works vanish from public view during the following decades - and then miraculously emerge from the Moscow apartment of George Costakis half a century later, looking as good as new. The bourgeoisie they set out to provoke vanished into that collage's black hole.

David Wild is an architect in London

2.

El Lissitzky's Black Sphere, 1921-22
 Rozanova's Explosion in a Trunk, 1916



BOOK

By Andrew Mead

Frank Thiel: A Berlin Decade Hatje Cantz, 2006. £39.99. Distributed by Art Books International (02392 200080)

In the wake of the show at Manchester's CUBE, featuring Michael Collins' large-scale 'record photos' of building sites (AJ 08.02.07), comes Frank Thiel's account of a decade of construction in Berlin, Like Collins, Thiel focuses on process not result and does so quite dispassionately. The artist Robert Smithson believed that many building sites offer more visual stimuli than what finally emerges from them, and that's certainly the case with some of Thiel's subjects - pre-eminently Potsdamer Platz. How mediocre it looks now that the rawness of construction is concealed.

Several things distinguish Thiel's approach. As well as offering Collins-like overviews of sites taking shape, he concentrates on detail, and does so with a Modernist eye that relishes grids and modular repetitions, whether in sheets of steel reinforcement or a building's facade. That's one kind of near-abstraction. But Thiel's Berlin is a place of demolition as well as construction, so another species of abstraction appears: the more Expressionist one of ravaged surfaces and peeling walls.

Deftly paced and sequenced, Thiel's book is often very striking, though the stress on process means we don't really sense the Berlin that now exists – the limits of the makeover, the continuing fractures and voids. During the time that Thiel took these photos, the German economy foundered and the downside of reunification became clear. It's surely no accident that his book ends with those peeling walls.





CRITIC'S CHOICE

By Andrew Mead

The dapper gentleman pictured above is *Theodore Jacobsen*, and half-unrolled in his right hand is a drawing of the west front of London's Foundling Hospital on the fringe of Bloomsbury – built in 1752, demolished in 1928, and his best-known work. Jacobsen was a successful merchant but, unlike the Alan Sugars of this world, found time to practise as an architect as well. He supplied designs for Trinity College, Dublin, which were part-executed; and a scheme for the Bank of England (as a Palladian villa), which wasn't.

Jacobsen features in a new exhibition at the Soane Museum, A Passion for Building: The Amateur Architect in England 1650-1850, that runs from 18 May to 1 September. One of the most interesting items on view is a 6ft-long drawing for a 'porticus' – a sizeable Roman temple meant to serve as a viewing platform – which was to stand in the garden of Salisbury House, a Tudor palace by the Thames. The designer was a courtier, Sir John Osborne, and the Soane claims that his scheme was of 'a Classical purity preceding anything by Inigo Jones' (www.soane.org).

The Soane Museum is a prime example of a place shaped by the taste, eye and judgement of a single person. The same could be said of the London gallery Annely Juda Fine Art, whose founder *Annely Juda* is shown above beside a Mondrian painting. From the late 1960s until her death last year, she specialised in the geometric art of the 20th century, particularly the pioneers whose work had such a formative influence on the Modernist architecture of the 1920s. Pieces by Malevich, El Lissitzky, Moholy-Nagy and the like were regularly on display in her gallery, along with more recent paintings and sculpture in the same tradition.

Juda's premises in London's Dering Street are by the late *Max Gordon* – designer of Saatchi's now defunct Boundary Road gallery, whose spaces far surpassed anything Tate Modern offers. From 24 May-28 July at 23 Dering Street there's a memorial exhibition, *Annely Juda: A Celebration*, with a superb line-up of artists – some still working now, others from the avant-garde she sedulously showed. It's not to be missed (www.annelyjudafineart.co.uk).

For forthcoming events visit www.ajplus.co.uk/diary



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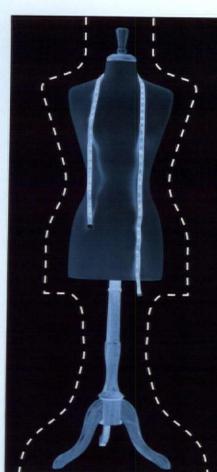
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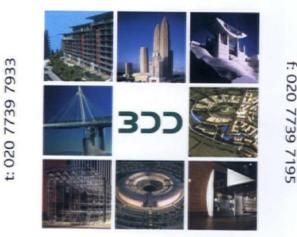
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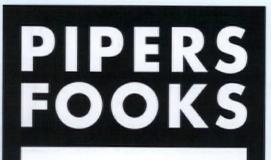
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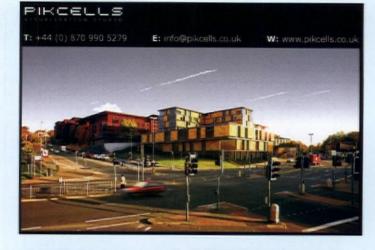
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3D COMPUTER VISUALISATION

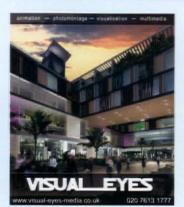








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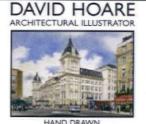
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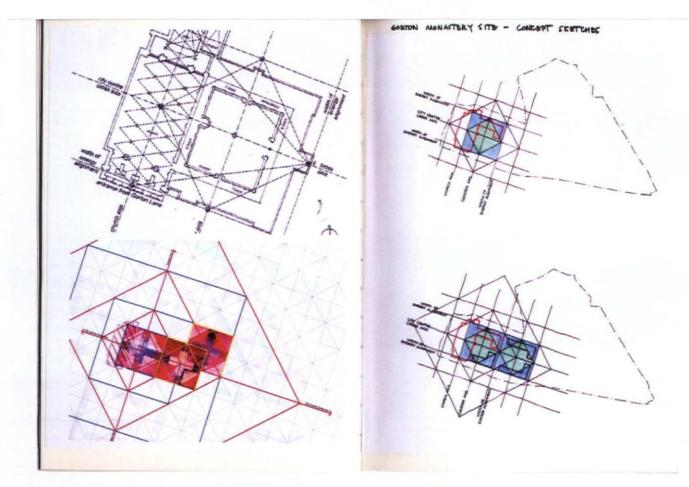
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Concept sketches for a new 69-unit housing scheme next to the Grade II*-listed Gorton Monastery, east Manchester. By Neil Elliott of Taylor Young



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Kooltherm K10 Soffit Board were installed at the new Arsenal Emirates Stadium in London. Not only did it meet the high thermal standards required, but it also addressed the stringent safety requirements of public buildings with a Class O/Low Risk fire-rated insulation core.

BRETT MARTIN



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Brett Martin Daylight Systems has supplied 3,000m² of Trilite Ultra 36 single-skin translucent GRP rooflights to brighten areas of Hull's Paragon railway station. The new translucent rooflights provide optimum levels of diffused natural daylight and more than satisfy all the required safety levels.



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requirements demanded by modern building design. The range includes optical turnstiles, tripods, entrance gates, barrierarm optical turnstiles, speedgates, passgates and tailgate detection systems.

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Brett Landscaping and Building Products, the leading supplier of innovative concrete block, specialist kerbs, flag and industrial paving, is to supply nearly 1,000m of specialist kerbs to the new Cardiff International Sports Village development, to complete the infrastructure of the site.

GOODING ALUMINIUM



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Gooding Aluminium's new 172page 'Let There be Aluminium' handbook is packed with newgeneration aluminium products, fixing solutions and materials, as well as photographic examples of real-life projects. Specifiers can apply now for their free copy at www. goodingalum.com

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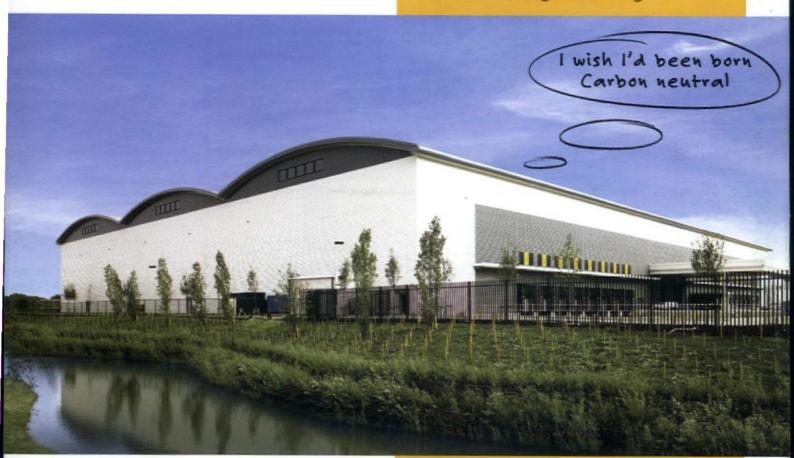
AJ ENQUIRY 205

Scandinavian Window Systems (SWS) has supplied windows and doors for the RSPB's Environment and Education Centre at Rainham Marshes, Essex. The laminated timber windows were combined with high-thermal-performance glass and huge fixed panels to create the viewing area.

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