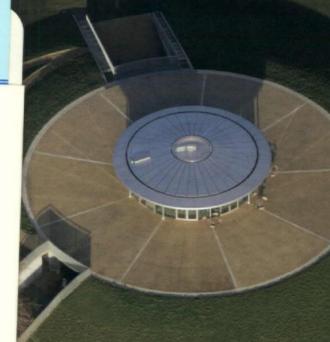
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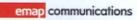
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ARCHITECTURAL PLURALISM IS TOO WEAK WHEN TOUGH CHOICES HAVE TO BE MADE

By Kieran Long

Far be it from me to sound the death knell for British architecture so soon into my tenure as AJ editor, but legendary critic Kenneth Frampton almost does it in our Opinion piece this week (see pages 20-21). It is, he writes in an exclusive commentary for the AJ about the Stirling Prize shortlist, 'increasingly difficult to determine the limits of a specifically British architecture'.

Frampton blames this on an uncritical culture that has no shared criteria of how a building should be judged. 'Polite and deferential' certainly describes much of what passes for architectural criticism in the mainstream magazines and national newspapers, and the fact that the Stirling jury is composed of British judges means it will be open to prejudices of taste.

Perhaps the cheerful architectural pluralism that results from an uncritical context is a positive thing. But for Eric Parry's office, this week nursing the hangover of the rejection of its extension to the Holburne Museum in Bath (see Agenda on pages 12-13), a plural view of the situation doesn't seem to have helped much.

The planning report on Parry's scheme received comment from everyone there is to consult, and opinions diverged. On balance, the planners tentatively recommended the scheme for approval. But in the end, at committee stage, the conservation lobby had the clearest message and shouted the loudest: either make the facade out of Bath stone or take the design back to London.

Pluralism is fine when the concert of voices is dispassionately conducted and a reasonable solution found. But it is too weak when tough choices have to be made. We may not know the limits of a British architecture, but Bath's conservation officers know the limits of their city's architecture: Bath stone please, and don't touch the Georgiana. Perhaps the aim of the Stirling Prize jury this year should be to try to establish some of the criteria Frampton would like to see more of.

CONTRIBUTORS



Robert Holden, who reviews a book on architecture and regeneration on page 45, is a landscape architect and a teacher at the University of Greenwich

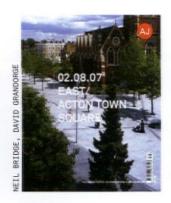


Neil Bridge, who photographs Acton Town Square for the Building Study on pages 27-37, is a photographer whose work has also appeared in Monocle



Austin Williams, who writes and illustrates the NBS Shortcut about CDM legislation on pages 40-42, is the author of NBS Shortcuts and director of the Future Cities Project

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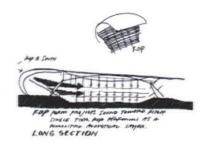
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King's Cross developer Argent and The Architects' Journal have teamed up again to challenge young practices to work at King's Cross. This year's brief was for a key linear site within the King's Cross masterplan. See the solutions in an exhibition at the New London Architecture Gallery which will provide a great insight into new architectural thinking today.

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FRIDAY 27 JULY

- Broadway Malyan on shortlist of four to design 60-storey tower for Liverpool
- CABE and English Heritage warm to tall buildings
- · BACA designs floating houses for Dutch town (above)
- Manchester Airport seeks architect for air-trafficcontrol tower



TUESDAY 31 JULY

- Newcastle's 'homage to Frank Lloyd Wright' goes on sale (above)
- Cladding safety fears add to pressure to delist Plymouth Civic Centre
- Adjaye and Hadid go head-to-head in Russian arts museum contest
- New addition to Le Corbusier's Chandigarh planned



THURSDAY 26 JULY

- · Chipperfield gets Stirling double...
- ...While bookie William Hill sets odds without expert advice
- Tate seeks architects for portable arts pavilion
- Bath Council votes against Parry's Holburne Museum scheme (above) (see pages 12-13)

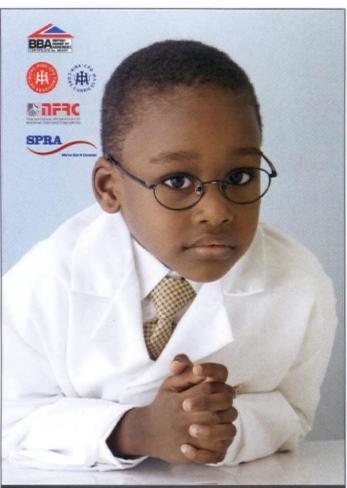
MONDAY 30 JULY

- · Fatal rocket explosion leaves Foster waiting for Spaceport result
- · Shed KM submits plans for Liverpool's Littlewoods Pools
- RMJM and Taylor Architects unveil new engineering school for Ireland (below)
- · Rogers lauded in Parents at Work survey while Foster fails to make the grade

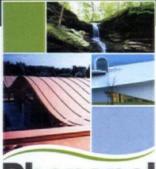


WEDNESDAY 1 AUGUST

- · Blears pulls plug on Reid's 'alien-like' sewerage plant
- Gustafson Porter holds its breath as second UK scheme runs into trouble
- · Winners of RIBA cooling tower competition announced
- Energy Performance Certificates 'go live' as Home Information Packs come in



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ENQUIRY 13 ON CARD WWW.AJPLUS.CO.UK/AJDIRECT

NEWS



1. The training quarter will be on the site of the Eton Manor sports hall, now demolished 2. The Olympic Park

FOREST HACKNEY NEWHA

Boundary of Eton Manor site

OLYMPIC CONTRACT UP FOR GRABS

By Max Thompson

The Olympic Delivery Authority (ODA) is set to release the tender for the design contract for the Eton Manor training quarter in east London.

The AJ can reveal that an OJEU notice for the design of an area described by an ODA spokesman as a 'little triangle at the top of the Olympic Park site', will be out within days.

Along with the Olympic Stadium, the Aquatics Centre, the Velo Park and the Handball Arena, the Eton Manor tender is one of only five packages that will boast permanent structures which will have a life beyond the 2012 London Games.

Described by the ODA as a 'significant design contract', the tender document will call for architects and designers to pitch for the chance to design a number of venues and facilities

that will be used over three distinct phases.

'The first phase is an athletes' training centre for use during the Games, with running tracks and swimming pools,' the ODA spokesperson explained.

'The second is the conversion for the Paralympics, tennis and archery events. The third phase is the legacy phase, which will see the provision of a multi-purpose sports centre,' the spokesperson added.

Eton Manor, which currently occupies the northeast corner of the Olympic Park site, is named after an old sports hall built on a 12ha site previously known as the 'Wilderness'.

It was started before the First World War as a boys' club by Eton College, and the site has a rich sporting heritage. Part of the running track used

for the 1948 London Olympics was transferred there after the Games and was later buried beneath the site. The first athletics meeting in the UK after the Second World War was also held at Eton Manor.

In December 2006, the Eton Manor sports hall became the first structure to be demolished to make way for the 2012 Olumpic Park.

With three of the five most prestigious design contracts already awarded - to HOK for the Olympic Stadium, Hopkins Architects for the Velo Park. and Zaha Hadid for the Aquatics Centre - competition to gain a role on the Handball Arena and the Eton Manor training quarter will be intense.

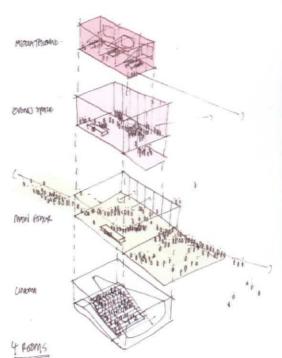
NEWS IN PICTURES



1.

FESTIVAL CENTRE FOR SHEFFIELD

Carmody Groarke has won the competition to design Sheffield's new Festival Centre. The London-based practice saw off a handful of local firms, including Houghton Budd Architects, HLM Architects and Prue Chiles Architects, to land the RIBA-organised contest (see AJ 21.06.07 for images of shortlisted entries). Slovenian practice Sadar Vuga Arhitekti in collaboration with the Designers Republic and Jason King were also shortlisted. The competition brief called for a scheme to unite Sheffield's famous Showroom cinema with the adjacent business centre, dubbed the Workstation. Carmody Groarke has proposed a phased redevelopment of the existing 1920s warehouses opposite the railway station, beginning with the creation of a new core and the expansion of the offices. It is hoped the extra income generated through the doubling of commercial space will allow the centre to build more screens within the 'basement plinth' and a new multi-function pavilion on the front of the building. A planning application is expected to be submitted next spring. By Richard Waite



2.



10



- 1. Carmody Groarke saw off a number of local practices to win the competition to design the Sheffield Festival Centre
- 2. Exploded axonometric
- 3. The scheme will unite the Showroom cinema and the adjacent Workstation business centre through the redevelopment of existing 1920s warehouses

AGENDA



1 & 2. Eric Parry's Modern extension to Bath's Holburne Museum was rejected for not being in keeping with the city's Georgian heritage

BATH GOES COLD ON MODERNITY

By Richard Waite

The decision last Wednesday (25 July) to turn down plans for a sleek glass and ceramic extension to the Grade I-listed Holburne Museum of Art in Bath is not just bad news for the scheme's architect Eric Parry.

It highlights a wider, deeprooted problem with Modern architecture in the city.

For those that mattered, most notably the council's historic conservation officers and the members of Bath and North East Somerset's planning committee who voted against the proposals, the Holburne Museum chiefs had broken the golden rule.

They had tried to build something that was not traditionally styled and had been unwilling to bow down to tokenism by throwing Bath stone cladding at the exterior. Objectors – of which there were more than 100, including UNESCO – and ultimately the committee were not convinced, and after a three-hour meeting it was eventually held the project would 'harm' the existing museum building, the local conservation area and the surrounding Grade II-listed Sydney Gardens.

The move led Holburne Museum director Alexander Sturgis to speak out. He said: 'Following this decision I would be surprised if any architect of any standing would accept a job in this city.'

Parry also hit out, labelling the council's conservation officers 'myopic' and 'negative'.

However, detractors had criticised the museum prior to the judgment about why it had taken unnecessary risks by steadfastly riding its Modernist charger into the jaws of the conservation lobby – a warning which is proving to have some justification as the art gallery now battles to save its Heritage Lottery Funding, promised to it on the receipt of planning permission.

Indeed, the situation is now so dire for the museum, which was banking on the extension to substantially increase its floor space and revenue, that it may have to close.

Even so, Sturgis is adamant a traditional response to the challenging brief would not have worked and that the museum 'in its current form' will not have a future.

He said: 'We thought we were building something excellent, admittedly of its time, but sensitive to the site, to the building and the gardens in which it would stand.

Sturgis admits the museum had come up with a daring, unashamedly Modernist scheme but thought it had ticked all the right boxes.

He added: It was always a risk, but we went in with English Heritage (EH) support and the council officers recommending approval.

'EH is, after all, the authority on these matters.'

Parry was equally disappointed by the rejection of the plans, in essence a reduced reworking of an original competition-winning scheme dating back to 2002.

He felt the proposed threelevel extension, with its glazed ground-floor entrance below solid upper storeys, was a 'distilled and logical' approach which reintroduced the Georgian connectivity between the museum and the gardens.



2.

The museum was originally developed by Thomas Baldwin as Sydney House in 1794 before being reworked in 1911 by architect Reginald Blomfield. Part of Parry's proposals included the re-siting of an impressive Blomfield staircase to reopen an axis through the museum into the grounds

Yet Parry was aware of deep-seated reticence from council officers right from the start: 'There was a desire from the conservation team to put everything underground and not see anything.

'The officers we dealt with had a myopic, negative view through the gestation of the project, in particular the historical environmental team, who were dead set against the scheme and presented at the meeting in a catastrophic way.' According to Parry, one councillor at the planning meeting suggested the scheme would be perfectly acceptable in Birmingham 'but not here'.

Throughout, the architect was under pressure to use Bath stone, but it was not a compromise he was prepared to entertain. Not before Wednesday's decision anyway.

He said: 'A stone building would have had a field day.
There's no doubt a NeoGeorgian Classical building would have been better received, although that would have been totally inappropriate.'

'If this is the way to proceed in Bath, then the whole place is doomed.'

Interestingly the council decision also raises questions about the role of Bath's design and development watchdog, the Urban Regeneration Panel.

Made up of luminaries such as architect Richard MacCormac, ex Peabody Trust head Dickon Robinson and structural engineer Alan Baxter, the panel threw its weight behind the scheme.

Disappointed panel chair Les Sparks agreed the refusal would not give 'any hope' to developers wanting to work in Bath and added: 'Hopefully we, as a panel, will still be able to go on advising council about what we feel is best.

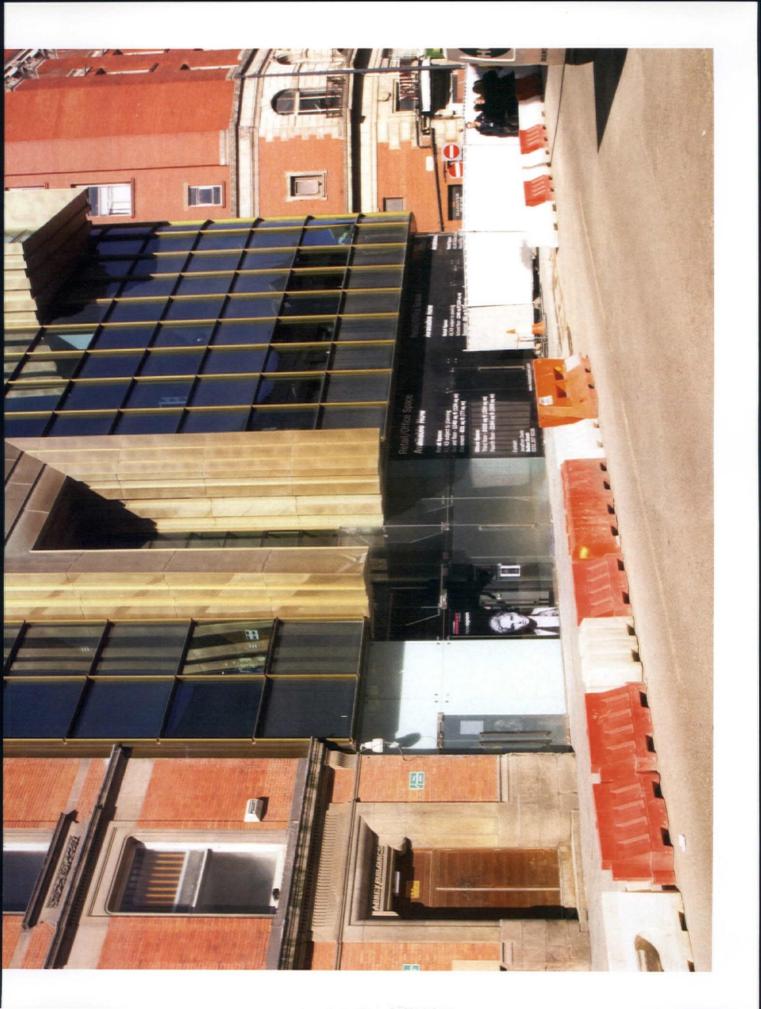
'The panel considered this a very good scheme and advised the council of our support. Clearly the in-house conservation team did not.

'One has to be concerned that there was such vociferous opposition to schemes of this calibre – this is not a mediocre Modern proposal; the quality here was very high.' Yet, when it comes to the crunch, it is voices of bodies like the Georgian Group which still carry the weight.

In a statement released to the AJ, Georgian Group secretary Robert Bargery said: 'All architects commissioned to design in Bath today must, it seems to us, be humble enough to respect the extraordinary architectural unity of Bath and offer something beautiful but essentially ordinary - the Georgian city makes its own very powerful statement, so the most we need now is the dotting of "i"s and the crossing of "t"s, not self-regarding exclamation marks."

Despite s uch vehement opposition it seems the museum is still prepared to gird its loins and continue its crusade. An appeal will be launched in the next few days.

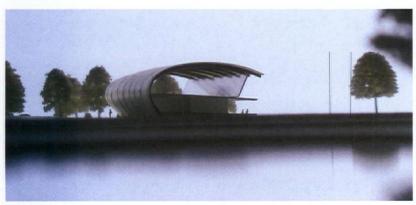




NEWS IN PICTURES



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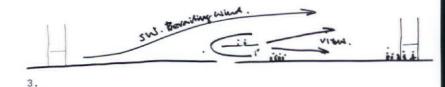


2.

SNELL PITCHES FOR RUGBY GROUND

Snell Associates has submitted these designs for a new rugby clubhouse and grandstand at the edge of the Yorkshire Dales for planning approval. The proposals for Ilkley Rugby Club are to replace the existing clubhouse and stand, built in 1924, with a new timber and glass scheme. According to the London-based practice, the project is located on a flood plain near the River Wharfe, so it has been designed to sit on stilts, which lift the building 1,100mm above the ground. The design was inspired by the long barns prevalent in the area, with the curved form acting as a wind break, while the glazed face overlooks the pitch and the Wharfe Valley below. The 1,000 m2 project is split over two floors. The lower floor will provide six changing rooms as well as a physiotherapy room. The upper floor will provide the club with a gym, a bar and new dining areas. Should the project be granted planning permission, work is likely to start in summer 2008, with completion ready for the beginning of the 2009/10 season. By Richard Vaughan

- 1 & 2. The clubhouse and grandstand for Ilkley Rugby Club sits on stilts, with the curved form acting as a wind break
- 3. Concept sketch
- 4. Annotated site photograph



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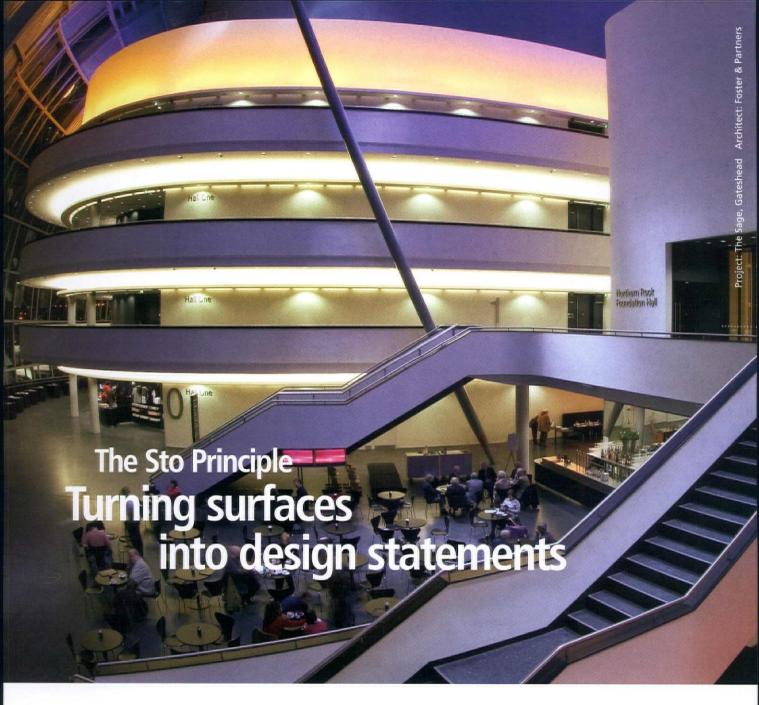
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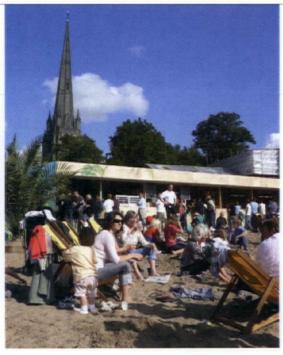
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AGENDA



1 & 2. The popularity of the Bristol Urban Beach has forced the site's developer to consider placing more emphasis on the public realm



2

BEACH SETS STANDARD FOR BRISTOL

By Richard Vaughan

A temporary beach in Bristol, created by Zero Zero Architects and a leading independent think tank, could be responsible for protecting one of the city's most important remaining public spaces.

The Bristol Urban Beach, opened earlier this summer by Demos and the London-based practice on Redcliffe Wharf, one of the city's most valuable pieces of land, is currently in line to be redeveloped under a scheme drawn up by Alec French Architects and muf.

However, the beach's popularity could force developer Westmark to place more emphasis on the public realm and provide a scheme focusing on the public space.

Melissa Mean of think tank, Demos, with the help of council planner Julie Witham, organised the Bristol Urban Beach, which has echoes of the Paris Plage project on the Seine, to show how the space can be used to its full potential.

Mean said: 'We took over a rundown car park, and created a 1,500m² beach. The key message was how people can raise their expectations of what the space could be used for.'

Indy Johar of Zero Zero said: 'We wanted to work on the concept of "what is the nature of a public space?".

'We found that it isn't simply about creating a space but creating a public event. It is about making an animated public realm'

The site is steeped in history. Redcliffe Wharf is where explorer John Cabot set sail for Newfoundland in 1497, and although development is not opposed, it is hoped the site is not over-commercialised.

Former RIBA president and local architect George Ferguson said: I dread to see this site become like the rest of the harbourside.

"That is not to say
Westmark are not capable of
producing something better
here – they are – but it is the
planners who must make it
happen. Redcliffe Wharf is
a key, iconic site.

'We cannot have a repeat of the commercial developments on the rest of the harbour, where people will just sit and drink Starbucks.'

According to Westmark spokeswoman Nicky Rylance, the beach has shown the developer what could be achieved, but she says that the scheme has always had the public realm at its heart.

'The buildings will merely frame the public space, and

with muf on board we will be able to offer a space where another beach could be held or a market, fair or performance space,' she said.

Bringing in muf to work on the landscaping side of the project gives some indication of intent by the developer. But for local architect and urban planner Keith Hallet, who is also a member of the community group Redcliffe Future, the beach shows how influential a well-thought public space could be.

'The beach has been packed with the just three days of good weather,' said Hallet. 'Westmark are good commercial developers but they still look to the bottom line. They are looking after their best interests. But the public must be the winners here.'

COMPETITION

SOMETHING TO SIT ON

The AJ has teamed up with Modus Furniture for the second Something to Sit On competition. Design a seat for informal working, and Modus will produce a prototype that could become part of its product range. All you have to do is get your proposal on paper.

The jury for the competition will be:

Jon Powell, director, Modus
Ed Richardson, director, Modus
Ben Addy, last year's winner and director, Moxon Architects
Ian Stallard, co-founder, Fredrikson Stallard
Patrik Fredrikson, co-founder, Fredrikson Stallard
Ola Rune, co-founder, Claesson Koivisto Rune
Simon Pengelly, founder, Pengelly Design
Kieran Long, editor, The Architects' Journal

Will Hunter, editor, AJ Specification



Closing date for entries is 31 August.

The winner will be announced at the AJ's reception at 100% Design at Earls Court on Thursday 20 September, and the shortlist will be announced in AJ 13.09.07, and exhibited on the AJ's stand at the show.

For the brief and entry form visit www.ajplus.co.uk/somethingtositon





THE STIRLING PANEL MUST TRANSCEND STYLISTIC AND IDEOLOGICAL BIAS



Kenneth Frampton, professor of architecture at Columbia University, New York, and author of Modern Architecture: A Critical History, assesses the six shortlisted buildings for this year's Stirling Prize, announced in last week's AJ (AJ 26.07.07).

It seems from both last year's Stirling Prize and this year's shortlist that it is increasingly difficult to determine the limits of 'British' architecture – a criterion which is still the mandate of this award. British, that is, as opposed to generically European, based on the provenance of both building and architect.

It is one thing to give an award for the achievements of a lifetime or to decide on the first prize in a competition where the site, brief and criteria are largely agreed upon. How much more difficult it must be to assess an annual prize for British architecture, particularly when it is unclear what the grounds for eligibility are.

Is it equally valid to give the award to a British architect who works almost exclusively abroad as it is to bestow it upon a Dutch architect for a building in Portugal?

Alternatively, would we be closer to the intent of the prize

if it went to Haworth Tompkins' reworking of Bill Howell's Young Vic Theatre in south London, which went out of its way, as did Howell's original, to retain as its entrance the ornamental tiled interior of a former butcher's shop?

However praiseworthy the Young Vic may be in terms of its low-key authenticity, it is questionable whether this is a work of sufficient scope to merit the prize, even though it is evidently a civic building that has been fully consummated as 'a space of public appearance'.

A similar civic virtue may also be claimed for Rem Koolhaas' Casa da Música, although in contextual terms this is the antithesis of the Young Vic. OMA's concerthall-as-spaceship is as removed from the urban fabric and topography of Porto as it would be if it had landed on the moon.

The specificity of their public function is a decisive attribute in both these buildings, as it is in Norman Foster's sensitive recladding of the tripartite ferrovitreous shed that spans over the tracks at Dresden's Central Station.

Of a more problematic civic nature is Glenn Howells' Savill Building in Windsor Great Park, largely because it serves the somewhat unworldly latterday task of being a 'visitors' centre'. Despite the highly articulate tectonic character of its timber-shell roof and the equally tectonic steel structure beneath, one cannot help posing the question as to what this audaciously extravagant form has to do with its programme or, for that matter, with its verdant topographic site.

David Chipperfield's equally extravagant America's Cup Building raises similar doubts, despite its daring structure. Is the weightless flying evocation of its form just a shade too literal? Would those all-too-ample cantilevering terraces not be more appropriate to an air terminal rather than a yacht basin?

Chipperfield's standing as a British architect of exceptional ability is surely indisputable, despite the fact that he has built little in the UK. His Museum of Modern Literature in Marbach, Germany – shortlisted for the prize along with his Valencia building – can surely be counted among the most compelling civic works he has produced. It is a representational structure of rigorous and refined

proportional rhythm; an exemplary work of minimalist Classical character that uncannily recalls Leo von Klenze's neo-Grecian Walhalla, built in Regensburg in 1842. It is poised on a very similar promontory overlooking an equally spectacular landscape.

And yet such is the fate of the programme in our Post-Modern age that the building's representational disposition would surely render it a more fitting vehicle for a regional parliament than a museum.

However, Chipperfield's Marbach project seems to be the only building on the shortlist that is fully integrated into its landscape – and this is no mean feat in an age that is inundated with free-standing objects, irrespective of their aesthetic quality. This would be enough for me, were I a member of the prize committee, to elevate Chipperfield's standing within the current list.

All of the buildings on the shortlist are unquestionably works of quality, but they are far from being of the same genre and they don't always represent unequivocally distinct cultural positions with respect to the future of architecture. So by what criteria do we discriminate between them?

I have endeavoured here to suggest one or two overriding considerations which, transcending stylistic preferences or even ideological differences, might be used to assess the relative worth of the shortlisted works. However, such a method clearly did not prevail in last year's Stirling Prize, where a politically prestigious work was slotted into the winning place over a smaller site-sensitive building, which was more tightly and appropriately resolved.

I contend that such biased judgements are due not only to the pluralism of the late-modern world but also to the fact that we no longer cultivate a culture of criticism that attempts to assess the overall resolution of one work versus another according to criteria that are sufficiently articulated in terms of topographic, programmatic, tectonic and phenomenological values.

On the one hand we are invariably too polite and deferential, in the name of liberalism, and on the other we are often crudely prejudicial without ever fully declaring our hand in public.

For more on the Stirling Prize visit www.ajplus.

co.uk/stirling

In the Nama of Kenneth Frampton and from the ew the Stipling Prize that increasingly difficult at we might deem to specifically British the original manda that is an opposed European based on the to building and the Is it equally valid oward to a British and almost exclusively a baston it upon on an Netherlands for a low Portugal? Alternativel dozero to se intent gave it to Howorth Tomp Bill Howell's Young ambeth, which went out of its way, original intervention, entrance, the ornaments However praise worth be in terms questionable whether sufficient scope to me even shough it is eviden that has been

'I don't want to give it away – it's an asset. And I've been spending a lot of rent to preserve it'

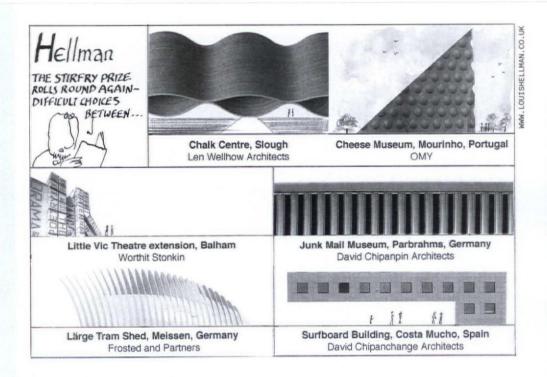
Frank Gehry wants a decent price for his archive. New York Times, 23.07.07

'Robert Adam
does not look like
an architect –
more like a
Dionysiac,
twinkly-eyed
banker in a
good suit'

Stephen Bayley. Observer, 29.07.07

'Architects are my favourite kind of people: it's their combination of aesthetics and practicality which is so irresistible'

PR consultant Mark Bolland. Evening Standard, 27.07.07



BAD HAIR DAY

Astragal attended HOK's summer party last week. Superbly organised by the firm's Claire Dexter, the event was held at the Architectural Association, affording Astragal the opportunity to have a nose at its summer show's offerings. Star of the show was Margaret Dewhurst, whose tumbling wooden installation Bad Hair sits proudly outside the college. When Astragal asked HOK's head of design Larry Malcic if he had snapped up the precocious talent that is Dewhurst, a tray of deliciously fragrant chocolate brownies suddenly appeared under Astragal's nose in a scurrilous attempt to distract him from the answer. Nice try, Larry, but Astragal seems to recall that the pint-sized but formidable Dewhurst has signed up with one Ken Shuttleworth

who, as well as being boss of Make, also happens to be the aforementioned Dexter's partner.

THE FINAL REEL

Like much in Bradford, little has happened over the last year with Carey Jones' competitionwinning proposals to flatten and redevelop the city's Art Deco Odeon cinema site. However, the anti-bulldozer campaigners are not dropping their guard. Recently, a gaggle of around 300 Odeon-lovers turned up to form a human chain around the 1930s twintower landmark. The protesters hoped the 'hug' would send a message to the regeneration chiefs about how much the currently empty building means to the folk of Bradford. But Astragal's insiders say their efforts are all in vain. Rumour

has it that *Demolition Man* will be showing at the Odeon very soon...

QUALITY COUNTS

In researching Florian Beigel's Positive People building in South Korea, Astragal happened upon the website of Häfele Korea. Its 'Greetings' page has that characteristic polite candour you find in South Korea. 'After endless days of hard work, we are proud to introduce our newly designed website, it announces sweetly. Having outlined what is available online it then offers a contrasting approach to all those architects suffering from value engineering (i.e. cost cutting) and product substitution: 'The bitterness of poor quality remains long after the sweetness of low price is forgotten.' Quite.

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www.revitusergroup.org.uk, an on-line community where Revit customers can share ideas, exchange hints and tips and generally interact with like-minded individuals.

LETTERS

SUPPLY CAN BEGIN TO DICTATE HOUSING DEMAND

I hope Paul Latham was joking when he suggested handing the planning system over to architects and mounting a campaign to reprogramme Joe Public's poor taste (Letters, AJ 26.07.07). I'm not a communist and, despite growing up in Thatcher's Britain, I am not a Conservative either, but I do have some empathy for the strengths and weaknesses of a market economy.

While I agree with Latham that most of what the housebuilders produce is crap, I don't believe customers buy it because they have no taste. They buy it because, generally speaking, it's all that's available. 'Box-bashing' is a supply-led industry; when supply is low, demand and prices are kept high, and in a seller's market there's no incentive to innovate or take risks.

'Any colour you like so long as it's black' was an acceptable marketing proposition when there was little effective competition for the Model T Ford, but as the market for cheap mass-produced motorcars blossomed, other colours quickly appeared as manufacturers fought to win customers.

I am more optimistic than Latham. From talking to nonarchitect friends I'm convinced that there is some pent-up demand in the *Grand Designs* generation for better-designed homes, but until the supply of homes is increased, housebuilders will continue to view contemporary design as risky, expensive and unnecessary.

And if supply and innovation is only increased in the public sector where there is little consumer choice, we won't be getting much insight into where the punters' preferences really lie. *Matthew Wood, director, Conran and Partners*

ADAM SHOULD PUT UP AND SHUT UP IN BASINGSTOKE

It is revealing to see architects trying to find themselves in critical debate ('Robert Adam goes on the attack as "style police" council looks set to reject his Basingstoke tower', ajplus 17.07.07). In this particular case I would keep quiet and not throw stones, as Adam's proposal does seem to hark back to Stalinist architecture.

I am not sure how we should articulate sustainable architecture beyond current fashionable interpretation, but there should be something between hell and heaven.

I'm looking forward to the feedback from the councils... Henrik Rothe, managing director, Architecture and Design Leit-Werk

A CHALLENGE TO THE CONCRETE ORTHODOXY

A super issue as expected (AJ 12.07.07), but there is a point worth making. After reading the editorial blowing the trumpet for the signature brigade (e.g. David Chipperfield) I moved on to 'Justice is served by Chipperfield', and thought, 'You're having a laugh!' The comment by B720 Arquitectos – 'a spatial composition that attempts to break the rigid and monolithic image of justice' – deserves three out of 10 for trying. It's concrete again, just waiting to weather into a dull, dirty, stained, featureless facade.

While on the subject of exposed concrete I may as well condemn myself to the dustbin of old-fart architects who clearly remember the concrete failures of bygone years. Looking on a few pages to the Building Study on Corb's La Tourette, I couldn't help thinking that had this building been clad in, say, terracotta or a good facing brick, it would probably be as good as new.

OK, OK, light the fire under me now! Phil Blower, Southend-on-Sea, Essex

THE AJ MUST PLACE FACTS AT THE TOP OF ITS AGENDA

I can more or less appreciate the AJ's minimalist style but it seems to me that basic details about the subject of a Building Study are buried within the text.

It was only in the fourth paragraph of last week's piece (AJ 26.07.07) that I discovered that the Victoria Miro gallery is in London, somewhere between Islington and Hoxton. Reading on to the bottom of the page I was rewarded with the ultimate prize and told that it is at 16 Wharf Road.

In the same issue you published an article on the Housing Green Paper ('Has Cooper gone far enough?') without giving a web link. A strange decision given that the AJ seems to consider itself up to speed, complete with website etc.

Is it too much to ask for the AJ to provide clear factual information? To this reader at least, the magazine's current form of presentation is too often a triumph of style over content. Or am I just a grumpy old man?

Andrew Beard, Andrew Beard Architects, Stroud, Gloucestershire

ENGINEER TO FINALLY GAIN MUSEUM RECOGNITION

Further to Spencer de Grey's letter on the inscription in the Great Court at the British Museum (AJ 26.07.07), the name of the engineer, Buro Happold, is to be added to those of de Grey, Norman Foster and Foster + Partners – possibly quite soon.

This is with the approval of the architects and follows a gentle campaign which started as long ago as June 2002. It will be interesting to see how soon 'soon' turns out to be.

*Jane Priestman, London N1"

EXPO PAVILION DESIGNS ARE A TASTY CONFECTION

Are the architects shortlisted for the Shanghai Expo in danger of developing diabetes (AJ 26.07.07)? All the entries seem to have come straight from the sweetshop.

Heatherwick offers an orange sherbet, Marks Barfield some fruit creams, Eight a confection in lemon jelly, Zaha some glacier mints, Avery some sugar-coated liquorice, and Draw a mint imperial. I hope this sweetness doesn't all turn sour before the Expo takes place.

Diana Wilson, Manchester

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



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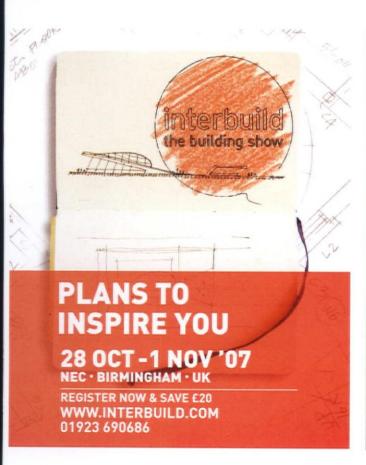
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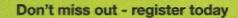
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EAST/ ACTON TOWN SQUARE



THE ARCHITECT DESCRIBES IT AS 'A PHENOMENON OF PRECISION'

By Kieran Long. Photography by Neil Bridge and David Grandorge

Julian Lewis of East has become a paving nerd. 'It's amazing how you end up with so much knowledge,' he says, before going on to describe how it's important to saw the backs of kerbstones to prevent mortar being squeezed between kerb and paving, how utility covers need to be specified without flanges and how black mineral pigments in mortar will not fade. This is the kind of knowledge you can only get from a close-up and sustained relationship with the pavement over a period of years.

The piece of paving in question is Acton Town Square, a hard landscape in west London that has recently been completed, creating a faceted granite surface between a Victorian church, a branch of supermarket Morrisons, the King's Head pub and Acton High Street. It is one of the first finished projects of London Mayor Ken Livingstone's 100 Public Spaces programme.

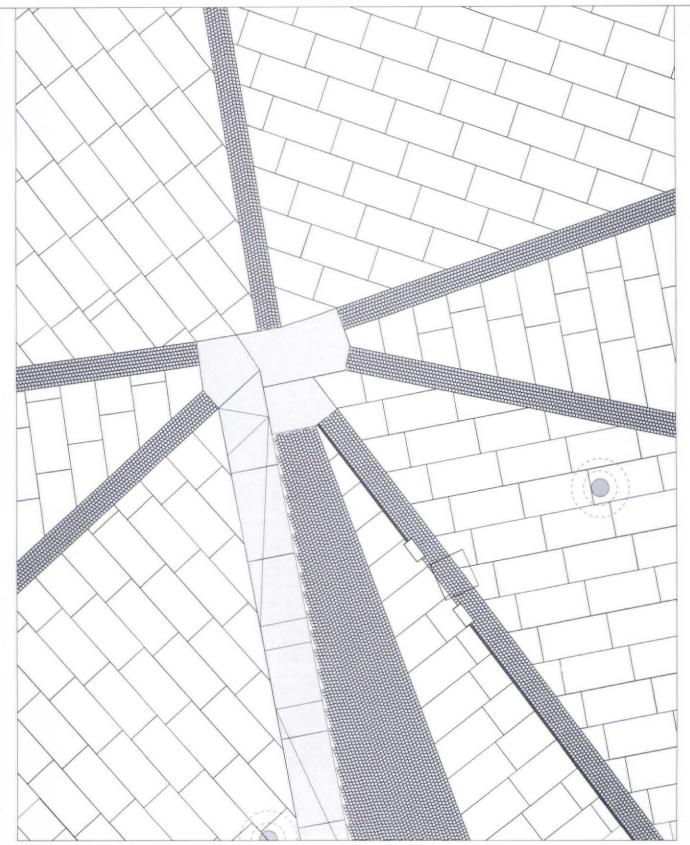
East, an east London-based practice founded in 1995, is probably best known for its work on strategic planning studies in east and south-east London, as well as a recently completed school in north London's Tufnell Park. But the firm does have an intimate relationship with the surfaces of the public realm. In 2005, East authored Transport for London's streetscape guidance, defining rules for pavements and street furniture across the capital's road network. This laid down rules as simple as recommending that all street furniture be painted the same colour, simplifying the material palette and specifying stricter details on paving to ensure consistency across the capital. East's defining ability in this project was to deal with the unbelievably specific while keeping in mind

broader goals. Having completed this guidance, the practice won the chance to use some of its own rules in 2003, first with a job to formulate a public-space strategy for Acton, and then to build a new town square there.

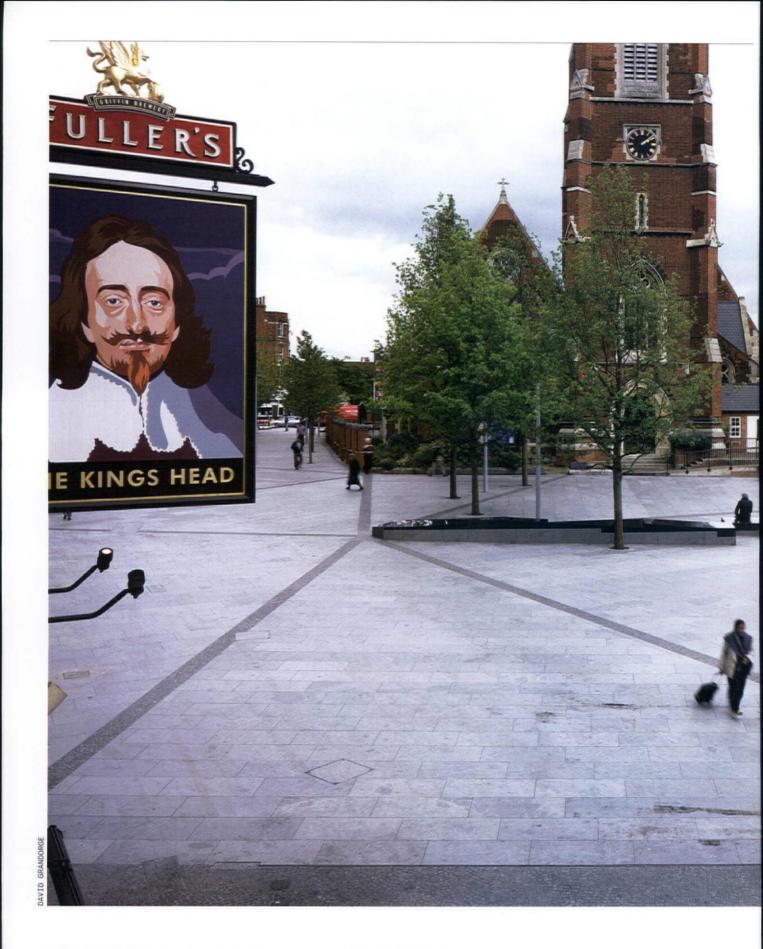
The surface of the square is composed of seven perfectly flat facets that dramatise the gradient across the site, and comply with disabled-access regulations without the need for steps and ramps. Each facet is bounded by vectors of small granite setts that fan across the square. Between these lines are laid 900 x 600mm granite paving slabs. The triangular facets make up the triangular space between the road, the church and Morrisons. The northeasterly part of the project is more formal, creating a pedestrian street next to the colonnade of a Modernist Post Office building. Here East planted a line of trees, and this is where a new street market takes place. A small and utilitarian kiosk stores market stalls on the corner of the appropriately named street to the east – Market Place.

Where the new market is held, service points are concealed in the granite ground, and luminaires by DW Windsor hang from the trees themselves, with wires held up on steel poles – these rather dumb verticals are perhaps the only ungainly part of East's work here.

The detail is fabulous. The granite surface (from China – Lewis says that they hope its durability will win back sustainability brownie points lost in transportation) extends right up to all of the surrounding elements, effectively dignifying the eclectic

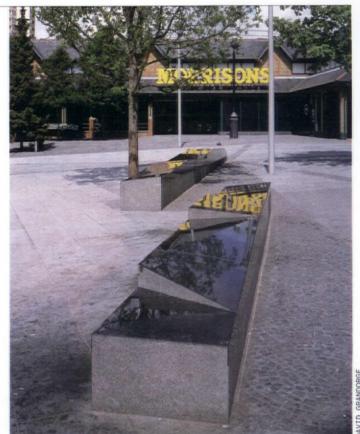


1. Paving layout drawing, with granite slabs divided by lines of setts. East drew almost every stone in the square during the design stage



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- 2. The view from the first floor of the Kings Head pub, looking across the square. The square has a minimum of street furniture, with lighting fixed to buildings and services for the market buried in the ground
- 3. The benches are faceted to deal with the council's fears of people sleeping or skateboarding on them. They are made of highly polished Chinese black granite

2.



surrounding architecture, and admitting the impossibility of having everything as you would want it. For instance, East had wanted to do away with the ugly 1980s wall that bounded the church's small graveyard, replacing it with a more transparent railing. This didn't happen, but the granite surface still extends right up to the wall. Perhaps the most obvious place where this strategy has been effective is in the small space between the blank party wall of the shop next to the pub and the supermarket. This space is owned by Morrisons, but East and the council successfully negotiated to cover it in the tiny granite setts (while retaining an existing Christmas tree). Lewis says he now hopes that Morrisons' cafe might allow diners to sit outside.

The most formally expressive part of the project is the two benches in the middle of the space. These are tricky to assess, and are a kind of awkward mediation between the need to make street furniture difficult to sleep or skateboard on, and the desire to create a generous place to sit and relax. The stealth-bomber aesthetics don't really add character to the place, and even in their luxurious materiality (more black granite polished to a high sheen) they remind me a bit of those contemporary benches you get in the City of London that are really there to stop terrorists driving a car-bomb into a bank. Having said that, they are well-placed and obviously well-used, allowing you to sit and face the church or the pub, rather than the road or supermarket. The benches also divide the square for one of its hidden purposes. The space between them and the church facade is intended to be driven on, and features a

turning circle which can accommodate a hearse. The church has also retained some parking on the square, marked out by discreet discs set into the stone.

One of East's locally controversial moves was to remove some trees and brick planters, and the removal was phased so as not to suggest a *tabula rasa* approach. The new trees are oaks that grow through bespoke paving slabs. These slabs are flush with the surface of the square, and have an inner ring of stone that can be removed to allow for the long-term growth of the trees.

This meticulous approach might look simple enough, but the achievements of the project are clear as soon as you see a picture of the square before the redevelopment. Apart from the obnoxious brick planters (which one can imagine filled with crisp packets), there were more than 20 vertical elements holding traffic lights, security cameras, heritage lanterns and other detritus. East has managed to pare this down to the bare minimum (although ominously high posts carrying security cameras are inevitable).

It is easy to get obsessed with the detail of this project. Even Lewis himself can't help describing the work of his project architect and the contractor McNicholas as a 'phenomenon of precision'. But that would be to underestimate the civic quality of the project, which proves East to be one of the most mature of its generation in the creation of public spaces.

The big idea was to recognise that although this space has a substantial church facing it, it is not a formal square, but an extended public territory extending all the way around the church.



Instead of becoming obsessed with the church facade and the fantasy of an Italian piazza, East was as interested in working with the post office, the supermarket (which takes on a certain Scandinavian Modernist quality if you squint hard enough), the pub and the other buildings around the site. Indeed, the original plan had been to extend the project to the other side of Acton High Street, and Lewis still hopes that this might happen as a later phase. This is perhaps made more likely by East's recent appointment to carry out an urban design framework for Acton.

There was always a public space of some kind here, and, in fact, East's project replaces an award-winning landscape laid down by Ealing Council in the 1990s, which had a neat green cycle lane, plenty of greenery, and banal modular paving. There is now a new orthodoxy at work in London, and contemporary architecture, in all its forms, is a big part of it. The five completed 100 Public Spaces are very diverse, ranging from the overtly celebratory (Gross Max's Potters Fields and Gillett Square, by Hawkins\Brown) to the perfunctorily formal (Marks Barfield's Wembley Station Square) and the whimsically oppositional (Barking Town Square, by muf). The next stage for the programme is to decide from these early examples whether pluralism works, or at least have the debate in public. East's project might be austere, but, says Lewis, 'if design is forced to recognise a need to celebrate, it is doomed to failure. Colourful banners can't make you have fun all day long.' Acton Town Square could become the location of a real civic centre for this place, hewn defiantly from a granite base.

- 4. The square as it was originally. This scheme was award-winning in its day, but was dominated by excessive street furniture and uncared-for planters
- 5, 6 & 7. Details of the paving layout. Large granite pieces sit at the intersection points of the lines of small setts
- 8. Site plan. The triangular piazza leads to a pedestrian avenue, along which a market is now held every Saturday





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LIVINGSTONE'S 100 PUBLIC SPACES PROGRAMME

The Mayor's 100 Public Spaces programme was launched in 2003 to support the work of Richard Rogers, the Mayor's chief advisor on architecture and urbanism, and the delivery of an urban renaissance in London. The programme aims to demonstrate that new and revitalised public space can make a real difference to individual quality of life and community vitality. So far, 35 projects have been announced, with a further phase following the adoption of the London Public Realm Strategy later this year. Acton Town Square - known locally as the 'Mount' - is one of five completed schemes; the others are Potters' Fields, Gillett Square, Wembley Station Square and Barking Town Square Phase 1. More are on the way. Every project is different - a range illustrated by the grand urban vision for Victoria Embankment and the more gritty urbanism of our work around Dagenham Dock - yet they all work to the same criteria: a good geographic spread across London; 50 per cent of projects in areas of multiple deprivation; projects that align London Development Agency and Transport for London objectives with borough and more local aspirations; and, importantly, projects where there is an opportunity to tackle contemporary urban issues and promote exemplary design for London. On each project we attempt to showcase good urban, landscape and streetscape

design that leads to flexible spaces which can sustain a rich mix of use and users. To help achieve this we provide design advice and assist the development of credible delivery strategies. While Acton Town Square was embedded in broader strategies - for example, the Uxbridge Road study - we followed our strategy of working with key local stakeholders to deliver these aims; in this case, the local authority, the church, local traders, and local regeneration group Action Acton. Acton Town Square followed our prescription for an uncluttered, flexible space, and, as such, has become an unfussy backdrop to events and activities. Street furniture is of the highest quality, but used sparingly; seating is created with large natural stone pieces using the same granite as the paving. Lighting is fixed to buildings where possible. During a design review of Acton Town Square, Richard Rogers remarked that it should be designed to last 1,000 years. While traditional planning schemes in London have rarely shown this level of aspiration, the design and build quality on this scheme takes a step towards realising that aim. The square's delivery has led to a reduction in antisocial behaviour and a flourishing street life in the area. It has become a space for Londoners and, in this respect more than any other, Acton Town Square is a success.

Jamie Dean, Design for London

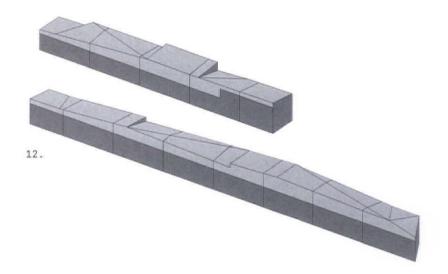


11.

9. Discreet discs set into the granite mark the parking spaces outside the church 10. Trees pop up through circular openings in the paving. The inner stone ring can be removed as the tree grows

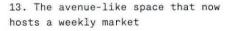
11. The centre point of the square

12. Drawings of the two benches



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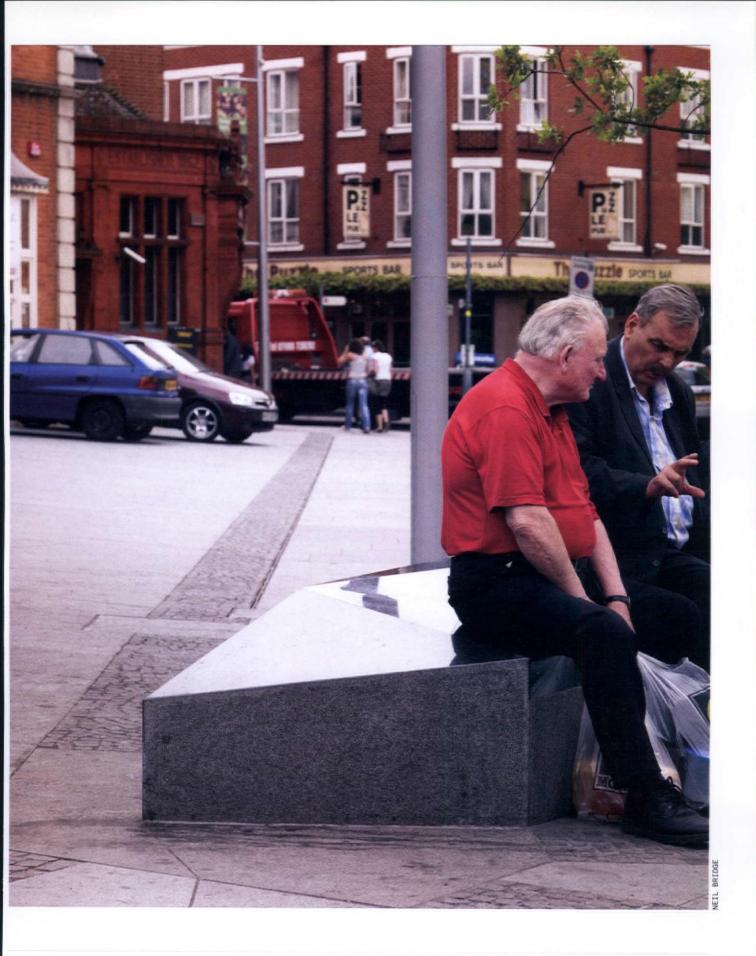
14. Looking south across the square towards Acton High Street



13.



14.



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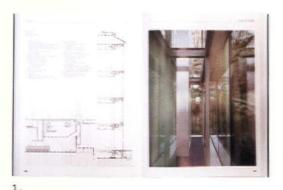








TECHNICAL & PRACTICE / UPDATE





1 & 2. The latest on glass: two offerings from Birkhäuser (Books)

WHAT'S NEW

- In response to the recent flooding, CIRIA is offering free online access to its report 'Standards for the Repair of Buildings Following Flooding' (C623) until 31 August. It covers the repair of common types of domestic buildings. Visit www.ciria.org/downloads.htm
- Consultation on Defra's 'Making Space for Water: Urban Flood Risk and Integrated Drainage' closes on 10 August.
- For an overview on the policy and funding context of urban flooding, see the Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology's Postnote (Number 289) at www.parliament.uk/ parliamentary_offices/post/ pubs2007.cfm
- The BRE Press has released 'Performance-Based Intervention for Durable Concrete Repairs', outlining a new appproach to remedial concrete work. Visit www. brepress.com

- Robust Details, the non-profit company whose details are an alternative to the on-site soundtesting required by Part E, has expanded its website to include information on the Code for Sustainable Homes. Visit www.robustdetails.com/Code-for-Sustainable-Homes-fa62cdf
- The Little Red Book of Acoustics: A Practical Guide, by independent acoustic consultant Hepworth, is good value at £19.99. It covers environmental and building acoustics, including definitions, relevant standards and guidance, all in a single text which is used for the Institute of Acoustics diploma course. Visit www.hepworthacoustics.co.uk/redbook.htm

EVENTS

Scratching the Surface: Clapham Manor School

8 August, 8.30-9.30am
The Building Centre, 26 Store
Street, London WC1 7BT
Philip Marsh, dRMM
Free, booking required
www.newlondonarchitecture.
org/talks

Shrinking London's Footprint 9 August, 6.00pm Imax, Science Museum, London www.ice-london.org.uk

Sustainable Products and Recycled Materials Workshop 15 August, 9.30am-12.30pm (repeated 19 September) BRE, Watford www.bre.co.uk/events

Understanding Regeneration
16 August, 2.00-5.00pm
Northumbria University, Newcastle
RIBA North
caroline.albin@inst.riba.org

BOOKS

Glass Construction Manual
Second edition, Schittich et al,
Birkhäuser, 2007, £85
An update of the 1999 edition
of the popular DETAIL
manual, which includes an
overview of glass as a building
material and looks in depth at
its loadbearing behaviour and
energy performance. A section
on fixings and details is
followed by more than 40
international case studies, both
replete with drawings and
photographs.

Glass Structures: Design and Construction of Self-Supporting Skins
Jan Wurm
Birkhäuser, 2007, £54.90
This book, by an Arup facade engineer who started his career as an apprentice glazier, focuses on the use of glass plate modules for self-supporting wide spans. Packed with interesting tables and diagrams about the structural aspects of glass, this work also suggests a new formal vocabulary.

TECHNICAL & PRACTICE

CDM LEGISLATION MEANS NEW RESPONSIBILITES FOR ALL PARTIES

Written and illustrated by Austin Williams

In the latest in our series of NBS Shortcuts, 'how-to' guides covering a range of practice, regulatory and design guidance, Austin Williams looks at the recent amendments to the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations and how they will impact on projects.

The Construction (Design and Management) (CDM) Regulations have just been changed to make it a lot easier to secure convictions against clients and their advisors. In today's climate, Health, Safety and Welfare could be the name of a firm of solicitors – presumably previously trading as Sue, Grabbit & Runne.

In the past, if you were not found guilty in a court of law you were presumed innocent; nowadays there seems to be a presumption that you have escaped justice. Thus the current Lord Chancellor has made great stock out of suggesting that the difficulty in securing convictions is a reason to amend the law so that the burden of proof can become less onerous. Now the Corporate Manslaughter and Corporate Homicide Bill – which seeks to investigate organisations for manslaughter following work-related deaths, and prosecute where relevant – is making its way through Parliament and justice is being amended so that culpability can be more easily assigned.

Under the Construction (Design and Management)
Regulations (CDM) 2007, civil-liberties exemption has been removed. CDM 2007 came into force on 6 April with an accompanying Approved Code of Practice (ACoP) published two months earlier. Companies now need to be more realistic and

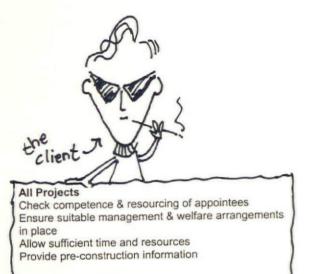
transparent in their assessment procedures and structure their Health and Safety systems accordingly. For example, a client executive delegating responsibility to an untrained member of staff will be deemed personally to be at fault in any subsequent legal proceedings resulting from Health and Safety infractions.

CDM 2007 applies to all projects, although 'notifiable' projects attract additional duties. Notifiable projects are those that last more than 30 working days or involve more than 500 person days of work (the actual number of people on site is immaterial). Domestic projects which are carried out by 'a client' (i.e. a housebuilder) are also notifiable. If demolition or structural dismantling is involved, then an additional written plan showing how danger will be prevented is required. Additionally, where project risks are higher, something approaching a written construction phase plan will be required.

Every party involved in a project is expected to coordinate activities from Health and Safety viewpoints, and must cooperate with others involved in construction work on the site and on adjoining sites. Importantly, duty holders (client, designer, etc.) must take account of the general principles in the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.

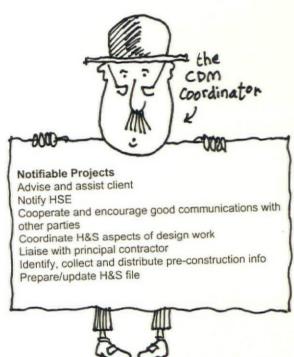
THE CLIENT

The client must ensure that workers are competent and adequately resourced; construction work can be carried out safely; the requirements of the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare)



Notifiable Projects

Appoint CDM coordinator & principal contractor (and retain until end of construction phase) Make sure suitable welfare facilities & construction phase plan in place before start on site Provide H&S file info to CDM coordinator Retain and provide access to H&S file



Regulations are met; and adequate welfare provisions for construction workers are in place from the contractor, as well as adequate protection for the client's workers and the general public.

Where more than one client exists for a project, one representative can be nominated to act for all, provided they meet the requirements of the regulations. The client can no longer appoint a client's agent as a way of transferring Health and Safety duties to someone else under contract. Under a transitional provision (one of the few in the new regulations), clients' agents can continue for existing projects until 5 April 2012, if the agent agrees to assume the client's duties under the 2007 regulations.

For notifiable projects, the client must ensure that a CDM coordinator and principal contractor are appointed. All must be verifiably 'competent' within the terms of the ACoP. The CDM coordinator may be appointed after the scheme has been declared viable provided that only nominal design work has been carried out. The principal contractor can be appointed once the client knows enough about the project. Additionally, the client must ensure that a Health and Safety file is written, maintained, completed and received by the client at project handover and a suitable contractor's construction phase plan and contractor's welfare facilities are in place before work starts. If the client fails to appoint either a CDM coordinator or a principal contractor or both, then the role is taken on by the client by default.

For existing projects, a transitional provision allows planning supervisors to become the CDM coordinator, and the principal contractor stays the same unless the client changes the appointments. The client has until 5 April 2008 to make sure that these people are competent persons under the 2007 regulations.

Pre-construction information must be available to designers and contractors, and this information must be factual and not speculative, e.g. 'asbestos might be present'.

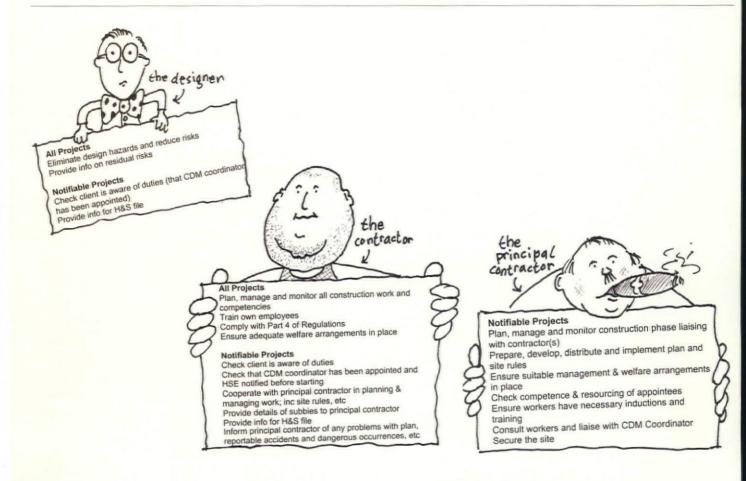
THE CDM COORDINATOR

On notifiable projects there must be a CDM coordinator and principal contractor at least until the end of the construction phase. The CDM coordinator's key role is to advise and assist the client in discharging the client's duties and coordinating the project on the client's behalf. Other duties (note: not functions) include:

- · advising on project-management arrangements;
- · notifying the HSE at relevant stages (in notifiable projects);
- · collecting pre-construction information; and
- · advising on the suitability of contractor's welfare facilities and the initial construction phase plan.

The CDM coordinator must manage, review, update and hand over the Health and Safety file. If demolition or dismantling is involved, planned written assessment of the risks and subsequent arrangements is required. The file can be incorporated into a Building Regulations log book or maintenance manual.

Gone is the Association of Planning Supervisors, which has metamorphosed into the Association of Project Safety (APS). A person carrying the APS badge demonstrates suitable training



to carry out the function of the CDM coordinator, but planning supervisors will effectively be phased out in a year.

While Chartered Membership of the Institution of Occupational Safety and Health signifies that the holder has competency in Occupational Health and Safety (not necessarily the same thing as CDM competency), it might mean that two competent persons may be required to carry out a suitable audit of the premises. For those thinking of taking up the role of CDM coordinator for a quarter per cent fee, the responsibilities, risks and insurances can be onerous indeed.

THE DESIGNER

A designer's duties apply to all projects. CDM Regulation 18 specifies that no designer shall start work on a notifiable project – other than initial design work – unless a co-ordinator has been appointed and the client is aware of their duties.

The designer has a new duty to eliminate hazards and reduce remaining risks so far as is practicable in order to avoid Health and Safety risks. There is no longer any need for designers to carry out a 'design-risk assessment'. This is to encourage them to consider hazard and risk as integral aspects of the 'design review' process. Additionally, they must now make sure that any workplace designs comply with the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations, relating to the proposed use of the structure, including risks from using private roads and footpaths, and the imagined risks arising from future construction or maintenance activities.

THE PRINCIPAL CONTRACTOR

The principal contractor now has a more explicit role in managing the construction phase than under CDM 2004. Now it has to ensure that workers are competent and informed of the minimum time they have to plan and prepare before start on site. Also, principal contractors must establish that they have sufficient resources in place so that their involvement – from planning through implementation – is carried out with due regard to Health and Safety. It is the principal contractor's responsibility to make sure that the construction phase (Health and Safety) plan is prepared, reviewed, updated, implemented and complied with.

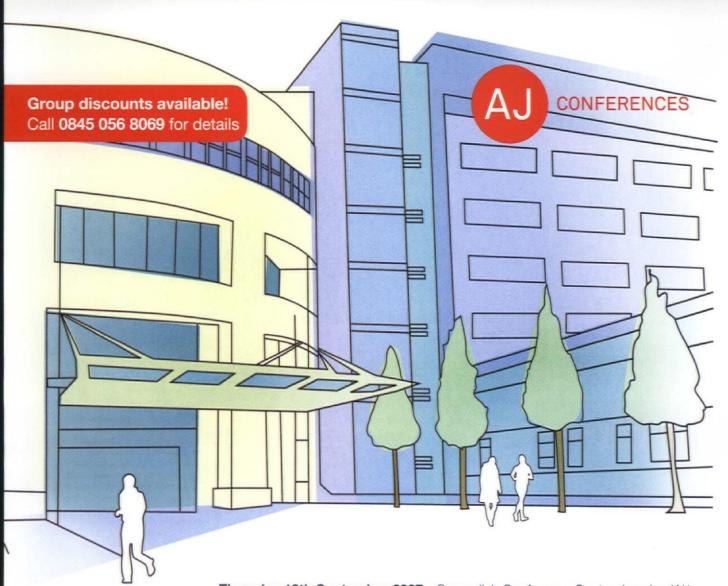
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Austin Williams is the author and illustrator of NBS Shortcuts. For more information visit www.thebuildingregs.com



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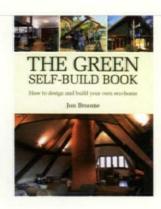
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TECHNICAL & PRACTICE



GREEN INSPIRATION FOR HOUSEBUILDERS

By Barrie Evans

The Green Self-Build Book Jon Broome, Green Books, 2007, £25

Jon Broome's *The Green Self-Build Book* is much more mainstream than its title suggests. By 'self-build' Broome means any house that someone commissions and/or designs and/or builds for themselves. Government figures for 1999 show that, defined in this way, self-build accounted for 10 per cent of house completions, and it is today estimated to account for around 15 per cent – some 25,000 homes each year.

This growth is in part fuelled by self-builders seeking a greener home, and this in turn can alter the role of the architect. Self-builders often want to be, in part, the designer themselves, which can be uncomfortable for the architect. In greener projects in particular, self-builders may wish to avoid using main contractors, with their penchant for product-substitution and unresponsively following their own normal building practice. The alternative of using specialist subcontractors may well require the architect to be project manager. And there are many examples of projects where the self-builder is ahead of the architect in pushing the boundaries of green building.

Written for all involved in the self-build process, some of Broome's book is a skim-read for architects, but there is a lot of well-researched information on sustainability. How many architects, for example, are up to speed with the Dutch Environmental Preference Method for choosing preferred forms of construction that Broome describes?

The first third of the book is devoted to self-build case studies. While Broome states that there is no specific aesthetic to sustainability, his exemplar homes tend to be on the hairy side, with the hand of the maker very evident. There are few big design ideas here – so much of sustainability is about getting the detail right. At least as interesting to the architect are accounts of the process in all its vicissitudes, such as funding, permissions, sourcing the chosen materials and components, and working with a variety of different people.

There are also chapters on design issues such as thermal comfort, daylight, pollution, reducing site waste and green forms of construction. And there are listings of sources of green products, plus useful contacts and web links.

Most novel among these resources is a chapter on using Alexander's Pattern Language to develop a building brief and design, which is exemplified by architect Brian Richardson on his own home. You can harbour reservations about Alexander's prescriptiveness; his emphasis on analysis over imagination implies that design could almost be turned into clockwork. But this hypothesis is a sophisticated starting point for an intelligent discussion between self-builder and architect, as is so much of this book.

'Eco-Centre and Courses', by Terena Plowright, which lists more than 150 field centre and projects to visit, helping you hone your green knowledge, is also available from Green Books, priced at £12.95.

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REVIEW

BOOK

By Robert Holden

Design and Landscape for People: New Approaches to Renewal. By Clare Cumberlidge and Lucy Musgrave. Thames and Hudson, 2007. 224pp. £29.95





2

1. Playpumps in a South African village

Zagreb, Croatia: site of a two-year project by Platforma showcasing the potential of the city's empty buildings

1.

This is a really interesting pictorial survey of projects worldwide since 1990 dealing with urban and rural regeneration. Written by public art curator Clare Cumberlidge and former director of the Architecture Foundation Lucy Musgrave – who now run the art and public realm consultancy General Public Agency – this is a take on contemporary community action and renewal.

At first glance, the book seems to be a series of snapshots, not an analysis; but the projects are grouped by theme – utility, citizenship, rural, identity and urban – which the introductory essays do explore to some extent.

In the 'utility' section, for instance, Cumberlidge and Musgrave note that the creation of water supply or transport networks can result in new structures which cut across urban forms, paying little thought to what's already there. So they argue for the reuse of infrastructure and for interventions that are sensitive to local needs.

Their examples include the playpumps installed in numerous villages in South Africa. Powered by children playing on roundabouts, the pumps raise groundwater – as much as 1,400l an hour – into big overhead tanks, adorned with AIDS prevention messages and the advertising which pays for the programme. The pumps also help to combat disease: the threat of cholera in open water supplies.

A European inclusion comes from Stanica, Slovakia, where an old railway station has been converted into a community meeting place, with studios, exhibitions and a café, while it still continues to function as a station. The point is to build upon what's there.

The edible schoolyard at Martin Luther King Jr School in Berkeley, California, where the classes grow their own food, is one of the authors' examples of citizenship promotion, as is the Hotel Neustadt in Halle-Neustadt, Germany, where teenagers converted an abandoned system-built apartment block into a 92bedroom hotel, related to and serving an arts festival. In both these cases the authors argue for long-term engagement and participation, with programmes that enable 'active citizenship'.

But the book can be rather hard going. The language is frenzied and fatiguing, using metaphors and clichés that mask meaning rather than illuminate. The authors also seem to suggest that the 1990s invented cross-disciplinary working and community action. Try telling that to the squatters of 1960s Amsterdam, or to members of any rural commune or urban allotments.

I suspect that the real invention of the 1990s was that arts consultants began to realise the possibilities of community action consultancy. And it is a pity that the rhetoric and hyperbole of the writing should cloud the really useful messages contained in the selected projects. So treat this as a valuable source book, with a collection of good photographs – but don't expect an easy read.

Robert Holden is a landscape architect in London



1.

BOOK

By Richard Weston

Miniature and Panorama: Vogt Landscape Architects, Projects 2000-06. By Günther Vogt et al. Lars Müller Publishers, 2006. 576pp. £39.90



2.

1 & 2. Vogt's planting schemes encompass lush tapestries of colour and austere monocultures of birch

This thick wedge of a book on the Swiss landscape architect Günther Vogt is filled with colour and a clamour of texts and images. Presumably the aim is to offer an allusive, multifaceted view of his work and ideas, and the result feels more like a website than a traditional book.

Vogt was the partner of the celebrated, prodigiously productive Dieter Kienast, who died young in 1998. Kienast's monographs were famously restrained, with a let-the-work-speak-for-itself combination of elegant drawings and large black-and-white photographs, accompanied by matter-of-fact descriptions.

In their place we get a bewildering array of material by 'artist friends' and by Vogt himself – numerous short texts and photographic essays as well as project documentation.
The linking theme is our relationship with nature, with Vogt's schemes occupying only half of the 576 pages.

While there is much of interest, I found this medium-is-the-message presentation slightly annoying.

Among the artists' contributions, Hamish Fulton's 'paper walks' and Olafur Eliasson's photographs of Vogt's rainforest at Zurich zoo seem to me a waste of space. Christian Voqt offers some pleasant photographic 'miniatures and panoramas' of the projects, while Olaf Unverzart's pictorial essay, entitled 'The Production of Plants', contains several memorable images, including the bizarre sight of an auditorium-like auction room in which racks of plants are

mechanically paraded before hundreds of buyers.

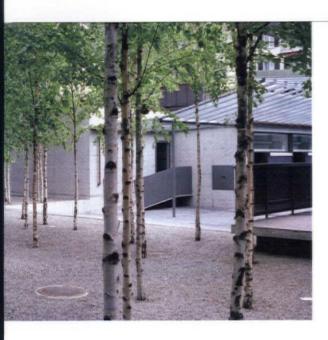
The longest text,
Peter Erni's 'Nowhere and
Everywhere' – an exploration
of the garden as an emblem of
our 'ceaseless quest for paradise'
– does not seem to me quite so
original or profound as its arch
style would like us to think:
much of the text is italicised,
and comes replete with
marginal elaborations in small
type that are often of marginal
relevance.

By far the most interesting things in the book are Vogt's contributions, making the noise all the more annoying. His short texts are thoughtful meditations on the nature of nature, at their best when dealing with the implications of the specific, like the camouflage patterns of the peppered moth or what constitutes a terroir.

His visual essays – which range from catalogues of Swiss clouds and soil profiles to the cartography of mountains and the stunning 'relief maps' of Edouard Imhof – are also more engaging than the contributions of the artists, who've been drafted in to add cultural weight.

And so to the work itself. This ranges in scale from a vast new residential district in China to more discreet pieces like the sculptured terrain around Herzog & de Meuron's Laban Centre in London or the wobbly planters in Foster + Partners' Gherkin.

The formal assurance and clarity we came to expect from Kienast Vogt is still there, and, if a shift in direction can be detected, it is towards a greater interest in the botanical/horticultural possibilities



of landscape design, and in natural processes as sources of inspiration. Among the latter I particularly liked the courtyard of Zurich's Park Hyatt hotel, where a Karst landscape was abstracted into slightly convex and concave slabs calculated to dry differentially.

Vogt's planting schemes

– beautifully notated
graphically – range from
austerely minimal monocultures
of birch trees to lavish tapestries
of colour.

A corporate headquarters in Saint Gall teems with almost 200 perennials, orchestrated according to a complex score based on flowering times and colours, while at the home of FIFA in Zurich the world's major vegetation zones are evoked including, in the courtyard at the building's

heart, a richly planted recreation of a clearing in a North American cloud forest.

Having dwelt on the book's perversities, I must end by saying that it is beautifully presented and that most of its varied pages can be dipped into with pleasure. Vogt is clearly a major talent in his own right and, on the evidence presented here, well on the way to establishing a distinctive position in European landscape architecture. It will be fascinating to see how his work develops, and when he next presents it in book form I hope that he will do so more discursively, in a format that gives the projects the breathing space they deserve.

Richard Weston is a professor at the Welsh School of Architecture, Cardiff University



CRITIC'S CHOICE

By Andrew Mead

Given the crowds that flock these days between the London Eye, Tate Modern and Borough Market, it's maybe hard to remember that a decade ago London's South Bank was moribund – a bleak zone where concert-goers scurried into the darkness and Caffè Nero was nowhere on the horizon. The reopening of the Royal Festival Hall after Allies and Morrison's restoration has cemented the transformation of this area. But there's a reminder of the not-so-good old days in an exhibition at the V&A called Royal Festival Hall Revival.

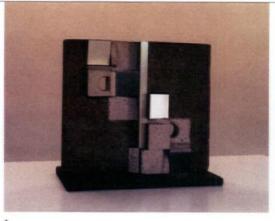
Some photos taken by Allies and Morrison in 1996 set the scene, showing the compromised interior of the RFH and its troubled environs. The show then revisits the hall's creation (construction drawings, press coverage, some Robin Day chairs), before touching on key aspects of the restoration (especially of the auditorium), and celebrating the results in colour photos by Dennis Gilbert (www.vam.ac.uk).

Which is fine as far it goes. But there's no mention of the controversy surrounding the work on the auditorium, the technical content is a little thin, and – surely a missed opportunity – there's no sense that the restoration has just been unveiled, with evaluations in many newspapers and magazines. Some acknowledgement of this (if just a board with pinned-up articles) would make the show seem more immediate – a talking point as well as a history lesson.

Alongside the Skylon and Dome of Discovery, the RFH was central to the 1951 Festival of Britain, and all three are prominent in a nostalgia-laden book by Paul Rennie, which has just appeared – Design: Festival of Britain 1951 (Antique Collectors Club, £14.95). With its many pages of illustrations, ostensibly it's a survey of all the souvenirs and ephemera that the event generated: the posters, headscarfs, mugs, medals and jigsaws alongside postcards of the temporary pavilions (pictured).

But it isn't just a retro indulgence. Referring to the South Bank as 'an ongoing architectural laboratory', Rennie reminds us of what motivated the festival's organisers – the democratic idealism that the new parade of shops beside the RFH does not quite reflect.

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





2.

EXHIBITION

By Andrew Mead

Kenneth Martin and Mary Martin: Constructed Works. At Camden Arts Centre, Arkwright Road, London NW3, until 16 September

1. Maquette by Mary Martin for her work

at Musgrave Park Hospital, Belfast

2. One of Kenneth Martin's mobiles

At the entrance to the first-floor galleries at Camden Arts
Centre (CAC), remodelled
by Tony Fretton in 2004, is a
maquette by Mary Martin.
It's for an 'environment' in the
'This is Tomorrow' exhibition at
London's Whitechapel Gallery
in 1956 – a show featuring
several artist/architect
collaborations (Alison and Peter
Smithson with sculptor Eduardo
Paolozzi, for instance) that is
now most remembered for
launching Pop Art in the UK.

But the exhibit that Martin created with her husband Kenneth and architect John Weeks was more austere and abstract. The Martins belonged to a group of artists who called themselves Constructionists; using everyday materials such as hardboard, stainless steel and perspex, their works sought to shape and activate space. Seen

today in CAC's deft installation, they still look fresh, engaging with architecture now as much as when they were made.

Mary Martin went on to realise a number of large-scale pieces for buildings, including Llewellyn Davies Weeks' Musgrave Park Hospital, Belfast, and RMJM's Stirling University. They share the language of her smaller domestic works, in which honeycomb-like clusters of angled stainless-steel planes come alive with the light, or rhythmic groups of painted wooden blocks and planes form shallow orthogonal reliefs.

Reproduced in the excellent cheap catalogue, a 1957 model of Llewellyn Davies Weeks' Corby Diagnostic Centre, with its multiple monopitch roofs, shows just how much architect and artist

were in tune at that time. But it's three of Mary Martin's last works – constructions in clear and coloured perspex from 1969 – that seem most resonant now. In the precisely calculated way that the perspex planes slide past each other, meet, or seem to float, Martin's sculptural shorthand at once evokes architecture.

From Kenneth Martin's output, the CAC shows a mixture of mobiles and paintings – the mobiles mostly suspended in a line down the main room as a family of related forms. With asymmetrical spiralling arrangements of brass or steel strips, sometimes bent into arcs or circles, they're especially effective in silhouette – the metal gleaming as they slowly rotate. A photograph in the catalogue shows several of these

mobiles hung in a ward of London's Whittington Hospital in 1953, where they were 'valued for the mesmerising and soothing effect' they had on patients – it's easy to see why that was so.

Martin's paintings are from a series he worked on over many years called *Chance and Order*: chance determining the points at which the paintings' coloured bands or lines (their main constituents) begin and end. The results, though in no sense proposals for architecture, can nonetheless seem to anticipate some of today's computer-generated designs.

This is art that's in dialogue with architecture, with neither discipline usurping the other – maybe a more fruitful way for them to coexist than forced or funding-led collaboration?



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Munkenbeck+Marshall Urbanism Unit B, North Building, Gainsborough Studios 1, Poole Street, London N1 5EB



Experienced Part I architectural student

with CAD skills, Vectorworks or similar

required by architectural practice in Covent Garden. To start immediately. Please send CV to CKC Architects 5 Dryden Street. London WC2E 9NW

SHORELINE HOUSING PARTNERSHIP

EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST – REMODELLING OF OLDER PERSONS SHELTERED HOUSING



Shoreline Housing Partnership is a Registered Social Landlord with properties throughout North East Lincolnshire. We are currently seeking Expressions of Interest from suitably qualified and experienced Architects Practices for the remodelling and refurbishment of one of our Older Persons Sheltered Housing schemes in Grimsby.

The scheme currently has 14 one bed flats and 14 bed-sits and stands in extensive grounds within a semi-rural location. We are seeking an imaginative and innovative solution to the remodelling of the dwelling. This will include the conversion of the bed-sits into flats together with other internal and external solutions. refurbishments of the dwelling to provide a modern and attractive scheme.

This project is a pilot for the refurbishment of all our sheltered housing stock and will act as a model to demonstrate the potential for improvement and to provide a design code for the all our schemes.

Applications are therefore invited from suitably qualified and experienced Architects who must be able to demonstrate the following;:-

- · Experience of similar schemes in the public and private sector.
- · A successful track record of resident involvement in the
- design an development of housing schemes

 The availability of resources to cope with the design and development of the scheme, from initial design and consultation stages through to completion of the project.

 The ability to work as part of a team delivering the overall project.

Interested organisations should respond in writing no later than 12 Noon,on Monday on 20th August, 2007 to the following;-

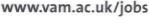
Martin Berry Shoreline Housing Partnership, Devonshire House, Bull Ring Lane, Grimsby, North East Lincolnshire DN 31 1ES

It is currently the intention to interview selected responders week commencing during 3rd September, 2007

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> To apply online, please visit our website CVs will not be accepted Closing date: 31 August 2007







A Clerkenwell based job agency set up by Architects for Architects

Cool hotel architectural £45,000 p.a. + benefits.

A dynamic & progressive practice of 35 in N1 are looking to appoint a Project
Architect to lead a team of Architects in the refurbishment of a 5 star hotel. Successive candidates must possess excellent communication skills, be confident dealing with clients & have previous experience of leading a team of design consultants. This is a complex & highly challenging project & is a great opportunity to further you career. Autocad an advantage.

Graund-breaking schemes! £35,000-£40,000 p.a.

A small practice in SEI who won Young Architect of the Year in 2001 are looking for a recently qualified Architect to work on several pioneering competition schemes.

Successful applicants must have excellent design & technical skills & an ability to visualise their ideas using free-hand sketching as well as 3D modelling. A superb apportunity to join this award winning practice & see projects get built! Vectorworks

Run quality projects! £38,000-£45,000 p.a.

A practice of 7 in Hammersmith are looking to appoint 2 Project Architects to work on high-end residential schemes in and around London. Successful condidates must be confident job runners & be able to take projects through from early design to completion. This is a great chance for someone to gain a good level of responsibility early on in their career. Autocad an advantage but not essential.

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Very prestigious practice. A senior post to work closely with the client and contractors on a £300M mixed use development, the project is at the design monitoring stage therefore excellent communications skills & design, technical & co-ordinating skills required. Ref: 3627 (Philip)

rchitects/Part2's/Technicians Marylebone/Clerkenwell £38k-£48k+Bens With a unique & creative approach to design, this desirable & renowned award winning London practice now requires individuals who possess a flair for design, as well as an eye for technical detailing. You will be RIBA / ARB qualified, with a career history that reflects your skills and industry knowledge on retail, transport or residential schemes. Both AutoCAD and Microstation required but not essential.

Ref: L389 (Hannah)

Architects / Technicians Watford / Hertfordshire Circa £30k - £48k + Bens A name synonymous with the construction industry for over 130 years with a reputation for quality. This rare opportunity is now available for candidates with proven technical for quality. This rare opportunity is now available for candidates with proven technical and AutoCAD skills to further develop their careers with a 1st class company. As you would expect from a company of this calibre the remuneration package will be extremely Ref. 3617 (Philip)

Technical Managers / Co-ordinators London / Thames Valley £40k - £60k + Pkg
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Technicians/Assistants/Architects Elstree/Watford c£28k-£45k+Bens Having carved out an enviable reputation working in various areas including secure buildings, sustainability, heritage and residential. Opportunities now exist for go-getters who would like involvement on projects from inception to completion and are hungry for success would like involvement on projects from inception to completion and the work of the standing and progression. The practice is using AutoCAD 2006 so this knowledge / understanding Ref: 3629 (Philip)

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In return you will receive an excellent remuneration package including a competitive salary, company car or car allowance and private healthcare.

Please write with your CV and recent examples of your work to: Joanne Pottinger, Personnel Manager, HBG UK Ltd, Centrium, Griffiths Way, St Albans, Hertfordshire AL1 2RD, jpottinger@hbqc.co.uk



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Full details and an application form are available from our website www.gdst.net/vacancies. Alternatively telephone the 24 hour recruitment line on 020 7393 6609, or email recruitment@wes.gdst.net.

No CVs or agencies please. The successful candidate will be required to undertake a CRB check.



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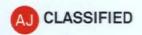
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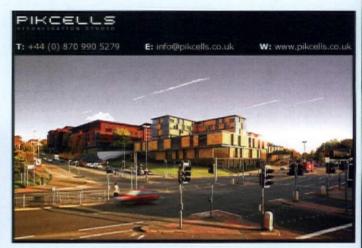
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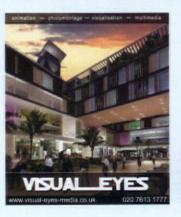








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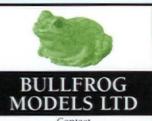
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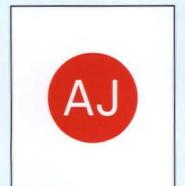
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- Claudine Blamey, Corporate Social Responsibility Director British Land
- Dr Paul Toyne, Sustainability Director, Bovis Lend Lease

For full details of the updated programme and speaker line-up please visit the website.

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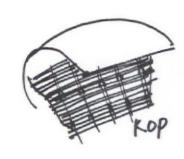


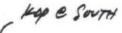


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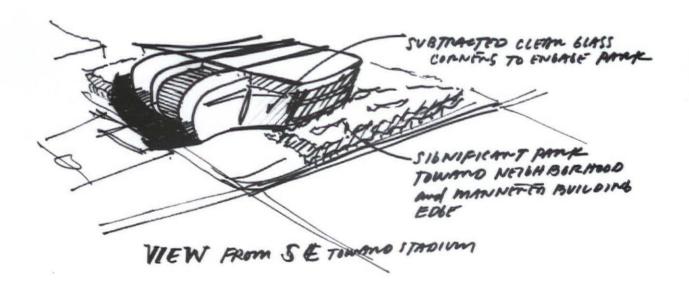


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Preliminary sketches for Liverpool FC's new stadium. By Bryan Trubey of HKS Architects



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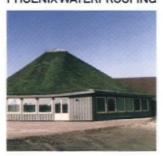
SIGNBOX



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Signkit FE LED is a low-voltage fire exit sign that consumes 80 per cent less power compared to other systems and requires no maintenance. This precision-engineered, sustainable sign solution has a minimum life of 60,000 hours and has automatic battery back-up to ensure continuous illumination.

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TRIANCO



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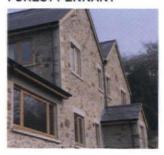
BURMATEX



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Contract carpet manufacturer Burmatex has recently completed its contribution to the extension of a Bradford school. Burmatex products have been used to create a positive learning environment and to assist the school in complying with Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) requirements.

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