

02.10.08

IT in Practice

*Animation software and a
guide to smartphones – p36*

Up the M1

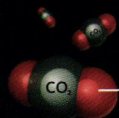
*Alain de Botton wants
to take you on holiday
to Watford Gap service
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AJ

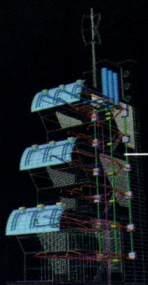
MAKE'S JUBILEE CAMPUS

*Ex-Foster architect Ken Shuttleworth's firm
expands the University of Nottingham with
three 'iconic' buildings – page 22*





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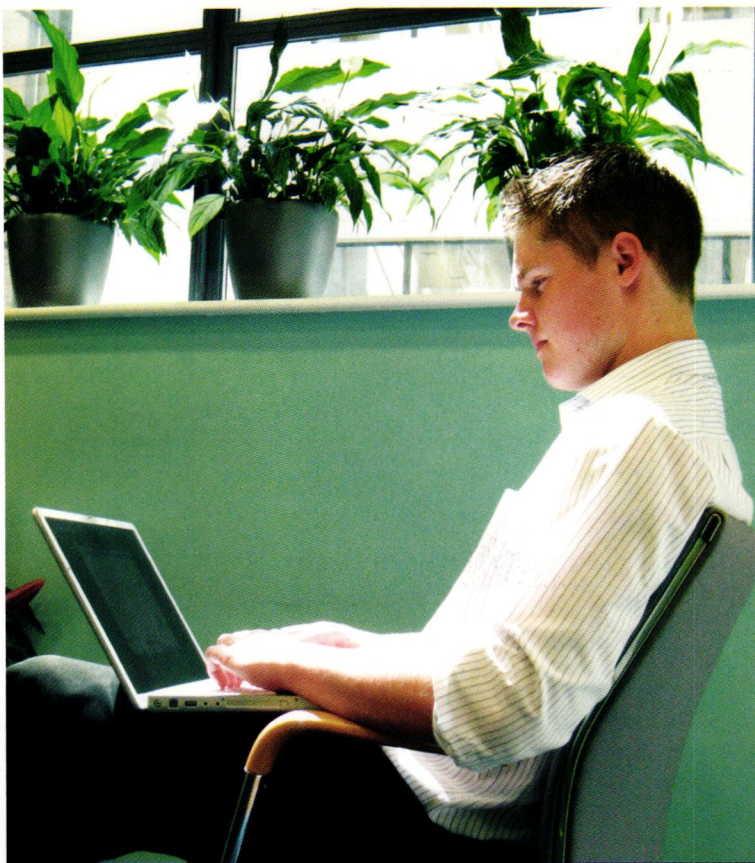
50 Top jobs: **RMJM; Atkins; Bespoke**

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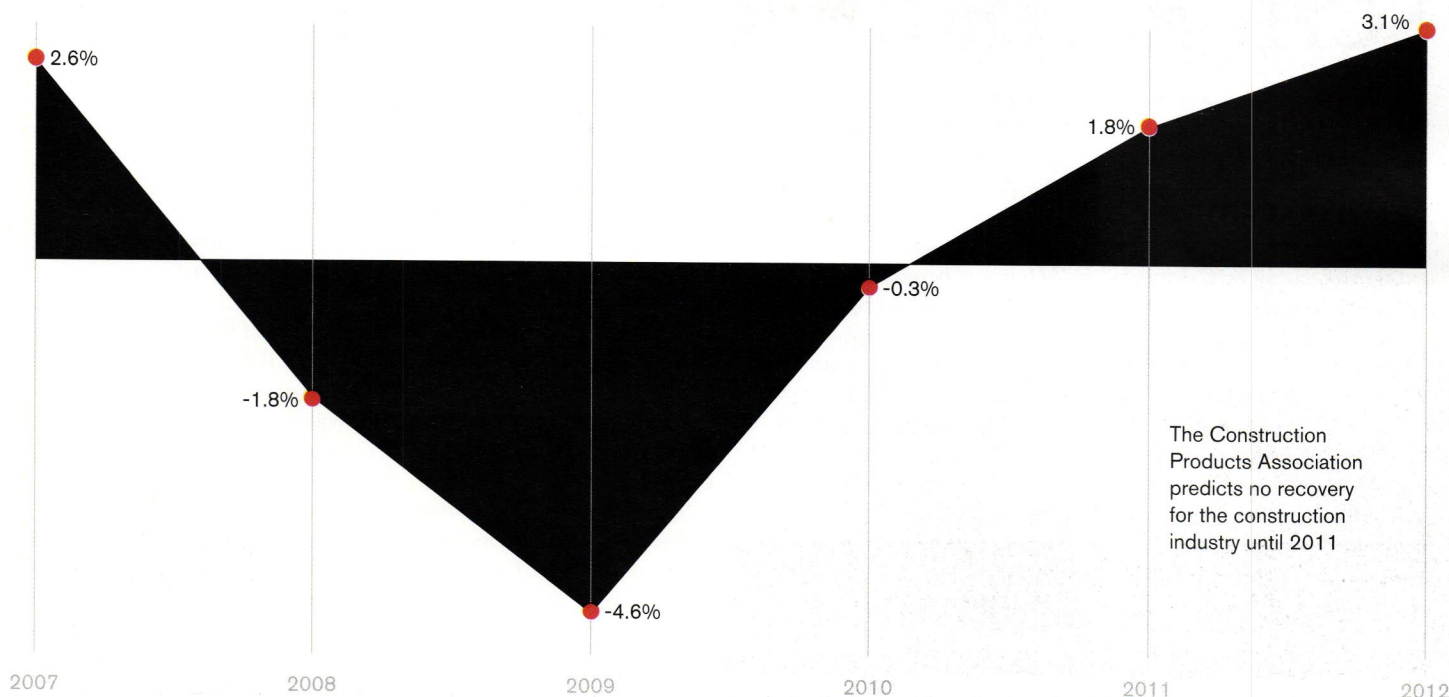
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NO UPTURN FOR THREE YEARS

Crisis will be 'worse than 1990', says former RIBA president

The construction industry should brace itself for a three-year decline in output of at least 7 per cent over the next three years. And there will be no return to growth until 2011 at the earliest, according to a report released today (2 October).

The study by the Construction Products Association (CPA), which represents 85 per cent of UK manufacturers and suppliers, predicts a 7 per cent drop in the total spend on construction between 2008 and 2010.

This follows another week of global financial chaos as the US House of Representatives voted against a US\$700 billion (£380 billion) bail-out plan for the US

stockmarket and major banks across Europe went into administration.

The report predicts that 2008 will see the lowest number of housing starts for 60 years and a 22 per cent fall in industrial and commercial output. Both figures will continue to fall in 2009.

CPA chief executive Michael Ankers said of the figures: 'These forecasts are without doubt the gloomiest we have produced since compiling this information and have been downgraded from just three months ago to show the sharpest downturn since 1991.'

Make Architects founder Ken Shuttleworth said it was 'impossible to predict' but warned:

'2009 is going to be really nasty'.

Shuttleworth added: 'I was in India and even they were feeling the effects. The most work is likely to come from schools and other Private Finance Initiatives. Crossrail may also give architects some work – they'll need to design the stations.'

RIBA president Jack Pringle believes the forecast is too optimistic. 'This is shaping up to be worse than 1990,' he said.

'We didn't have the collapse of financial institutions and the world's biggest insurers going down back then. This won't be anything like the dotcom crash – this will be much more serious.'

The CPA says public sector

spending on construction has continued to rise since last year's Comprehensive Spending Review but, with lower tax revenues, spending could fall after 2010.

Urban Splash director Nick Johnson said: 'Anybody who is forecasting right now is in a difficult game. Whether it's one year or three years I couldn't say, but what I will say is that prior to this major slowdown we're witnessing, the basic economic models were wrong.'

'Demand in the housing sector really needs to come back – that will be a major factor in the situation.' *Richard Vaughan*
[Read Kieran Long's leader on page 18](#)

HATE-CAMPAIGN HOMES SCHEME DROPPED

Studio BAAD's controversial 'wonky' homes scheme in Hebden Bridge, West Yorkshire, which sparked an intimidation campaign against the firm, has been rejected by the local authority.

On Monday night, Calderdale Council's planning committee rejected its own council officers' recommendations to approve the £10 million Garden Street project.

The contentious mixed-use development, which would have created 48 homes, eight shops and 160 car-parking spaces in the centre of the town, hit the headlines last month when the practice reported bricks being

thrown through its windows.

The firm's PR, Tim Downs, was warned by an anonymous caller that he would leave Hebden Bridge 'in a wooden box' if the scheme went ahead.

However, despite the scheme receiving the support of CABE, the committee felt the project 'failed to respect or enhance the conservation area' and was 'not on a scale consistent with the size of Hebden Bridge'.

The decision has delighted Anthony Rae, one of nearly 300 people at the committee meeting and spokesperson for the Garden Street Action Group, which was

opposed to the project. He said: 'This is a great victory against a completely unnecessary and ill-advised development.'

'[For] the third time, we call upon the developer to act in the best interest of the town and abandon their proposals.'

A disappointed Philip Bintliff, founder of Studio BAAD, said: 'Against the backdrop of hecklers, I'm not certain any committee could have been expected to have come to a different conclusion.'

'But there are lawyers, barristers and planning consultants looking at the way forward. I can't see it ending here.' *Richard Waite*

THIS WEEK ON THE WEB

CULPRIT REVEALED IN CUTTY SARK BLAZE

The fire that ripped through the Cutty Sark last May was started by a dust extractor which had been left on over the weekend. The 19th-century tea clipper was being worked on in preparation for its new home, a visitor centre designed by Youmeheshe Architects, alongside Grimshaw.

DOON STREET TOWER CHALLENGED

Westminster City Council and English Heritage (EH) are mounting a legal challenge against Lifschutz Davidson Sandilands' Doon Street tower. The 43-storey skyscraper near London's South Bank was given the green light by communities secretary Hazel Blears in August, following a high-profile public inquiry.

SERGISON BATES MAKES SHORTLIST FOR NEWCASTLE HOUSING EXPO

Sergison Bates, FAT, dRMM and Niall McLaughlin have been named on an impressive 12-strong shortlist of practices vying to build houses as part of the Scotswood Expo in west Newcastle. Other finalists include Featherstone Associates, Proctor and Matthews and Malcolm Fraser Architects.

HOPKINS TO REVAMP EDWIN LUTYENS' HAMPSTEAD SCHOOL

Hopkins Architects has finally succeeded where 17 others have failed, by winning planning permission for the redevelopment of Edwin Lutyens' Grade II*-listed Henrietta Barnett School in London. After consultation with bodies such as English Heritage, the local authority approved the revamp.

Read all of these news stories in full and see images at WWW.ARCHITECTSJOURNAL.CO.UK



2007 winner:
Mole Architects'
Wabi Tea House,
Prickwillow,
Cambridgeshire

THE AJ SMALL PROJECTS PRIZE

The AJ is seeking entries for its annual AJ Small Projects Awards, sponsored by Rambøll Whitbybird.

The competition accepts schemes completed between 1 January 2007 and 1 November 2008, with a contract value of less than £250,000.

All projects must be unpublished, and the winning projects will be awarded £2,500 to be shared at the judges' discretion.

Last year's winner was Mole Architects for its £7,000 Wabi Tea House in Cambridgeshire.

Mole director Meredith Bowles said: 'At the beginning of most great architects' lives there is an exquisite small project marking the great works to come.'

The deadline for entries is 7 November 2008. For details and entry forms, visit www.architectsjournal.co.uk/smallprojects

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FRESH ACADEMIC BLOOD

Three new architecture-school figureheads talk about CAD monkeys, the credit crunch, and why they're not in London. By *Richard Vaughan* and *Richard Waite*

TOM JEFFERIES

This summer, Tom Jefferies was named head of the School of Architecture at Birmingham Institute of Art and Design (BIAD), Birmingham City University. Jefferies, 45, was previously senior lecturer at Manchester School of Architecture. He began teaching at the University of Liverpool School of Architecture, where he also studied, in 1991. He replaces former acting head Hannah Vowles.

Why Birmingham?

What interested me was the potential to develop the School of Architecture in Britain's largest industrial city. The school is small, with a strong focus on professionalism and working within a construction industry context. Cross-disciplinary engagement and growth will expand these core values.

In 2004, the University of Central England [the former name for Birmingham City University] had a 93 per cent failure rate. Do you think these results still plague the school? Every school of architecture has had turbulent periods in its history. The consequent restructuring for us produced

Birmingham School of Architecture BIAD and the school now sits within one of the strongest centres for visual culture and design in the UK, with expertise from jewellery to landscape. In my view, an art institute is the natural place for a vibrant architecture school.

What does Birmingham offer? Birmingham School of Architecture BIAD is unique in having both the RIBA president-in-waiting Ruth Reed and the recent president of the Landscape Institute, Kathryn Moore on its staff. Both bring exceptional profiles – they're fantastic role models. This quality reflects the school's ambition and we intend to develop these links.

Is there too much focus on London in architecture? Ruth Reed ran her successful presidential campaign on regional representation and I'm looking forward to working with her in my new role. My professional and academic focus has always been international.

Will you be making any major changes in your first year as head? Course restructuring will enable maximalism and cross-disciplinary working. I've only been here for two weeks and have already been in discussions with professors of

other disciplines such as jewellery, 3D design and fine art.

Will you continue non-academic work with urban renewal project HMRI Pathfinder?

All my work in consultancy, such as that with Maccleanor Lavington, directly informs or grows out of my research. I intend to continue this strategy. However, the practice Wilkinson Evans Jefferies, which we set up for a European 3 scheme in

work that responds to the demands of energy costs, zero carbon and rising consumer expectations within a shrinking economic context.

Do you worry that the students training now won't find a job?

The 1990s' recession taught me that architects are mobile and the world needs buildings.

Which architects will feature on your course?

'In my view, an art institute is the natural place for a vibrant architecture school'

Holland, is in hibernation.

Ernst Neufert and PPS3 will feature heavily.

What is the biggest challenge facing architects over the next three years?

Maintaining the importance of quality – this means producing

Name one thing people may not know about you.

Glenn Howells used to live on my street.





RICHARD MARKS

Why Kingston?

Kingston has a long tradition in tectonic practice. It's about the idea of building insight, on site, in a place, out of materials.

Also, its peripheral position for me was interesting. You could be very apologetic about where

it is. It has critical distance, and that's very important. It has fantastic facilities – it's just spent £1.5 million on its workshops, which gives it an almost unique resource at undergraduate level. We're one of very few schools that is able to go out and

'I want to be part of a school that's confident enough to teach people the background fabric of cities'

Kingston is located. I saw it as an opportunity to have a certain type of concentration that comes from being slightly outside of the fray.

Does Kingston suffer from not being a central London school?

Possibly, but Kingston has real strengths from being where

engage in 'making' and thinking through making.

Given the current economic climate, do you fear your students may not find a job at the end of their course?

Yes, it's obviously a fear. Higher education is very expensive, and architecture is an expensive course

in higher education. I've always taken a position that what schools need to do is give people the ability to make their way in the world. I hope we can offer a course that is very sophisticated but also gives them a position that is useful to practice.

How would you describe your ideal architecture school?

My visual analogy for an architecture school would be Raphael's School of Athens. I want people to be close enough to be able to critique other people's work, using the same terms of reference, so everybody understands.

I want to be part of a school that is confident enough to teach people the sophisticated background fabric of cities – so we're not training students to design objects all the time, rather, we're designing things that might oscillate between foreground and background.

What favourite architects will feature on your course?

I'm influenced by lots and lots of people. There are moments that interest me. I gave a lecture and was told that most of my points of reference came from a period between 1890 and 1920. That period has become important for DRDH Architects as a practice – it's a moment of doubt between

an understood condition of 19th-century craft traditions and modernity.

Why is the whole school working on a single project in Croydon?

It's an interesting moment to be speaking about a place like Croydon from a place like Kingston. Croydon operates in the same periphery as Kingston does. We're asking, what does it mean to be a city within a larger city?

We're trying to work on strategic projects that give us a voice and make ourselves heard, but don't have to be done within certain timescales. So, while I think Boris Johnson couldn't be worse for the London that I operate in, for the school it could be a very interesting time.

DANIEL ROSBOTTOM

Daniel Rosbottom, 39, is co-director of DRDH Architects and joined Kingston University as head of the School of Architecture and Landscape earlier this year. He has been teaching architecture for 15 years, starting his career where he began his studies, at Leeds Metropolitan University.

PRUE CHILES

Prue Chiles has been appointed director of architecture at the University of Sheffield, taking over from well-known industry figure Jeremy Till. Chiles, 48, has taught at the university for 17 years. She runs her own experimental research facility called The Bureau of Design Research as well her own private practice. Both are based on campus.

Why Sheffield?

I studied at Portsmouth and did a Rome Scholarship for two years (1984-86), where I looked at the early Renaissance – that's where my history and theory interests come from. After that, I went to America and worked with [architectural partnership] Roche-Dinkeloo for a very long nine months before returning and working for Rivington Street Studio. In 1992, I came up to Sheffield to be with my

really am is an architect.' So I did a lot of competitions and was shortlisted for the National Centre for Popular Music in Sheffield. We are always shortlisted, we never win. And now it's galling that my ex-students are winning, like Andy Groarke of Carmody Groarke for the Sheffield Festival Centre.

You are not head of school – can you explain your director role?

My role covers all the taught programmes: Parts 1 and 2, all RIBA, all ARB, and a strategic view of undergraduates, MArch and Part 3 – and how they all work together. Undergraduate and MArch diploma courses are becoming, like in many schools, quite distinct and split. We're trying to address this. The culture of MArch needs to permeate the degree and vice versa.

How do you think Sheffield, as a school, is perceived?

We have a social, cultural and political emphasis that's very much our intellectual agenda,

So what kind of architects are you producing?

We send out these incredibly broad, intelligent students with an ability to think for themselves. We've had criticism from some local practices over the years, saying, 'You don't give us CAD monkeys.' I say, 'Good. You teach them'. How long does it take an intelligent person to learn that? I think it's fine that we're not producing students that can go straight in and make commercial practices a profit in their first

month. All the good practices tell us: 'You have really well-rounded students'.

Are you proposing any major changes at Sheffield?

We don't want to completely redefine ourselves and we don't want to change the course, but we wish to build on some of those initiatives and on others we have let go a little bit. One thing we need to address is the admission policy – to widen it out – but it is extremely difficult.

'We've had criticism from some practices over the years, saying, "You don't give us CAD monkeys"'

husband [an academic at the University's school of archaeology]. I was only expecting to be here for three years.

Did you miss practising?

After taking on a full-time teaching position in 1993, I spent the next seven years wanting to get back into practice. I enjoy writing and I can write critically about things, but I was always thinking, 'Actually what I

perhaps at the loss of really fantastic drawings. But there are other things students need to know that are just as important – they have the rest of their lives to refine their drawings. At Sheffield, they're not going to spend eight months drawing; they're going to spend four months drawing. For the other four months, they will learn to understand a political and social structure, which will create architecture that people want.



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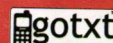


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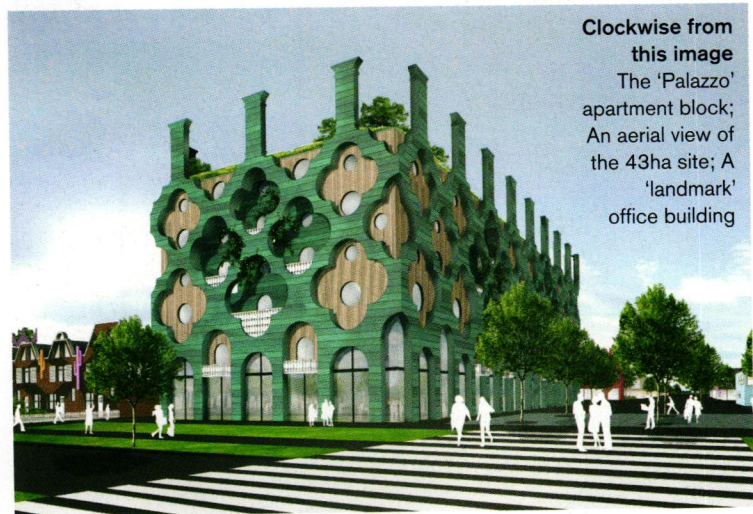


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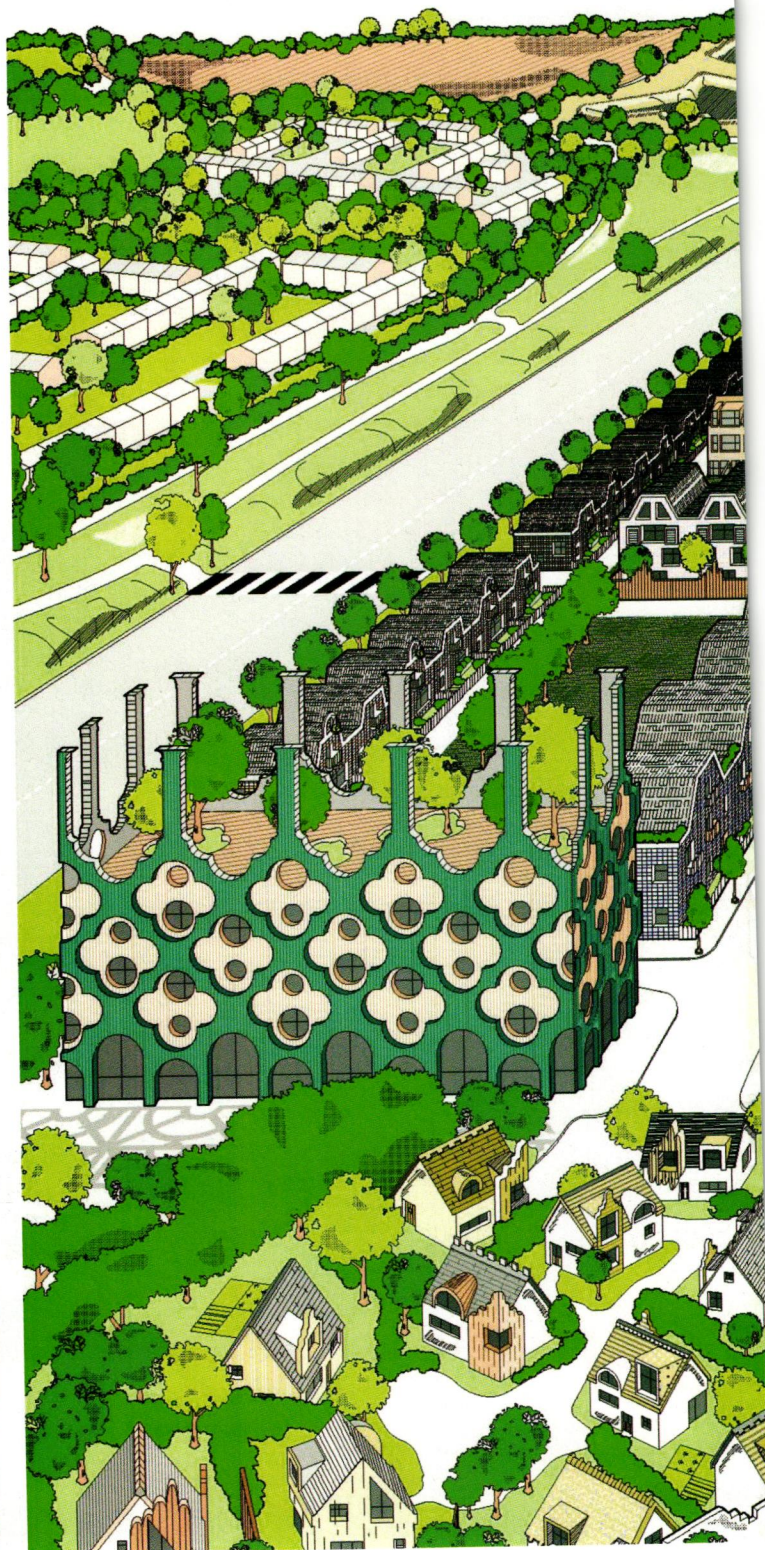
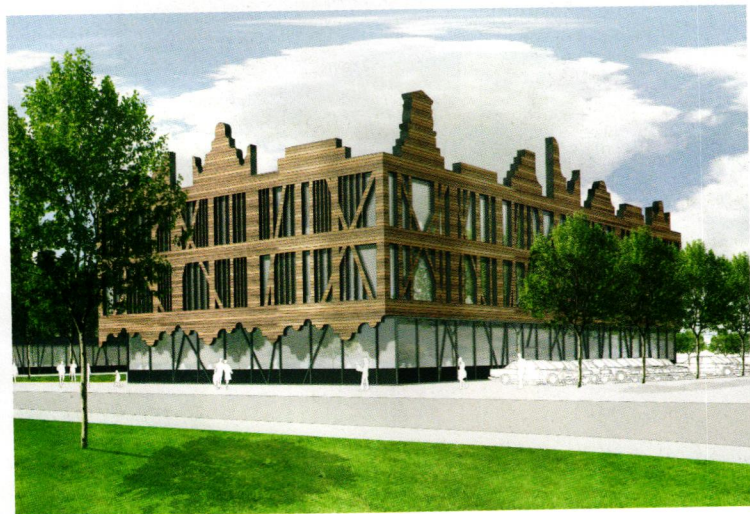
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FAT CONVERTS WOOL-FACTORY SITE

London-based practice FAT has submitted these plans to convert the site of a former wool factory in Darlington into 1,200 homes and office space 'for several thousand'. The £100 million scheme at Lingfield Point – once the largest wool-manufacturing centre in Europe – is being billed as a 'trendy' mixed-use, low-energy development. The project, for landowner and developer Marchday, will include a new medical centre and public allotments, plus an outdoor performance area and exhibition space inside a disused power station. *Richard Waite*

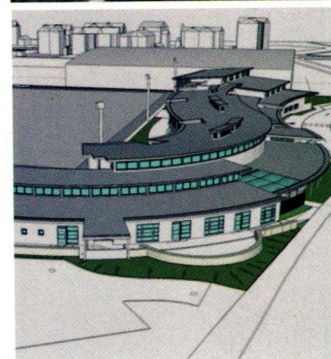
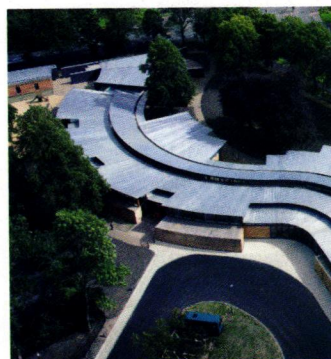
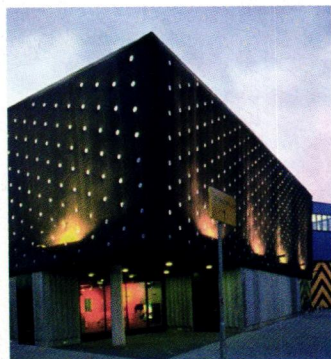
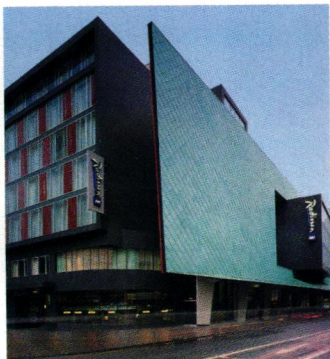


Clockwise from this image
The 'Palazzo' apartment block;
An aerial view of the 43ha site; A
'landmark' office building





Astragal



SPOT THE DIFFERENCE

Astragal can assure readers he has not touched a drop of liquor this week. But he has suffered from an unusual bout of double vision. It first started when **Alan Dunlop** of Gordon Murray + Alan Dunlop Architects noticed similarities between his firm's Radisson Hotel in Glasgow (pictured top left) and SMC Parr's Abertay University building in Dundee (bottom left). Then Dutch firm **Bentham Crouwel** contacted Astragal after spotting a 'striking resemblance' between its 1998 concert hall in Tilburg (top centre) and **careyjones'** recently completed Soundbox in Sheffield (bottom centre) (AJ 18.09.08). This was followed by another lookalike of an Alan Dunlop designed-scheme – a

proposed **Austin-Smith-Lord** school in Glasgow (bottom right) which appeared to owe something to the award-winning curves of Hazelwood School (top right) (AJ 27.09.07), also in Glasgow. Of course, it turns out it's all just a big coincidence.

BOREDOM THRESHOLD

Rumours that **Norman Foster** and **Jean Nouvel** could be dropped as lead designers on the Walbrook Square office project in the City of London were not met happily by City head of planning **Peter Rees**. Rees – who refuses to allow any buildings built in his square mile to fall below his particular benchmark – said it was the first he had heard but had a warning for anyone attempting to dumb

down designs. 'They should be aware of Peter Rees' low threshold for boredom,' he told Astragal. 'If someone doesn't know about my low threshold for boredom, then they will find it very difficult to get something through planning.'

HARD SELL

This week, **Zad Rogers'** Clere Street rooftop dwelling in London caught Astragal's eye.

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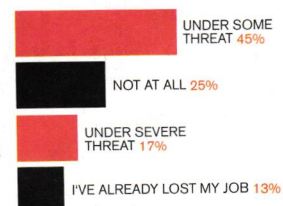
Designed by **Tonkin Liu** and **Zad's** dad, Sir Richard, the five-bedroom home, which sits on top of a Shoreditch warehouse, is now up for sale. Both in their 40s, **Zad** and partner **Lucy Musgrave** have perhaps outgrown the charms of the obsessively hip and youthful district – or maybe, like the rest of us, they need a bit of extra dosh. Whatever the reason, estate agent The Modern House has enlisted the AJ to big up its sell. It quotes online editor **Ruth Slavid**, who wrote a building study of it in these pages (AJ 30.08.07), saying: 'The apartment is suspended from the structure, giving it entirely column-free spaces.' No mention of a finder's fee though.

THIS WEEK'S ONLINE POLL

Do you feel that your job is under threat as a result of the credit crunch?

Next week's question: Who do you think should win the Turner Prize?

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Deputy Mayor of Lewisham

Ian Clement,
Deputy Mayor, Government Relations

Nicholas Falk,
Director, URBED
(Urban and Economic Development) Ltd

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Tuesday 4 November
Half-day conference, 9.00am - 12.30pm
£149 (£129 NLA Supporters)

Speakers confirmed

Janet Rangeley,
Chairman, Integrated Transport
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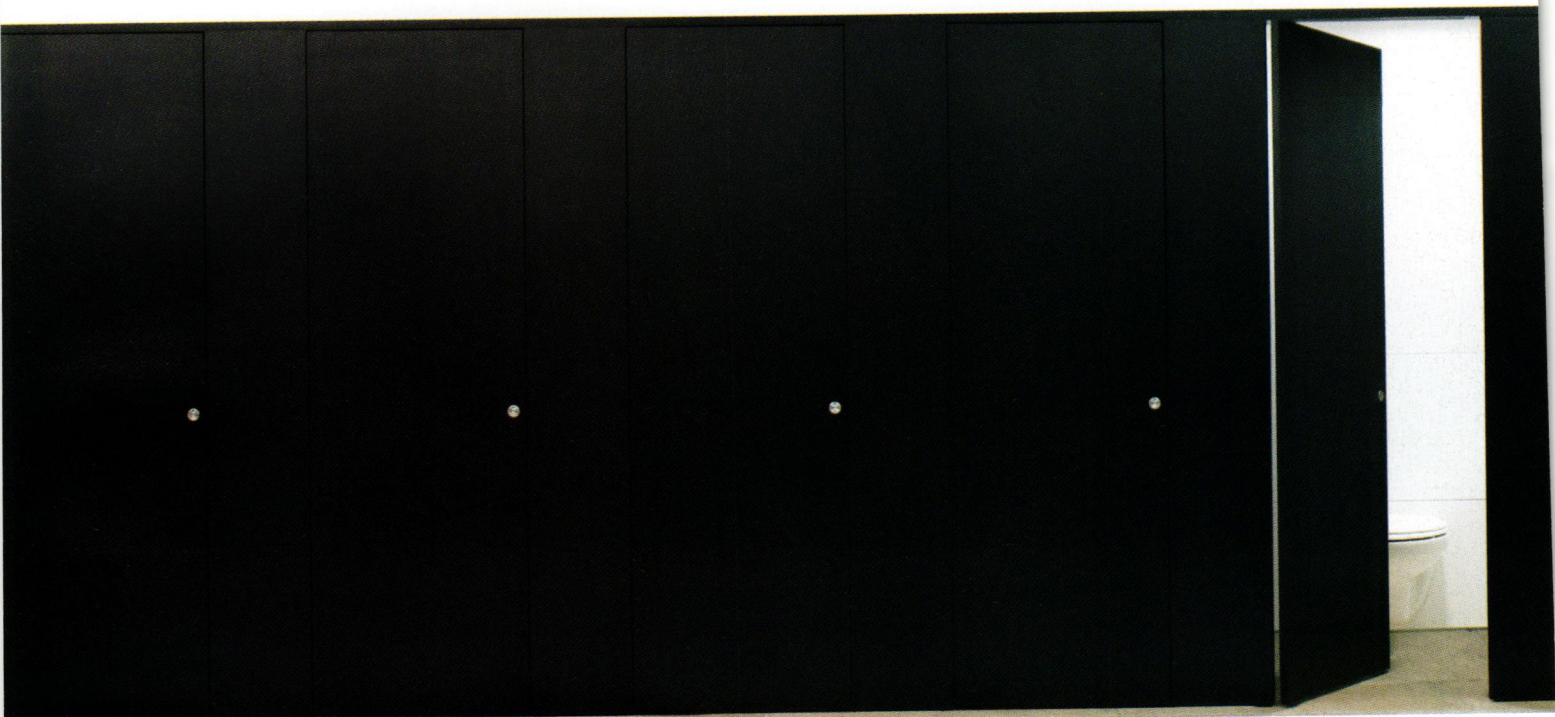
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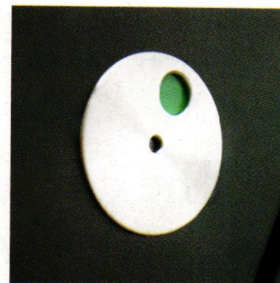
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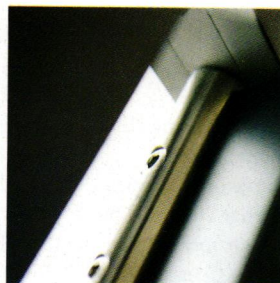
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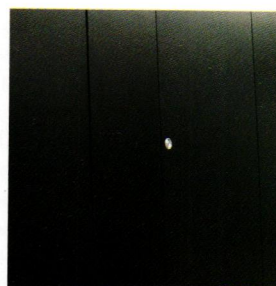
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Leader The consensus seems to be that the upturn is three years away, says *Kieran Long*

It's probably a very good time to be going to architecture school. If you were 18 now and starting your undergraduate degree, you will probably be facing three great years of being taught by very good architects (who suddenly have the time to teach), and the prospect of emerging just as the downturn ends.

Industry experts are now predicting three years of pain for the commercial sector. Michael Slade, chief executive of developer Helical Bar, said this week that 2011 will be when people begin to dip their toes back in the development industry. The Construction Products Association says that while the housing sector might recover sooner (it has suffered longer), the construction industry

won't reach 2008 output levels again until 2012, but will begin to grow a year earlier.

There are two sectors that remain hopeful. Health projects have jumped in importance in the last year and education, too, remains vital, with the government's Building Schools for the Future (BSF) project picking up speed. And it's not just BSF. For those lucky enough to have a piece of the framework agreement pie there's huge investment in higher education colleges, and still some university work.

But all this depends on public spending remaining high. That's a given now, but you only have to look to Ireland, the one European country officially in recession, to see how long that can last – all spending has been cut for

public projects not yet gone to tender. Let's hope the well doesn't also run dry in the UK.

A BAD SPORT

With the award of the Stirling Prize just over a week away, the true byzantine nature of the prize became clear with a strange episode this week. The former editor of an academic journal emailed the chair of the jury, Gordon Murray, to influence him away from a shortlisted project. Maybe this kind of lobbying goes on all the time in juries, but this transparent attempt to undercut the process is thoroughly depressing and doesn't help the atmosphere of the old boys' club that the RIBA claims it is trying to shake off. kieran.long@emap.com

Opinion New legislation for public buildings means there's no hiding your actual energy use, says *Judit Kimpian*

The UK government introduced Display Energy Certificates (DECs) this week for all buildings over 1,000m² occupied by a public authority. Until now, any new-builds or buildings bought, sold or rented, needed an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC), or asset rating. While this requires designers to demonstrate an improvement in CO₂ emissions against a notional building, the new DEC is based on real meter readings and bills.

The EU came up with DECs to address the fact that public buildings rarely change hands, and occupy a fraction of the new-build sector, so the only way to communicate their efficiency was to report actual energy use. In doing so, it has launched a legislation much more onerous than an EPC – user energy can account for over half of a building's energy use, and up until now has been unregulated.

This is a momentous change which will

bring even the most green boroughs into focus. Increasingly, clients will ask architects and consultants to estimate their future operational ratings. How can architects do this?

Thankfully, organisations such as the Usable Buildings Trust and CIBSE have invested a great deal of time to define CO₂ emission benchmarks for key building sectors and benchmark categories, which provide the backbone of the DEC ratings. The CIBSE publication on the revised benchmarks should

This is a change which will bring even the most green boroughs into focus

give a good idea to the more technologically minded architects about the average ratings for a benchmark category. For example, the average annual rating for offices will be somewhere between 70-80kg CO₂/m² but interestingly, the same benchmark will be used regardless of the ventilation system.

CarbonBuzz (www.carbonbuzz.org), from Chartered Institute of Building Services Engineers (CIBSE) and the RIBA, launches on 5 November. It allows architects and consultants to benchmark their projects against CIBSE's benchmarks online, anonymously. It provides a visual interface and bridges the gap

between forecasted energy use during design, and actual energy use in operation.

Real data would help designers and clients address occupant behaviour, which is a key step towards creating a truly Zero Carbon Britain. Sadly, there are no immediate plans for the government to make the DEC database public, even though architects and engineers need the information to verify whether their ambitious low-energy designs work in practice. So projects like CarbonBuzz, creating an anonymous database of UK projects, will improve the quality and quantity of data available.

While the industry is straining to provide enough inspectors to respond to the urgent need for DEC certificates, the assessment process has created one of the best systems we have for raising awareness of the real energy use of buildings. With organisations such as the British Council for Offices consulting their members on the adoption of voluntary DECs, architects had better take notice.

For more information, visit www.epbd-ca.org or go to www.communities.gov.uk and search for Display Energy Certificate. Judit Kimpian is head of sustainability and advanced modelling at Aedas Architects comment@architectsjournal.co.uk



Forces of good and evil met again in Venice to battle for the soul of architecture, writes Patrick Lynch

The conflict stirred up by the British Pavilion at the Venice Biennale, and the fact that it ignored curator Aaron Betsky's theme of pseudo-critical masturbation, was the latest salvo in a battle for the soul of architecture today. This represents the second coming of a

conversation over breakfast). Somol and Whiting criticised the 'optical-conceptual model' of Eisenman that 'distanced' people from experience in order to make them question their responses to architecture. They also targeted 'the populist plot form' of Charles

logic architecture parlante, an architecture of accomplices rather than audiences'. Their insistence that 'a return to the plan is the best shot for this kind of projective discipline', to counter the pointless meanderings of 'critical architecture', is refreshing.

But Somol's naivety is made clear in an interview in *Pidgin*, Princeton school of architecture's student magazine, where he discusses his continued faith in the Modernist device of the diagram – rather than what Colin Rowe would call the 'plan-form'. Eisenman retaliates in the same issue with some psychodrama about the Oedipus complex that sounds like the wheels are about to come off the wheelchair: 'Everyone wants to kill me. I am considered Daddy. Let them try.' The same sort of bizarre overreaction by the establishment to criticism occurs in London too, of course, and the reason can only be a guilty conscience.

Eisenman's influence is inherited from the former Dark Lord, Philip Johnson

revolt by humanist rebels, the first of which was brutally suppressed by the avant-garde 20 years ago. Put bluntly, the last time anyone stood up to Peter Eisenman in public was Christopher Alexander in 1982. Wearying of Eisenman's endless, narcissistic verbal and visual diarrhoea, Alexander simply accused him of 'fucking up architecture'.

Eisenman's influence is an inheritance of the terrible patronage of the former Dark Lord, the late Philip Johnson. They invited Mark Wigley to write a Museum of Modern Art catalogue essay on Deconstruction in 1990, since he was the only person they knew who knew anything about Jacques Derrida. Wigley was a PhD student of English from New Zealand whose girlfriend was studying architecture in New York. Now he's dean of Columbia's graduate school of architecture and married to Beatriz Colomina, a professor at Princeton (alongside Eisenman).

Now, a new generation in the US has taken up arms against this evil empire, led by Robert 'R'E' Somol and Sarah Whiting. They guest-edited an issue of *Log* last year, a magazine edited by Eisenman's wife Cynthia Davidson (which should have made for interesting

Jencks and Robert Venturi, whereby inhabitants become 'consumed by their own subjectivities' as twin curses that afflict American architecture. Somol, sounding like he'd be played by George Clooney in the movie, rejects both of these traits in favour of 'a dialogic architecture *résonnante* rather than a mono-

The British Pavilion at the Venice Biennale this year



Sam Jacob. The flooding of Farnsworth House makes me feel itchy and agitated

Seeing Mies van der Rohe's Farnsworth House in Plano, Illinois, up to its neck in floodwater is enough to bring out obsessive-compulsive symptoms in even the most relaxed of us. Just imagining the whiteness of its frame and its transparent walls lapped by the muddy waters of the Fox River makes me itchy, uncomfortable and agitated.

The anxiousness that last month's flood creates goes to the core of what makes Farnsworth House such an exceptional project. Part of the house's sublime beauty is its precarious balance between 'nature' and 'culture'. *The building exists in a state of hypertension, suspended on legs intended to protect it from floods, but which symbolically articulate the separation of distinct realms.*

It's a condition described by Peter Smithson as 'rurb' – a compound of rural and urban that highlights the fundamental weirdness of the building, as

though you'd cut out a picture of the quintessential metropolitan interior and pasted it on to a *National Geographic* spread on the flora and fauna of the Midwest.

When I last visited it, the house was still owned by property developer and art collector Peter Palumbo. *Inside the oblong of warm air, Palumbo seemed to reveal in the notion of his house as a piece of culture.* In fact, you could interpret his inhabitation of it as a mixed-media piece about high Modernism, Cold War politics, international finance, 20th-century fine art, society marriages, the British monarchy and insurance claims – rather than anything resembling domesticity.

A letter of thanks from Margaret Thatcher hung framed in the bathroom. A photograph of Princess Diana was on a bureau behind a line of sharpened pencils, each with an embossed House of Lords motif. Looking through the house, beyond a stack of Andy

Warhol's Brillo boxes, you could see the turret of the Mappin & Webb building, which previously occupied the site of James Stirling's No. 1 Poultry in the City of London, where Palumbo battled for years to build Mies' only proposal for the UK. Here, the old cupola was displayed like the severed head of a defeated chief, a kind of ritualistic offering of pagan apology to Mies. These artefacts were set in the almost-void of Miesian abstraction. Loading this strangely dematerialised space with objects dense with cultural meaning seemed to ramp up the hypertension of the house, aligning it not only with an architectural concept, but also with totems of the machinations of the abstract and artificial.

A series of framed photographs documented a previous flood, showing the same Brillo boxes floating in green-brown liquid. *The interior of the house was filled with water, as though it were a fish tank, and the tension between landscape and architecture seemed to dissolve into a soup.*

Farnsworth House's suspension between nature and culture assumes that the definitions and qualities of the categories remain consistent and separate. The science of climate change, however, shows us that these are not distinct categories, and the intersection of the two creates new and very real kinds of environmental conditions – as the people of New Orleans might tell us.

The house allows us nostalgia for a view of nature as a romantic, idealised 'other', as seen from its cultured interior. Its flooding reminds us that any cultural interpretation of nature is likely to be overturned, and that the forces shaping a structure as seemingly artificial as Farnsworth House are the same as those shaping the landscapes and climates that surround it.

Ludwig Mies van der Rohe's Farnsworth House after the flood in Plano, Illinois, on 14 September 2008



THE OTHER SIDE

In your article 'Studio BAAD scheme triggers death threats' from AJ 04.09.08 – accompanied by a leader article – you state: 'The most vocal anti-development reaction has come from a resident organisation called the Garden Street Action Group, which has denied having any involvement in the attacks.'

In fact, no journalist actually contacted the Action Group to ask us 'to deny having any involvement in the attacks', and we could have given no more informative answer than anyone stopped at random in the streets of Hebden Bridge.

As you will have reported (*see News, page 6*), Studio BAAD's planning application has been rejected, despite, right to the end, the persistent and partisan support of Calderdale Council's officers for a development which the council promoted and had a financial interest in.

The other side of this story is really interesting: overwhelming community opposition (3,400 objections to just eight expressions of support) to a completely unnecessary and hugely out-of-scale scheme threatened to be imposed on our small town; absence of consultation (contrary to your assertion); careful concealment that the external cladding for the buildings would be corporate Stone Lite veneer sourced from a factory in Coppell, Texas (not exactly sympathetic to our Conservation Area – I wonder why CABE didn't mention that?).

Readers of the AJ can find out more on our website: www.notogardenstreet.org.uk.
Anthony Rae, spokesperson,

*Garden Street Action Group,
Hebden Bridge*

ON VENICE

Congratulations on a very amusing article ('Like nerds talking about sex', *The Critics*, AJ 18.09.08) and for voicing about the Venice architecture biennale what I'm sure lots of people were thinking but were too afraid or embarrassed to say publicly.

Perhaps the lesson is that architects should have the confidence to stick to buildings and keep their giant plastic aubergines firmly in the closet.
*David Mikhail, Riches Hawley
Mikhail Architects, London E1*

It was a joy to read your review of the Venice architecture biennale. Though Kieran Long's personal attack on Patrik Schumacher might be deemed a little cruel, he has been brave in articulating his scepticism of the high priests of parametricism and their wares.

If parametrics could address issues such as the performance of a building's external skin or the energy it used, we would be compelled to take it seriously. Cloaked in a meta-language and producing ever more complicated, curvaceous forms, it appears instead to be an essentially decadent and empty chapter in the inevitable advance of digitally created building form.

*David Grandorge, department of
architecture and spatial design,
London Metropolitan University*

Just a note to say how much I loved your savage critique of the Venice architecture biennale. In particular, I enjoyed your

comments about the South American architects.

As part of the Ordos 100 team of international architects working with Chinese artist Ai Weiwei on a slightly bonkers project in inner Mongolia, the one thing I learned was that Europe has become tired, over-intellectualised and, above all, joyless. It is South America where the real joy is now being generated. We in Ordos are working with both Alejandro Aravena and Teddy Cruz.

*Simon Conder, Simon Conder
Associates, London N1*

FROM WWW. ARCHITECTS JOURNAL.CO.UK

I was delighted by your piece about the Venice architecture biennale. I hope it encourages other architectural critics to be less sycophantic, and perhaps we can even hope for the end of a certain architectural mafia that has thrived and dominated education and practice for far too long.

I am sure that there is a huge majority of readers who will be very pleased by what you have written, and I am amazed that more architects and students in the UK haven't dared to post a response and make their thoughts known on the AJ website. But then I am really not surprised at how nervous people are of the sickening architectural mafia.

Anonymous, London

Bravo. I haven't read a critique as courageous and spot-on like this – where a critic actually takes position and engages in a polemic that has the potential

to make us reflect on our situation – about the state of arts in architecture in a long time, neither with regard to the Venice architecture biennale nor in general. It's a text that makes us remember what architectural criticism could, and should, be about, while most of what poses under this term today hardly gets beyond a mindless approbation of the existing. Quite a fatal attitude for a discipline like architecture that once went out to change the world.

If Enlightenment, to quote the famous phrase by Immanuel Kant, 'is man's emergence from his self-incurred immaturity', then you may divine between the lines of this text what an immense territory of architectural enlightenment lies before us.

Andreas Ruby, Berlin

This piece only fuels my assumption that architectural critique has been plainly irrelevant to the development of architecture in a period that has been the most productive and diverse for decades.

Aiming this polemic mainly against the individuals and their sometimes quirky attitudes, rather than their work or thinking, only undermines how out of touch architectural theory is at the moment. If the only contribution to the discourse is going on about the importance of the section and the cultivation of craft, then I am very sad for how little this has to offer.

I thought it was certainly not the strongest biennale in the last 10 years, but if it provokes such a neocon whinge, it is perhaps more powerful and political than I imagined.

Mirco Becker, London



SKIN DEEP

Make struggles to reconcile surface glamour with enduring architecture at Jubilee Campus, its first significant project, writes *Peter Wilson*

Make might seem an unusual choice to masterplan the expansion of the University of Nottingham's Jubilee Campus and design new three buildings for it, being a young-ish practice with no significant completed projects. To date, the firm's completed buildings include Dartford Judo Centre

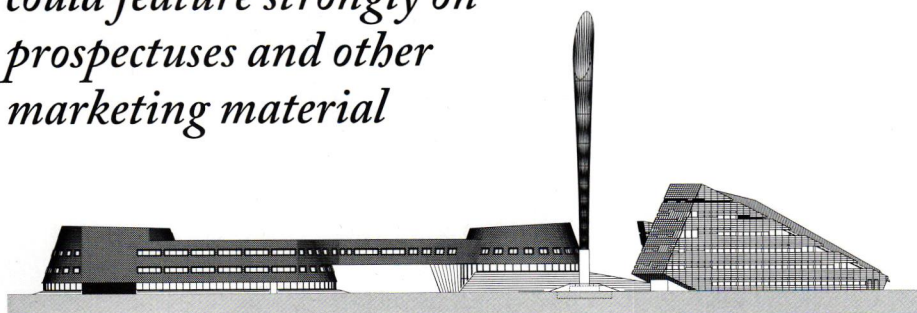
(2006), the St Paul's Cathedral Information Centre (2007), and the renovation of Marks and Spencer's former headquarters at 55 Baker Street, London (2008).

Make, however, has some serious previous: practice founder Ken Shuttleworth is widely credited as having originated the design of >>



Clockwise from right Gateway seen from the man-made lake; The Amenity building and the Gateway near completion; Elevation of the Gateway, Aspire and International House

The university wanted to create distinctive symbols of its modernity, symbols that could feature strongly on prospectuses and other marketing material

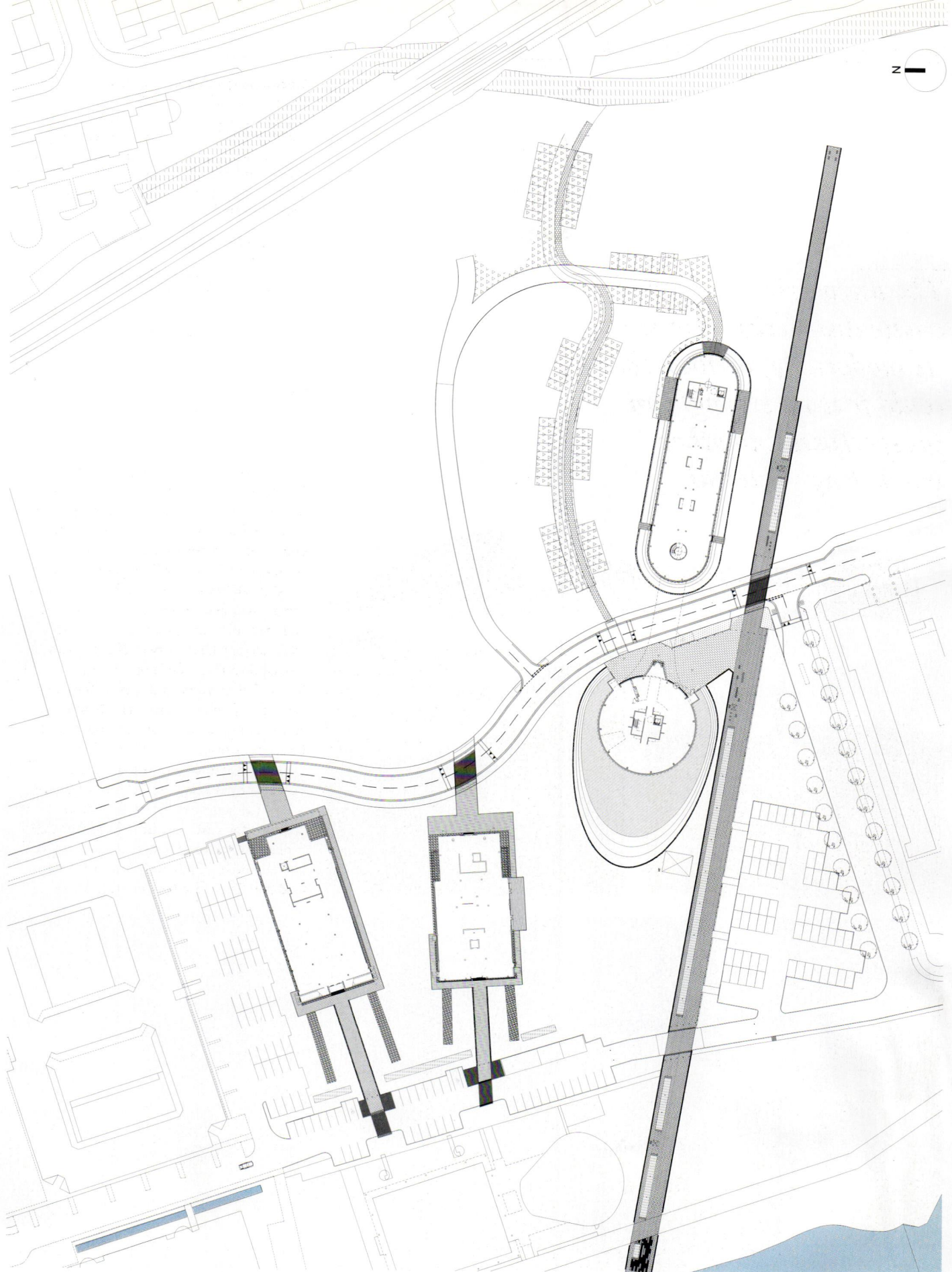


30 St Mary Axe (the 'Gherkin') in the City of London before departing his senior role at Foster + Partners. The question that has remained unanswered since Make's formation in 2004 is whether the engineered precision synonymous with Foster's name has transferred to the work of the new practice, or whether an entirely different, genuinely distinctive architecture will emerge from Shuttleworth and his now 100-strong team.

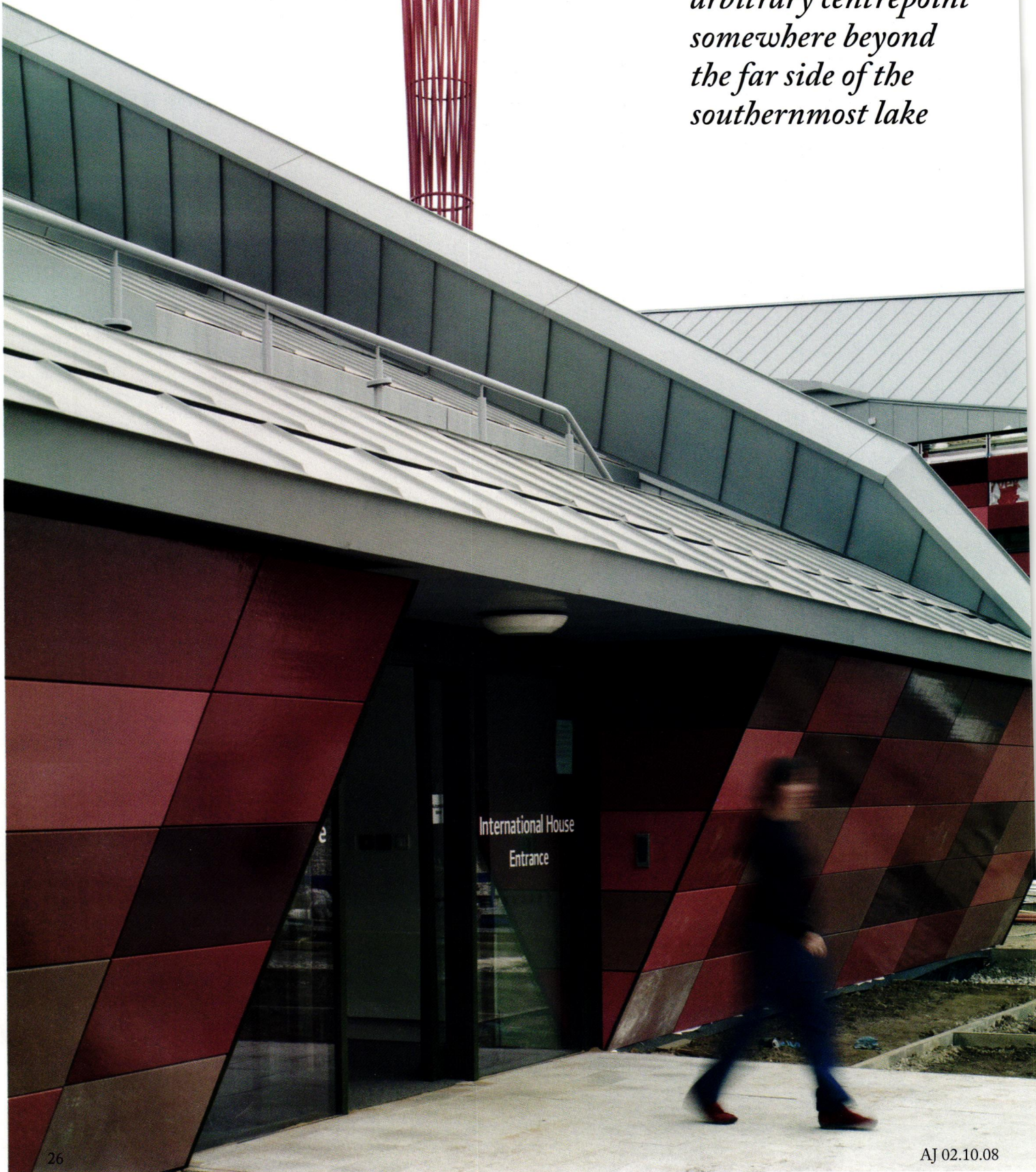
As part of its expansion, the University of Nottingham wanted to create distinctive images of the institution's modernity, symbols that could feature strongly on prospectuses and other marketing material. It is in this context that Make's buildings should be considered. With 35,000 staff and students spread over four campuses in its home city, and with other campuses in China and Malaysia, the University of Nottingham is ranked fifth in the table of UK universities for its number of overseas students. The expansion of its Jubilee Campus is primarily aimed at attracting top-flight staff, students and investment from this global market.

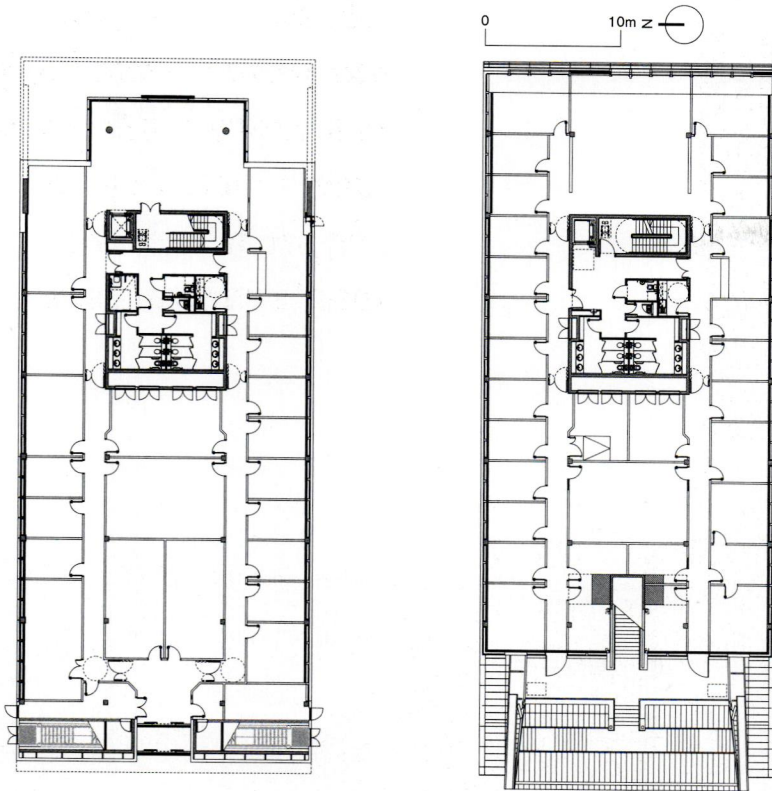
The campus sits on land previously occupied by Raleigh's bicycle factory, once one of the largest in the world. The university acquired the 7.5ha site in 1999 and engaged Hopkins Architects to deliver a masterplan and a number of relatively low-rise, timber-clad buildings. Hopkins' masterplan >>





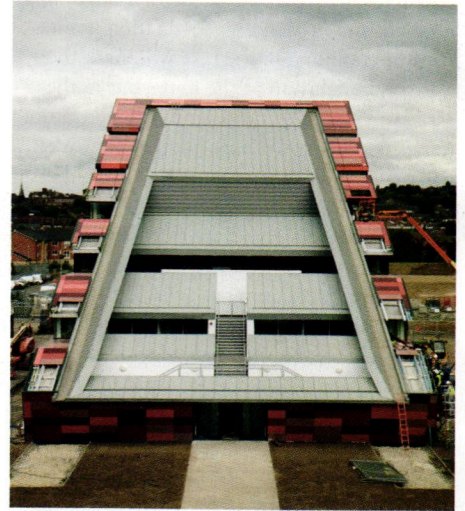
*The buildings fan
out from a seemingly
arbitrary centrepoint
somewhere beyond
the far side of the
southernmost lake*





Left Ground-floor and first-floor plans of the Amenity building
Below The grey metal-

clad roof of the Amenity building gives it an 'oddly naval' appearance



comprised a subtle grid-iron arrangement running north-south against a background of small man-made lakes. But not all of it was implemented, and in the second major stage of the site's development the university commissioned another masterplan, this time by Make. The new layout, which was granted outline planning permission in 2005, is substantially different from the collegiate orthodoxy of its predecessor, and now that its three key buildings – International House, the Amenity building and the Gateway – are complete, the contrast is clear.

Make's masterplan reorientates the site layout from north-south to west-east. The

rationale for this radical change in direction is unclear, but the design statement submitted with the original planning application suggests it is part of a grander ambition to open up the campus to the surrounding urban environment. The adjacent neighbourhood consists of gritty, two-storey, brick Victorian terraces, which were once working-class dormitories for the bicycle works and are now home to students. Make's planned collision of the Jubilee Campus with this *Coronation Street*-like world across the nearby River Leen could be viewed as advance notice of the terraces' eventual incorporation into the campus enclave.

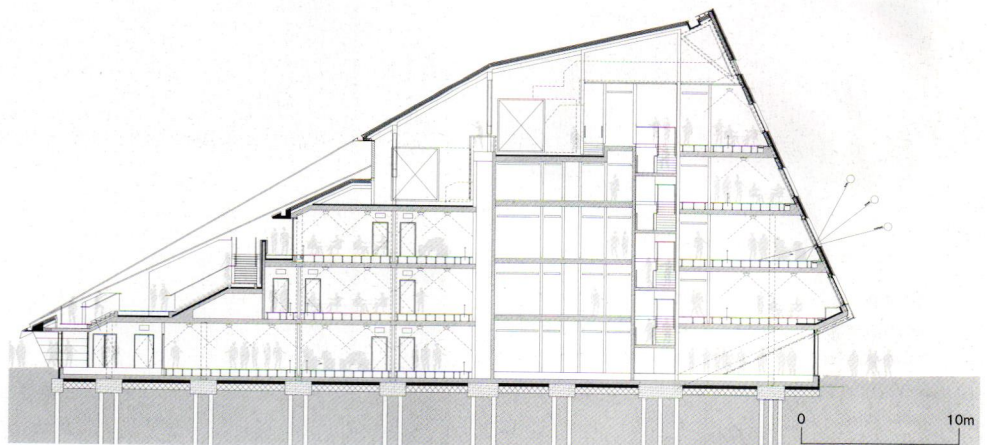
The practice's layout drawings show

International House, the Amenity building and the Gateway fanning out from a seemingly arbitrary centrepoint somewhere beyond the far side of the southernmost lake. This has something of the dippiness of a student design project; it's hard to argue for or against, since it has no visible physical presence in the resulting plan.

The strongest defining aspect of the masterplan is the lateral insertion of a 'boulevard' – a pedestrian and cycle route for students from the area of terraced housing to the east and beyond the river. In reality, the work to extend the route over the river and across the railway yard has not begun; the >>

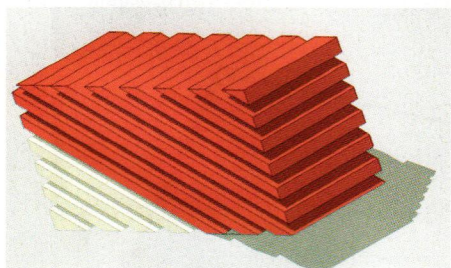
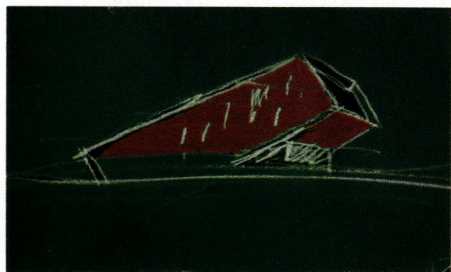
Left Visitors can access the Amenity building from the main entrance in its east facade or, alternatively,

the west facade (pictured)
Right East-west section through the Amenity building



grand avenue currently has neither beginning nor end, and no defining destination point. A future fountain in the lake will mark the westerly conclusion of the route, but to the east, it arrives perpendicular to the humdrum terraced housing. Perhaps another artwork will be introduced here to complement the 60m-high filigree of steel that struggles to impress under its grandiose title, *Aspire*. This elongated metal doily sits at the centre of the masterplan, functioning as a visual focus rather than an organising element for the overall scheme, but its braggadocio is all too clearly highlighted in its vapid moniker.

Make's preliminary design statement also feels a tad thin; it takes a leap of imagination to recognise its notion of 'geological strata' erupting through the earth's surface, leaving behind two oddly skewed forms, in the striations of the multicoloured terracotta cladding of the Amenity building and International House. The banded elevations are supposed to reference Nottingham's brick-built environment, but this is also a stretch. >>



This page A concept sketch (top) by Make founder Ken Shuttleworth and a computer model (above) – inspiration

for the eventual form and appearance of the Amenity building and International House (right)



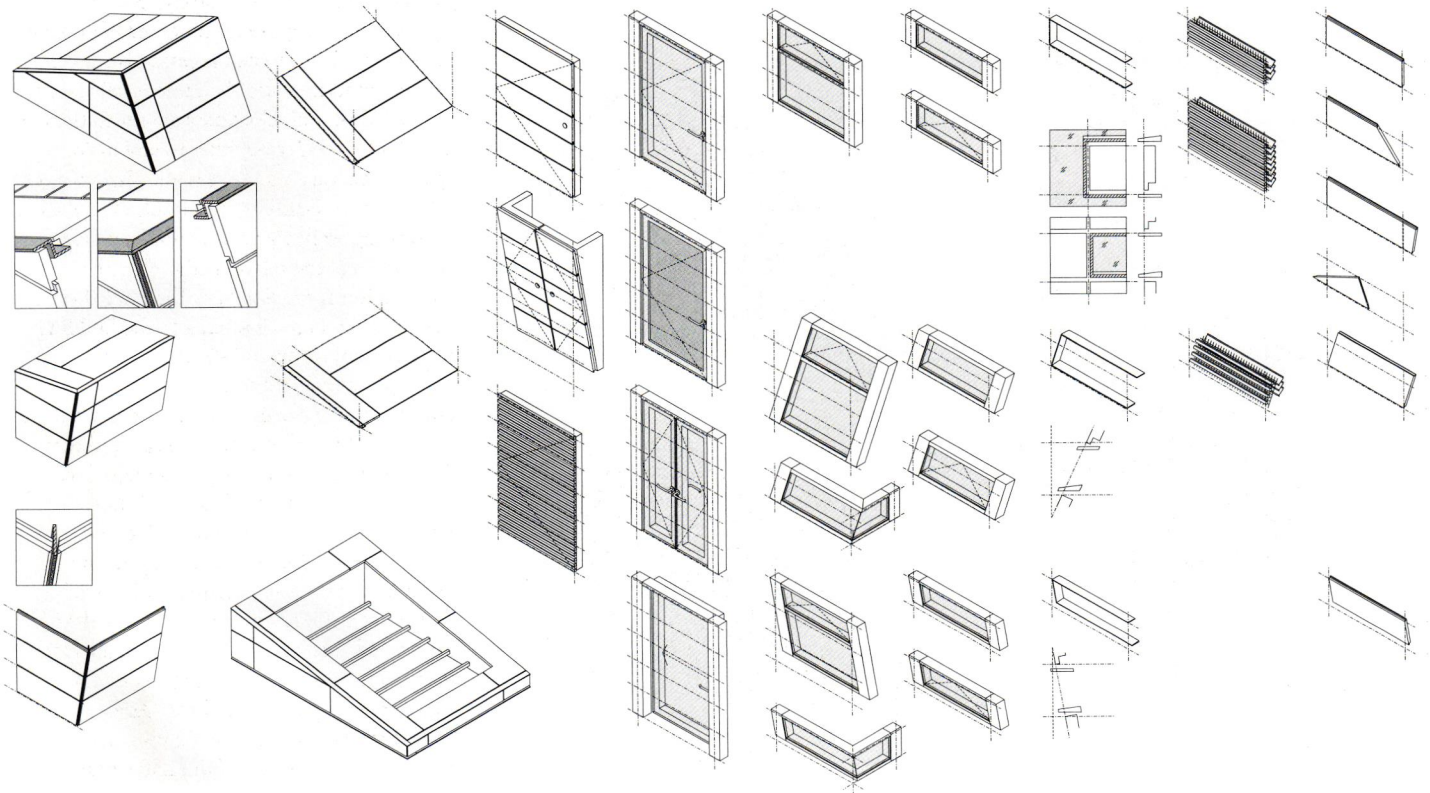
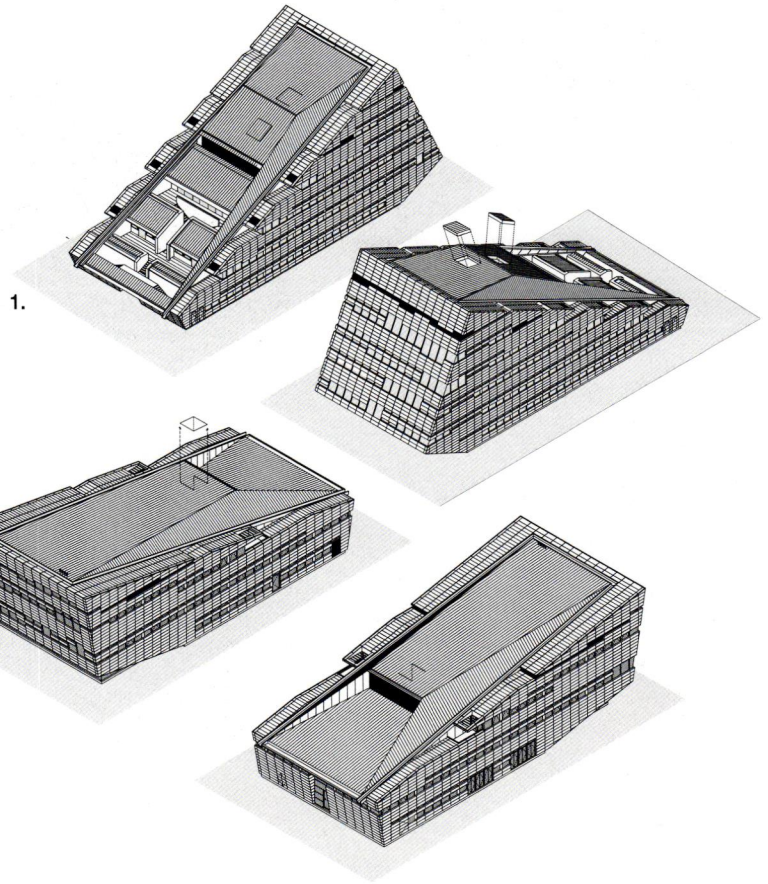
It takes a leap of imagination to recognise Make's notion of 'geological strata' erupting through the earth's surface in the striations of the multicoloured terracotta cladding

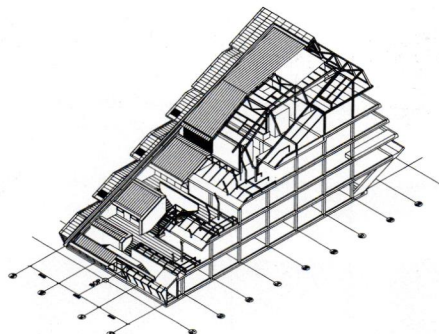
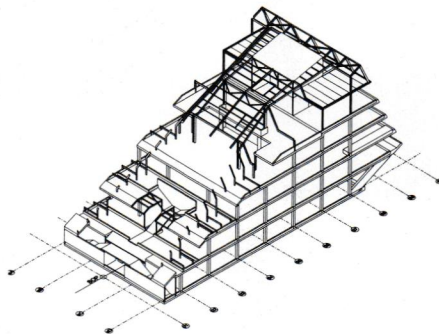
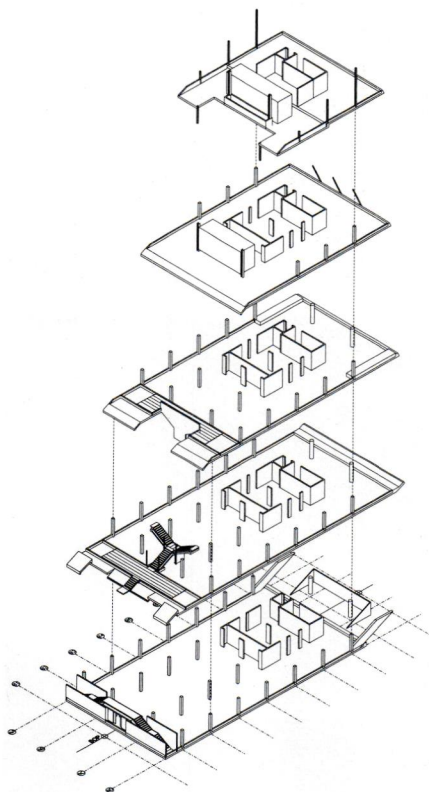
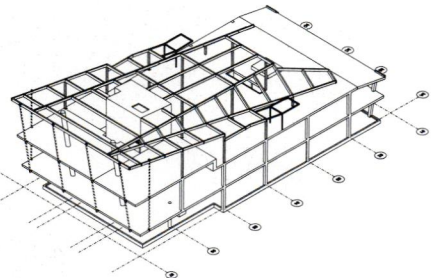
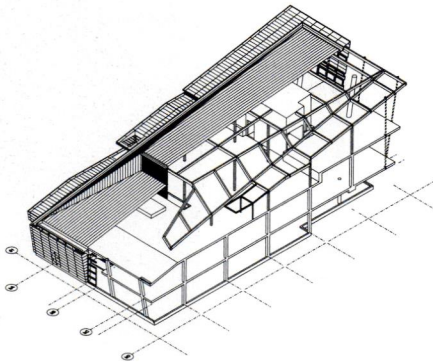
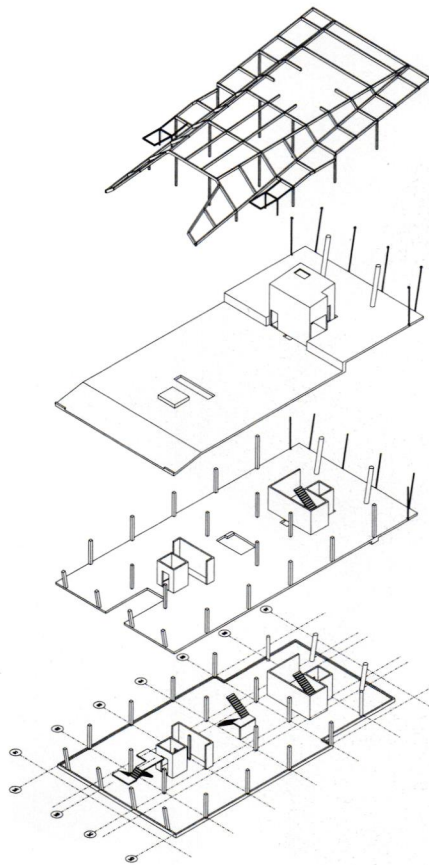


Below Project architect David Patterson says: 'This drawing describes the key facade elements for International House and the Amenity building, showing all possible facade conditions, including doors and windows, with a particular emphasis on the corner interfaces. The design team was concerned that 2D drawings alone would not adequately convey the design intention, and this drawing was issued to tendering contractors to help overcome this issue. In addition, a Design and Build procurement route made it essential

that the successful contractor had a benchmark for developing the facade.'

Right Studies of International House (1) and the Amenity building (2) showing hatch access to the plant room to allow easy removal of equipment
Far right, top and bottom Drawings showing cladding, steel and concrete layouts for the Amenity building (top) and International House (bottom). Patterson says: 'We designed the buildings' skin first and worked our way inside.'



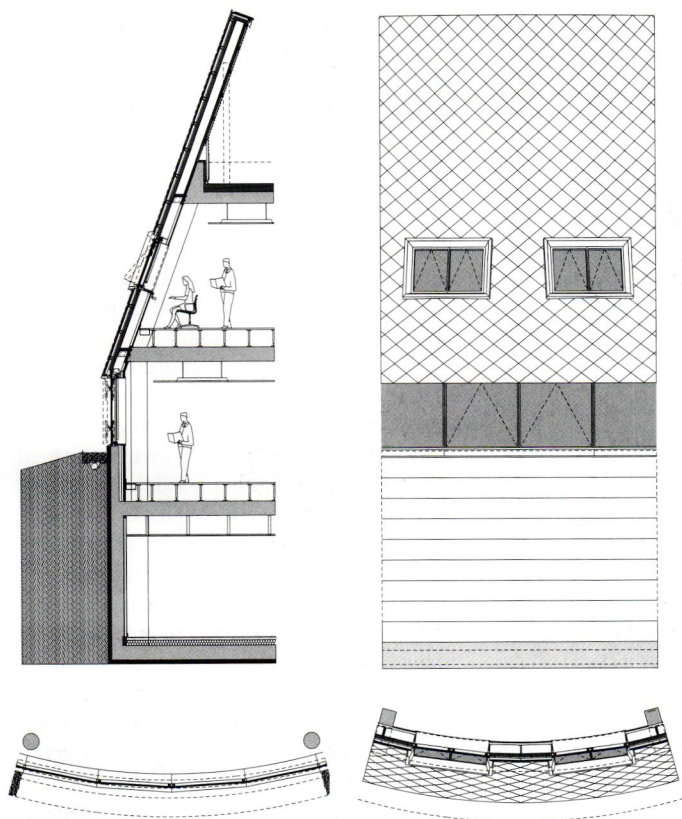


With grey metal-clad roofs that loom large along the full length of both International House and the Amenity building, the overriding image is oddly naval.

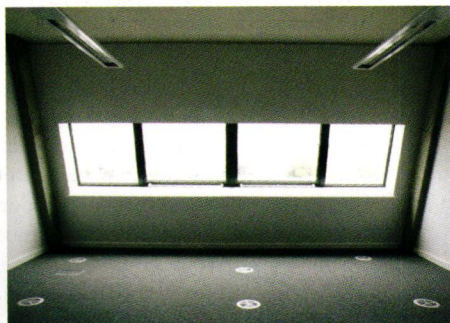
According to project architect David Patterson, 'we designed the buildings' skin first and worked our way inside'. As a result, formal preoccupations took primacy over the internal planning and sustainability. While the latter is extensively addressed in the project's design report, the nagging suspicion remains that not all of the aspirations or assumptions made there – the use of renewable energy sources and natural ventilation, for example – will necessarily stand up to the scrutiny of post-occupancy analysis. The angles, positioning and massing of the buildings has been extensively explored through a large number of physical models and computer visualisations. The production drawings were all delivered in 3D to facilitate the input from fellow consultants on the project – a factor less well received by the contractor, whose preference was for conventional 2D information.

International House has a main entrance in its east end and a secondary, axially opposite and supposedly equal set of doors in its western front. When accessed from this 'wrong' end, the visitor is immediately faced with a blank wall. Corridors are set to the left and right but offer no route to any major spaces – because there are none. The university's desire for flexibility has resulted in a series of dividing walls that have produced a deep, cellular plan. The relationship of these walls to fenestration is problematic. The bunk-bedded, deep-set banding – essential to the building's external expression and its daylighting strategy – seems, if not quite arbitrary, to be uncomfortably predicated on little more than the hierarchies of institutional space allocation. As such, it is unlikely to remain fixed.

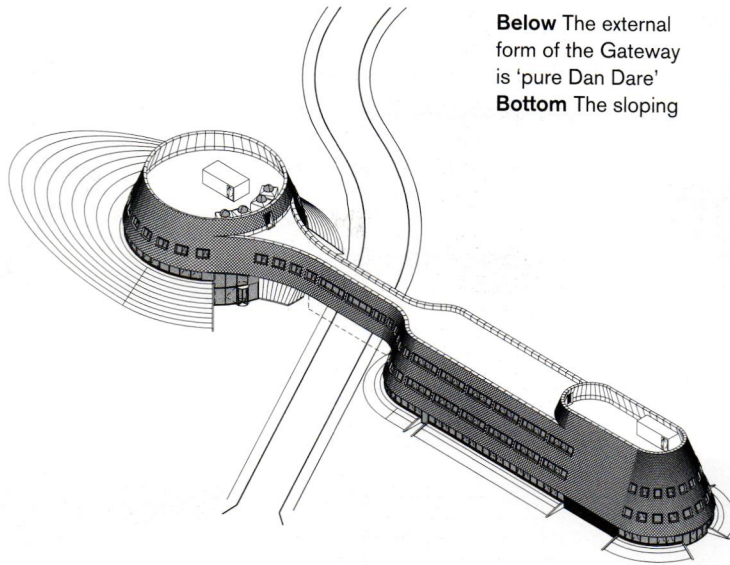
Like International House and the Amenity building, the Gateway's external form is its defining aspect. In contrast to the multi-coloured terracotta tiles of its two big brothers, the Gateway is precision-clad with galvanized zinc shingles, its head connected to its body by a road-bridging 'neck'. The sci-fi iconography is pure Dan Dare. Unfortunately, despite the architectural assurance of its unusual form and surface >>



Above Section and elevation details of the Gateway
Right Typical interior space in the Gateway
Far right Giant lightpipes illuminate the Gateway's foyer
Below The surface treatment of the Gateway building is 'architecturally assured'



The result is three very determinedly 'foreground' buildings, each vying for prominence, the whole arguably no greater than its parts



Below The external form of the Gateway is 'pure Dan Dare'
Bottom The sloping

walls are the 'only concession to the unconventional' for the Gateway's interior

treatment, the interiors are more like Dare's unsophisticated sidekick Digby. The only concession to the unconventional is the inward slope of the window walls.

From the Sainsbury Centre at the University of East Anglia through to 30 St Mary Axe, Foster + Partners has always struggled with entrances, and on the evidence of these three buildings, Make does too. The Gateway's front door is asymmetrical to the scheme's dominant centre line. It has the added ignominy of being under the bridge linking the project's 'head' to its larger linear body on the other side of Triumph Road (a route re-aligned to allow the building to connect the main part of the Jubilee Campus to a yet-to-emerge 'innovation park').

Once inside, the foyer is something of a disappointment. This is the only space of any real architectural significance or opportunity in any of the three buildings. A quasi-atrium with an axial bridge overhead, its ceiling

contains five lightpipes on steroids that are part of the project's environmental control system, but their positioning seems curiously undefined by the space itself. That said, the fair-faced concrete ceiling here, and in the other two buildings, are of a high construction standard despite the project's Design and Build procurement route.

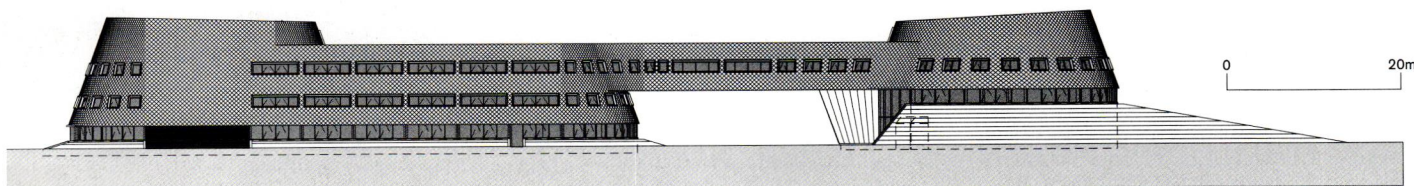
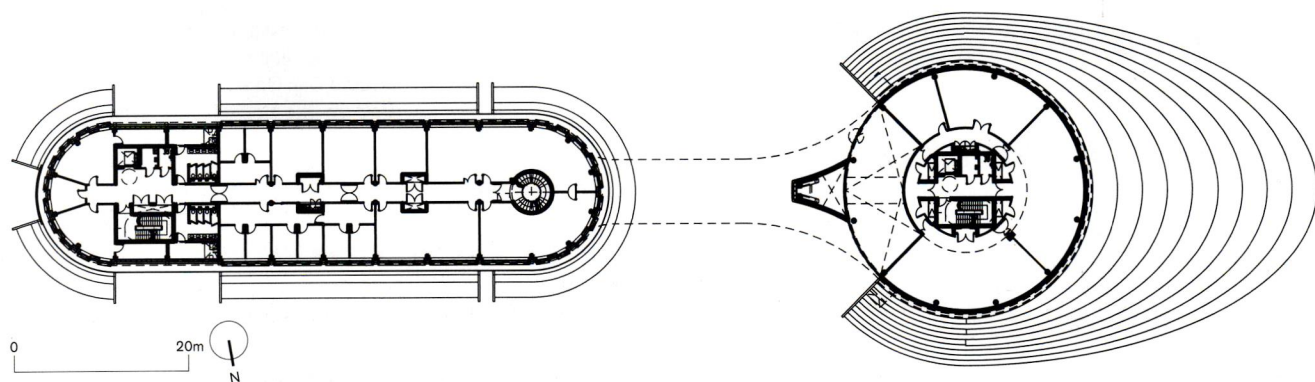
Perhaps the biggest problem of all three buildings is the sheer lack of significant internal spaces – although the functions of their various rooms perhaps do not lend themselves to atriums and grand spaces: the Gateway provides business incubator units; International House is occupied by a number of existing administrative, academic departments and teaching facilities; and the Amenity building functions as support to its siblings with a staff catering area, fitness suite, Islamic and multi-faith prayer rooms, and accommodation for visiting academics.

The accommodation housed in all three

buildings is essentially 'background' but, perhaps understandably, like so many other young practices, Make has sought to make more of this than the functional brief really offered. The result is three very determinedly 'foreground' buildings, each vying for prominence, the whole arguably no greater than its parts. Make's buildings have the characteristics found in many modern North American universities – highly individual, highly marketable, but, ultimately, very much of their time in style and intention. If care is not taken, this approach to architecture results in the kind of outré intervention manifested at the Sharp Centre for Design in Toronto by Will Alsop.

When we consider the university's role in a nation's intellectual development, the question might legitimately be asked: if the country's leading academic institutions, especially those with architecture schools, can't be fagged to take the lead in commissioning buildings with the cultural qualities required in a nation's >>





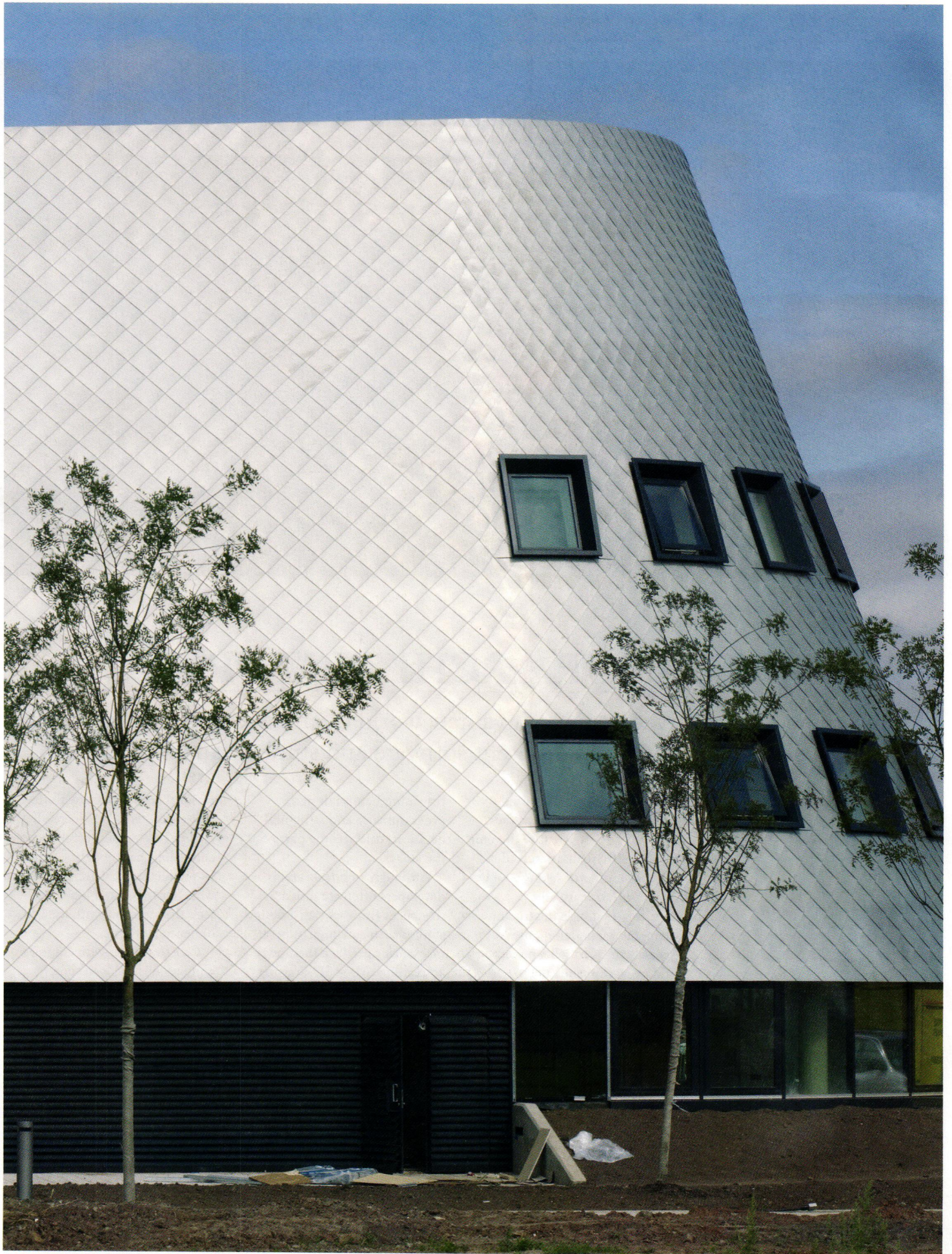
PAUL HILLS/ROK SOL

Top Ground-floor plan and elevation of the Gateway building
Above The Gateway under construction
Opposite The Gateway is entirely clad with zinc shingles

contemporary architecture, who will? Universities build for specific purposes, after all, and for the long term. Their architecture should not be characterised by the expediencies of speculative development, nor by flights of fashion. In this instance, the University of Nottingham has gained three distinctive buildings, but they lack the timeless qualities of the English collegiate tradition that architects such as Powell & Moya successfully managed to interpret at the Oxbridge universities.

Whether he likes it or not, Shuttleworth has a substantial reputation to maintain. It will be interesting to see if Make has the desire – and the *cojones* – to move beyond the transience of gesture at Nottingham and deliver significant and enduring architecture. ■ Peter Wilson is an architectural critic and director of business development at the School of the Built Environment, Napier University

Start on site date December 2006
Contract duration 18 months
Gross external floor area International House 3,450m²; Amenity building 2,400m²; Gateway building 4,850m²; total 10,700m²; site area for masterplan 75,000m²
Form of contract Design and Build
Total cost £22.5 million (buildings and landscaping)
Client University of Nottingham
Architect Make
Civil and structural engineer Adams Kara Taylor
Services engineer Faber Maunsell
Quantity surveyor and Planning supervisor Gardiner & Theobald
Main contractor Rok SOL
Annual CO₂ emissions International House 53kg/m²; Amenity building 87kg/m²; Gateway building 47kg/m²





Squint/Opera animated a short film for the London 2012 Olympics; the flying pods in this sequence are to illustrate crowd facilities

ANIMATION

ANIMATE YOUR ARCHITECTURE

Animation technology is opening up a new world of architectural design. *Kaye Alexander* finds out what different software and studios can do

Animation is primarily used by architects in two ways, says Richard Benson, creative director of Pikcells visualisation studio, 'demonstration or selling'. Demonstration usually investigates design or structural elements, while selling uses special effects to sell a project and engage an audience.

Jules Cocke, co-founder and director of architectural film studio Squint/Opera, describes animation as 'a statement of intent that is not susceptible to Chinese whispers'.

'An animation can include inspiration, precedents, schematic elements – all the things usually eclipsed because people want to see the finished thing,' says Cocke. 'All the

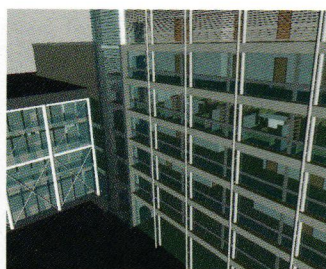
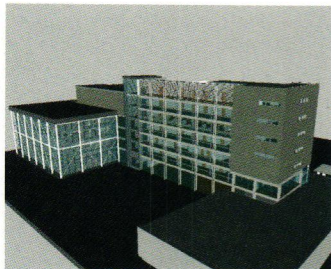
reasoning behind design, programmatic and structural decisions can become part of the story.'

Although architects and developers often commission sequences from specialist design studios such as Squint/Opera, many firms produce their own animations. Most 3D drawing packages have some form of animation capability. Gehry Technologies' Digital Project offers real-time interactivity, while Google SketchUp simply plays back a pre-recorded sequence.

Nick Manning of Autodesk's Media and Entertainment Division points out there are free tutorials for most programs on the internet and that graduates are

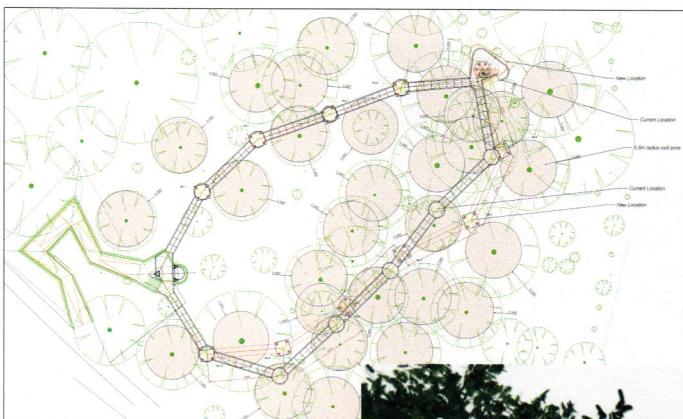
reasonably conversant with them. Autodesk 3ds Max is increasing its user base amongst architects and Adobe has brought Flash into its product suite, aligning it closely with Illustrator so it looks and feels the same, but with the added dimension of time.

One drawback with complex animation is the lead time. Robert Jarvis of Jarvis Design says it takes about six weeks to produce a good three-minute professional animation, so although they could be used by architects from conception to the marketing of a project, designs never stay still long enough. As a result, animations are usually reserved for final presentations, rather than for the design team itself.



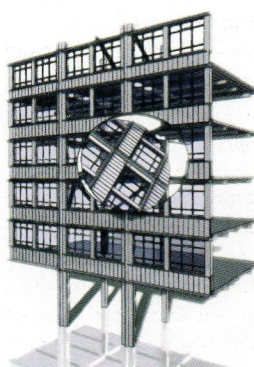
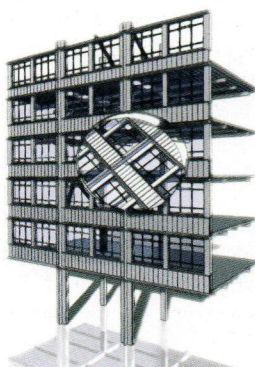
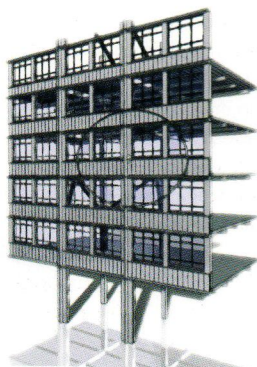
SOFTWARE NAVISWORKS

Autodesk NavisWorks can be used to create a variety of animations. Its walk-through tool incorporates clash detection and replicates gravity, so the viewer doesn't go through solid objects and can automatically move up stairs. NavisWorks is compatible with over 50 file types and used by construction firms to coordinate architectural, service and structural models. A free downloadable viewer, Freedom, allows even those who don't have the program to review animations.



SOFTWARE DIGITAL PROJECT

At Marks Barfield Architects' Kew Gardens Treetop Walkway project, a radar survey of tree root activity at proposed foundations and other site constraints were modelled in Digital Project. The design team then used inverse kinematics, a kind of animation, to manipulate the position of the walkway modules while maintaining spatial relationships. This created the desired route through the trees without affecting their roots.

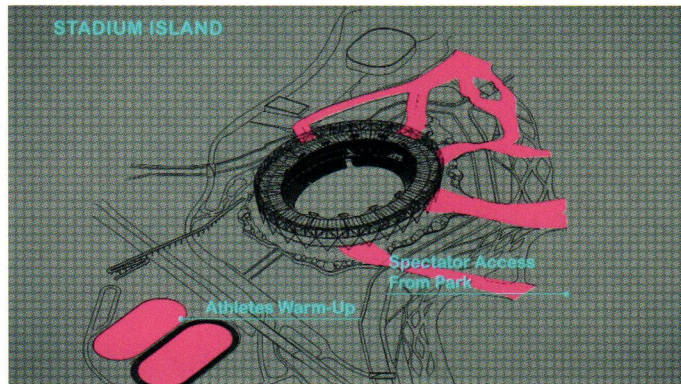


SOFTWARE SOLIDWORKS

Engineer Price & Myers used Dassault Systèmes' SolidWorks program to animate the spinning motion on artist Richard Wilson's free-rotating Liverpool artwork *Turning the Place Over*. That way, it could use clash detection to work out what extent of the floor plate had to be removed. >>

STUDIO SQUINT/OPERA

The animation created for London's Olympic Stadium by Squint/Opera film studio is a far cry from the 'abstract, computer-ish '80s fly-throughs sometimes associated with animation,' according to Cocke. The sequence combines complex modelling, real people and diagrams to explain how the design team has moved from concept to proposal. 'A convincing animation replaces the traditional language of presentations,' says Cocke. 'Animations can be used as a reference point for everyone because they do not require specialist knowledge in order to understand them.'



STUDIO PIKCELLS

'With [Leeds retail development] Broadgate, we were getting into film production on a scaled-down platform' says Pikcells' Richard Benson. His visualisation studio usually works from accurate AutoCad drawings, using 3D models (usually supplied by architects in SketchUp format) as a reference. The animation is split into sequences which are lit and rendered separately using 3ds Max and V-Ray rendering. All the separate elements are then composited into the final shot using Autodesk Combustion and Adobe After Effects. 'The important thing with these programs,' says Benson, 'is that they have a non-destructive workflow. Each action is recorded in a history, allowing you to go back and undo at any stage.' ■

BUYER'S GUIDE, BY JAMES MORRIS

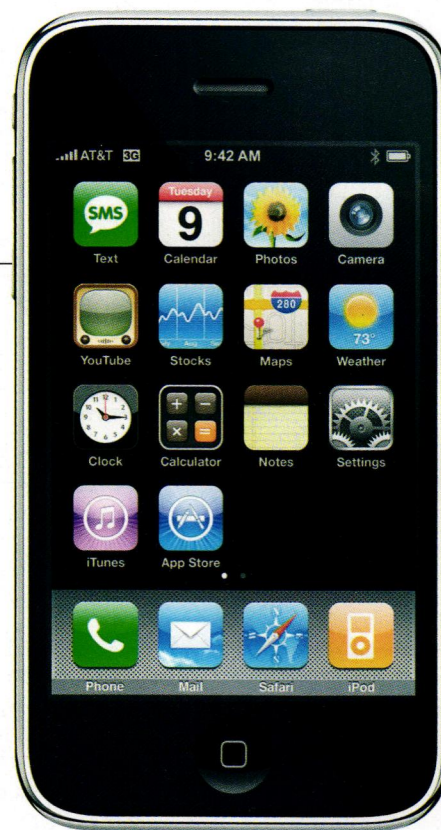
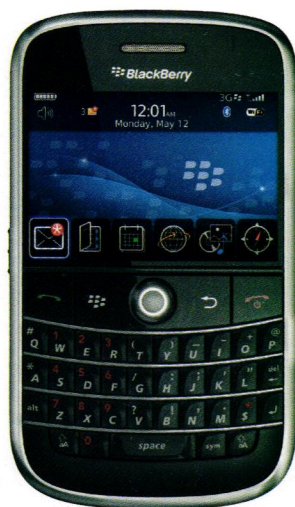
SMARTPHONES

HINTS AND TIPS

- Get a discount on your phone by choosing a network and call plan. Do your research to find the best deal.
- Keep an eye on the wireless data standards supported by each phone. 3G connectivity is a must for comfortable web access, and is usually in the form of HSDPA (High-Speed Downlink Packet Access). Alternatives include GPRS and EDGE, but these are much slower.
- A smartphone can play MP3s and videos, but not every file type is supported and some displays are better than others. With the exception of the iPhone, you will probably also need to invest in an additional memory card to store a music or video collection.
- Bear in mind that web browsing will tax a smartphone with a small screen.
- If you write a lot of emails, a full QWERTY keyboard is a good option. Touch-sensitive screens or numerical keys pale in comparison.

1 RIM BLACKBERRY BOLD 9000

The BlackBerry, with its push technology for instant emails, has revolutionised the smartphone market. This latest model retains its trademark features – a QWERTY keyboard and the ability to edit documents such as Microsoft Office files – but is now a music and video player as well, making it the most appropriate option for a business user. <http://eu.blackberry.com>



2 APPLE IPHONE 3G

The 3G beats its iPhone predecessor with high-speed internet connectivity and built-in GPS. Beyond that, it boasts the same supreme interface design and powerful features, from music and video to web access and email, and third-party applications can now be run too. Despite its mediocre camera, this is the smartest smartphone out there. www.apple.com

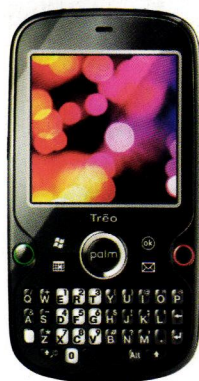
Continued overleaf >>

SMARTPHONE	WIRELESS	SOFTWARE	MEMORY	MAIL ATTACHMENTS	BATTERY LIFE
1 RIM BlackBerry Bold 9000	GPRS, EDGE, HSDPA, Wi-Fi, Bluetooth	BlackBerry OS	1GB, microSD	Word, Excel, PowerPoint, OneNote, PDF viewer	5h talk/ 312h standby
2 Apple iPhone 3G (only available on O2)	GPRS, EDGE, HSDPA, Wi-Fi, Bluetooth	Mac OS X v10.4.10	8GB/16GB	Word, Excel, PowerPoint, PDF (all view only)	5h talk/ 300h standby
3 HTC Touch Pro	GPRS, EDGE, HSDPA, Wi-Fi, Bluetooth	Windows Mobile 6.1 Professional	288MB, microSD	Word, Excel, PowerPoint, OneNote, PDF viewer	7h talk/ 367h standby
4 HP iPAQ 914c Business Messenger	GPRS, EDGE, HSDPA, Wi-Fi, Bluetooth	Windows Mobile 6.1 Professional	128MB, microSD	Word, Excel, PowerPoint, OneNote, PDF viewer	4h talk/ 250h standby
5 Palm Treo Pro	GPRS, EDGE, HSDPA, Wi-Fi, Bluetooth	Windows Mobile 6.1 Professional	128MB, microSD	Word, Excel, PowerPoint, OneNote, PDF viewer	5h talk/ 250h standby
6 Sony Ericsson Xperia X1	GPRS, EDGE, HSDPA, Wi-Fi, Bluetooth	Windows Mobile 6.1 Professional	400MB, microSD	Word, Excel, PowerPoint, OneNote, PDF viewer	10h talk/ 833h standby



3 HTC TOUCH PRO

Although the Touch Pro is just another Windows Mobile smartphone, this has a much more friendly interface. Like the iPhone, it rotates the screen with the device. There are a number of wireless options and built-in GPS, too. The 2.8in screen is great for videos but the killer feature is the QWERTY keyboard, which makes writing emails a doddle. www.htc.com



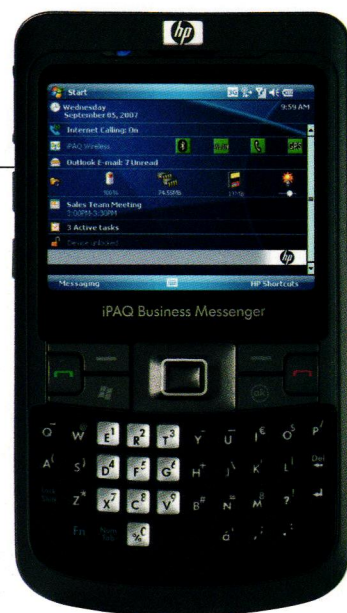
5 PALM TREO PRO

Rather than using Palm's own operating system, the Treo Pro is a Windows Mobile device, so it has the usual capabilities, including email and passable web access, Wi-Fi, quad-band GSM, GPRS and HSDPA 3G, and built-in GPS. However, battery life is limited and, though the Treo Pro will do the job, Palm is no longer the smartphone leader it once was. www.palm.com



6 SONY ERICSSON XPERIA X1

The Xperia X1 features a slide-out keyboard, a high-resolution camera, plus HSDPA, GPS, and even FM radio reception. There is plenty of memory as well, with up to 400MB built in and a microSD slot for expansion. The 3in screen makes it the largest of the Windows Mobile range and much of the system's clunk is hidden by the interface, too. An attractive, feature-rich phone. www.sonyericsson.com



4 HP IPAQ 914C BUSINESS MESSENGER

Against its style-conscious rivals, the iPAQ 914c looks remarkably sober, but it packs a 3 megapixel camera and all the usual wireless standards. It lasts longer than most other Windows Mobile devices between charges and if you need dependable email, this has all the features – it's just not the most exciting option. www.hp.co.uk

SIZE, WEIGHT	DISPLAY	MEDIA FORMATS	NAVIGATION	CAMERA, GPS	HANDSET (inc VAT)
114 x 66 x 15mm, 136g	2.7in, 480 x 320	MP3, AAC, MPEG-4, WMA, WMV, 3GP	QWERTY keyboard	2 megapixels, GPS	£589.99
116 x 62 x 12mm, 133g	3.5in, 480 x 320	MP3, AAC, Protected AAC, H.264, MPEG-4	Touchscreen	2 megapixels, GPS	£349.99 (8GB), £399.99 (16GB)
102 x 51 x 18mm, 165g	2.8in, 480 x 640	MP3, AAC, MPEG-4, WMA, WMV, 3GP	Touchscreen, QWERTY keyboard	3.2 megapixels, GPS	£499
113 x 64 x 16mm, 154g	2.46in, 320 x 240	MP3, AAC, MPEG-4, WMA, WMV, 3GP	Touchscreen, QWERTY keyboard	3 megapixels, GPS	£358.38
114 x 60 x 13mm, 139g	2.5in, 320 x 320	MP3, AAC, MPEG-4, WMA, WMV, 3GP	Touchscreen, QWERTY keyboard	2 megapixels, GPS	£399.99
111 x 53 x 17mm, 158g	3in, 800 x 480	MP3, AAC, MPEG-4, WMA, WMV, 3GP	Touchscreen, QWERTY keyboard	3.2 megapixels, GPS	£528.75

In this section // *Alain de Botton and The School of Life* // *Back Issues* // *Critic's Choice* // *Croydon car parks* // *5 Things To Do*

The Critics



MARK LOMAS

HOLIDAY

Tripping up the M1

Alain de Botton explains why his new mini-university, shop and travel company, The School of Life, chose the M1 as one of its holiday destinations

M1 Holiday (25-26 October) includes travel, hotel and all meals for £295. Contact The School of Life on 020 7833 1010 or visit www.theschooloflife.com

All architects, and quite a few cyclists too, are familiar with the quote from Nikolaus Pevsner: 'A bicycle shed is a building; Lincoln Cathedral is a piece of architecture'. Like the best aphorisms, this one immediately sets our minds whirring to test our own observations against its rigid certainties.

Unsurprisingly, ever since the architectural historian first made that remark, a minority have been enthusiastically compiling a contrary case for that unfortunate bicycle shed. Might this humble building not also possess some merit, irrespective of what its makers

intended? Might we might not be allowed to stretch our definitions of the beautiful, to generously encompass at once Gothic vaulted ceilings and corrugated iron and steel boxes?

Pevsner was keen to limit the use of the term architecture to buildings that were, in his words, 'designed with a view to aesthetic appeal.' But aesthetic appeal is a stranger beast than Pevsner seems to have been ready to allow. A building can be wrong from all sorts of formal criteria – and yet it can still charm us, perhaps by evoking a valuable passage in our national past or connecting us to certain

endearing frailties of our culture.

A belief that we should stretch the definition of 'satisfying' architecture has, over the years, led an array of writers and practitioners to speak up for the merits of the sort of wayward structures Pevsner ignored. Writer JG Ballard was among the first to draw attention to the aesthetic qualities of motorways, car parks, fast-food outlets and malls, teaching us to see the sublime in dystopian concrete megaliths. His acceptance of the brutality of modernity was subsequently echoed in the writings of landscape >>

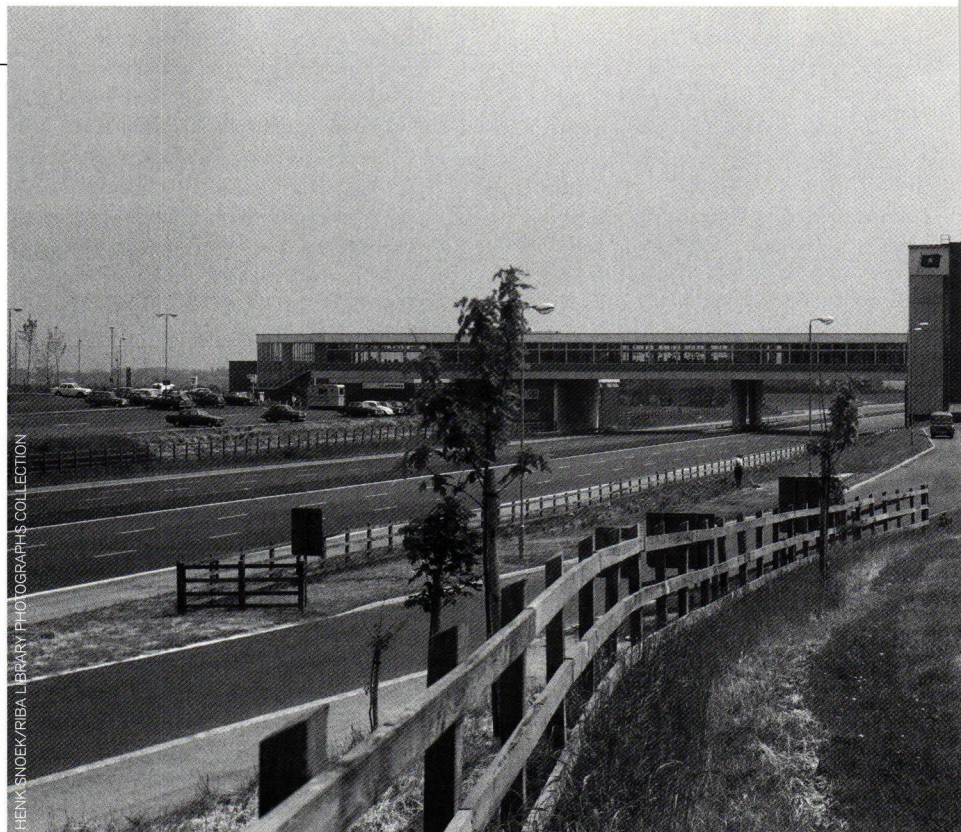
Below Dinner for two at Watford Gap service station

Bottom Underpass at Brent Cross – the start (or finish) of the M1

Right Leicester Forest East service station boasted silver service at its bridge-top restaurant when it first opened in 1966



HENK SNOEK/RIBA LIBRARY PHOTOGRAPHIC COLLECTION



Alain de Botton continued from p41

historian John Brinckerhoff Jackson, the photos of Bernd and Hilla Becher and the films of Patrick Keiller. Last year also saw the publication of a high point of anti-Pevsnerian revisionism, Simon Henley's *The Architecture of Parking* (Thames & Hudson, £24.95).

It's with such works in mind that I recently launched a new kind of architectural travel company as part of The School of Life, taking people on short holidays around ignored but fascinating sites throughout the UK, in the company of writers and artists sympathetic to the architectural aesthetic of the supranormal.

Photographer Martin Parr is just back from taking a group around the Isle of Wight, where his tourists were taught to unearth a new sympathy for the plastic Baroque in the

island's B&B's (all participants were asked to photograph parts of their bedrooms that could lead them to challenge traditional notions of beauty and ugliness). In November, The School of Life is offering a holiday to Heathrow, which will bring out the excitement and utopianism of a location too often described as merely hellish and which will, hopefully, lead people to discern the terminals' charms, and render them comparable to those usually associated with standard tourist destinations.

But perhaps the highlight of the season's first set of architectural holidays is a two-day trip up the M1 in October, led by historian and theorist David Lawrence, author of *Always a Welcome: The Glove Compartment History of the Motorway Service Area* (Between Books). Lawrence has been obsessed by motorways ever since his parents took him to

Little Chef as a seven-year-old boy, and he has now translated his juvenile passions into an all-encompassing understanding of the bridges, toilets, graphics and sociology of the road network. To listen to him, we cannot begin to understand modern Britain if we don't fathom the charms and horrors of our motorways.

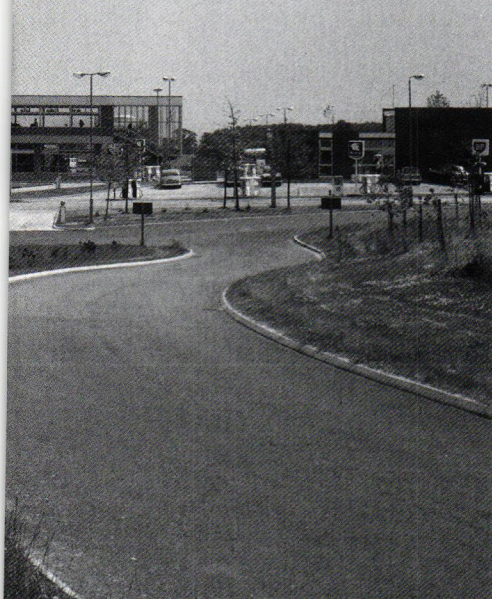
The journey up the M1 will begin at Brent Cross (never a dull place) and proceed north, stopping off at regular intervals to meet with a range of experts. These include members of the graphic design team responsible for the country's motorway signs and a man who commissioned no less than

The first motorway service station was aggressively futuristic in spirit

25 of the nation's Travelodges.

The holiday allows participants to focus in particular on the evolving self-image of the nation as it has been reflected in the architecture. The first motorway service station, at Watford Gap, was aggressively futuristic in spirit. Lawrence explains that those who designed it had backgrounds in television, bingo, dancehalls and Miss World. They wanted 'Dallas meets Disney meets *Star Trek* fantasy dropped down on middle England.'

The idea of going to a motorway simply to look at it rather than use it is an old one. It belongs to the 1960s, when technology was an object of aesthetic interest rather than a merely



Back Issues Adverts from the 1950s reveal a bygone age of deference to architects, says Steve Parnell

Advertising is the life blood of any magazine. In the increasing affluence of the 1950s, the front covers of architectural periodicals would not show a famous architect or building, but adverts. Copies of the AJ from this period would contain a supplement with well over 100 pages of adverts, removed when bound into volumes. In contrast, there would be less than 50 of pages of editorial content.

These predominantly black-and-white adverts (colour printing was rare, owing to its expense), with their hand-drawn images and arbitrarily juxtaposed fonts, say much about the period.

A woman's place was quite clearly in the kitchen – adverts for boilers extolled the virtues of how easy it was for the housewife to keep the house warm: 'Specially designed for her (after all, she is the one who has to use it all the week).' And if she wasn't shovelling coal onto the fire, smiling in her high heels, she would even be able to fit the new Polyflex toilet seat – 'without any tools'.

In the images, tradesmen wear ties, jackets and flat caps and the architect often underlines his nose with a moustache. The language is courteous and clipped: 'If you care to write for literature we should be pleased to acquaint you with the very many others,' suggests one paint ad.

An advert for cremators is clearly intended to fan the flames of this increasingly fashionable funerary method and elsewhere, ready-mixed concrete is cementing its reputation with the readership.

However, what stands out is not the folly of asbestos or lead piping being the future, nor the neologisms for product names (whatever happened to Hiduminium Rainwater Goods?) but how much reverence the contractors and product manufacturers had for architects at that time, advertising how proud they were to be associated with a particular modern building and looking for further work from the – then unquestionable – leaders of the construction process.

utilitarian function. For example, Woodall Services, opened in 1968, offered day-trippers lunch in its wood-panelled dining room while staring at the passing cars and lorries outside. The menu boasted gammon steak with pineapple every day of the week. With the oil crisis of the 1970s came a more modest approach to service station architecture. Out went Futurism and in came red-brick bungalows. Even the food changed, with gammon disappearing completely from the M1 by the summer of 1979, to be replaced by the flavourless sandwiches we know today.

We'll be stopping off for the night at a Travelodge, where I'll be giving a lecture on the enticing alienation of the motorway motel, as captured in the work of painter Edward Hopper. Oscar Wilde famously quipped that there was no fog in London before Whistler started painting. So too, our roads were a lot less enticing before Hopper got to work. His influence is a reminder that our sense of what's beautiful isn't innate and that we may require artists to open our eyes to the neglected sides of our world.

There's sure to be fun on the holiday up the M1, but the underlying message is a serious one: we should learn to make ourselves at home in the turbulent, half-compelling, half-ugly landscape we've created. Opening our eyes to the bicycle shed is sure to be just as valuable as admiring Lincoln Cathedral. ■

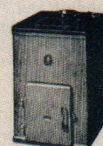
Resume: Signs, sausages and services: there's beauty in the everyday, says Alain de Botton

The Architecture Journal for June 2, 1955



What's the point of a boiler that leaves the housewife cold?

A boiler that heats the water but doesn't warm the kitchen simply leaves the housewife cold. The new boiler is a new sense of heat and that doesn't mean like economic planning. But only housewife is entitled to be sure that she's not about the new water service. Specially designed for her use, she is the one who has to use it all the week. The housewife, when using the new boiler, will be able to see it all the week. The housewife, when using the new boiler, will be able to see it all the week. The housewife, when using the new boiler, will be able to see it all the week.



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This important new book from Italy contains 400 photographs and 144 designs, illustrating more than 100 modern architects, including the works of Le Corbusier, Gropius, Mies van der Rohe, and many others. The book is a valuable reference for architects and designers.

Italy's Architecture Today
A. ZWEMMER LTD. 14-15 Clarendon Road, W.C.2.



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BRANCHES THROUGHOUT THE UNITED KINGDOM

THE ARCHITECTS' JOURNAL (Supplement) June 2, 1955

THE LAWSWOOD NE-GAS CREMATOR

A technical advisory service on the installation and layout of Cremators with their auxiliary equipment is available for Architects preparing Crematorium designs. Many progressive authorities are installing this type of Cremator, which incorporates the latest technical developments, eliminates the smoke nuisance and ensures speedy cremation with a minimum gas consumption.

Bulletin No. 9 is available on request

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Telephone: HEATON MOOR 2261 (3 lines) Telegrams: Gasifly, Manchester 19

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the best toilet seat—
at no extra cost

The 'Polyflex' toilet seat has a flexible mounting. Breakages are very unlikely. 'Polyflex' includes a flexible P.V.C. pad attached to the seat and firmly fixed to the Polyflex seat pillars. The pillars, mounted with a shock absorber, are self-aligning in the W.C. pan with polyflex washers covered by wear mats. The 'Polyflex' seat can be fixed to the brackets without any tools, and, because of the flexible mounting, it will stay firmly in position. The 'Polyflex' is hygienic. The seat, hinge, and pillar heads extend outside or apart. All are easily cleaned. The 'Polyflex' is available in black, white and a range of standard pastel shades.

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Shires are the largest manufacturers of household articles in the country. They also make W.C. seats and pans. Each order will complete W.C. seats. LORIVAL'S OFFICE: 1, CHURCH LANE, LONDON, E.C.4. (TELEPHONE: 01-477 1111). SHIRES: 1, CHURCH LANE, LONDON, E.C.4. (TELEPHONE: 01-477 1111).



Critic's Choice

Wrest Park is to benefit from a well-deserved restoration, says **Andrew Mead**

The very first president of the Institute of British Architects in London (later the RIBA) was a Tory politician, the 2nd Earl de Grey. He was a keen amateur architect who, in the 1830s, designed Wrest Park near Silsoe in Bedfordshire (pictured below) as his family home.

One of the very few houses in the UK that are thoroughly French in conception, Wrest Park was acquired two years ago by English Heritage, which already managed the grounds. A first phase of conservation is now complete but ambitious plans for the future have just been announced: a 20-year restoration of the extensive landscape.

Intriguing though the house is (with a fine staircase hall), it's the landscape that really matters at Wrest Park, reflecting as it does two centuries of changing tastes. De Grey's parterre and lawns fuse with earlier schemes which had grown around the building he'd demolished for his own. At the end of a long, oblong, 18th-century lake sits a Baroque brick pavilion by Thomas Archer – a perfect eye-catcher even though it's 800m from the house.

Water plays quite a part here and in the 1760s landscape architect 'Capability' Brown softened some of its edges, but he left earlier formal elements intact, such as the woods criss-crossed by beckoning paths.

English Heritage has published a new guidebook (£3.50) and the grounds are open at weekends until the end of October (www.english-heritage.org.uk). I wish this restoration project well – it's a beguiling place.



View from a car park: taking in the sights on one of Croydon's seven 'hills'

WALK

The seven hills of Croydon offer idiosyncratic views, says **Richard Marks** of **DRDH Architects**

Welcome to SuperCroydon tour, Sunday 21 September (part of London Open House weekend). www.londonopenhouse.org

Like many Londoners, all I knew of Croydon was what I'd seen from the train to Brighton – a glimpse of Richard Seifert's No.1 Croydon tower, and a light sense of relief as we pulled away again. This year, as a tutor at Kingston University, I'll need to pay more attention. Under new head of school Daniel Rosbottom (see *News*, page 9), every Kingston architecture student will be studying the commercial centre

of this large town in south London this year.

To this end, I met Vincent Lacovara, co-founder of architecture practice AOC and senior urban designer at Croydon Council, along with some local residents and Kingston tutors, for a tour of Croydon's 'seven hills'. Put on as part of London's Open House weekend, the hills in question were, in fact, seven multi-storey car parks across the urban centre.

Sparing no thought for our feeble legs, Vincent set a ripping pace up each of the seven- or eight-storey monoliths. A fine view emerged from the desolate upper decks – empty and redundant, we were told, due to a massive overprovision of parking. Seven car parks were built because Birmingham had six, and Croydon was not to be outdone.

The tour focused on Croydon's oddities and failures. The building boom of the 1960s left the borough with an excess of office space (a problem exacerbated by the success of Canary Wharf), while only 4,000 people actually live

in the urban centre. Bisected by impressive hunks of infrastructure, Croydon is also cut in two by four-lane highways, though these connect to mere two-lane roads on its outskirts.

With its three giant malls, Croydon is marketed as a shopper's Shangri-La, but once these blocks close, they form an impassable barrier from one side of town to the other. Lacovara is working to re-address some of these imbalances. His knowledge of Croydon is impressive and through his tour, I gained a strange affection for the idiosyncratic borough. I look forward to an interesting year ahead.

Resume: Rome if you want to: a tour of Croydon's seven hills

5 THINGS TO DO THIS WEEK

1 *Cartoons and Coronets: The Genius of Osbert Lancaster*

Discover the architectural satirist's doodlings (pictured right) at The Wallace Collection. Until 11 January. Hertford House, Manchester Sq, London W1U 3BN, www.wallacecollection.org

2 *Le Corbusier: The Art of Architecture*

See next week's issue for coverage of this Corb blockbuster and the opening of the Lutyens-designed crypt. Until 18 January. Metropolitan Cathedral, Brownlow Hill, Liverpool L3 5TQ. www.architecture.com

3 *Line by Line: 250 years of drawing Cheltenham*

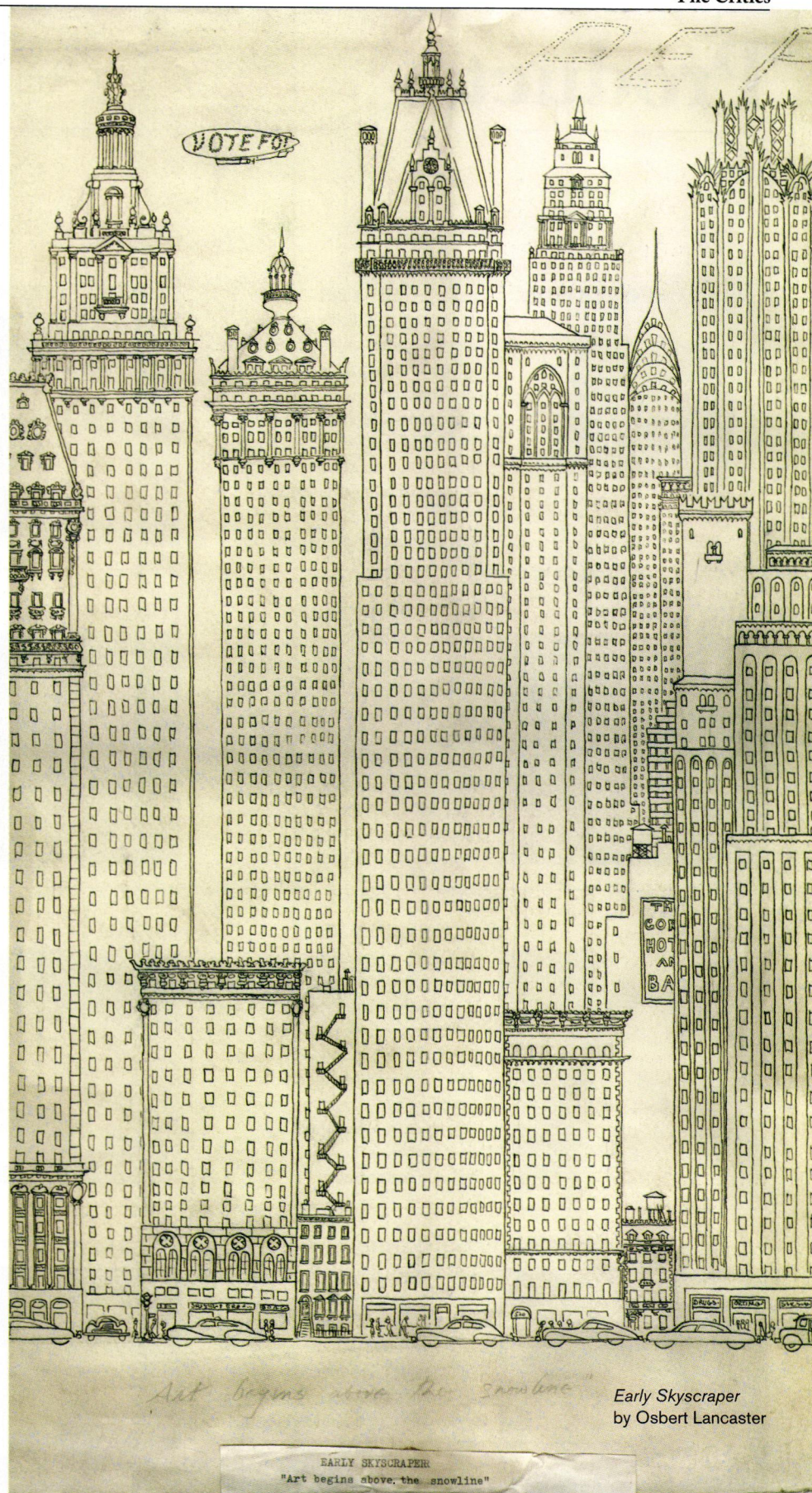
Follow the changing face of Cheltenham through these scribbings. Until 7 December. Cheltenham Art Gallery & Museum, Clarence Street, Cheltenham GL50 3JT. www.cheltenhamartgallery.org.uk

4 *Almut Rink: Foamywater*

Investigate how we represent landscape at this exhibition. Until 14 November. Austrian Cultural Forum London, 28 Rutland Gate, London SW7 1PQ. www.austria.org.uk/culture

5 *Oskar Kokoschka: Exile & New Home 1938-1980*

Enjoy this Viennese artist in a country setting. Until 14 December. Compton Verney, Warwickshire CV35 9HZ. www.comptonverney.org.uk



Early Skyscraper
by Osbert Lancaster

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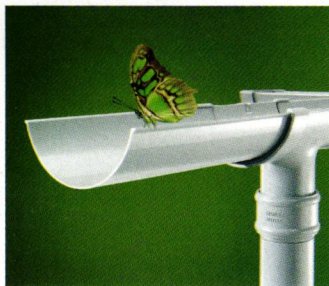
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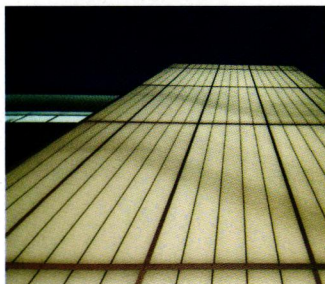
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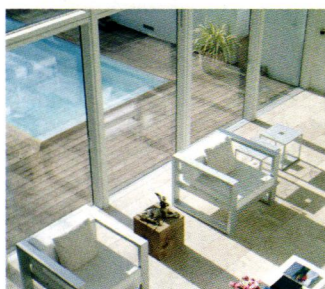
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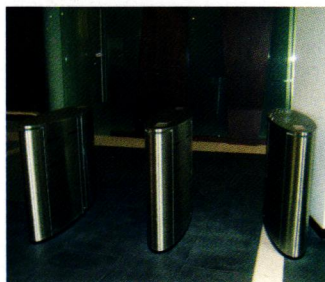
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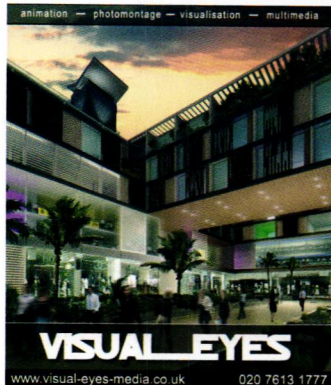
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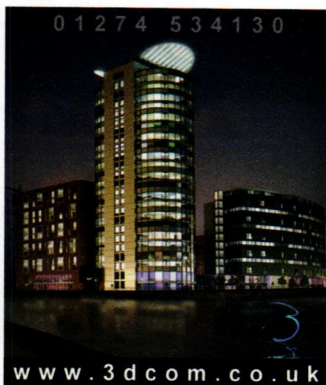
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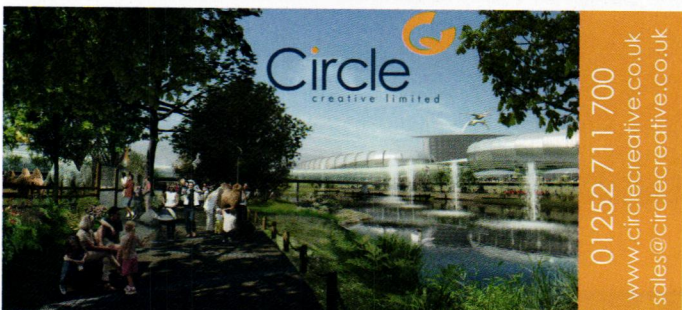
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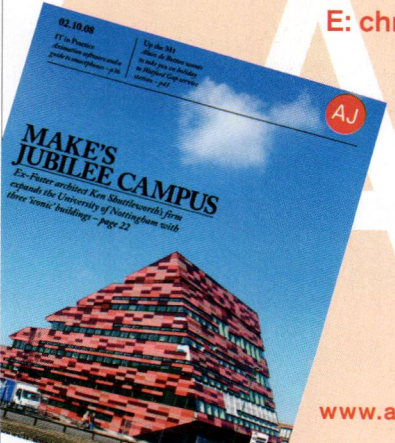
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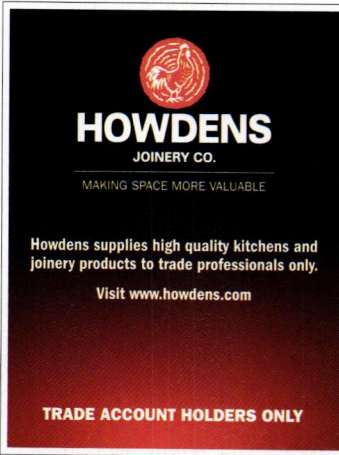
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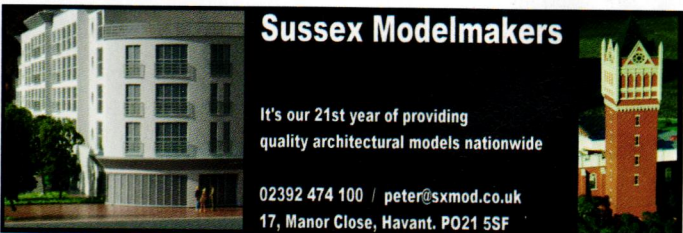
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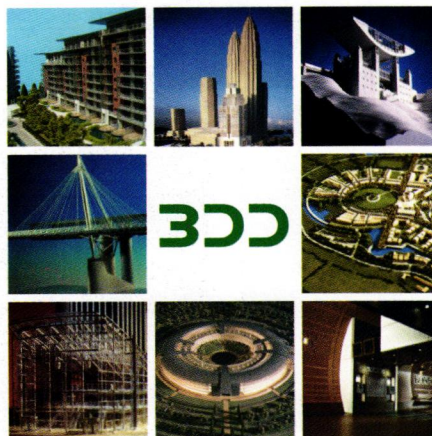


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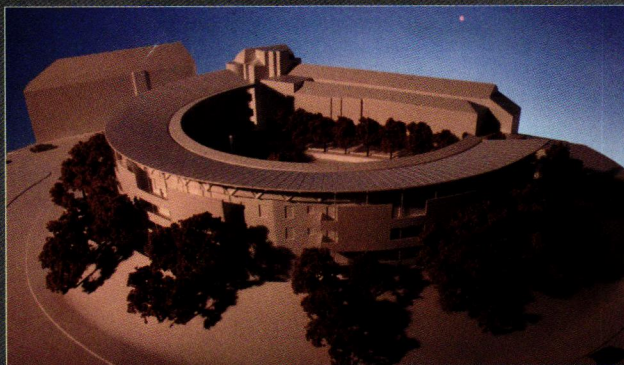
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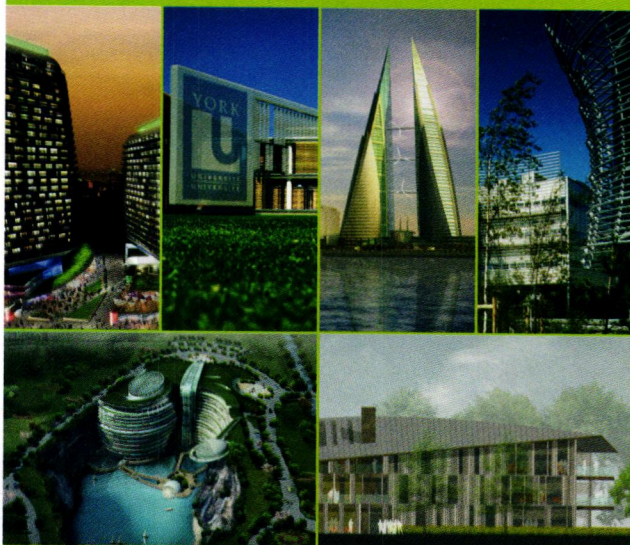
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Informal enquiries to Margaret Horne on 0191 227 4693.

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Ian Martin. Brickwalling a way through the crisis, with louder architecture

MONDAY. Finish the conceptual proto-drawings for my new Peopling of Britain Museum. It's a narrative architecture. Lots of spaces, or 'chapters', linked by a 'story' of corridors, circulation areas and signage. You can't be too careful, or too patronising.

The building offers an immersive experience, tracing the rise and fall of Britain as a world power and its survival as a haven of tolerance for the persecuted. **Originally it was called the Museum of Immigration but obviously someone on the board has been on a peopling awareness course.**

It's pretty counter-intuitive given the panic about incomers at the moment. The central message that immigration adds to the richness of our nation is underlined by my fee, which is substantial.

TUESDAY. I'm at the Institute of Advanced Iconography for an afternoon of lectures, workshops and smoking breaks. The theme? How To Beat The Economic Crisis With Cheaper, Louder Architecture. No exclamation mark either, a real touch of class.

Even better, not one of the speakers is an architect. They're all from the music industry and they're here to offer some top pop marketing advice. It's a good idea. The worlds of epic space and epic sound do share a common heritage. Both went through Modernism together, and even today may be found in the same part of the Culture/Lifestyle supplements.

But blimey, motivational speakers from the music 'biz' are much more interesting than the ones you usually get at an architecture wafflethon. Instead of some middle manager

droning on about PFI hospitals you get a tough, sexy indie guru swigging from her vodka and tonic and gossiping about George Michael. Instead of some nutty, whey-faced Austrian professor and his fractal slideshow you get **a legendary hip-hop producer with novelty hair and a facial ladygarden.**

And they're all telling us the same thing. Bang it out quickly. Clone. Saturate the market before it gets bored. And, most importantly, **TURN IT UP.** The world's a noisy bar. Music and architecture have to shout to be noticed. The secret is something called 'brickwall limiting'.

If you heavily compress the sound on a CD during mastering you close the gap between average and peak volume. So when it comes on in the noisy bar it'll be louder than anything else. Except when all the CDs have been brickwalled. Then everything's just aggressively and uniformly noisy.

This, according to our plenary session MC, is what's happening in architecture, but not quickly enough. Oh, buildings are being compressed all right: high-density apartment cramming, heavier hotels, value-engineered office lumps. But you have to make them much **LOUDER.** Other conference tips:

- If you've just done some interesting architecture, try to get on *The Charlotte Church Show*.
- Put the word 'fusion' in somewhere; everybody loves it apparently. That and urban. In fact, if you can work in the phrase 'urban fusion' over lunch with a features editor and remember to wear an iPod you might swing a two-page spread on your brilliant new glass

extension for that terraced house in Catford.
• At your next client presentation, use backing dancers and a light show.

WEDNESDAY. Redesign the London Stock Exchange, giving it more of a 'rowdy coffee house' feel. **It incorporates a 24-hour Lending Bar.** And a health spa with jacuzzis: the South Sea Bubbleteria.

THURSDAY. A mysterious voice announces he's the new client for my stock exchange do-up. What happened to the old client? **A gruff cackle, then: 'I've eaten him...'**

FRIDAY. Barratt, the trophy parrot I adopted to boost my status in the world of contemporary design, has moved out. Great news, I never liked him. But a little upsetting, as **nobody likes to be dumped for a green campaigner.**

Barratt was headhunted by some dickhead with a sustainability blog. One minute he's in the RIPBA press office squawking platitudes at lazy journalists, the next he's the toast of the We're Doomed circuit. He flaps on stage, fixes the audience with his beady stare, hops from one leg to the other and repeats 'Hey! Let's conserve Earth's Precious Resources! Kraark! Or we'll all be – extinct!' Then he dozes off for a bit.

SATURDAY. Morning: **Post-Rational Modulism.** Afternoon: International Quaker Style.

SUNDAY. Yet **more industry lay-off** in the recliner.