

22.05.08

Technical & Practice
*How to outsource
your work – p40*

Student Rags
*Magazines by
architecture schools
in this Critics special
– p45*

The AJ100 Party
*Ted Cullinan charms
the crowd at the annual
gathering of the UK's
biggest practices*

AJ

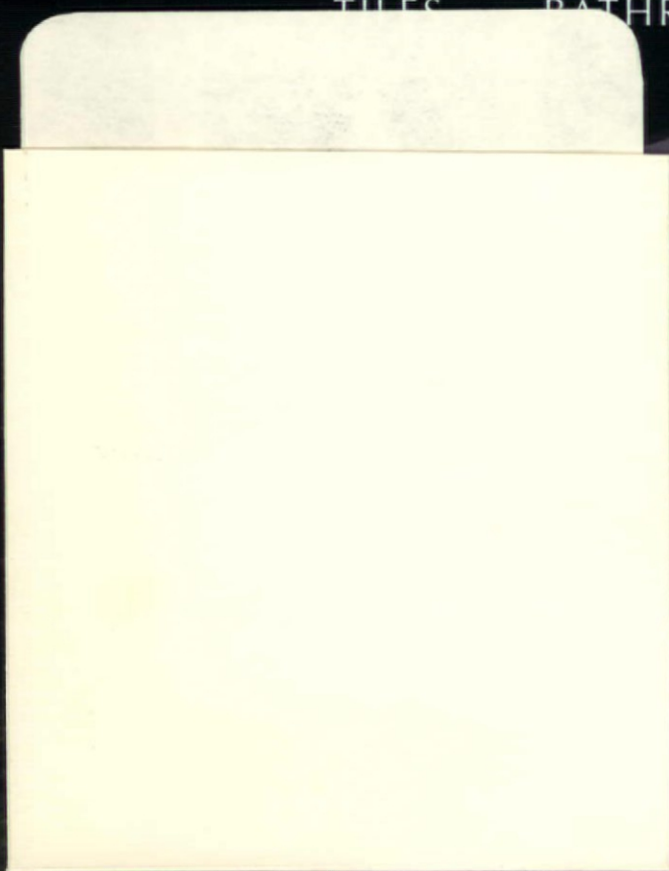
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*Wilkinson Eyre turns theory into practice with
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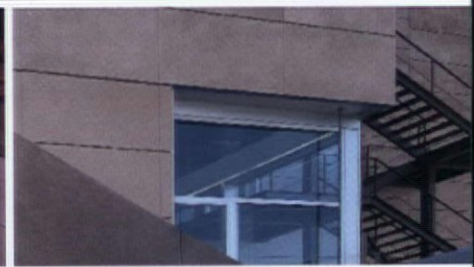
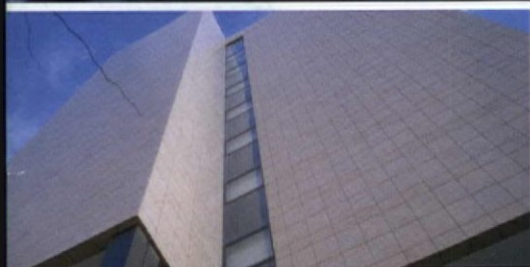
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**SOUTIEN
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Editorial enquiries/fax

020 7728 4574 / 020 7728 4666

E firstname.surname@emap.com

T 020 7728 plus extension below

Editor Kieran Long

Editorial administrator Shumi Bose (4574)

Editor, online and special projects Ruth Slavid (4572)

News editor Max Thompson (4564)

Senior reporter / Northern correspondent

Richard Waite (07918 650875)

Reporter Richard Vaughan (4566)

Features editor Jaffer Kolb (4571)

Technical editor Hattie Hartman (4569)

Senior editor, The Critics Christine Murray (4565)

Features writer James Pallister (4570)

Contributing editors Susan Dawson, Sam Jacob,

Patrick Lynch, Ian Martin, Andrew Mead

Editorial assistant Kaye Alexander (4568)

Editor, AJ Specification Tally Wade (4567)

Art editor Cecilia Lindgren (4580)

Deputy art editor Eriko Shimazaki (4578)

Managing editor Angus Montgomery (4579)

Sub-editor Isla McMillan (4577)

Managing director Fraser Murdoch

Commercial manager Malcolm Perryman (4584)

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Classified sales manager Tom Peardon (4558)

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Recruitment Kyra Willis (3827)

Group sales manager Midge Myatt (01902 851645)

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News

05 House of Lords sends design to top of **Housing Bill** agenda

08 Stars come out to play for **AJ100** awards

14 Witherford Watson Mann tries to break the **European** curse

Comment

18 **Leader** 'Design' is a far less exacting standard than 'architecture'

20 **Patrick Lynch** reverts to childhood with Tezuka Architects

58 **Ian Martin** attends the TVP100

Features

24 – 37 **Wilkinson Eyre's** Bristol Metropolitan College turns 2003 exemplars into reality

45 – 49 **The Critics** Steve Parnell tackles **student publications**

Jobs & Classified

51 Classified advertising

54 Top five jobs: **Centurion, Bespoke, Pipers, PTP Architects, RIBA**

This week online

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Left The
Houses of
Parliament
Below Lord
Howarth



LORDS FORCE DESIGN TO TOP OF HOUSING BILL AGENDA

A House of Lords group led by Lord Howarth is demanding changes to the Housing and Regeneration Bill to ensure design quality is embedded in the new Housing and Communities Agency (HCA).

A 'design caucus', led by the former architecture minister and backed by the RIBA, has demanded key amendments to the Housing and Regeneration Bill – the legislation which will ratify the creation of the HCA.

With a purse of nearly £16.3 billion, the HCA is expected to deliver 100,000 homes and will be created later this year when English Partnerships and the Housing Corporation merge – neither of which groups had statutory duties in respect of design quality.

Speaking at a Lords debate in the last week, Howarth called for the HCA to be given an explicit role in guaranteeing 'the improvement of design quality in new housing', and insisted the new superquango should appoint a design expert to its board.

Howarth said: 'There can only be benefit in using this legislation to reinforce... the guidance expressed in the planning policy statements [on good design]. There will otherwise be a wide gulf between the aspirations of ministers in Whitehall and practice and decision-making on the ground.'

He added: 'I also believe it is right that we should require in legislation that appropriate people are in place and procedures are followed that will

conduce to good design.'

Howarth's comments to the Lords' grand committee garnered widespread cross-party support, with Baroness Whitaker claiming the proposed amendments were 'the missing link to the bill's sense of what the HCA is for'.

However, Baroness Andrews, who is overseeing the passage of the bill through Parliament, said she could not accept the amendments in their current form but was 'sympathetic towards aspirations to improve design quality'.

Anna Scott-Marshall, RIBA head of policy, said: 'There appears to be a head of steam building on design issues and it is clear the government will not be able to ignore this.'

The Lords must now wait for

the next stage in the passage of the bill, likely to be next month, to discover the government's response. Meanwhile, it is understood that the RIBA would be interested in the design expert role.

However, CABA's head of public affairs, Adrian Harvey, has ruled out embedding a representative from the commission within the new agency, similar to the designated London 2012 Olympic Games position. He said: 'If the HCA needs to draw on our expertise, as the government's advisor on architecture we are willing to offer [it].'

'But we are keen that the agency will not be immune from design review and we want to maintain the independent scrutiny role.' *Richard Waite*

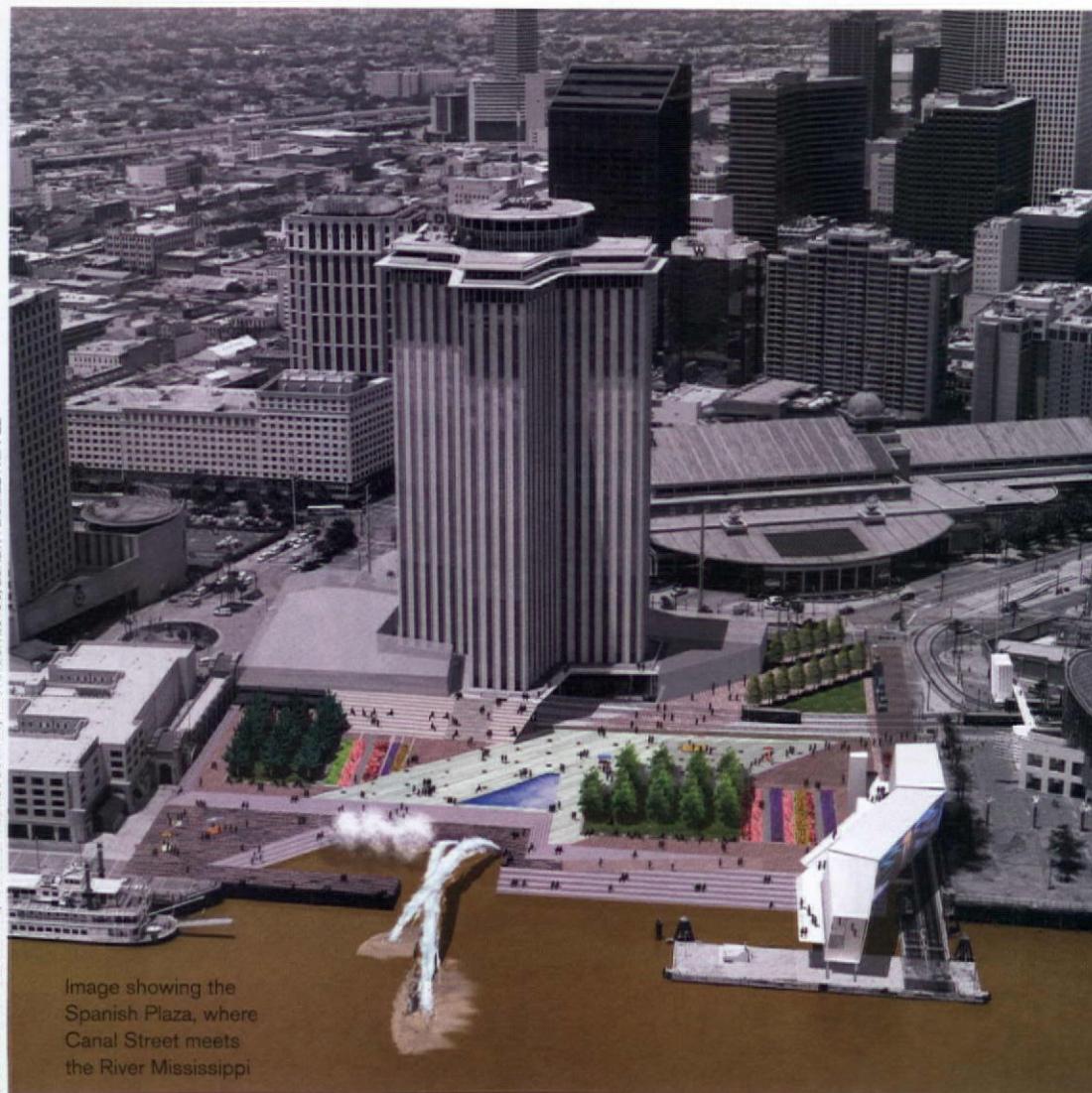


Image showing the Spanish Plaza, where Canal Street meets the River Mississippi

ADJAYE ADDS TO NEW ORLEANS MASTERPLAN

Adjaye/Associates has been appointed to draw-up plans for a chapel as part of a \$300 million (£150 million) redevelopment on the banks of the River Mississippi in New Orleans, USA.

The London-based practice is part of a five-strong architectural team – led by New Orleans-based Eskew+Dumez+Ripple – appointed by public development corporation the New Orleans Building Corporation (NOBC) to design a 9km stretch of development along the east bank of the river.

Working alongside US practices Chan Krieger

Siemewicz and Michael Maltzan Architecture, and landscape architect Hargreaves Associates – which also has a London office – Adjaye has been tasked with designing a new chapel for the scheme.

According to the NOBC, the chapel will bring 'an intriguing set of life experiences to a city influenced by West African culture and craftsmanship'.

In addition to the chapel and a riverfront amphitheatre by Los Angeles-based Maltzan, the scheme will also include cruise-ship terminals, educational institutions and an arts centre,

as well as more than 30ha of open spaces.

When the scheme is completed in 2016, the NOBC estimates that around \$3.6 billion (£1.8 billion) in new private investment will be generated for the city, which was devastated by Hurricane Katrina in 2005.

The appointment is Adjaye's second New Orleans project in the last six months. Last December the practice unveiled designs for flood-proof homes as part of a regeneration project part-funded by Hollywood star Brad Pitt (AJ online 05.12.07).
Max Thompson

THIS WEEK ON THE WEB

FOSTER REDESIGNS GALLERY EXTENSION

Foster + Partners has unveiled its redesigned proposals for an extension above the historic Parke-Bernet Gallery on Madison Avenue, in Manhattan's Upper East Side, New York City. The new scheme is significantly smaller than Foster's original plans for a 22-storey elliptical tower, sent back to the drawing board in January last year.

FIRE RAGES AT BERLIN PHILHARMONIE

Fire struck Hans Scharoun's Berlin Philharmonie on Tuesday (20 May). According to reports, smoke was seen billowing out from beneath the distinctive tent-like roof of the building (pictured below) in the city's Tiergarten area. More than 110 firefighters tackled the inferno, the latest in a series of blazes to hit architectural gems around Europe, following on from fires at BIO's Bluecoat Art Gallery and Delft Technical School last week.



SILVERSTONE DESIGNS NEED 'MORE FINESSE', SAYS CABE

CABE has said it is 'unconvinced' by HOK Sport's proposals for the redevelopment of the pitlane and paddock for the British Grand Prix at Silverstone. The design watchdog said it supported the architectural aspirations of the project, but called for 'more finesse' if it was to back the planning application.

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3

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THE TOP DOGS COME OUT FOR THE AJ100

Last week at the East Wintergarden in London's Canary Wharf (14 May), the AJ played host to 400 architects from the industry's top practices at the 13th annual AJ100 awards. The guest speakers were RIBA Gold Medallist Ted Cullinan – who caused a stir with his doodle-illustrated speech – and architecture minister Margaret Hodge – who pledged her loyalty to the industry. *Max Thompson*

For videos, interviews and photos visit WWW.ARCHITECTSJOURNAL.CO.UK, and read Ian Martin's take on the AJ100 on page 58



4



1. Flanked by Schüco's Danny Fitzgerald and AJ editor Kieran Long, BDP chairman Tony McGuirk picks up the AJ100 largest practice award

2. Alan Shingler of Sheppard Robson and Gensler's Kirsten Rothery

3. Foster + Partners wins the international practice of the year award

4. Ted Cullinan's house-design sketch

5. Architecture Minister Margaret Hodge makes her address

6. Ted Cullinan's sketch of people on the Tube

7. The East Wintergarden

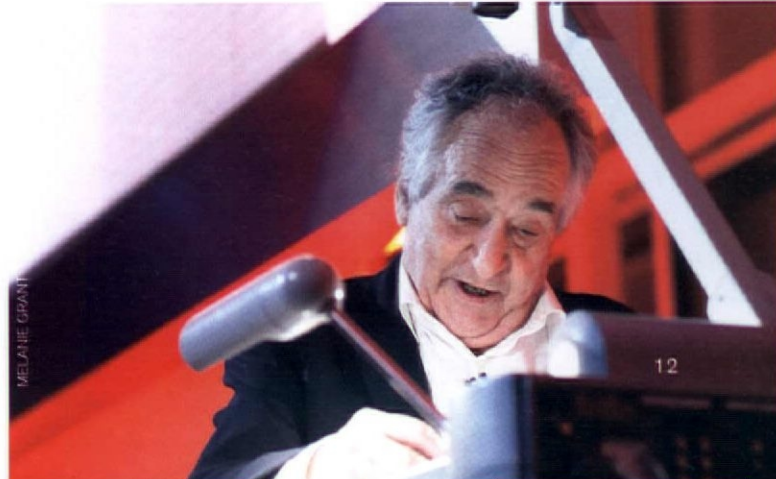
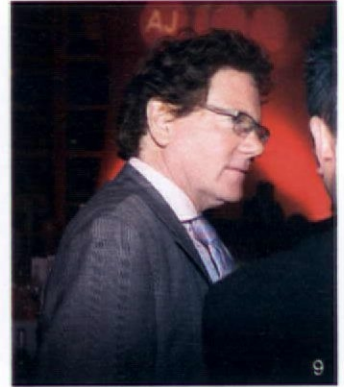
8. Bosses Mark Goldspink of Purcell Miller Tritton and William Taylor of Hopkins

9. Broadcaster Maxwell Hutchinson

10. Eric Parry Architects director Robert Kennett

11. SMC Group managing director Chris Littlemore

12. Speaker Ted Cullinan



SCOTLAND PROPOSES ALTERNATIVE TO PFI

The Scottish government has outlined its proposed alternative to PFI as a procurement method for major infrastructure projects, including schools and hospitals.

Under plans revealed on Tuesday (20 May), the Scottish Futures Trust (SFT), a not-for-profit organisation, will be formed to act as a 'key vehicle' in the delivery of more than £35 billion-worth of public projects over the next 10 years.

Arnie Dunn, president of the Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland (RIAS), said he hoped the replacement scheme

would put design at the heart of large-scale public projects.

Dunn said: 'If this new system means there is going to be a return to a more traditional role for architects then I can only commend it. And if it means less involvement from lawyers and insurers driving the project, it will be a good thing.'

Alan Dunlop, partner of Gordon Murray + Alan Dunlop Architects – which is currently working on the Clackmannanshire PPP schools project – said there will be little change in the short-term.

'At the moment it's a bit vague just how [SFT] is going to be structured but the intent is very commendable,' he said.

'However, as many of the PPP contracts for schools are already signed, I can't see how it will come into operation for some time.'

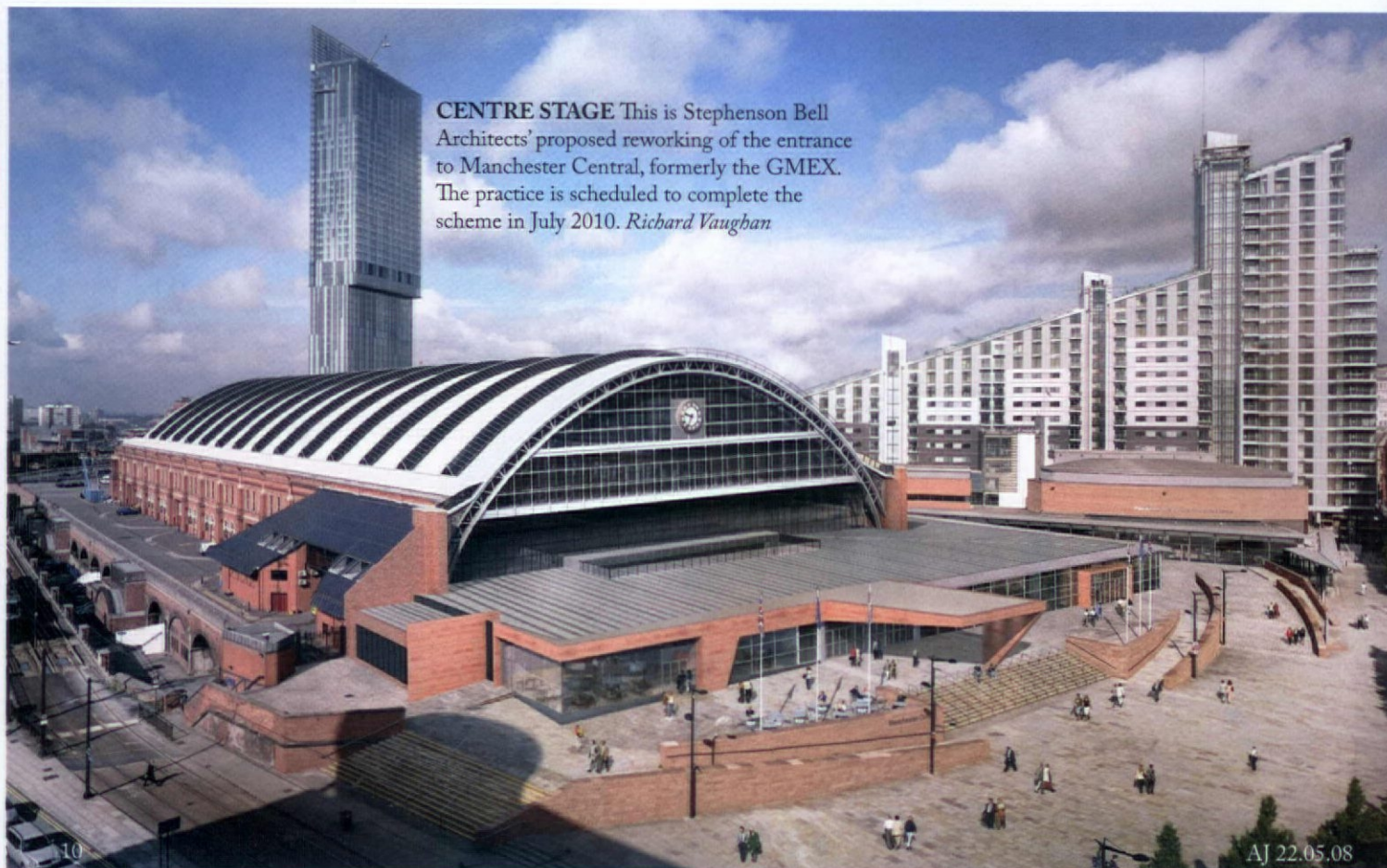
The SFT scheme will be set up as a public-sector partnership between central and local government and, according to the Scottish National Party (SNP), it will be less costly than the existing PFI procurement system. *Richard Vaughan*

UNQUALIFIED PLANNERS MAY BE USED

The government has mooted plans that will force architects to deal with unqualified 'technical and support staff' in roles traditionally carried out by council planning officers.

Planning minister Caroline Flint, who gave evidence to a Communities and Local Government Select Committee on Monday, claimed the delegation of certain roles would free up planning officers.

Peter Stewart, RIBA planning group chair, said: 'If tasks such as minor planning applications do not need professional judgement, then does there really need to be an application?' *Richard Vaughan*

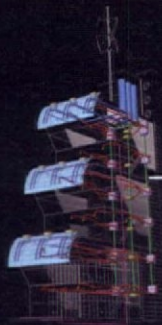


CENTRE STAGE This is Stephenson Bell Architects' proposed reworking of the entrance to Manchester Central, formerly the GMEX. The practice is scheduled to complete the scheme in July 2010. *Richard Vaughan*

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HODDER GOES GREY

Manchester-based Hodder Associates has unveiled this 66-flat scheme for developer Maryland Securities in Newton Street, Manchester city centre. The 10-storey building, which has just gone in for planning permission, will be clad in a dark-grey brick. *Richard Waite*



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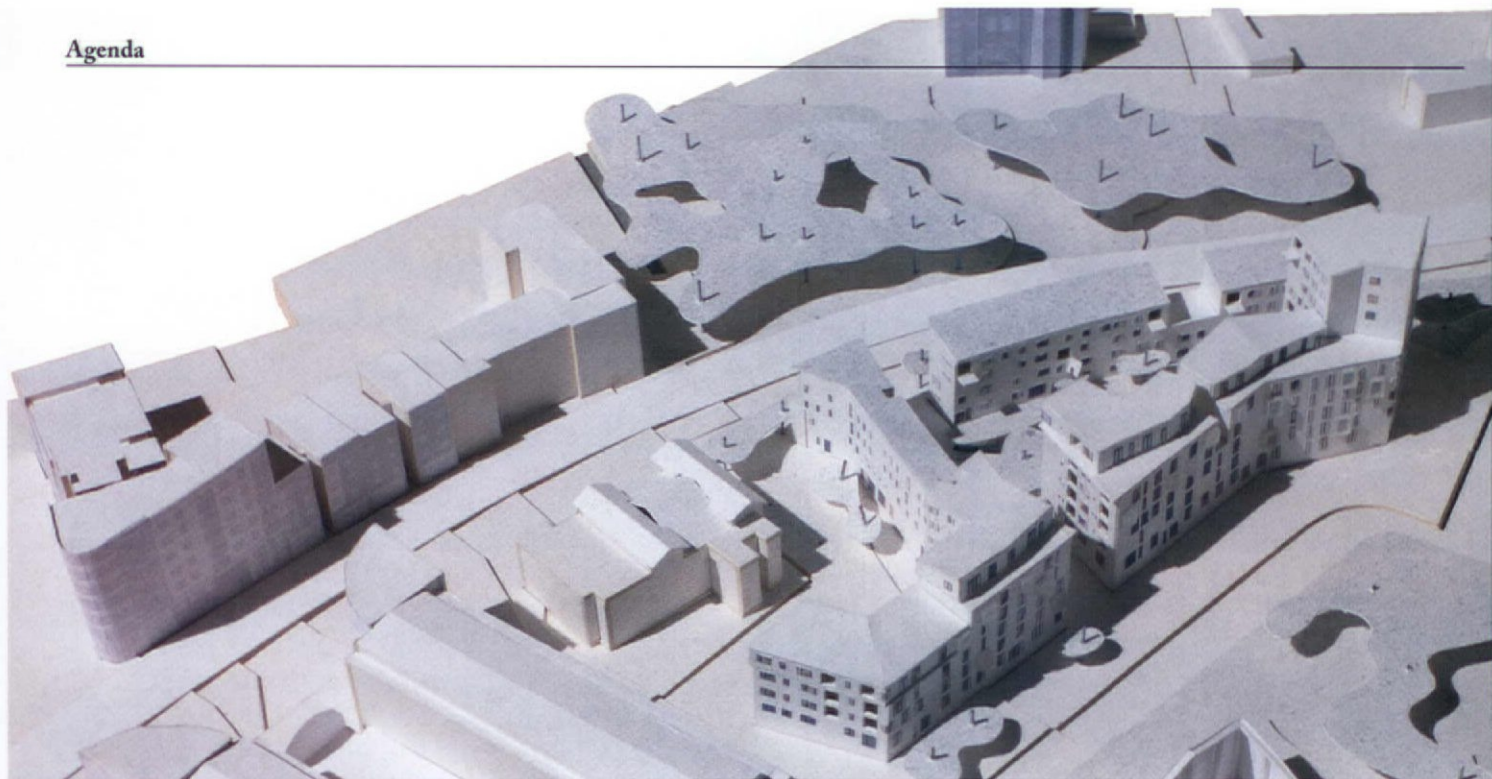
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BREAKING THE EUROPAN CURSE

Wetherford Watson Mann (WWM) has become the first practice in the UK to land outline planning permission for a winning European project.

But only a fool would put money on the practice ending the UK's disastrously unproductive 14-year-long flirtation with the Europe-wide housing contest.

WWM's 122-home scheme, part of the regeneration of the concrete 1960s Stonebridge estate in north-west London, has already endured a two-year rollercoaster ride which has seen both the brief and site change.

And despite drawing up detailed proposals and carrying out extensive public consultation, the victors of the 2006 CABC-organised European 8 contest are facing yet more uncertainty.

The scheme's site is to be sold by landowner Hillside Housing Trust, formerly Stonebridge Housing Action Trust, to a private developer.

The trust, which has already delivered hundreds of social houses within a larger Shepherd

Epstein Hunter/Terence O'Rourke masterplan, as well as Will Alsop's Fawood Children's Centre, did not want to get involved with private homes. And there is nothing to compel the buyer to retain WWM.

But a glimmer of hope remains. When Hillside sells on the site, the deal will be tied to a licence and any purchaser will only be fully given the land when the trust has decided it is 'of sufficient quality'.

Commenting on the pending sale and the fact that WWM has already had two unrealised wins in European 5 and 6, co-founder Stephen Wetherford said: 'We don't feel betrayed by European.'

'We knew there were no guarantees Stonebridge would be built. All the parties – CABC, Hillside and whoever purchases [the site] – buy into that risk. You don't do European expecting it to go smoothly.'

On balance, Wetherford remains positive about the scheme. He says: 'This is an important first step for European in the UK. It's

gone from a contest aspiration to a complex development with 122 units and outline planning'.

But to followers of the European story, the Stonebridge plot is familiar. Since the UK first entered the competition in 1994 not one scheme has been delivered, while hundreds of homes have been built under the contest umbrella elsewhere in Europe.

Now the future of WWM's design is at the whim of the market. In that way, Wetherford says, '[we] have been put under the same demands as anyone else and have had to make [the £16 million development] stack up financially.'

In Oldham, Lancashire, a scheme by fellow European 8 winners Loop Architecture and Harry Dobbs Design is also no nearer to coming out of the ground. Although approved generally as part of a larger masterplan for a Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder area, a detailed application has yet to be submitted.



Loop's Phil Catcheside expects this to finally happen in September this year. He said: 'Things are moving forward, albeit painfully slowly... It seems to have taken a long time to get to this stage but it hasn't fallen apart.'

The practice's scheme for developer BASE (AJ 01.02.07) tripled in size from 44 to 150 homes and was widely tipped to become the UK's first European success story in the UK.

But, as Pathfinders nationally came under scrutiny, heels dragged, and even though the project could have 'some' gap funding, Catcheside feels the development could 'end up being as [commercially] exposed as many others'.

Yet European-backer CABE has defended the contest, claiming the Stonebridge permission marks 'a milestone' and that the competition is 'also about making contacts'.

However, Catcheside concluded: 'Though CABE has done everything asked of it in terms of design quality, the European system can't force people [namely private developers] to spend money if they don't want to.'

Richard Waite

THE UK'S EUROPEAN WOES

European 1-3 (1989-1992) UK did not enter

European 4 (1994) Birmingham (Wilkinson King), Glasgow (Hrvoje Njiric), Liverpool (BIQ), Manchester (Chris Bannister, Barbara Dunsire) – all unbuilt

European 5 (1997) Sheffield (Chris Bannister, Barbara Dunsire), Nottingham (Group for Architecture), Dartford (Witherford Watson Mann) – all unbuilt

European 6 (2000) Peckham (Witherford Watson Mann), Hackney (Philippe Haag, Michel Kirsch, Georges Zigrand), Manchester (Amin Taha and Richard Markland) – all unbuilt

European 7 (2003) UK did not enter

European 8 (2006) Stonebridge (Witherford Watson Mann), Oldham (Loop Architecture, Harry Dobbs Design), Milton Keynes (no outright winner) – still in the pipeline

European 9 (2008) Sheffield (Prewett Bizley), Stoke-on-Trent (RCKa), Milton Keynes (Tom Russell Architects)

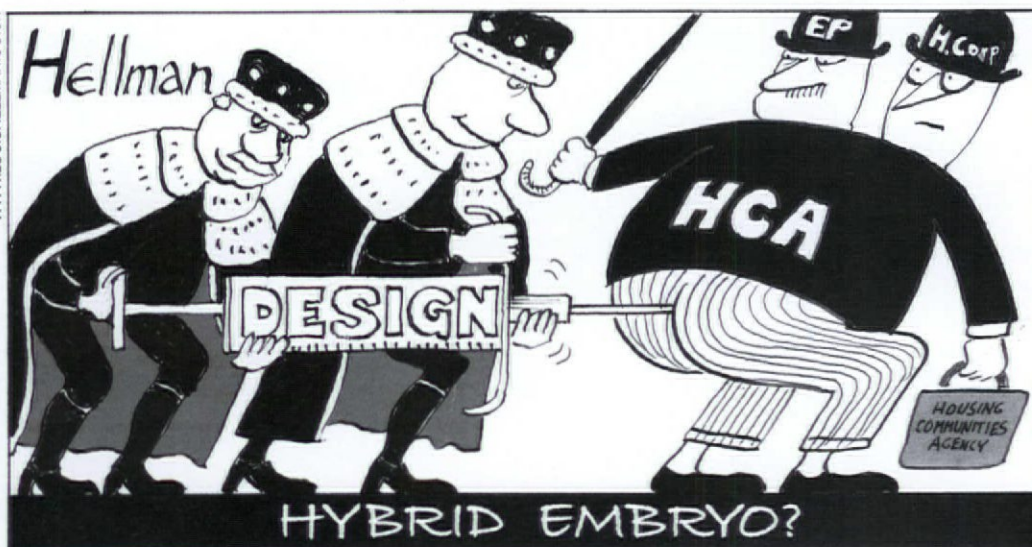


Top left and top right Witherford Watson Mann's model and sketch for Stonebridge estate
Centre Stonebridge when it was first

built in the 1960s
Above Loop Architecture and Harry Dobbs Design's European 8-winning scheme for Oldham

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FASHION VICTIM

From male kimonos to kilts, dickie bows to Doc Martens, architecture once again proved it has no real fashion sense at the AJ100 awards ceremony last week (14 May). Perhaps more people should have called AJ towers, like one confused architect who rang on the morning of the bash to find out what the phrase 'stylish dress code' really meant.

NICE WORK

Jaws dropped when it was revealed at the AJ100 awards ceremony that Ken Shuttleworth's burgeoning practice Make has a 2 per cent staff turnover – an incredibly low figure which more than justifies the firm's Employer of the Year award. **Karl Haden**, chief of recruitment agency and award sponsor SIV, jokingly boomed as he handed over the prize. Astragal's sure the agency's work recruiting nearly 150 newbies for Hamiltons last year will have eased this minor pain...

EASY RIDER

Astragal's cycling buddies are worried – about the proposed Olympic Velodrome by Hopkins. Boasting a glazed 'choker' beneath the sombrero-like roof, the scheme looks good. But what about the glare and shadows? How many velodromes do you see with masses of glass, they say? Naturally, the Olympic Delivery Authority is unworried. The design will create a 'light and open environment to maximise spectator experience while also ensuring the best possible track conditions for cyclists'. And all this can be controlled with heavy blinds. But at what cost?

AIR MAIL

One of Astragal's spies witnessed a spot of bother at Rogers Stirk Harbour + Partners' newly opened Heathrow Terminal 5 recently. A furious woman was complaining loudly about the lack of a postbox to some officials, who cried 'security reasons' until the unhappy

customer pointed out that other Heathrow terminals have them. Over trotted an apologetic manager, claiming: 'It was an oversight by the architect!' The things architects are blamed for. And the woman's response? 'Oh I can believe that. We've had a lot of problems with the architect on our house extension.'

PLAYING IT COOL

Astragal was lucky enough to enjoy an afternoon with **Reinier de Graaf** from **Rem Koolhaas'** firm Office of Metropolitan Architecture (OMA) at the RIBA Futures Fair last week. The dapper Dutchman was taking the

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audience through his practice's portfolio of work in Dubai. De Graaf described the Emirate state as 'a collection of mutually competing theme parks' where there exists a 'monotony of the exceptional'. So it's a good job OMA designed something low-key for its Waterfront City scheme (pictured below). No one will really notice a Death Star amid the theme parks anyway...

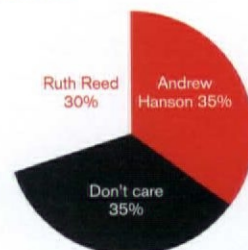


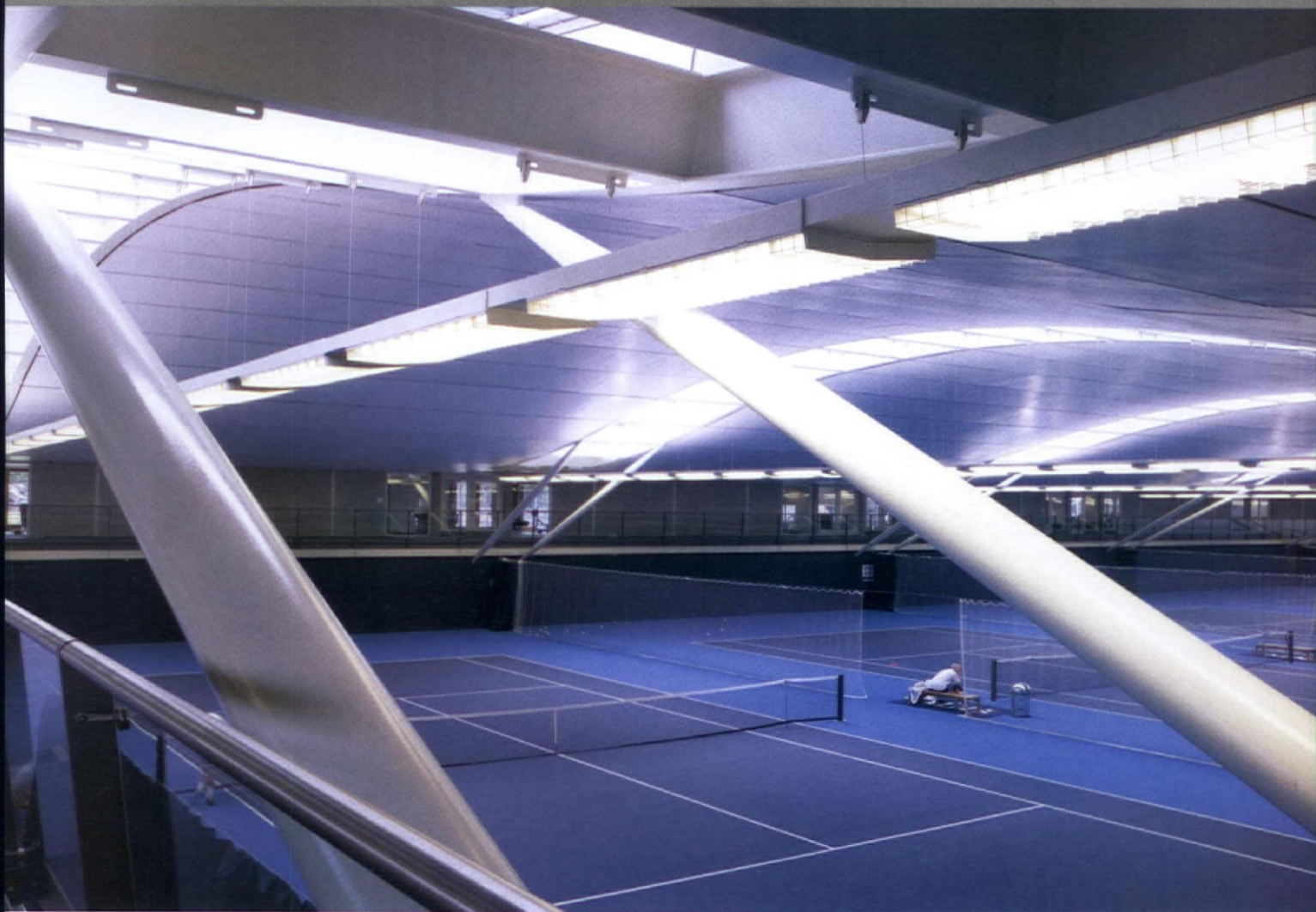
THIS WEEK'S ONLINE POLL

Who should be the next president of the RIBA? Ruth Reed/Andrew Hanson/Don't care (see right for result)

Next week's question: Would you encourage a young practitioner to enter the European competition?

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Leader & Comment



Leader 'Design' is a far less exacting and specific standard than 'architecture', says *Kieran Long*

If you're a housing architect, the debate in the Lords last week about whether to amend the Housing Bill to include explicit reference to 'design quality' is required reading (*see page 5*). At the beginning of the debate, Lord Howarth proposed that design quality should be enshrined in the duties of the soon-to-be-incorporated Homes and Communities Agency. This should be simple enough, he says, because 'what constitutes good design is well documented' in government and CABE standards. As well as in 2,000 years of Western architectural commentary and criticism, you might well add.

But confusion still reigns among policy-makers about what design quality means. The debate revealed the usual differences in

opinion, which are worth setting out here, about what design quality actually might refer to, and how it could be measured.

Lord Dixon-Smith said: 'Design is a matter of taste'. Whereas his Tory colleague Lord Brooke of Sutton Mandeville opined that there is something fundamentally true about good design, giving the example of the rebirth of Denys Lasdun's Keeling House in East London, and ending with the Shakespearean paraphrase 'quality will out'.

Lord Mawson, a cross-bench peer and expert in community regeneration, was more scientific. 'Design quality is a practical matter,' he said, adding: 'Certain kinds of environments... create certain kinds of public behaviour.' On the other hand, Lord Tyler

believes it's a question of the individual designer: 'Unless high-quality designers are involved in the next generation of housing we are in danger again of creating inbuilt obsolescence in the housing stock.'

I can't help feeling that the word 'design' is confusing everyone. Why can't we just call it architecture? That has served perfectly well for centuries to imply constructional quality and also describes a profession whose responsibilities include the client, the end-user and the city at large. Design as a word is abstract and unhelpful. A good piece of design can be anything from an anglepoise lamp to a nifty paper clip. Architecture is a more demanding standard.

kieran.long@emap.com



Opinion The BSF reforms need to improve design quality as well as streamlining the process, says *Greg Penoyre*

Well, it was either going to be a radical reform or a 'tweaking' of the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) procurement process. Perhaps not surprisingly, Partnerships for Schools (Pfs), which is responsible for delivering BSF, has opted for the latter in its procurement review (AJ 08.05.08). Tweaks though they may be, they will be welcome to many in the bidding community. But will they lead to higher design quality?

The way the BSF schools programme is procured is hugely important to its success. While the Pfs recommendations are not transformational there is no doubt that there are some significant improvements.

There will be less congestion during the critical design stages; the new recommenda-

tion is for two sample schools developed to stage C by two bidders as opposed to as many as five sample schemes developed (in theory) to stage D by three bidders previously – that's a big difference. But real improvement depends on the detail: Will the three bidding contractors at Invitation to Participate in Dialogue (ITPD) stage one really be able to complete meaningful first-stage bids on Stage A-B work or will they be asking their design teams to do much more behind the scenes? The same question will arise over Stage C

My own experience in BSF bids has been discouraging

work for ITPD two. I remain unconvinced that design can flourish within the constraints of a bid in this form, and whether the bid is the right point in the selection of private-sector partner to be talking about design at all.

Central to this is the question of what is being judged and when. My own experience of bids, in which our consortium's design proposals were reported to be of the highest quality but the bid was nevertheless unsuccessful, has been discouraging. This outcome will remain a disincentive to designers if

facilities management, partnering, and of course the commercial offer are still judged simultaneously alongside highly labour-intensive architectural proposals.

It is also important to be accurate about where quality is coming from. I can't help noting that the illustrations in the Pfs review document are not of BSF schools. That's a pity, there are some good ones, including Wilkinson Eyre's Bristol Brunel Academy and Marks Barfield's Michael Tippett School in Lambeth. Why not use those?

There are other challenges with a wider impact than just design quality. These include the readiness of local authorities to embark on the journey, and the readiness of the market to deliver. For authorities, the imperative to get on and see tangible change has so far made for more focus on first projects than is healthy if the real test is of a long-term partnership.

The long term is what this should be all about. Long-term partnerships, to produce designs of lasting quality – that's what we want to get on with.

Greg Penoyre is a senior partner at Penoyre & Prasad

See feature on BSF design on pages 24-37



Analysis The draft Heritage Protection Bill will make it easier to manage our historic environment, says Jane Kennedy

At a time when architecture has become more and more beset by bureaucracy, and even a simple planning application requires several written reports from a range of consultants, it is good to know that there is legislation pending which will make our lives simpler.

In his draft Queen's speech of 14 May, Prime Minister Gordon Brown set out plans for the draft Heritage Protection Bill to be introduced in the 2008-09 parliamentary session. The government says this Bill will 'create a more open, accountable and transparent heritage protection system by reforming the way that historic sites and buildings in England are registered'.

The proposals in the Bill which will principally affect architects in practice are to:

- replace the separate listing of buildings, scheduling of ancient monuments and registering of parks and gardens with a single list of designated sites or 'historic assets';
- make details of all designated sites available online;

The Bill would be the most significant change ever to our historic building law

- streamline the associated consent processes, with a new heritage asset consent replacing listing building consent and scheduled monument consent, and merging conservation area consent with planning permission;
- create a new statutory framework enabling voluntary management arrangements for owners of complex historic sites, to be called heritage partnership agreements (HPAs); and
- provide through local authorities a record of the historic environment in their area.

Owners will be consulted in advance if their buildings are being considered for

designation and the new listing descriptions will be more accessible. Trials of these new list descriptions suggest they will be full and clearly written.

Applications for consent to carry out works will be simpler because there will no longer be separate scheduled monument consent (which currently must be applied for directly to English Heritage) and listed building consent.

HPAs have been piloted in places such as the University of East Anglia (with its Denys Lasdun buildings), the Piccadilly Underground Line (with stations by Charles Holden) and Rochester Cathedral Close, Kent. The agreements will be drawn up in partnership with the site owners, the local authorities and English Heritage. The aim is to establish guidance on agreed works and to avoid the need for repetitive consent applications. HPAs should be flexible enough to work in a variety of places: the pilots have demonstrated their success for a range of assets, including modern buildings.

The government says the changes will reduce bureaucratic burdens for owners and local authorities by streamlining consent procedures, and that introducing voluntary management agreements will help facilitate

long-term management of complex heritage sites. All of this is good news, but additional resources will be needed for the new system to be put in place. English Heritage needs funding to upgrade existing designation records to the standard which will become the norm under the new system, and to set up the combined list of 'heritage assets'. Some funding is available from the grant which government gives to English Heritage for support and training to be provided to local authorities but more will be needed.

If the Bill goes through parliament in the next session it could become law by 2010. It would be the most significant change ever to our historic building law, which has otherwise developed incrementally over the last 100 years. The rules will be easier to understand and both architects and clients will be better informed about the significance of their sites. As long as there is adequate funding to implement the changes, then it will be simpler to plan management and change within the historic environment.

Jane Kennedy is a senior partner at Purcell Miller Tritton and an English Heritage commissioner

Email comment@architectsjournal.co.uk



Heritage partnership agreements have been trialled at Denys Lasdun's University of East Anglia buildings

BORIS BAGGS



Tezuka Architects' Fuji Kindergarten promotes common and uncommon sense, writes Patrick Lynch

And then they do it again! Forming an oval courtyard, the Fuji Kindergarten in Tokyo by Tezuka Architects (a practice I praised last week (AJ 15.05.08)), is another of those projects that you wished you'd done yourself. It's was published last year (*Architectural Review*, August 2007) and last month *Detail* added an excellent essay by the architects, in which they said: 'What we'd like to teach the children with this building is plain common sense.' The wonderful sketches that illustrate the article appear to have been the working drawings. It seems have been great fun to do, and certainly looks like a fun place to be in – the big kid in you wants to join in running around the roof and jumping at trees. Although the architects admit that the complex geometry caused a headache for their assistants and for the builders, the kindergarten's elegantly distorted formal simplicity is clearly derived from the need to fit the typology on to the site, and the moments of potential awkwardness implicit in this approach are delicately and hilariously handled. For example, trees shoot up through

the roof and rope nets are slung out to protect children from falling through the gaps when shinning up the branches. The timber roof slopes gently towards the centre, encouraging movement and making everyone visible from the everywhere. The result is a sort of benign Panopticon, where the inmates clamber gleefully all over the building. I've never seen so many photographs of so many happy people in one place. The kids seem to be in love with their bodies in the building, and it

influence of both Alvar Aalto and the psychological writing of Donald Winnicott on Colin St John Wilson. British psychoanalyst Winnicott's writings relate spatial situations to psychic ones, and he says we need 'holding environments' that enable us to withdraw from or step out into the world. Menin and Samuel are intrigued by the ways in which bodily images translate into spatial images. I don't mean the formalist clichés that you hear bandied about so often ('womb-like

The big kid in you wants to run around the roof and jump at the trees

appears like a great wide grin, an indulgent and resilient background figure.

Sarah Menin and Flora Samuel have written about the psychology of modern spaces in *Nature and Space: Aalto and Le Corbusier* (Routledge, 2002), and Menin has also written about *An Architecture of Invitation* (Ashgate, 2005) in which she traces the

forms', 'feminine curves' etc.). Menin and Samuel tease out instead the inspiration for our spatial and linguistic references in our relationships with people and place; the encounters with the world that enable us to develop a sense of selfhood. They thus avoid the black hole of most contemporary criticism that starts and ends with biography. It is obvious that certain morphologies imitate the primary encounter of being held, and courtyard typologies can mutate from squares to ovals without losing the essential qualities that distinguish these spaces in topological terms as territories defined by wall buildings. Tezuka Architects' kindergarten is a safe realm that exposes children to miniature adventures everyday, offering an invitation to play and to learn from playing. A certain kind of uncommon sense is set in motion in this project, intimating and introducing all of the roles we learn to play in life, from adventurer to spy to gymnast and actor, and in leaving things incomplete, even the architect in all of us is encouraged to come out to play.



The Fuji Kindergarten,
Tokyo, by Tezuka
Architects

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CASHING IN

In her article 'It's all about the money' (AJ 15.05.08), Hattie Hartman quotes me as saying that the design-led practices, which tended to top the annual Colander benchmarking surveys in terms of profit, were the 'big-name practices with a brand which can command higher fees'.

It is true that these practices often deliver excellent profit margins. However, I also said that these were not the only design-led practices to make money. Smaller, lesser known practices with a strong design agenda also top the bill, simply by ensuring that efficient working is part of their office culture.

It has to be said that practices prepared to go the extra mile for good design find it a lot easier if they are also turning a healthy profit. Then they can invest in nurturing their staff and buying the best equipment, can indulge in interesting competitions, and can spend time on research initiatives that allow them to remain active and interested – and so able to deliver well-informed and creative work.

Caroline Cole, Colander, London SE19

MODERN LANGUAGE

The impressive excerpt from Léon Krier's new book in AJ 08.05.08, *The Architectural Tuning of Settlements* (see illustration, right), raises significant concerns about Modern architecture's maturity (and even suitability) in the context of urban planning.

I'm doing my Part 3 at the moment and have been trained, like the majority of my contemporaries, with an assumption that the Modern movement represents year dot for architecture today. I still broadly subscribe to the ideas that most contemporary architecture is fundamentally based on.

However, my recent personal investigations into the Classical language of building have revealed to me what an impressive grammatical architectural 'system' Classical architecture is based on, and that Modern architecture in all its forms has yet to 'evolve' something to rival it (although Le Corbusier, to his credit, realised the excellence of this system, which has evolved over millennia, and subsequently tried to produce the Modern equivalent on his own).

Urban planning as presented by Krier is yet another example of the frankly superior refinement of the 'Classical' system of architecture as compared to Modern successors.

I think that architects, whatever their tastes, have a duty to acknowledge that, or they have a duty to present cogent arguments that challenge the views of traditionalists, rather than simply producing the usual ranting and raving. I say that as someone who is not a traditionalist or a 'Modern' (in the most polarised sense), but as someone who simply admires good architecture.

Michael Badu, London

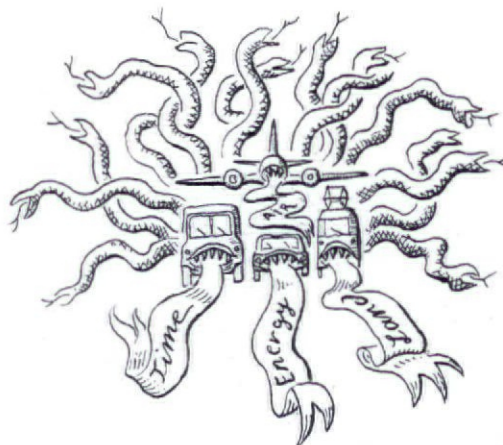
FIRST DATE

On the Letters page in AJ 08.05.08, St Mary Redcliffe Church, Bristol, is described simply as '12th century'. In fact, the earliest structural work, in the inner porch, is early 13th century, and most of the church is 14th or 15th century.

David W Lloyd, Old Harlow

CORRECTION

Karen Rogers is an architect director at BDP ('These women mean business', AJ 15.05.08).



MODERN HYDRA
LK 1984

An illustration from Léon Krier's *The Architectural Tuning of Settlements* (AJ 08.05.08)



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BRITAIN'S SCHOOLS: THE VISION BECOMES REALITY

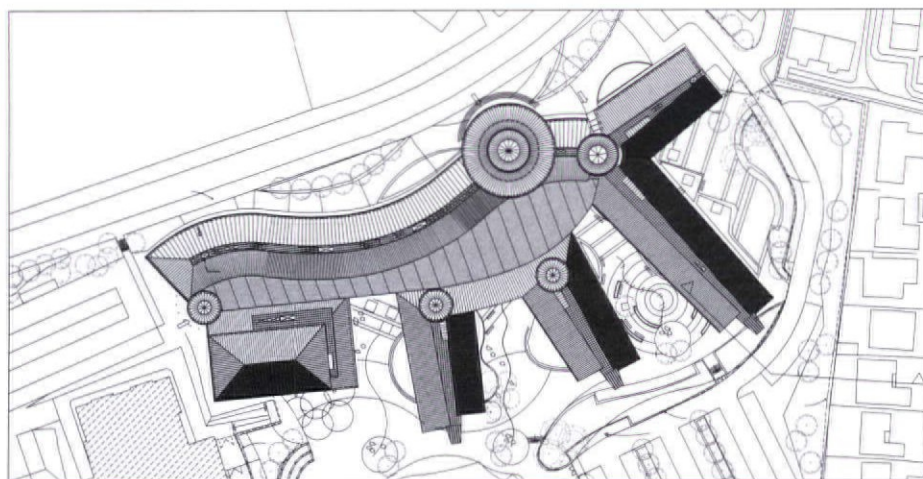


MODEL #1 LEARNING CLUSTERS

DFES EXEMPLAR, WILKINSON EYRE,
DESIGNED 2003

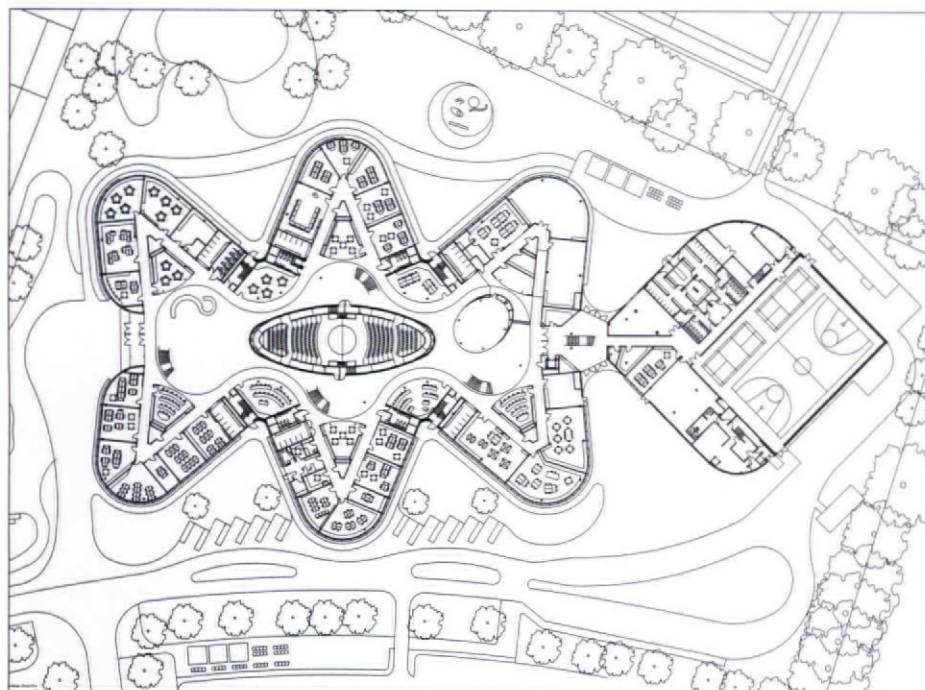
The practice refers to this as a 'kit-of-parts' design. Two different types of building – learning clusters and central facilities (containing assembly, dining and office spaces) – are linked by a covered, environmentally protected street.

As the UK prepares for the latest wave of BSF schools, *James Pallister* shows how two theoretical projects now dominate their design >>



FAILSWORTH SCHOOL, MANCHESTER
ARCHITECTS CO-PARTNERSHIP, 2008

A sinuous two-storey structure holds common and administrative spaces, while four fingers contain teaching facilities. These are linked by a light-permeable ETFE covered street.



NIGEL YOUNG

**THOMAS DEACON ACADEMY,
PETERBOROUGH,
FOSTER + PARTNERS, 2007**

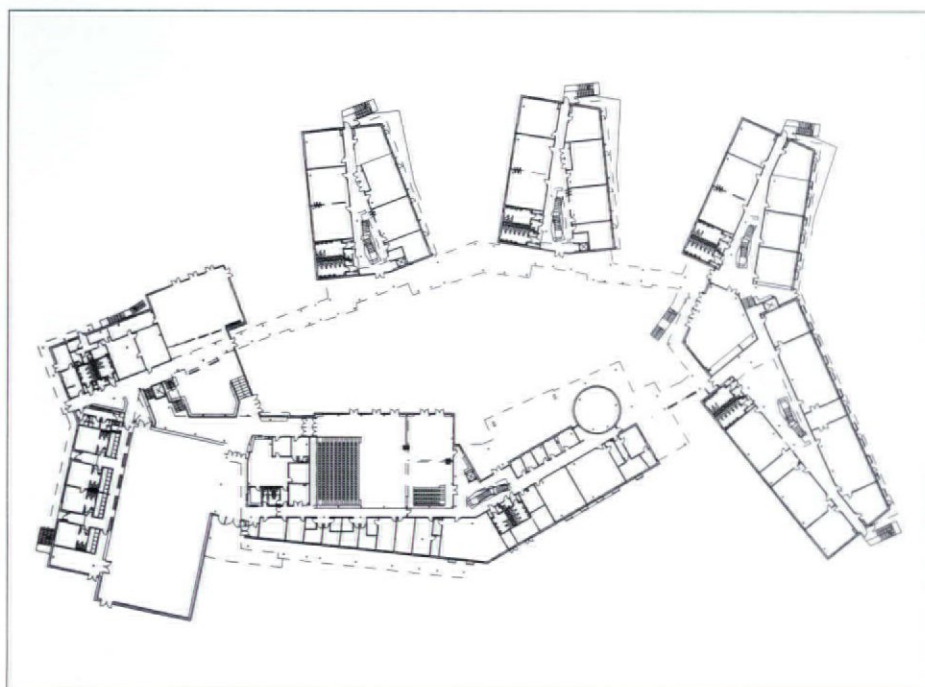
Two ribbons of classrooms form curves that naturally sub-divide into six sub-colleges. These enclose a covered light-suffused courtyard; in the centre is a library and lecture theatre.

***None of the exemplars
just use corridors and
classrooms'***

In 2003 a fresh-faced David Miliband, then schools minister, launched the Department for Education and Skills publication *Schools for the Future; Exemplar Designs, Concepts and Ideas*. Five years on, with the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme gathering pace, two of the plan arrangements established in this publication are now dominating new secondary school projects.

The DfES document covered the results of a brief given to 11 different architectural practices, chosen for their lack of experience in educational design, who were asked to radically rethink school design in primary, secondary and all-through schooling.

Their designs, produced to RIBA Stage C, were collated and published in the document, which, according to Miliband's imperative in



AMOS GOLDBREICH

**NORTHAMPTON ACADEMY,
FEILDEN CLEGG BRADLEY
STUDIOS, 2005**

A series of linked pavilions, clustered around an internal courtyard, each houses a separate faculty. A dramatic entrance to the multifunctional, communal and service area serves as the public interface of the site.



JOHN MADEJSKI ACADEMY, READING, WILKINSON EYRE, 2007

A central 'agora' or assembly space links the strawberry-shaped teaching areas. Three bridges link the buildings at first-floor level. Ecological landscaping also plays a significant role on site.

his preface, makes 'a major contribution to radically improving educational opportunities'.

Mace/RTKL, Wilkinson Eyre Architects, de Rijke Marsh Morgan Architects, Alsop Architects (now SMC Alsop), Penoyre & Prasad, and Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios all worked on secondary school briefs designed for differing sites.

Stafford Critchlow, who heads up Wilkinson Eyre's school design division, says: 'There is an emerging set of distinct types in school design; one model [the street] is based on a high-rise block, the other on pods arranged around a central street, like our "strawberry" configuration.

'There is pressure from the government to make schools increasingly large, but at the

same time the consensus from education experts is that small schools get better results. The strawberry is a way of mediating this. They are semi-autonomous units within the school.'

The strawberry model has so far been implemented by Wilkinson Eyre at the John Madejski Academy in Reading and at Bristol Metropolitan College (see pages 30-37). >>



JAMES BRITTAIN

BRISTOL METROPOLITAN COLLEGE, WILKINSON EYRE, 2008

A central street, linking several learning clusters on one hand to a shared amenity block on the other, seeks to foster a community atmosphere (see pages 30-37).

'The strawberry design provides semi-autonomous units'

'The strawberries have become popular and have been used across a number of schools' says Critchlow, a point with which Beech Williamson, architect for BSF delivery body Partnership for Schools (PfS) concurs. 'Probably one of the most useful themes to emerge from the exemplar school design program was the arrangement of strawberry-type clusters,' says Williamson.

The street exemplar, which was the second design principle to emerge from the DfES

document, was initially developed for a tight urban site. Wilkinson Eyre used a variant at the Bristol Brunel Academy (completed in 2007) on a long, thin site which had to accommodate both the new building and the original building prior to its demolition.

Foster + Partners' nine completed academies show plan arrangements that draw from both internal pods placed within a linear block – at Folkestone Academy – and pods clustered around a central street – at Thomas



**MODEL #2
THE STREET**

**ALSO P ARCHITECTS, DFES EXEMPLAR,
DESIGNED 2003**

This model was developed for a tight urban site, and comprises two different types of adaptable learning environments on either side of a central atrium, which can be raised above the ground.



Deacon Academy, Peterborough. Paul Kalkhoven of Foster + Partners says: 'The plan for our academies is strongly informed by the specific curriculum or tutorial requirements of the clients as well as the site, though there are distinct optimum types of arrangement we use that derive from fairly consistent criteria – ratio of staff to teachers, visibility, circulation.

'With the Thomas Deacon Academy the wiggly lines of the plan come from two outer lines of classrooms which are concertinaed in

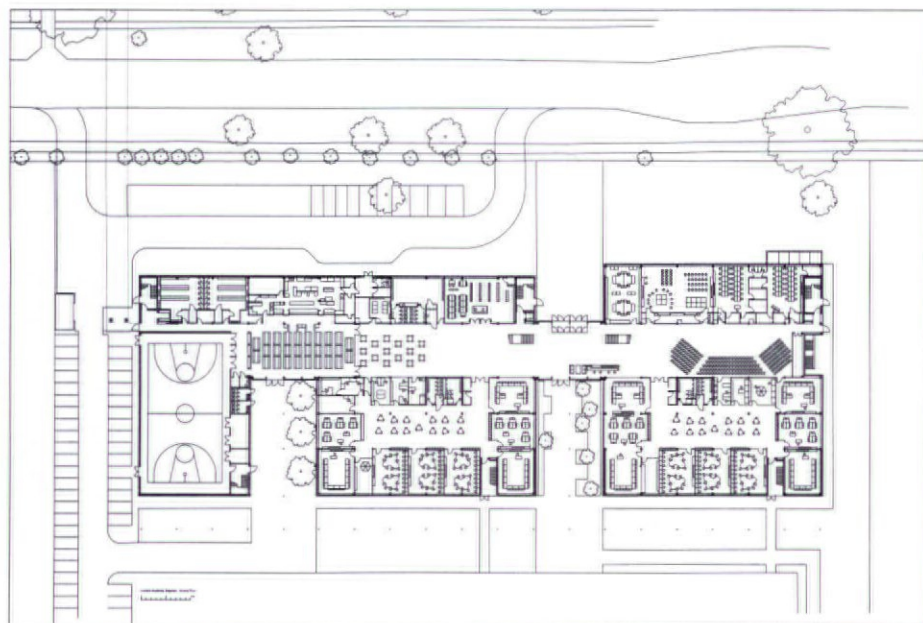
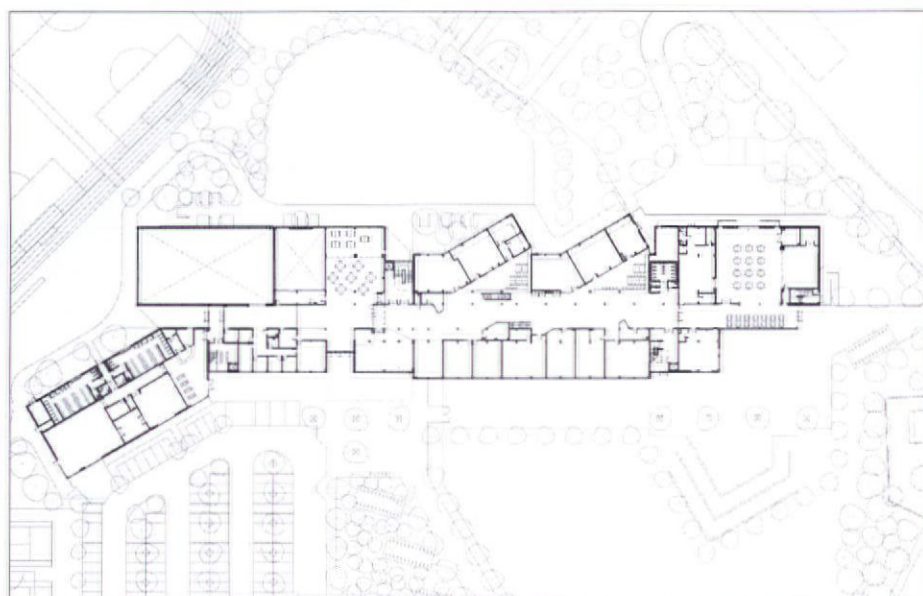
on themselves giving a compact plan with interesting sub-spaces between classrooms. The shift in reliance on classrooms to flexible space means the kids are spread throughout a wider area, but there aren't any more teachers; making easy surveillance so important'.

'It's an interesting time to consider the importance of the exemplar programs. Our work on academies begun before the scheme was launched and they have quite different parameters to BSF. I think where they were

useful is giving an idea to the clients of what is possible'.

'What all the exemplars have shown and what our work has shown there are lots of solutions, but what they all have in common is that none of them just use corridors and classrooms, they all have new approaches.

'The school is like a mini-society, if you can create a school that works and many people come together successfully then this is perfect,' concludes Kalkhoven. ■



JAMES BRITAIN

BRISTOL BRUNEL ACADEMY, WILKINSON EYRE, 2007

Classroom spaces are set back on either side of a lively communal 'street', and are colour coded for easy legibility; open-plan breakout spaces are provided at ground level.



NIGEL YOUNG

LONDON ACADEMY, EDGWARE FOSTER + PARTNERS, 2006

The site is divided into home bases according to year groups and school levels, creating smaller communities within a larger whole, minimising movement and enhancing security.

EDUCATING NEATER

Wilkinson Eyre has applied its 'strawberries and spine' design exemplar to its latest BSF school in Bristol, says *James Pallister*.

Photography by *James Brittain*

From the road approaching Bristol Metropolitan College, the only clue to Wilkinson Eyre's second Building Schools for the Future (BSF) project in the city is the cluster of turquoise ventilation cowls peeking above the skyline. Set in a hollow, it is ironic that a school that focuses so much on visibility – of its staff and its students – is so tucked away from its surroundings.

'It doesn't have the kerb-side impact that the Brunel Academy has,' says John Burgess, general manager of Bristol Local Educational Partnership (LEP), referring to Wilkinson Eyre's other finished BSF project in Bristol, which completed in September 2007. The Brunel Academy has a dramatic street-facing facade that gives it the look more of a biotechnology R&D facility than a school. The approach to the Metropolitan College is more muted, the south approach sweeping down past the soon-to-be demolished old school to one side and plant room to the other, to the formal entrance.

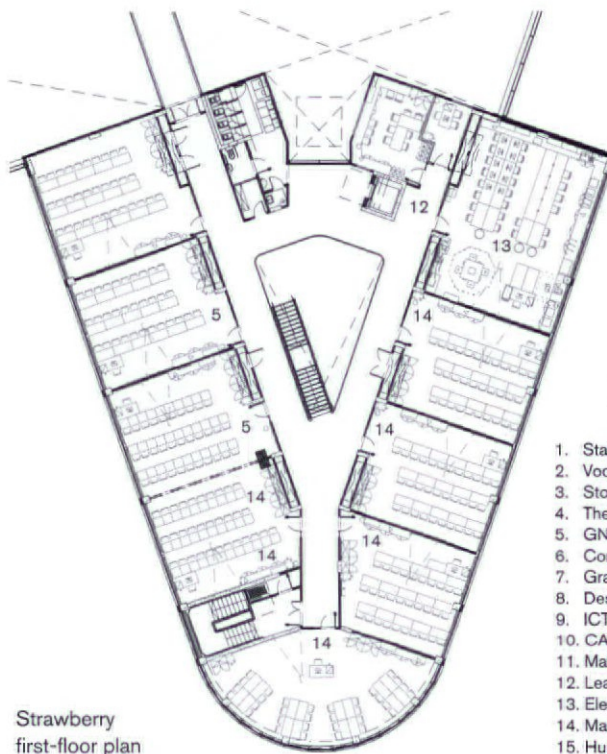
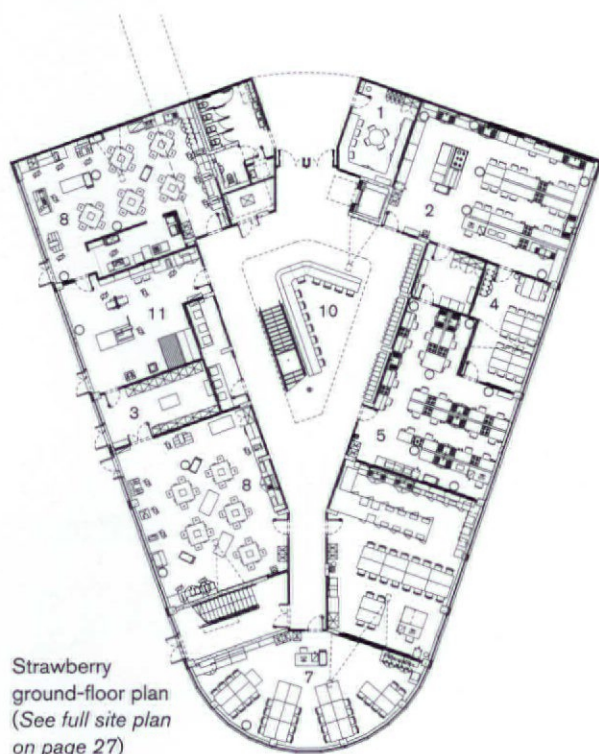
This entrance, a glazed curtain wall made of 5m-wide units and resting on a yellow-bricked plinth, leads on to a covered 'street' that houses all the shared service elements of the school: administration offices near the entrance; dining areas; and an auditorium and sports hall at the north and south ends respectively. Off this, on the east elevation, are three projecting blocks dubbed 'strawberries' – shaped in plan like triangles with rounded apexes – which house the classrooms. This simple arrangement belies a body of research into education design, of which the Metropolitan College is only a snapshot.

'The kit of parts is two things: there are the ways of laying out schools – the strawberries, the spine, methods of surveillance – and there are the methods of prefabrication and standardisation that facilitate roll-out,' says Wilkinson Eyre director Chris Wilkinson. Speaking in his London office, together with Stafford Critchlow who heads up the practice's education arm, Wilkinson is >>





View down the
central street from
the entrance lobby



1. Staff workbase
2. Vocational food technology
3. Store
4. Theoretical teaching
5. GNVQ
6. Constructional textiles
7. Graphics
8. Design and technology
9. ICT area
10. CAD teaching
11. Material preparation
12. Leadership office
13. Electronics and control
14. Maths
15. Humanities

'How do you cope with the flashpoints – the corridors, the lockers, the bogs?'

referring to the 'kit of parts' of school design typologies and guidelines that the practice has been developing since the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) invited it to work on theoretical secondary school designs as part of the DfES' 2003 paper *Schools for the Future: Exemplar Designs, Concepts and Ideas* (see introductory feature on page 25).

Working up designs with education expert Graham Parker and 'pretend client' Blyth Community School, Wilkinson Eyre's team, led by Critchlow, drew up a set of design principles to deal with what Critchlow refers to as 'the recurring problems of school design: how you do visibility of staff and students, how you cope with the flashpoints – the corridors, the lockers, the bogs?'

From the Labour government elected on the 'education, education, education' ticket

back in 1997, BSF is an ambitious £45 billion programme of works that aims to rebuild or replace every state secondary school by 2020. Metropolitan College is Wilkinson Eyre's second built BSF school – it has two more on the drawing board – that uses the central spine and strawberry typology developed for the exemplar design and put through its paces at the practice's John Madejski Academy in Reading (2007). 'It wasn't appropriate to use the strawberries approach at the Brunel Academy – the site was long and thin – so we opted to use three storeys,' says Critchlow.

Once inside the Metropolitan College I get my first view down the spacious covered 'street', about 115m end-to-end. The positioning of the three strawberries was dictated by a sewer pipe running east-west across the site. Permanent building work cannot be undertaken less than 3m away from

Long section



This image The strawberries are passively ventilated with large cowls providing air outlets



this pipe, so the strawberries are set 3m equidistant from it. Steel roof decking on the covered street joins the 'strawberries' on the east aspect to the auditorium and sports hall blocks – on either side of the main entrance – to the west. This steel roof is classed as a 'temporary structure', meaning it can run across the path of the sewage pipe.

I'm escorted upstairs to meet the headteacher, Theresa Thorne. Thorne has been at the school for two years and has seen results improve: in 2007 the number of students achieving GCSE A*-C grades was up by 9 per cent compared with 2006. The back stairs behind the reception area take us past Skanska's facilities management office – as part of the Private Finance Initiative (PFI) arrangement of BSF, the main contractor is charged with upkeep of the facilities for 25 years – and up to a suite of four offices, WCs

and a conference room that host the school's finance and administration operations. Off this is a gangway that leads from the school's staffroom to the sports hall.

Thorne tells me: 'I was sure that we had to have a central staffroom. A lot of new schools haven't opted for them, relying on the mini-staffrooms that we have placed around the school where staff can do marking while being seen by, and keeping an eye on, the kids. I'm of the opinion, though, that staff should be able to get their own privacy while at work. The old staffrooms were a mix of everything – socialising, marking, eating, gossiping – but the idea with this one is that it shouldn't be used for working, the smaller staffrooms can be used for that.' As a result, the central 5 x 3m staffroom is kitted out with six comfy chairs and all the usual food-warming and tea-making paraphernalia. The windows that

run along two walls of the room and look out on to the atrium and central street are placed at 1,125mm, the same height as the balustrades, so that kids cannot see into the staffroom and staff only have to look out if they want to do so.

The staffroom exits on to a gangway that leads along to a first-floor viewing gallery overlooking the school's sports hall, where we see the kick-off of a five-a-side game – colours versus red bibs. A quick one-two followed by a punt puts colours ahead and I see the first goal to be (officially) scored in the hall – an achievement the scorer seems pretty happy with. The gangway has a metal grille ceiling with a flush ceiling-light running the length of it, leading me back towards the staffroom and over one of the three bridges that links the two main blocks to the strawberries. >>

Internal west elevation





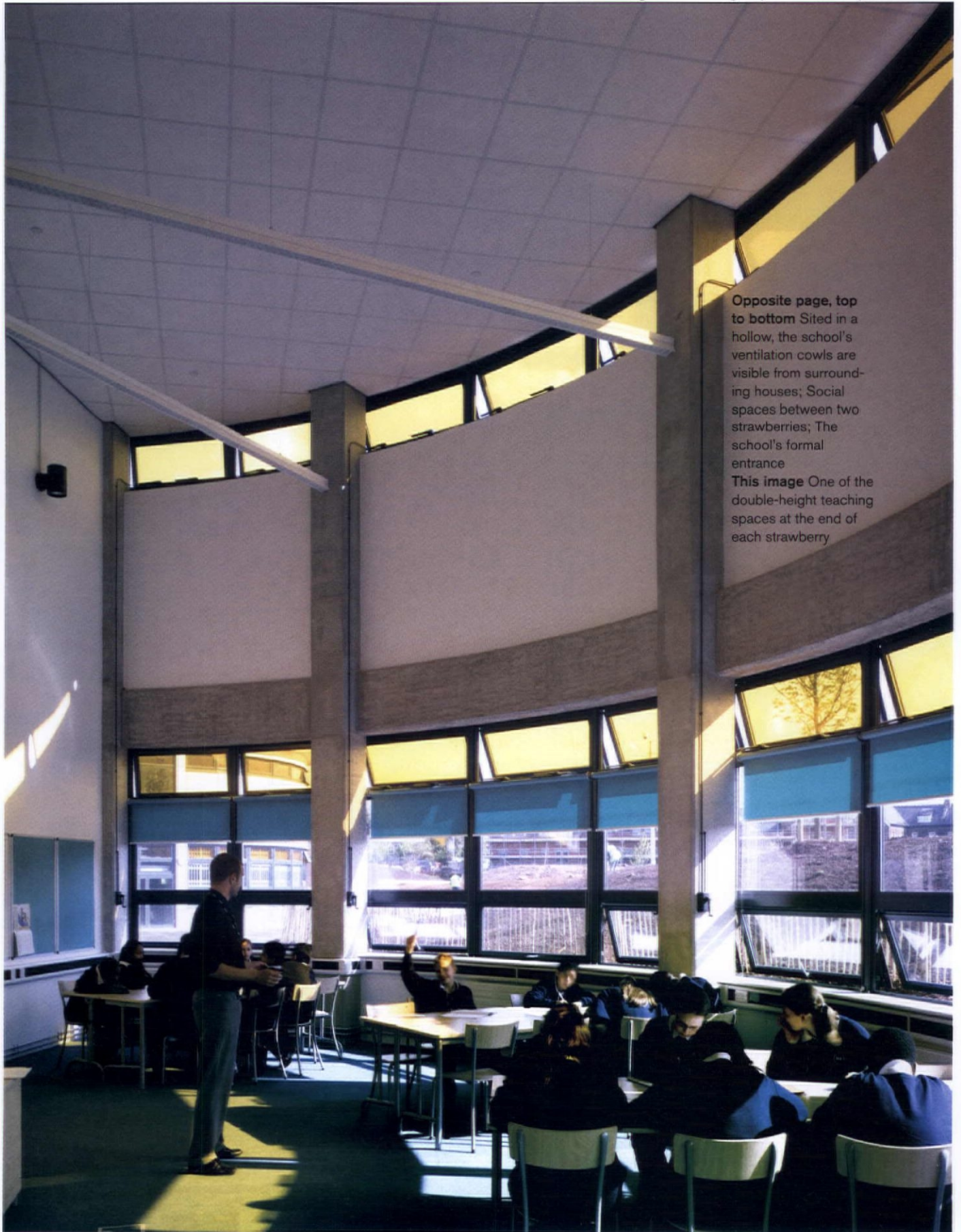
Staffrooms are placed sentry-like at the end of each strawberry

The two main blocks and the covered street are steel-framed, while the strawberries are concrete-framed. The meeting between these leaves a concrete doorframe exposed, marking the threshold between the two elements. Each strawberry has a skylight at the point where it meets the covered street. When I visited it was a very gloomy day, but despite this, the school was well-lit with natural daylight, helped by the clerestory windows that run the length of the street.

Somewhat deceptively for a space that feels comfortably small, the strawberries can fit approximately 300 people in their classrooms and work areas. The triangular arrangement dispenses with the need for much-maligned corridors. One of the consistent problems faced by secondary schools is the drop-off in attainment by pupils who excel at primary school but do not carry this through to secondary school; perhaps more manageable spaces like this can help address the problem.

At the centre of each strawberry is a break-out-cum-teaching area equipped with a bank of computers and chairs. This space is accessed from the first floor via stairs down to the ground floor. Again, the strategy of passive surveillance is articulated in the design: walkways look down on to this central space and the mini staffrooms are placed sentry-like at the broad end of each strawberry. The strawberries group together subject areas: in the foreign languages section I saw a class using the central space for French speaking and listening exercises. In the humanities area I popped my head into a geography class. I also took in the fit-out: exposed concrete ceilings with an acoustic roof and lighting raft, resin flooring as used throughout, and the outflow ducts leading to the cowl of the passive ventilation system.

And to the toilets. As with corridors, the toileting arrangements for students have come under much scrutiny in recent school >>



Opposite page, top to bottom Sited in a hollow, the school's ventilation cowls are visible from surrounding houses; Social spaces between two strawberries; The school's formal entrance

This image One of the double-height teaching spaces at the end of each strawberry



The college does have enjoyable moments, but it is by no means visually stunning

design. The government's Briefing Framework for Secondary School Projects, BB98, explicitly states in its Toilet Location Policy that 'the size, location and design of toilets can have an impact on the potential for bullying, supervision and inclusion'. Here, the students' toilets are at six points around the school. Based on the hope that girls are a civilising influence on adolescent boys, the toilets are unisex. Like Allford Hall Monaghan Morris' (AHMM's) Westminster Academy in London, the toilet cubicles have floor-to-ceiling doors, ensuring no wet paper towels or the like can land on unsuspecting occupants. Unlike AHMM's Westminster Academy, the toilet area is doorless, increasing the ease of surveillance.

Of the roof, Critchlow says: 'We had to work hard to convince Skanska that it would not be costly. In the end it's very simply made – the undulating rhythm is created just by using ceiling decks of different lengths.' The undulating roof helps repeat a trick of scale seen in the strawberries – breaking up and making a large space more approachable.

Viewed from the the gangway close to the staffroom, the street, punctuated by three bridges, is an impressive sight. Seen from beneath it's less so, and the visual cue of the bridges is more prison surveillance-point than futuristic walkway. This isn't helped by the depth required on the underside of the bridges between the blocks and strawberries for the trunking and sprinkler system.

Things come to life when the students come out of their lessons, heralded not by a bell but a cleverly worded announcement over the PA: 'You may leave the lesson in a few moments.' I'm ushered back up to the main staffroom, but I hang back. The students who had, while in lessons, seemed unnaturally well-behaved revert back to the identifiable types straight out of my schooldays, albeit now in miniature form: the pituitary freak who inspires fear with his five o'clock shadow, muscly forearms and big fists; the heavy-metal stoners; the hard lads; the popular girls; and the awkward ones. There is plenty of room along the main street for bunches to form while still allowing general passage; the

helpfully angled balustrade stair up to the sports-hall gangway becomes a place for hanging out on; and a bunch of kids, oblivious to my presence, picks up a tenner a student has dropped, passing it from accomplice to accomplice, chased by the boy shouting: 'Give it back, you dick!' The episode is stopped by a teacher on her way up to the staffroom. A normal school day. When I ask whether the school is over-policed and suffers from the eradication of private areas, Critchlow's riposte invokes US psychologist Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs: students are unlikely to be interested in their education if they are preoccupied with their physical safety.

'This is the greatest opportunity we have had since the war to build a whole new stock of educational buildings and we want them to be worthwhile,' says Wilkinson. 'It shouldn't be judged just on the aesthetics of the architecture; they aren't the whole story. What is important is to create the opportunity for these kids to learn, and to provide facilities that enable and encourage them to do so.'

Bristol Metropolitan College has enjoyable moments, but it is by no means visually stunning in the way AHMM's Westminster Academy is, and there are uncomfortable moments too – the exterior cladding of the strawberries, for example. But the easy utility underpinned by extensive research has produced a school that is well-lit, spacious, and if the research is right, well-gearred for high educational achievement. If every student in the country could go to one of these schools, it would be no bad thing. ■

Start on site July 2006

Contract duration 20 months

Gross external floor area 11,200m²

Form of contract/procurement PFI

Total cost £22 million

Client Skanska/Bristol City Council

Architect Wilkinson Eyre Architects

Structural engineer Arup

Services engineer Buro Happold

Quantity surveyor/main contractor Skanska

Planning supervisor Gleeds

Annual CO₂ emissions Originally calculated at 9.8kg/co₂/m², but may reduce to 8.8kg/co₂/m²

Opposite page

Central breakout pods house informal classes

Below The undulating steel roof leads the

eye down the school's spine

Bottom Each strawberry has stairs at its apex





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Big Fish Little Fish

*John Prevost of Make wonders how
shapeist Modernism meets the brief*

Over the last five months we have been developing a significant city-centre scale masterplan for a London developer. The principles had essentially been agreed, so when the client proposed a design charrette my heart sank.

The day began at 8.30am with the client and my colleague Felix Robbins introducing the scheme. Questions followed and ground rules were set. Thankfully, the masterplan principles were not questioned, but all eight practices taking part were asked to test massing, use and quality of the plots. After lunch, we were dismissed to meet up again the following day with our responses.

One participant from a Dutch practice was unable to attend the second day, so he came back to our office. Following a philosophical discussion as to whether we should be considering place rather than building, he went off to the model shop to produce his ideas. He returned with a group of geometric shapes representing an interpretation of shapeist Modernism. I didn't recognise any of the forms as having much to do with either our discussion or the brief. He then left to catch his plane back to Rotterdam.

Felix agreed to present the work to the group the next day, not really knowing what he was going to say. I left him knowing that I was going to miss out on an extraordinary day. Felix will report back in the next Big Fish.

Next issue: Jonathan Hendry
of Jonathan Hendry Architects



The surgery
attendees evaluate
a flexible working
request case study

SURGERY PROMOTES BENEFITS OF FLEXIBLE WORKING

Key figures from leading architecture practices including Rogers Stirk Harbour + Partners (RSHP) and Stride Treglown attended a surgery on flexible working held at the RIBA earlier this month.

The event, hosted by Uta Werner and Julie Parker of HR consultancy Working Visions, aimed to educate practices about flexible working, particularly employees' rights to request flexible working patterns.

'Flexible working is a hot topic in employment at the moment,' explains Parker, who met Werner while the pair were working for Rogers. 'It is particularly pertinent to architecture, where practices have an increasingly mixed workforce and depend on the experience of the age group

most likely to apply for flexible working for their project architects and managers.'

It is expected that by 2010, 10 million workers in the UK will be eligible for flexible working patterns under the current rules, which allow any worker with dependents under the age of six (under 18 if disabled), or caring for an elderly relative, to lodge a request. An independent review by Sainsbury's HR director Imelda Walsh looks set to extend this right to parents with older children, which will further increase the numbers eligible.

At the Working Visions event, Louise Palomba, associate at RSHP, Matthew Wood, director at Conran & Partners, and Richard Philipson, director at Stride Treglown, each spoke

about their experiences of working flexibly – a term which encompasses part-time working, working from home, unpaid leave, job sharing and non-standard working hours – from the perspective of both employee and employer. Each concluded positively on the benefits of an individual's work-life balance and for the company as a whole, improving its profile as a practice of choice, and its ability to cover core competencies and increase staff retention.

Werner says: 'In our experience, practices are willing to accommodate flexible working, but unwilling to promote it. With the impending credit crunch, it may be a way for firms to adapt without making redundancies.'

Kaye Alexander

THEY WORK WHILE YOU SLEEP

Outsourcing tasks abroad can help UK architects operate more efficiently but requires good management, says *Cathy Strongman*

Outsourcing – an established practice in industries including aerospace and automobile design – is also a valuable tool for architectural practices. The benefits of sending drawings or CAD work abroad are now being seen by a whole range of UK practices. 'When we started out in 2002, the typical profile of our clients was small to medium-sized practices who had won a big project and were desperate for extra resources,' says Andrew Kay, UK operations director for outsourcing agency Atlas. 'But now we're working with the bigger practices who are outsourcing more strategically.' The latest AJ100 survey shows that 26 per cent of the UK's top 100 practices outsource work (AJ 15.05.08). However, many firms would not provide comment for this article. There is still a cloud of secrecy hanging over outsourcing, although this is beginning to lift as the practice becomes more common.

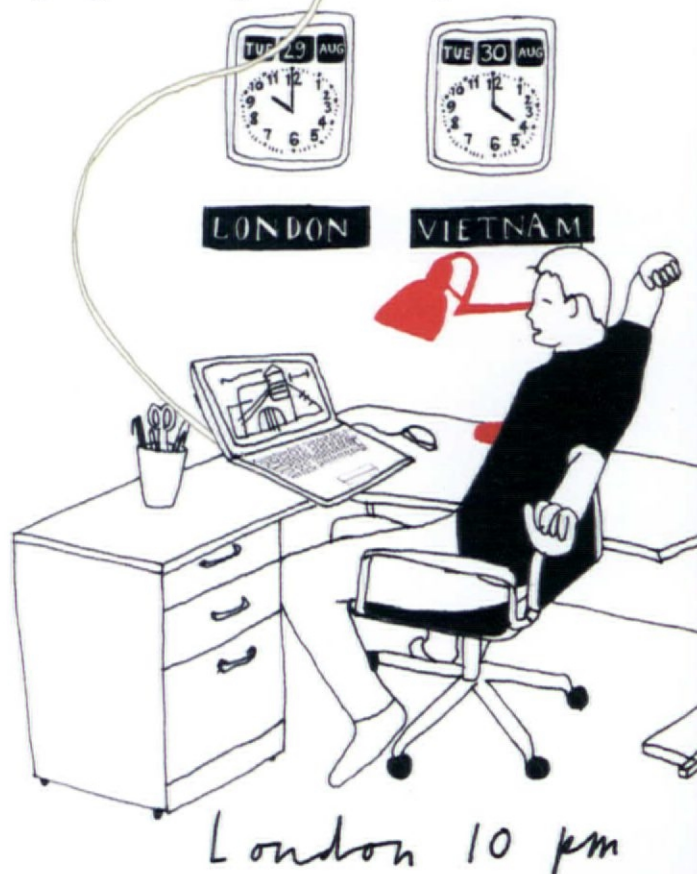
Ben Derbyshire, managing director of HTA; Rick Burgess, technical director at PRP; and Robert Sargent, divisional director at Stride Treglown, all agree that the lack of top-quality technical architects in the UK was an instrumental factor in their decision to outsource. Outsourcing also gives practices greater flexibility to deal with irregular workloads and allows them to take on more projects. 'Whereas historically we would try to avoid expanding and contracting for particular projects, outsourcing allows us to deal with the peaks and troughs,' says Martin Robertson, managing director of KSS Architects. Working across different time zones brings additional benefits. 'It allows us to make quick changes, which impresses clients,' says Sargent. 'We can work on something all day, send it to Vietnam in the evening and we get something back the next morning.'

A recent report on outsourcing published by Harvard Design School pinpointed 20 countries offering outsourcing services, with countries in Asia, Eastern Europe and South America among the forerunners.

Outsourcing providers take on two forms – overseas architectural practices wanting additional work, and dedicated outsourcing

agencies. Outsourcing agencies supply work to numerous clients – Atlas, for example, has provided work for 15 UK practices and has a workforce of over 350. Some smaller outsourcing agencies work solely for one practice and are set up as subsidiaries to these firms. HTA Australia, PRP Cape and Stamos Yeoh Architects Hong Kong all work along these

lines. Some practices employ multiple service providers. KSS Design Group, for example, started outsourcing work to South African architect Louis Karol seven years ago, but has now expanded its set-up to include specialist outsourcing agencies, with the practice using Atlas in Vietnam and IKON Technologies in India. >>





Map showing countries cited for outsourcing by UK practices interviewed for this article

HOW TO OUTSOURCE

- Most architects establish outsourcing set-ups through word of mouth, although cold-calling has become more common over the last five years.
- The service provider you select must be able to provide work that reflects the ethos of your practice and must also have compatible technical, software and communication skills.
- It is advisable to send out a project leader to spend time with the outsourcing agency and provide a detailed brief and schedule.
- Many architects will create an outsourcing manual on the basis of their first experience, and all agree that the process becomes increasingly efficient and refined with experience.
- The RIBA Code of Practice states that all clients must be informed of outsourcing procedures, and most contracts will have a clause that insists that the architect informs the client in writing.

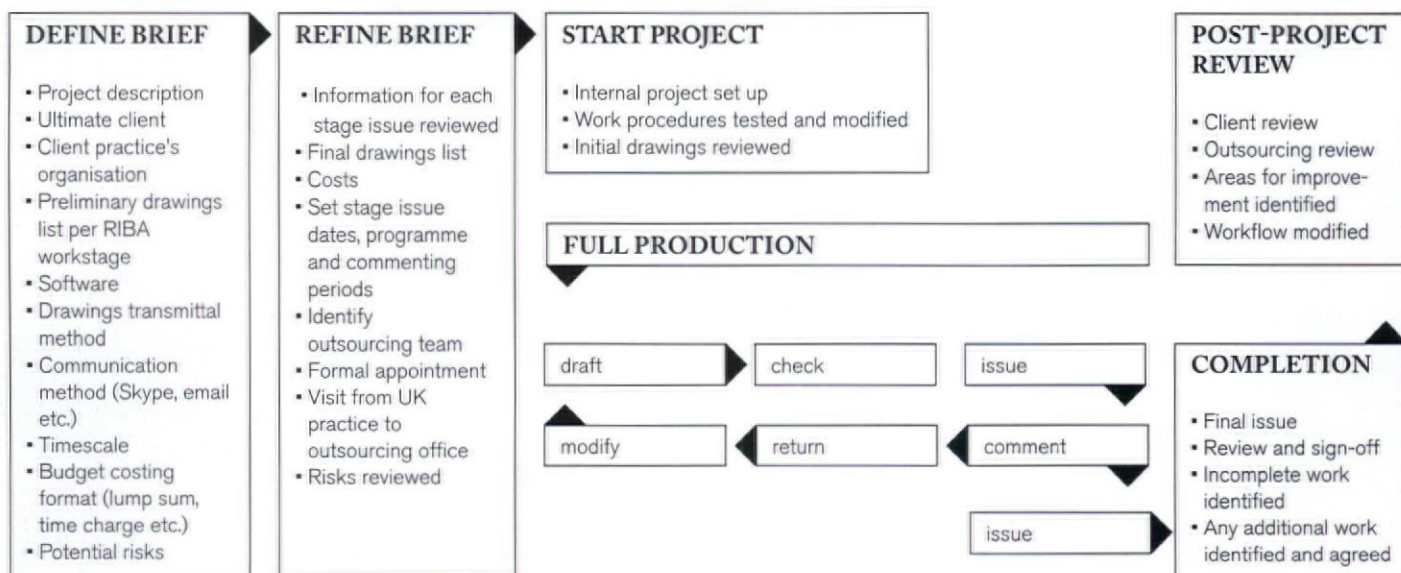


Vietnam 9 am



London 9 am
the following day

DIAGRAM SHOWING OUTSOURCING WORKFLOW



The majority of work sent to outsourcing companies involves working drawings and visualisation. 'We currently use them as a drafting bureau,' says Robertson. This gives the practices the chance to focus on design. It can also bring technological advantages. PRP, for example, is striking up a relationship with Satellier in India because it is well trained in building information modelling programme Revit.

Financially, there are benefits for the countries offering outsourcing services too. 'Some people perceive outsourcing as rows of workers pumping CAD in a sweatshop environment,' says Sargent. 'But the staff are really well paid and looked after.' In many countries, including India and Vietnam, outsourcing companies pay better than regular architectural offices. Still, Atlas charges a typical day rate of £200,

which is approximately half the cost in the UK, and Indian prices are competitive with this. Further savings are made in freeing up expensive UK staff to spend more time on valuable design work.

Despite the fact that outsourcing can improve the productivity and profitability of a practice, some architects remain secretive about it. This is partly to shield the identity of their outsourcing agency, through concerns that

they will become swamped with work. Yet is also because they fear it will have a negative impact on their reputation. However, the architects interviewed here have experienced a positive response from clients, who are often impressed at the speed and efficiency of their service. Despite the calming of the UK market, a growing number of architectural practices are looking to expand their outsourcing set-ups. ■



Above and right Atlas' office in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam



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CONFERENCES

**‘The architecture profession
must focus on the existing stock
of buildings – it is as important
as creating new ones.’**

(Margaret Hodge, 14th May 2008)

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*Anni Marjoram, Policy Advisor Women
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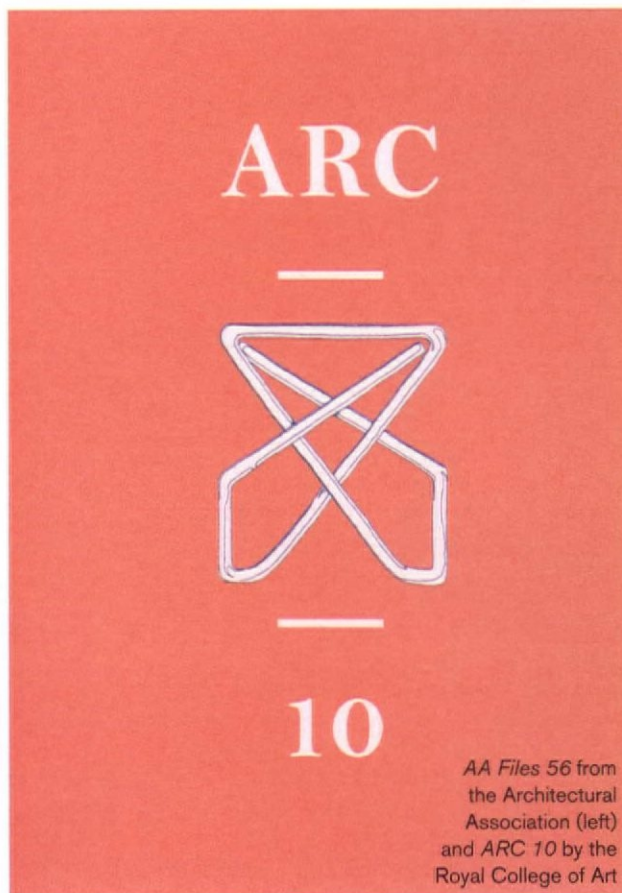
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In this section // *Back Issues on student publications* // *Critic's Choice* // *Bernard Tschumi on May 1968* // *5 Things To Do*

The Critics



STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

Back Issues: student magazines

*In anticipation of this year's degree shows, our columnist **Steve Parnell** peruses recent editions of a selection of architectural student publications*

In her book *This is not Architecture* (Routledge, 2002, £33.99), Kester Rattenbury writes that architecture, as opposed to building, is 'always that which is represented, and particularly that which is represented in the media aimed at architects'. So if we say that architecture is simply mediated building, instead of relying on hackneyed definitions that include qualities such as '*utilitas, firmitas, venustas*', we should be able to view the creation of its historiography in architectural journals. Likewise, by reading the RIBA validated schools' publications, it should be possible to learn something of what

they consider architecture to be.

Architecture as mediated building could explain a lot: why the architectural journal is so central to architects; why practitioners increasingly validate their careers by what they publish, rather than what they build; and why publication rather than the building is often seen as the end product of architecture. It might also explain the gap between education and practice. Despite the recent interest in live projects and 1:1 construction, architectural education still predominantly uses mediated building as teaching material and produces

media as its end result. Architecture in school exists almost solely on the page, in the model and on the computer screen – in other words, mediations.

By reading the publications of RIBA-validated schools, it might be possible to discern the distance between practice – which is primarily concerned with building – and education – which is primarily concerned with its mediation. Such publications, however, are rare today. Even Cambridge's *Scroope* is no more. Nevertheless, Back Issues found several recent school publications to investigate. >>

Exhibit! Nottingham University's *Exhibit!* 2007 Design Yearbook by its School for the Built Environment is interesting because of its contradictions. The format is student work interspersed with practitioners' essays, more than half of which discuss the importance of teamwork. Bill Taylor of Hopkins Architects uses an orchestral analogy, but the yearbook is more akin to a celebration of the individual student as a virtuoso soloist. In another piece called 'How We Teach Today' (pictured below), Charles Holland of FAT writes: 'Increasingly education leads students into a dark forest without a map to get back out.' But the rest of the book seems to reinforce the confused pathways that Holland criticises. To take the apparent lack of interest in history as an example, student Helen Jones, in the 200-word description of her project, uses a word beginning with 're' no less than 10 times ('By finding the object, reconstructing and reviewing the idea, I am creating an invitation for a new experience'). The very idea of the past can surely have no more relevance in such language than it did in the Bauhaus. Finally, Space Studio's Kevin Singh asks: 'Where did the whole project manager thing come from?' I would refer him to 'The Search for the Green Fairy' in the same publication, a project about the ceremony and ritual pursuit of absinthe, for a possible answer. Perhaps while students are so engrossed in media, clients need managers on site. www.exhibitnottingham.com



MSA² The *MSA² Yearbook 2008* (pictured above), a collaboration between Manchester School of Architecture and the Manchester Society of Architects, collates selected students', academics' and practitioners' work 'designed to give an annual snapshot of architectural output in the City of Manchester'. It's heavy on practice and light on students, with a sprinkling of academics in between, including lecturer Stefan White's interesting thoughts on patenting design. Practices featured range from the famous – Denton Corker Marshall with the Civil Justice Centre and Urban Splash's terrace for the 21st century in Salford – to the lesser known, such as HOT Architecture and GA Studio. Aedas chooses to feature its advanced modelling R&D statement on sustainability. With few exceptions, each practice's entry is, understandably, an advert –

professional photography accompanies descriptive text, with which the school's work collides effortlessly. This collision may be explained by the fact that practice exists in the building industry, whose products are then mediated, whereas the school is focused on mediation from the start. For example, because

Ian Simpson's highly commercial Hilton Tower is sandwiched between intriguing work by students

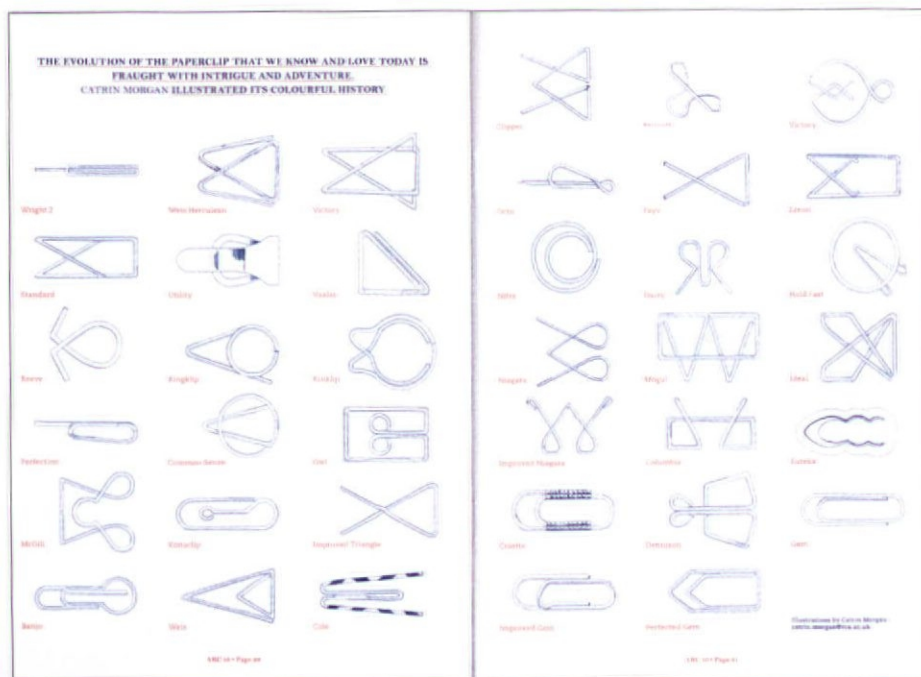
of the alphabetical ordering, Ian Simpson's highly commercial Hilton Tower is sandwiched between intriguing work by students Romulus Sim and Pritesh Solanki (pictured left). www.msa.ac.uk

MacMag The Mackintosh School of Architecture's *MacMag 32* (2007) (pictured below) is a truly magnificent effort and is the only yearbook worth paying for. Its format is simple: anonymous student editors interview tutors and practitioners such as Glasgow architect Gareth Hoskins, Simon Hudspith of Panter Hudspith, and head of school David Porter. Underlying its professionalism, variety and design is an acknowledgment that the magazine is a place where readers meet authors, and the school a place where students meet practitioners. The conversations all orbit around the built environment and the words 'appropriateness' and 'context' appear consistently. In *MacMag 32* and *MacMag 28* (2003), the year-out tales are revealing: student Naomi Cook describes her exhausting work doing



Above An essay by Charles Holland of FAT in *Exhibit!*
Centre *MSA²* (top) features Pritesh

Solanki's interactive gateway (bottom)
Right *MacMag 32* interviews Simon Hudspith



competitions at Benson + Forsyth as 'very similar to our degree show presentations'. Other students worked for Daniel Libeskind, also doing competitions. The implication that architectural education is training for architectural competitions is perhaps not so far off the mark, competitions being pure architectural mediations. www.gsa.ac.uk

ARC The Royal College of Art offers architecture within the context of an art and design school. Its *ARC* publication is like witnessing a bunch of young creatives turn booze into ideas at the pub one evening, and then chasing the remembered ones to their logical conclusion in the following morning's sobriety. In *ARC 11* (2008), there's an interesting piece called 'Googlegangers' by Ben Freeman ('What if a potential client types your name into a search engine and ends up browsing the wrong guy's site?'). In *ARC 10* (2007), I learned about the colourful history of the paper clip in a mesmerising graphic by Catrin Morgan (pictured above). It's fully caffeinated, eclectic and fun, but more design-as-search than design-as-research. www.arcroyal.co.uk

AA Files It's only really the Architectural Association (AA) that has embraced architecture as published building. In fact, it has gone way beyond and off into architecture as pure media. Since Alvin Boyarsky (AA chairman 1972-1990), the AA has pursued a determined course of publication – it even has its own publishing house. Although not produced by students, *AA Files*, currently edited by Thomas

Weaver, is always a treat, and even the book reviews are deliciously pretentious and chewy in their own right. It is strongest when its varied international writers look at the everyday through an architectural filter, such as architectural historian Roy Kozlovsky's 'Beat Literature and the Domestication of American Space' and University College Dublin lecturer Hugh Campbell's 'Open Heart City: Intimacy and Spectacle in the Films of Pedro Almodóvar' (*AA Files 51*, pictured below right). *AA Files 56* includes a feature on Robert Venturi's time at the American Academy in Rome by art historian Martino Stierli, followed by some enchanting time-defying photographs. It's this apparent randomness that keeps you reading. From the psycho-geographical to the pseudo-historical, *AA Files* really does locate the AA as the leading school of architectural publication in the UK. It's the only one currently worth collecting. This is a shame because publishing has never been cheaper or easier and vast quantities of content are already produced by the schools. A publication should be the focus of a school's attention – the climax of its efforts. The AA is so successful because it acknowledged this long ago, but there is no reason why other schools cannot balance this dominance with their own arguments of what the discipline of architecture should or could be. www.aaschool.ac.uk/publications

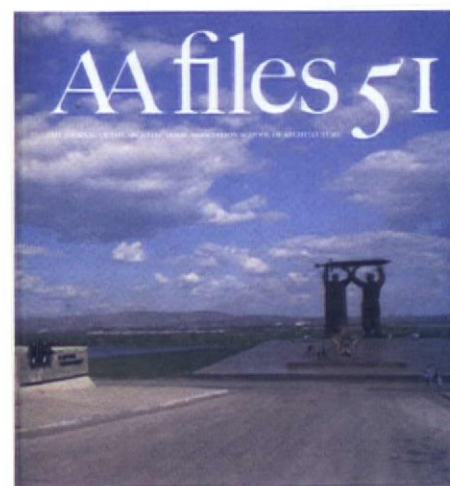
Online magazines Considering the emphasis that schools put on practising architects teaching studio, it is perhaps surprising that there are not stronger links between the RIBA-validated courses and

postgraduate research. Perhaps internet publication can encourage more interaction between academia, practice and the studio by promoting a free, central resource and location for architectural debate to occur. In *Edinburgh Architecture Research* Volume 30, editor Ruxandra-Iulia Stoica promises to expand

It's fully caffeinated, eclectic and fun, but more design-as-search than design-as-research

to an open-access peer reviewed journal (ace.caad.ed.ac.uk/ear), and Sheffield's *Field* (www.field-journal.org) has one complete publication online and another on the way that looks at alternative practice. Alastair Parvin and Adam Towle of the Sheffield MARCH programme have set up a site that lies between a blog and a fanzine (www.bemakeshift.com). Following something of a Sheffield ethos, user-generated content will appear online. It can then be automatically turned into a PDF at any moment, producing a unique paper-based fanzine. Currently, though, it's just a slideshow of random polemical quotes, begging for a contribution from 'YOU'.

Resume: Architects: you are what you publish, says Steve Parnell



Top left Catrin Morgan's history of the paper clip in *ARC 10* from the Royal College of Art

Above *AA Files 51* by the Architectural Association



Critic's Choice

For Alberto Manguel, the ideal library is a question of light, says Andrew Mead

'There should be a place with great tables on which the librarian can put the books, and the readers should be able to take the book and go to the light,' said Louis Kahn on his library at the Phillips Exeter Academy in New Hampshire, USA. For Alberto Manguel, author of *The Library at Night* (Yale, £18.99), there should be not too much light – just a pool of it in an otherwise muted room. With its classifications, its boundaries between books that might otherwise share an affinity, the library in the glare of day is too regimented for Manguel. At dusk that changes: 'The order decreed by library catalogues holds no prestige in the shadows.' Night subverts attempts to coax the world into a system.

Haunted by both the first Library of Alexandria (meant to include all the texts that existed) and the 'phantom electronic library' of the web, Manguel's book is most obviously architectural in its chapter 'The Library as Shape'. This includes Norman Foster's library for the Free University, Berlin, the immense barrel-vaulted 'ideal' library by Neo-Classical architect Étienne-Louis Boullée, and the Laurentian Library in Florence (pictured below) by Michelangelo, and discusses ways that specific spaces determine readers' behaviour. Manguel writes as a true bibliophile, valuing a second-hand copy with a history as much as a fine binding, but drawn primarily by what the book might reveal. His own book is ruminative and absorbing – a pleasure to read.



MICROFOTO



INTERVIEW

Architect and theorist Bernard Tschumi speaks to Shumi Bose about his experience in Paris during the strike and student protests of May 1968

I guess we'd better get the name thing out of the way: Shumi and Tschumi? When I phone your office, they think I'm joking. Yes, it's very amusing. I've seen so many different spellings.

I want to talk to you about May 1968, which is being remembered this month with the May 68 exhibition of street posters at the Hayward Gallery in London. What were

you doing in Paris and what was going on?

I was actually doing my internship to become a registered architect. In September 1967, I went to work in Paris for Georges Candilis of Candilis Josic Woods, a member of Team 10 (a group of architects, including the Smithsons and Aldo van Eyck, formed in 1953). It was a period of enormous cultural change, of uncertainties. These had to do with the pop scene in England, but the youth in countries such as France and Italy were very politicised. It was the time of the Vietnam War, and there were a lot of discussions about where society was going. Architecture in particular was very much under question. We had witnessed about 20 years of corporate Modernism and the results were not necessarily pretty. It was an intense time and what happened was a sort of exacerbation.

Like an explosion after pressure?

Correct. Try to get hold of an issue of *AD* magazine – there's a study called 'The Beaux-

Arts Since 1968' by myself and Martin Pawley (*AD* 41, September 1971, p533-566). We spent months interviewing everybody on the barricade and got an enormous amount of information on the events, perhaps more than we knew at the time because it was so fragmented.

What was your participation? Were you on the streets?

Well, of course – at one point, everyone was on the streets. All the offices were going on strike, and Candilis said, 'I don't want my office to strike against me. Go out to the streets and demonstrate, and come back in the morning and tell me what happened!' So, I found myself arrested and beaten up and spent a night in jail. But I was one of 800 other people – that was just what was going on.

What were architects questioning?

Could architecture be anything other than an instrument of the status quo, an instrument of the establishment, possibly an instrument of segregation? Because after all, architecture is a very expensive thing; it is paid for by big corporate private interest or state policies. To see architecture as an instrument of capitalism was a radical questioning.

What happened after the events of 1968?

Some people left architecture altogether. They believed that they couldn't affect it, that it was the wrong profession. Others began to teach, and never really fulfilled their design ambitions. Others tried, through design, to find a critical stance; for example, Superstudio and Archizoom in Italy, which did quite remarkable work while making a living by designing furniture for Cassina. And then a few people, who were quite different from each other, all found themselves at the Architectural Association (AA) in London in 1970-71, and were trying to use more imaginative tools to have a critical practice.

And you're in that group.

I would count myself in that group. I would count Rem Koolhaas, even people like Léon Krier, in that group. London and the AA had one advantage over the European equivalent. England, being less political in terms of its youth discourse, had not lost an appetite for life and creativity, an appetite which I did not see in France, Italy or Spain.



Far left The Hayward Gallery's May 68 exhibition of street posters runs until 1 June

Left Bernard Tschumi (circled) in Paris, 1968

Are there any similarities between the climate now, and that of 1968?

Something major has changed, both in architecture and everywhere else. In '68, everybody thought in terms of oppositions: there were good guys and bad, a left and a right, the black and the white. The contrast was very strongly defined. Today – and I would include the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 as part of the syndromes that changed the situation – there are no alternatives. China is not an alternative model as Mao proposed it. The model of socialism in the Soviet Union is gone. Cuba is pure nostalgia. As a result, this game of opposition doesn't exist any

more. You can't even say Post-Modernism versus Classical Modernism or Deconstructivism – it doesn't make sense, people don't think like that any more. If I look at the younger generation of architects, the best are doing their own thing in the most incredibly imaginative manner, without thinking in terms of ideologies or oppositions. There are enough people who don't take what is done by the RIBA or the American Institute of Architects (AIA) as what architecture is; who feel quite free about trying to reinvent a definition of architecture. **Resume:** The revolution will be analysed this month, as the 1968 protests turn 40

5 THINGS TO DO THIS WEEK

1 *Changing Spaces*

See five photographers capture the changing nature of urban space in this new exhibition. Until 21 June at Photofusion, 17a Electric Lane, London SW9. www.photofusion.org

2 *Ken Shuttleworth with Wayne Hemingway*

Attend this discussion between Make founder Ken Shuttleworth and designer Wayne Hemingway at the Hay Festival of Literature. 27 May, 1.00pm, Hay Festival of Literature, Hay-on-Wye. www.hayfestival.com

3 *RIBA Book Awards*

The RIBA International Book Awards 2008 will be announced at this invitation-only event in London.

6.30-9.00pm, 28 May at The Athenaeum, 107 Pall Mall, London, SW1. www.architecture.com

4 *Public Markets*

Pick up Helen Tangires' new book on the history of the public market, which includes over 800 historical photographs and architectural drawings of urban marketplaces. Released 30 May, £42.00. Published by W W Norton & Company. www.wwnorton.com

5 *Fiona Wong*

Experience the captivating copper orchids, porcelain angels and terracotta sandals created by this intriguing Hong Kong sculptor. Until 3 August at Harewood House, Harewood, Leeds. www.harewood.org

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CORUS



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The second phase of Huntstown Power Station is one of the first buildings in the Republic of Ireland to use a carbon-neutral envelope under the Corus Confidex Sustain guarantee. The main buildings were clad in Corus Colorcoat HPS200, which is backed by a 40-year guarantee, the longest cover for any prefinished steel cladding.

CLAXTON BLINDS



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Claxton Blinds is one of the leading commercial window-blind companies in the UK, specialising in interior window projects for any requirement. Some notable projects from Claxton Blinds include Tower 42, the Canary Wharf Tower and the Citigroup Tower. For more information, visit www.claxton-blinds.com

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The Nuances collection of wood flooring from Broadleaf Timber is inspired by vintage furniture and offers a choice of subtle oak shades. The range is created using specially blended, semi-opaque hardwax oils that colour naturally without masking the grain of the oak. Four styles are available: Bleached Oak, Classic Oak, Warm Oak and Rich Oak.

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B-Line lights in bronze finish were specified for the Geological Society Library at Burlington House. The lights come in lengths from 700-1,600mm and can be joined in a series or cut to length. Integral ballast, ceiling and wall-mounted, bookshelf and reading-desk versions are available in a wide range of finishes. Visit www.aktiva.co.uk

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Verti-Kal is a new panel layout for the Kalwall daylight-transmitting system, with single continuous grids to provide a vertical emphasis. The first project to use Verti-Kal is the Thomas School in south London where Claridge Architects designed individual classroom modules. For further information, visit the Stoakes website at www.stoakes.co.uk

METAL TECHNOLOGY



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The strong horizontal focus of the unusual wedge-shaped office facade in Carlisle Square, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, was created using Metal Technology's faceted System 17, with a distinctive aerofoil covercap. Direct Developments led the project team, including Chris Fairley Architects and Metnor Construction, for client St Margaret's Trust.

ABET



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The Alea Glasgow Casino features Abet's new high-gloss HR LAQ high-pressure laminate in all its washrooms. Cubicle specialist Decra worked with architect Real Studios to design the washrooms, and specified Abet HR LAQ because it offers a collection of bold and bright colours as well as high resistance to scratching, wear and abrasion.

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British architects can now specify the Davex range of profiles from Thyssen Krupp. Fully compatible with Schüco Jansen-VISS steel glazing systems, the slimline beams are pierced with holes that flood a room with patterns of light and shadows. The result is a steel beam that is strong and visually interesting. Visit www.schueco.co.uk

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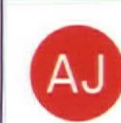
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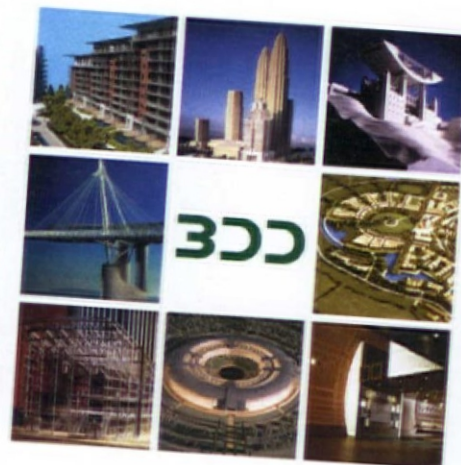
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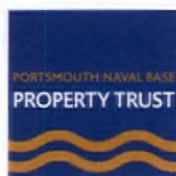
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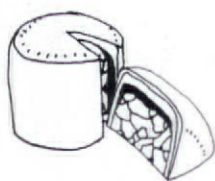
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Ian Martin. Celebrating the terrible importance of architecture and pudding

MONDAY. Emergency meeting of the Olympic Rebadging Task Force. It turns out that Zaha's splashtastic International Waterworld has been 'over-designed' while nobody was looking.

Olympics minister Suzi Towel and her coterie of moisturised consultants thought they'd grabbed a bargain when they bought it in at £70 million. Then the legacy people and Sky Sports insisted on pensioners' whirlpools, media suites, access roads, and so on. Worse, some clever dick in a hard hat noticed that whichever way you held the masterplan it wouldn't fit on the site, and that there was a plague pit underneath.

Zaha was admonished, though not to her face. Despite a smaller roof and 'fewer architectural bits', costs have risen to £250 million. Clearly, we need to act fast to dampen expectations. The project was launched years ago, with Prescott in his scuba-diving gear, rashly telling everyone it would have 'the wow factor'. Then, at the time of the redesign, **Suzi appeared in a bikini to downgrade public expectation** by promising 'the yay factor'.

Agreed that the PM should now appear on *The Andrew Marr Show* in a floppy hat and confirm the project is officially 'oh factor' status.

TUESDAY. Decline an invitation to join a regeneration superquango. **I'm all for density, but nine syllables in just two words?**

WEDNESDAY. To Docklands for the TVP100 Awards ceremony. This is held annually to celebrate premier UK design firm TVP making more money from architecture

than anyone else. The other 99 practices are there to share costs and to proclaim that they're in the epic space premiership too.

This year's ceremony is being held in the Glazed Ovary, a massive atrium made of super-intelligent glass that allows only good views in. Non-twinkling London is filtered out by a special ionised 'green' membrane which also seals in heat, jazz, aerial ballet and the spoken bollocks of 1,000 people in the 'design business' over four courses.

A procession of wankers and thankers take the microphone. TVP is thanked most of all, as it designed the Glazed Ovary itself and much of the view outside. And the dinner. And the entertainment. And the conversation – each table has a TVP project manager to co-ordinate things. The evening, though, is not just about money and power. It is about innovation. It is about the human spirit, and how that may be expressed through built art. It is about beauty and truth. And, in the end, love. And how all these structural elements may be combined to make money.

Architecture minister Dorothy Bingham is on top form as guest speaker. 'The fact that you are all here tonight proves how terribly important you really are,' she says, peering over the podium. 'Existing buildings are also terribly important, as many of our new buildings have yet to be built. Now, I am your minister and it is a terribly important part of my job to promote you and all the architecturey things you do. **You are growing at twice the rate of our economy, so perhaps it would be wise to forego the pudding tonight, boom boom!**'

The evening climaxes with TVP chairman

Arvin Sloan handing the TVP-designed TVP Trophy to himself in front of the vodka luge.

THURSDAY. Design an off-grid house for a humourless vegan couple from Wiltshire. For the greater good of society I locate it on a galeswept island in the Outer Hebrides, where **they can bore the fucking sheep to death instead.**

FRIDAY. God, **London even SMELLS Tory now.** My friend Loaf the Mayor is out of town (zero-tolerance factfinder in Chechnya) so I hook up with Darcy the architecture critic. As usual, he is accompanied by Bauhaus, the best-dressed dachshund in town. Today the yapping little bastard's wearing ultra-thin panels of Brutalist concrete in a complicated spiral shape. 'My little Wayward Gallery, aren't you?' Yap. 'Yes you are.' Yap yap yip.

They're both 'prolapsed' at the thought of the impending London Freshtival of Architecture. 'Sir Alan Sugar and Sir Richard Branson will be playing giant Jenga with a model Canary Wharf...' Yap yap. 'There will be jelly breakfasts, cycling hubs, guided debates... they've even got a street magician who makes London landmarks out of balloons!' Yip yip.

It must have been like this in Rome, around 400 AD.

SATURDAY. Rule myself out of the RIPBA presidential contest by **accidentally saying something interesting.**

SUNDAY. Psychogeographical field trip in the recliner.

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