HOK-LED TEAM WINS COMMISSION TO DESIGN KANSAS CITY ARENA

HOME TEAM WINS, GEHRY GOES DOWN

After an out-and-out battle over the commission for the new downtown Kansas City Arena, a team of Kansas City-based firms, the Downtown Arena Design Team, consisting of HOK Sport+Venue+Event, Ellerbe Beckett, and 360 Architects beat Frank O. Gehry and Associates with Crawford Architects in the city-run design competition. While the HOK team submitted a preliminary design for the bond-funded $250 million project, Gehry's team did not. HOK's round glassy design beat Frank O. Gehry and Associates' angular, modernist plan.

Care for a stroll under FDR Drive to a sandy beach beneath the Brooklyn Bridge? This bucolic scene is just one of the possibilities for the future of the East River waterfront if SHoP Architects, Richard Rogers Partnership, and Ken Smith Landscape Architect get their way. The team's urban design plan, now up for consideration by the city, was commissioned by the New York City Department of City Planning under Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg's 2002 Vision for 21st Century Lower Manhattan initiative. If built, the project will link Battery Park to the existing East River Park situated to the north of the Manhattan Bridge. The plan aims to bring the public to this long abandoned area by reconnecting it to the city under FDR Drive, the elevated highway completed in 1955. "We want to knit the waterfront to the existing urban fabric," said SHoP's Gregg Pasquarelli.

The fight between the two teams got ugly in mid-September when both were quoted in the Kansas City Star. Continued on page 3.

EAST RIVER WATERFRONT RECLAIMED

Saarinen Revived

On September 28, as the remnants of Hurricane Jeanne pelted New York City, more than 150 people crowded into the Kaufmann Conference Center—commissioned by Edgar J. Kaufmann and designed by Alvar Aalto in 1964 for the Institute of International Education—to witness the launch of Eero Saarinen: Shaping Postwar Culture, a multi-year, multi-pronged project to reintroduce the mid-century master to critical and popular audiences. The effort, funded in part by a Getty Foundation grant, will include a complete catalogue of Saarinen's work, a documentary film, a symposium, and a traveling exhibit, which will open at the Museum of Finnish Architecture in Helsinki in 2006 and close in 2010 at Yale University, Saarinen's alma mater. The Finnish Cultural Institute in New York is also a collaborator on the project.

Saarinen, an expressive and at times controversial architect who died in 1961 of a brain tumor, never lived to see his greatest works—the TWA terminal at JFK, Dulles Airport, the Gateway Arch in St. Louis—completed. Because of that, organizers say, he wasn't around to defend his work from his critics and was soon

TRUSTEE DECRIES "LAMPS MADE OUT OF MELTED POLYSTYRENE CUPS" MASQUERAADING AS DESIGN

DYSON RESIGNS IN PROTEST

Citing his frustration that London's Design Museum now privileges flashy styling and fashion over substance, James Dyson, an inventor and designer who has resigned from the board of trustees of London's Design Museum. With his departure, Dyson, an inventor and designer who is best known for his Dyson air dryers, has represented the National Federation of Colombian Coffee Growers (NFCCG) since the 1980s. The NFCCG is emblazoned above an eponymous new cafe on 57th Street in Manhattan. The cafe, which opened on September 29, represents the efforts of the NFCCG to develop new markets for its coffee beans, and is the second of 300 such shops to be built across the country. The Manhattan firm Hariri & Hariri Architects designed the cafe, which is as contemporary as its fictional namesake is rustic. A stainless steel mesh scrim covers the middle three stories of the facade, and has the etched image of the Valdez and donkey logo. The storefront itself features a modish teak wrapper Continued on page 2.

GETTY GRANTS SUPPORT PRESERVATION OF EERO SAARINEN'S LEGACY

Juan Valdez Café Opens

Juan Valdez and his donkey have arrived: The face of the ponchoed character who has represented the National Federation of Colombian Coffee Growers (NFCCG) since the 1980s is emblazoned above an eponymous new cafe on 57th Street in Manhattan. The café, which opened on September 29, represents the efforts of the NFCCG to develop new markets for its coffee beans, and is the second of 300 such shops to be built across the country. The Manhattan firm Hariri & Hariri Architects designed the cafe, which is as contemporary as its fictional namesake is rustic. A stainless steel mesh scrim covers the middle three stories of the facade, and has the etched image of the Valdez and donkey logo. The storefront itself features a modish teak wrapper Continued on page 2.
JUAN VALDEZ CAFE OPENS continued from front page that folds around to become floor, wall, and ceiling, and holds a bar and stools that look out onto the sidewalk. Inside, a glinting white wall bulges out here and there to create seats for coffee drinkers. The wall, which is made of styrene, was hand cut into shape, treated with a urethane hardener, and then assembled on site.

"Starbucks owns the market," said partner Gisue Hariri, "but the NFCGG doesn't want to be like Starbucks. They are more interested in creating environments that, like European cafes, are centers for their communities." These cafes also give back to their own communities: For each cup of coffee sold, a caffeine gift card, NFCGG grows receive approximately 4 to 5 cents, which is well above the industry standard of 1 cent.

ANNE GUINEY

DYSON RESIGNS IN PROTEST continued from front page: Dyson, the line's namesake, said in a statement released late Sunday that his resignation was due to "the nature of the allegations and the circumstances in which they were made, which I believe are both serious and significant."

"I have decided to resign as chairman of the Design Museum, having been advised by the Design Museum that action against me may be imminent," Dyson said.

The Design Museum said in a statement that it had "fully investigated all allegations and found no reasonable basis for this dismissal."

CRITICISM OF Dyson's resignation came from several corners, including his former business partner, Farzaneh Hadi. Hadi, who worked with Dyson at the design firm Dyson and Hadi, said in a statement that he was "shocked and disappointed by the decision."

PRINCE CHARLES, who had been a patron of the Design Museum since it opened in 1989, said in a statement that he was "very sorry to hear about the resignation of Sir James Dyson as chairman of the Design Museum."

"I have always admired Sir James' approach to design and his commitment to innovation," Prince Charles said.

EAST RIVER WATERFRONT RECLAIMED continued from front page lighting up the highway's dark underbelly and pulling pedestrians across the barrier to the waterfront. Further small-scale interventions include the planting of 1,000 beechnuts on a 27-foot-wide median connecting a new waterfront esplanade to Chatham Park off Pike Street. The plan also calls for several tide pools to be cut into the waterfront and a reflecting pool at Peck's Slip, replicating the shape of the historic inlet. Since presenting this initial phase to Community Boards 1 and 3 last spring, the architects have moved ahead on designing their project.

The second phase of the plan includes larget­geratures. The team hopes to build a series of slender glass towers over the expressway just south of Fulton Street. The service cores and piers of these buildings would occupy the space between the highway's two roadbeds. These towers would be residential units, generating funds to finance this new ribbon of open space. Thruslim, the towers will still block some river views but the architects believe that the area's renewed vitality would more than compensate for the lost views.

In October, the design team presented this phase to Community Boards 1 and 3, and are awaiting recommendations from these and other interested organizations. The final plan should be presented to the public next February.

WILLIAM MENKING

In The Fountainhead, Howard Roark defends his decision to blow up Cortlandt Homes, a low-cost federal housing project he agreed to design with a fellow architect, condemning his collaborator as a "second-hand" and claiming "no work is ever done collectively, by a majority decision." He goes on to orate: "Every creative job is achieved under the guidance of a single individual thought. An architect requires a great many men to erect his building. But he does not ask them to vote on his design..." An architect uses steel, glass, concrete, produced by other... But the materials remain just so much steel, glass and concrete until he touches them.

Roark (or author Ayn Rand) may speak for those who believe architecture to be a solitary profession. But architecture is collaborative from creation to reception, and defies the rational conception of the architect as artist—itself a relatively modern idea, born with the compartmentalization of the field's increasingly complex areas of knowledge. Turn-of-the-century architect Richard Morris Hunt famously liked to dressed as the 19th century Florentine artist Cimabue while H. H. Richardson liked clients to think of him a palette-wielding artist, flaunting his impracticality while employees in his office pounded out drawings. McKim, Mead and White were perhaps the first to understand the division of labor that architectural practice requires. While McKim and Mead were out front—McKim the hard-nosed businessman and Mead the artistic playboy—their project was in back, running the office.

The collaborations that Andrew Yang describes in his feature ("The New, True Spirit," page 8) seem to suggest that designers are engaging in new model of working, coming together as equal creative leads. This trend has everything to do with the growing impulse to brand projects, with celebrity architects lending political clout and even financial feasibility to projects of ever-growing complexity and ambition. The difficulty of building in New York has made the city an incubator for this new mode of practice (World Trade Center, NYC, 2012, the High Line), and the trend is spreading, as Los Angeles' recent Grand Avenue competition demonstrates.

The popularity of collaborations today points to an awareness that architecture's related disciplines—engineering, urban planning, landscape architecture, et cetera—have grown so far apart that it's impossible for any individual designer to master all the skills that were once more integrated. This new collaborative spirit points to a desire to bring these diverse arts together again. The world has yet to see the results of these star-studded collaborations. Their realization will be the true test of whether more creative power yields better products—or simply better publicity.

WILLIAM MENKING AND CATHY LANG HO

In a public statement, the museum's director Alice Rawsthorn said: "The Design Museum is a global institution that generates change for the better. It is not a design museum; it is a learning museum. It is a place for ideas and discovery. It is a place for the world."
FOR ART’S SAKE!

Stanford University is sure on top of the latest social trends. Now that things like civil liberties and secularism have gone the way of pashmina shawls (Why so many do you still insist on wearing those? That was, like, literally eight seasons ago! Buy a jacket), it seems university president John L. Hennessy has decided to throw out artistic freedom, too. As reported earlier this month in several West Coast papers, Hennessy has vetoed a planned outdoor sculpture by artist Dennis Oppenheim that had been approved by his own Panel on Outdoor Art. The 22-foot-high work, appropriately entitled *Device To Root Out Evil*, takes the form of an inverted church with its steeple stuck into the ground. “This work frustrated the university's conservative element, and the President’s Office made a decision based on what the reaction might be,” Oppenheim said in a statement. “This is the first time that a sculpture was ever rejected by the University President.” A version of the piece is still planned for Daniel Libeskind's forthcoming addition to the Denver Art Museum.

CONNECTICUT THE LATEST TO USE EMINENT DOMAIN FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

At this point, only six other states, a new national stand in the way of economic development. The September ruling stands in the way of economic development. The plaintiffs have 40 acres of property that was once part of the Cross River Marsh Wildlife Management Area. The property is now owned by the state of Connecticut, which has undertaken a project to create a 300-acre wildlife sanctuary. The homeowners have filed suit against the state, arguing that the project will destroy their property values and violate their rights to due process. The case is pending in federal court.

TERMINALLY BAD

At deadline, the Port Authority had just shut down Terminal 5, an exhibition of art including Tom Sachs, Dan Graham, and Vanessa Beecroft at Eero Saarinen's former TWA terminal at JFK airport. The reason? Its rowdy night life parties, where violations allegedly included smoking, graffiti, and vandalism in the landmark building. (We’ve also heard rumors of suspicious white powders, mixed in the VIP room, and champagne revelers on the tarmac. Apparently, security guards were too busy fingerprinting foreign-speaking grandmothers in customs.) We, however, prefer Susan Saarinen's response. Catching one drunk guest bowing beer bottles, the architect's daughter ran over and doused him. "They didn't design this building for idiots like you to be bowling bottles!" Come hang out in the Meatpacking District, Susani! They need you.

LOWER EAST SIDE'S NEWEST BOUTIQUE

Forget the Meatpacking District. With its lively nightlife, quirky boutiques, and fine restaurants, the Lower East Side (LES) is the city's newest hipster quarter. A boutique hotel could not be farther behind. Real estate developer Paul Stallaings has beaten others to the territory with the 21-floor Hotel on Rivington, slated to open in December. The hotel will be managed by Klaus Ortlied, who was the opening general manager of Andre Balazs' Mondrian Hotel and The Mercer, as well as Ian Schrager's Hudson Hotel.

HOME TEAM WINS, GEHRY GOES DOWN

As tensions heightened between the two teams, even the Star joined the fray. On September 28, in a widely criticized county court ruling, the press was shut out of the city's final candidate review meeting, enraging the newspaper. The Star argued that under Missouri's Sunshine Law, an act that sets standards for public participation and transparency in government operations, the selection meeting should have been open to the public. Steve Glorioso, spokesman for Kansa City Mayor Kay Barnes, countered that there was no such precedent. "It was the first stage of our contract negotiations, so it was closed to secure the firms' proprietary information. After the initial private meeting, we provided public question-and-answer sessions."

But many interested citizens saw the closure of the meeting as an attempt to subdue the media circus surrounding the bid wars. City officials were quoted in the Star as saying that if the hearings were made public, the selection committee might have to "dumb down" their questions in order to appear tactful in direct view of the media. Even the architects weighed in on the issue. "The Gehry camp also wanted closed doors," said Glorioso. "The Gehry architects were not willing to mix in the public."

service core pre-established.

Their biggest challenge, according to Gonzalez, was changing the building's envelope to glass, which the architects thought would better exploit the fact that the building has no real neighbors and thus no impediments to views. With the building's structure already under construction, a true curtain wall was impossible. The architects had to develop a glazing system that could adapt to a structure that was built for precast cladding. Horizontal mullions are bolted to each floor slab. The architects were able to design different types of glass for the exterior—translucent milky, translucent green, clear, and opaque spandrel glass—which gives the façade a muted Mondrian effect.

The rooms are more spacious than what one would expect of a boutique hotel, because they were conceived to be residential units. With utilities running through closets, each stall can be easily converted to condos at some later point. The building owner himself will live on the 17th floor with his family, in an apartment designed by Grzywinski and Pons. With some consultation from Surface magazine, Stallaings tapped designers Marcel Wanders, Piero Lissoni, India Mahdavi, and Matthew Tirschwell to share the designs. This is all connected to Hadid is reportedly designing the hotel's penthouse, though the project is still in negotiation. CATHY LANG NO

EAVESDROP: ARIC CHEN

CONNECTICUT THE LATEST TO USE EMINENT DOMAIN FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Expanded Domain

In late September, the Connecticut Supreme Court ruled four to three in favor of the city of New London to proceed with the development of a 90-acre multi-use waterfront complex including a hotel, an office building, a museum, and a park to replace the city's Fort Trumbull neighbor-


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The building was initially meant to be a brick-clad residential building but Stallaings, who owns residential property in the area since 1978, changed his mind as the neighborhood began to gentrify. He com-
misioned Amador Pons and Matthew Grzywinski for the job, which Grzywinski described as "a strange mix of building from the ground up and a retrofit." The 29-year-old partners of Grzywinski Pons Architects inherited the building's mass-

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attended public presentations, town. The competition was one of the great applications of science—architecture," said Cheryl A. Chase, chair of the selection committee, which was advised by Robert A. M. Stern and Ken Greenberg. The center’s programming will cover biology, chemistry, physics, earth, and space science, and emphasize interactivity with displays like a forensics lab and installations on light, sound, and motion. "The building itself will act as an exhibit on sustainable design," said CTCE spokes­woman Christine Moses. "We’re aiming for a minimum LEED rating of silver." CTCE will announce an RFP for exhi­bition design this fall.

In Pelli’s plan, striking recti­linear forms hover above a glassed-in "museum on the street," a gesture to open the museum’s experience to passersby. A six-story central atrium topped with a cantilevered roof is flanked on the north by an opaque boxy gallery sheathed in a 50-by-60 foot LED screen showing flashy scientific images and movies. To the south, a cut­away glass enclosure accommodates a greenhouse. The building’s opposite façade looks out over the Connecticut river, with a glass observation deck sloped inward to avoid exposure to direct sun. "The north and south exhibit wings have been shaped to have bold profiles, while being sensitive to their solar orientations," said Pelli.

Raul Barreneche, editor of the recently published Pelli monograph Sections Through a Practice (Hatje Cantz), said, "Pelli’s work has been moving in a new direction. As younger people in the firm take on more responsibility, the designs are getting more formally inventive." The design will be complet­ed in 2005, with groundbreaking planned for the fall of that year. It is scheduled to open in 2007.

SEVENTY-NINE-YEAR-OLD GERMAN ARCHITECT AND STRUCTURAL ENGINEER FREI OTTO

The design brings sense of excitement to the street.

Cesare Pelli to Design Hartford Science Center

New Haven–based Cesare Pelli & Associates beat out three other firms—Zaha Hadid Architects, Moshe Safdie & Associates, and Behnisch, Behnisch, & Partner—to win the competition to design the new Connecticut Center for Science & Exploration (CTCSE), a $100 million museum to be built in the heart of downtown. The competition was judged on the basis of prelimi­nary designs as well as firm credentials. “The selection process, especially the well attended public presentations, had the added benefit of exciting our community about one of the great applications of science—architecture,” said Cheryl A. Chase, chair of the selection committee, which was advised by Robert A. M. Stern and Ken Greenberg. The center’s programming will cover biology, chemistry, physics, earth, and space science, and emphasize interactivity with displays like a forensics lab and installations on light, sound, and motion. “The building itself will act as an exhibit on sustainable design,” said CTCE spokeswoman Christine Moses. “We’re aiming for a minimum LEED rating of silver.” CTCE will announce an RFP for exhibition design this fall.

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The design brings sense of excitement to the street.
Dear Chairman Tierney,

I write in behalf of calendaring a designation hearing on Two Columbus Circle. A designation I do not support—in relation to the architectural aesthetics of the edifice. But a hearing whose absence damages the name of the commission for responsible governance.

Simply, in the 26 years of my involvement in preservation matters, beginning with my appointment as a commissioner by Mayor Edward I. Koch in 1979, I have never seen the commission turn its back on such a widely supported and substantive argument for a hearing.

Myriad established experts and many hundreds of New Yorkers think this structure, located at one of the city's most important crossroads, should be considered for official protection. For several years they have sought to make this case to you in a duly constituted meeting. On the public record. Before the building is destroyed. Before the eleventh hour.

Yet the commission has not consented to listen. Is the judgment of the agency, of its staff and commissioners, so inflexible that a different opinion can't be considered? No matter how well founded that different opinion might be?

The express purpose of the Landmarks Law was to create a participatory forum in which New York could weigh its communal welfare. That we might benefit from our assembled intelligence. Because the issues that come before you frequently involve complex qualitative findings subject to changing cultural perceptions.

In that regard, the collective scholarly knowledge of those who defend Two Columbus Circle is far in excess of any equitable test for calendaring. In fact, a sizeable percentage of the protected structures of New York, several thousand buildings, fail to have had been as thoroughly validated upon designation.

Taking into account the membership of the advisory panels of these organizations, the proponents for a designation hearing includes an assembly of distinguished scholars, distinguished architects, distinguished New Yorkers, distinguished Americans—many of these the same individuals whose testimony forms the basis in reason for countless other Landmarks Commission rulings.

Have all of these people suddenly grown ignorant? Entered senility? Gone blind? Or is the commission being arbitrary and capricious?

A Few of the Individuals in Support of a Hearing for Two Columbus Circle:

- Robert A.M. Stern Dean of the Yale School of Architecture, author of NY 1880, NY 1900, NY 1930 and NY 1960
- J. Carter Brown former Director of the National Gallery of Art and the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts
- Barry Bergdoll Chair of the Columbia University Department of Art History and Archaeology
- Witold Rybczynski Professor of Urbanism at the University of Pennsylvania, author of City Life
- Giorgio Cavagneri award-winning New York-based conservation architect
- Tom Wolfe author of From Bauhaus to Our House
- Elliott Sclar Professor of Urban Planning at Columbia University Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation
- Thomas Mellins author of Gotham Restored; and co-author New York 1930 and New York 1960
- Stanislaus von Moos Professor of Art History at Zurich University, author of Le Corbusier
- Dr. Jeffrey Korsass author of New York, Year By Year
- Herbert Muschamp architectural critic for the New York Times
- Kyle Normandin President, Northeast Chapter of the Association for Preservation Technology
- Michael Sorkin Contributing Editor of Architectural Record and Metropolis
- James Zemalis Director of Sotheby's 20th Century Design Department

A Few of the Organizations in Support of a Hearing for Two Columbus Circle:

- National Trust for Historic Preservation: which has declared 2CC one of the "11 Most Endangered Historic Places" in the United States
- Preservation League of New York State • Municipal Art Society of New York • Historic Districts Council of New York
- Fine Arts Federation of New York • Women's City Club of New York • New York Landmarks Conservancy • LANDMARK WEST!
- Coalition for a Livable Westside • DOCOMOMO US

As a student of international urban preservation, it is my understanding that in contemporary democratic societies, by legal definition, landmarks are those structures protected forever by the reasoned consent of a city's inhabitants. But how may such reasoning occur when government rejects responsible debate?

At some point in the evolution of this matter, as the list of scholars and experts continued to mount, the Commission's refusal to calendar a hearing could no longer be convincingly ascribed to a difference of judgment, or deafness— but began to border on misfeasance. It is a fundamental statutory obligation that the Landmarks Preservation Commission not evade timely discussion of creditable and broadly supported candidates for designation.

Please reconsider your position.

Respectfully,

Anthony M. Tung

A "Silent Majority" of over 1,000 individuals wants a public hearing for 2 Columbus Circle! The failure of the NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) to hold a public hearing to consider designating 2 Columbus Circle as an official Landmark places this 1964 building designed by planner/Modernist architect Edward Durell Stone in clear and present danger. The Museum of Arts and Design plans to strip and gut the building as soon as they obtain title from the City. This could happen at any time.

Silent no more! Help us urge the LPC to schedule a public hearing. Send emails or learn TDWW to the important contacts below. Tell them that 2 Columbus Circle, whether you love it or hate it, deserves the chance for survival that a fair and due process is supposed to provide.

LPC Chair Robert B. Tierney—comments@lpc.nyc.gov, 212-469-7955 (fax)
Council Member Gale A. Brewer—galebrewer@council.nyc.gov, 212-513-7317 (fax)
MD Director Holly Hatchner—hatchner@museumnyc.org, 212-513-0026 (fax)

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MORE THAN ZERO

On October 6, Larry Silverstein agreed to pay Daniel Libeskind a settlement of $370,000 for Libeskind's work on the Freedom Tower through 2003, putting to rest the suit brought by Libeskind against Silverstein three months ago. The settlement splits the difference between Silverstein's original offer of $225,000 and Libeskind's $843,750 demand. Said Libeskind, "I am pleased that we have put these issues behind us so that we can move forward without distraction on the critical tasks ahead:"

TERM NAL CONDITION

On September 27, the reinforcement cage at the construction site for the expansion of the Dubai International Airport collapsed, killing eight people. Aeroports de Paris, the company that manages airports in and around Paris, designed the collapsed expansion. Reports have not yet confirmed the cause of the collapse or who was at fault. Aeroports de Paris also managed the expansion of Charles de Gaulle International Airport, where a similar collapse in May killed four people.

PLANNING UPDATE

On October 4, Amanda Burden, director of the New York City Department of City Planning, announced a plan to extend mixed-use zoning in the Port Morris neighborhood of the South Bronx. The rezoning will triple the area of the mixed-use district, which has attracted residents to the formerly industrial area after it was rezoned in 1997. Much of the land to be rezoned is currently vacant or underutilized, according to City Planning. Under the rezoning, 400 new residential units would be created. On the same day, City Planning's Greenpoint-Williamsburg Land Use Waterfront Plan, a massive overhaul of zoning on Brooklyn's western shore, began the Uniform Land Use Review Procedure, a process that is expected to take seven months.

CCTV BACK ON TRACK

After a year and a half delay due to budget constraints, construction on Rem Koolhaas' structurally daring headquarters for state-run CCTV in Beijing began in late September. The design is costing the Chinese government ¥602.4 million, four times the cost per square foot of the average luxury tower in New York, though inside sources were quoted in China's Economic Observer as saying the actual figure is nearly double that estimate due to a higher earthquake proofing requirement.

HIGH ROLLING HIGH LINE

On October 2, Mayor Michael Bloomberg announced a $27.5 million increase in the city's funding commitment for the planned conversion of the 1.5-mile elevated rail running through the Meatpacking District, West Chelsea, and Hudson Yards into a public park. Of the $60 to $100 million that Friends of the High Line has raised to date, it was necessary to realize the project, the city has committed $43.5 million to date. The funds are designated for planning, design, engineering, and construction, therefore helping to ensure that the project will go ahead. A team led by Field Operations and Diller Scofidio + Renfro was selected in August to design the project. The park is currently slated to open in late 2005.

PARSONS PLAGIARIST RESIGNS


ICA BREAKS GROUND

The Institute of Contemporary Art (ICA) in Boston, designed by Diller Scofidio + Renfro, broke ground on September 15.

NEW AUTHORITY

In late September, Governor George E. Pataki nominated Kenneth J. Ringler, Jr., for the job of director of the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey. Ringler currently serves as the New York State Office of General Services Commissioner. The Port Authority must approve the nomination by October.

HUD REFORMULATES HOUSING SUBSIDIES

It has been a turbulent year for the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). With war-related commitments helping to push the 2005 federal budget deficit to $521 billion, the Bush Administration began to look for savings at home, and HUD programs were among the domestic agencies identified for significant cuts. HUD itself also proposed a series of significant changes to the way funds will be distributed, and this has housing agencies all over the country crying foul. "Like hurricanes in the Atlantic, assaults on the housing voucher program by the Bush Administration have been unrelenting," said Sheila Crowley, president of the National Low Income Housing Coalition, an advocacy group.

When the Bush Administration released its 2005 budget in February, four months after the standard October deadline, it effectively attempted to overhaul all HUD programs. Within this measure was a line item to completely change the housing assistance program, known as Section 8 vouchers. The budget called for the current funding level for Section 8 vouchers to be reduced by $1 billion while simultaneously rolling it into a new flexible voucher program. The flexible voucher program would turn Section 8 into a block grant to local housing authorities instead of indexing individual vouchers for inflation and market fluctuations. Critics, such as the analysts at the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, say that block grants are historically much more likely to fall victim to budget cuts than indexed vouchers.

The late release of the budget led to a scramble for funds, because housing authorities had very little time to contest the numbers. In response, a nationwide coalition of housing authorities banded together and lobbied against the Bush Administration's proposal. In August, they won, and HUD subsidies were mostly restored—set at 87 percent of 2004 rent levels—which means that the New York City Housing Authority and the Department of Housing Development and Preservation are now receiving a combined amount of $82.1 million for vouchers in the New York City region.

HUD also announced a reformulation of the Fair Market Rent (FMR) rate. The FMR is the amount of money that would cover rent plus vital utilities on 40 percent of subsidized housing units. Section 8 tenants pay 30 percent of their income to rent, and then the federal government foots the rest of the bill up to the FMR. The FMR is calculated every year through random digit dialing surveys and the most recent census data, in this case, 2000. Usually announced in the spring to allow ample response time, this year's FMR was released on the final due date, July 30. The new FMR altered the geography of the data by lumping suburban areas in with cities, as well as the rate at which large apartments are billed. In urban high rent areas, this put a strain on

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recipients by averaging out generally lower housing costs of suburban areas with those in urban areas. These changes have been met with stiff resistance from housing authorities across the country. "HUD has been very sensitive to all public comments," said HUD spokesperson Alan Glantz, "and we are seeking to remedy all disparities and discrepancies as we move forward."

TWINNED TOWERS

In September, excavation began for Bank of America's new headquarters at 1 Bryant Park. The 54-story, 1.1-million-square-foot, $1 billion tower, designed by Cook + Fox Architects, twists as it ascends toward its tip in a strikingly Freedom Tower-esque fashion. According to its architects, the faceted, glittering structure was conceived nearly simultaneously with its more famous downtown twin. With a façade of glass, steel, and aluminum, the bank headquarters, scheduled for completion in 2008, is only about half the height of Libeskind and Childs offspring. Even the commissioned renderings of the two buildings look alike; indeed, both were created by design firm dbox. With its fair share of copycat Seagram Buildings and Lever Houses, is New York City fated to become a landscape of knock-off Freedom Towers?  

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This past summer, Sir Richard Rogers arrived in New York, where his firm, Richard Rogers Partnership, had just been awarded a contract to redesign New York’s East River Waterfront from Battery Park to the Lower East Side—a commission landed with SHoP Architects. “We’re not really about conquering,” he told The Architect’s Newspaper at the time. “We’re more about collaboration.” Rogers, whose first major project was a collaboration with Renzo Piano to create the Centre Georges Pompidou, is echoing a level of openness that has helped his 30-year-old practice integrate its resources with the young upstart SHoP, an office that is less than ten years old and heavily influenced by new technologies.

As the competition for plum projects becomes more cut-throat, firms are increasingly taking less of a divide and conquer attitude, and opting for an approach that is more open to exchange and sharing—everything from office space to design fees. Since the competition to design Ground Zero resulted in über-teams like Steven Holl, Richard Meier, and Peter Eisenman; United Architects (UN Studio, Foreign Office Architects, Greg Lynn), and THINK (Frederic Schwartz, Rafael Viñoly, Shigeru Ban), SHoP and Rogers is only one of many high-profile design teams that have elected to take on large, complex public projects. When competing for large-scale urban redevelopment undertakings such as the High Line, the East River project, speculative projects for New York’s Olympic bid, and others, pooling talent has become de rigueur, if not en vogue.

The idea that architecture is shaped by one or a handful of creative geniuses—such as the mighty hand of Corb—is slowly starting to disipate as built realities become more complicated. While contributions to large projects have always necessitated a variety of different players—structural engineers, architects of record, lighting specialists, interior designers, graphic design consultants, landscape architects, et cetera—never before has the role of design lead been so open to interpretation by designers themselves.

The practice of stacking a team to include the top name or profile of one particular RFQ or RFP is nothing new. It’s also common for firms with international work to bring on local partners to help realize projects in contexts with which they are unfamiliar. After winning the competition to design the new headquarters for The New York Times, Renzo Piano tapped Fox & Fowle Architects for its experience building skyscrapers in New York City (Fox & Fowle is behind many of the tall buildings in Times Square, including the Conde Nast Building, not far from The New York Times site). When the two firms began working together, “the project really started over again,” explained Bruce Fowle. As the firm began to integrate Piano’s design with the restraints of New York’s Byzantine building codes, the design altered dramatically. Along with other details, a dramatic cantilever in the base was eliminated in favor of a more realistic structure. Recently, however, with the completion of both the Holl/Meier/Eisenman Group and United Architects teams, one architect’s vision eventually came to dominate that of the others. The issue of credit, too, is (as it’s always been) a potential minefield, with participants—and perhaps more problematically, the media—eager to point out individual contributions. There’s also the threat of putting too many creative juices flowing, and usually you get better results. Ideas can come from anywhere.”—Ben van Berkel

"As a team, we were able to put the pieces together and start integrating something with much greater vision. The problem is, we lost the competition before we got to that part." In the end, she reflected, “the architecture remained mostly by itself and we were never able to put it in the big image.” Image, however, might have everything to do with trend toward collaboration. Beyond the expectation of super-teams producing

"The give and take is great fun. It gets the juices flowing, and usually you get better results. Ideas can come from anywhere.”—Hugh Hardy

"It’s more work and more complication, and it doesn’t always mean a better product.”—Ben van Berkel

Zaha Hadid Architects with Balmori Associates, Skidmore, Owings and Merrill, and Studio MDA’s final design for the High Line competition (top). The Aernhem Central Station by UN Studio and engineer Cecil Balm novel (below).
The New York Times
corporate headquarters has been a collaborative effort by Renzo Piano Building Workshop and Fox & Fowle Architects.

The project is made possible by the generous support of Liquid Stone: Now Airbrush in Concrete.

The New Line Metro, Judiciary Square
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at the National Building Museum

THE NEW YORK TIMES.
Andrew Yang is a contributor to An and also writes for Wallpaper, Dweller, and The New York Times.

This collaborative mode of practice may not be possible or even desirable for every project—"I don't think you'll be putting together five architects to design a work of art," joked van Berkel, who is working with engineer Cecil Balmond on the Arnhem Central Station. However, there is an increased demand and conscientiousness on the part of the client, according to van Berkel. "Now we've noticed that clients are becoming more sophisticated. They have their own specialists, including marketing people," he said. 

"This is really about creating ways to allow the profession to evolve," said Sharples, who, along with his colleagues, set out as young architects to explore the feasibility of a decentralized five-way partnership. "We're finding that [in larger projects], it requires a collective enterprise." Given all the factors now at play in design—technology, sustainability, contextuality—the answer is rarely going to come from one place. "And that's how architects have to sell themselves," he said. 

Andrew Yang is a contributor to An and also writes for Wallpaper, Dweller, and The New York Times.

The Ceramic Tiles of Italy Design Competition, now in its twelfth year, recognizes outstanding achievement by North American architects or interior designers using Italian ceramic tile in commercial, institutional or residential installations. Projects are judged on their creative attributes as well as how they meet their functional and technical requirements. Domestic and international new construction and renovation projects are eligible.

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Ceramic Tiles of Italy

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Three biographies have been written about Frank Lloyd Wright since his death in 1959. Robert Twombly's Frank Lloyd Wright: An Interpretive Biography (1973) was the first history to look at Wright critically, but Twombly did not have access to Wright's archives. Brennan Gill, The New Yorker writer, had access to both the archives and surviving members of Wright's Taliesin fellowship to mine for information. Gill very much identified with the huckster in Wright, and his book, Main Skies (1987), did its best to sensationalize him. Meryle Secrest's Frank Lloyd Wright: An Index to the Taliesin Correspondence (1989) covered much the same ground, but a grasp of Wright's architecture and its modernist context eluded her. With the sanction of the Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation, William Martin finally launched serious research on what was intended to be Wright's definitive biography. Former editor of Architectural Forum, the experienced critic made extensive discoveries of new material about Wright's life, but sadly his premature death intervened and the book was never completed.

Wright's late work and the details of his burgeoning career still elude adequate evaluation. Olgianna, Wright's widow who presided over the Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation and died in 1985, kept tight control on access to his work up to that point. His vast correspondence only became available for research three years later when Garland published my five-volume Frank Lloyd Wright: An Index to the Taliesin Correspondence. And many of his visionary projects were only published in the late 1980s when Wright's archives became formally organized. Critics tend to dismiss his late architecture as Jetson-like, utterly fantastical, and totally out of sync with an evolving modern architecture. But they have tended to view the work through a tightly focused modernist lens, and have failed to measure it in the context of the late 1940s and 1950s. While Wright's Autobiography is out of print, the older biographies are incomplete, and his late work remains elusive. AdeLouis Huxtable's new biography fills a void with her primer on America's most famous architect. Undoubtedly the greatest architectural critic working in this country in the last 40 years, Huxtable brings to Wright a sagacity and grace that combines deep insight into architecture with elegant prose. Without bogging down in tedious archival details or taking on the burden of charting Wright's archives, she has created the best available synthesis of much of the most important recent scholarship on Wright and provided a highly readable book for a public at large.

Huxtable's approach is to juxtapose Wright's retrospective accounts with more factual explanations of his life and his architecture, and to let the reader savor the differences. We read of many familiar accounts of Wright's upbringing, but Huxtable also explains how the programmatic concept of the Guggenheim Museum—intended for a fixed collection of "non-objective" or abstract art—was altered in purpose and use, and the resulting changes led to the subsequent complaints about the building's viability as a conventional museum. So correct in so many ways, Huxtable's biography needs only a few points of clarification. The Imperial Hotel in Tokyo, designed for a fixed collection of "non-objective" or abstract art, surely be a real-life fantasy building—a real-life fantasy the story goes on to encompass missing scientists, giant flying robots, and mad.

The film recreates the docking of a dirigible at the Empire State Building, which happened once, in 1931.

Metropolis 2004

Sky Captain and the World of Tomorrow
Directed by Kerry Conran
(Paramount Pictures, 107 min.)

Metropolis 2004

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Directed by Kerry Conran
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The real attraction is not the film's comic book plot but its visual style. Art Center grad and first-time director Kerry Conran (brother of Sir Terence) toiled for years on a six-minute pilot, created with Photoshop and AfterEffects on an outdated Mac, before receiving full funding to make the film. Shot entirely with the actors in front of a blue screen, the detail-rich, almost sepia-toned film features several remarkable digital recreations of the New York cityscape. The Woolworth Building, Flatiron Building, and Radio City Music Hall form ideal images of a neo-Gothic, post-Jazz Age, pre-Depression New York. Obviously influenced by Fritz Lang's Metropolis and Hugh Ferris' charcoal renderings, Sky Captain will surely be a new favorite in the genre of "cinematic architectural" animation films, like Bladerunner and The Matrix. ANDREW YANG IS A REGULAR CONTRIBUTOR TO AN.
THE GOOD, THE BAD, AND THE UNAFFILIATED

Judging from The Architect’s Newspaper’s innovative report on the New York region’s architecture schools (Issue 14, 8.7.2004), it appears there is a renewed urge to transform the content of architectural education, one that might better reflect the unstable social and environmental pressures influencing today’s architectural discourse. Moreover, it is increasingly significant that, with great deliberation, these schools are moving towards internationalizing their visions, opening the way to establishing the prerequisites for a more sensitive global practice. But elsewhere in the world, where the educational resources are less evenly distributed, it is compelling to observe how the job gets done. In Italy, where a poorly funded and overpopulated national university system has been the norm since admissions were relaxed in the late 1960s, the situation is very different from that in the United States. There are many obvious disadvantages for students attending schools that lack up-to-date libraries, workshops, and studios, though a number of smaller universities currently cropping up (Ascoli Piceno, Ferrara, and Pescara), as well as larger, more established universities with tighter restrictions on admissions (Roma III, Instituto Universitario di Architettura di Venezia, known as IUIA), have gone a long way to address these problems. For the most part, the shear number of students—enrollment at the Sapienza in Rome, for example, is in the tens of thousands—makes maneuvering the educational system a major challenge in the struggle for academic advancement. This may help explain why alternative educational opportunities abound in Italy. One of the more proliferate is a new breed of alternative independent workshops. The most critically describing are those that free float over university systems and professional networks, attracting an international array of artists and activists, thinkers, and visionaries who, along with students, forge experiments against rote or routine practices. In the U.S., workshops are typically developed within the university structure, often held in the classroom or studio itself, geared at facilitating group projects. But rarely would they be open to the participation of students from other schools or other countries, let alone other disciplines or backgrounds. In Italy, by contrast, many workshops promote themselves primarily through multiple individual connections, leaning on existing academic structures, sympathetic municipalities and regional entities when convenient, as well as autonomous political groups. Students, post-graduates, and anyone with an interest in a particular workshop subject can get into the mix. It is not uncommon to find oneself surrounded by a group of highly motivated individuals with diverse backgrounds, applying very sophisticated techniques to a complex set of running issues based in and around hard urban constructs. The workshop thus acts as a “contact” network, putting together people, issues, and conditions found only in situ—reflecting a real world that is both uncontrolled and unfiltered.

The workshop is a microcosm of experimental architecture in Italy today. If there are no recognizable young superstars commanding the Italian stage at present, this is most likely because the familiar academic venues no longer monopolize architectural discourse, as Manfredo Tafuri and IUAV once did. Instead, a new generation of Italian architects and theorists have honed their skills in these unofficial think tanks, and continue to make use of the workshops to develop strategies that are increasingly gaining international currency. Stripping away references to individual identities, groups like Cielostratt, gruppo A12, ma0, UFO, IAN +, AVATAR, Multiplicity, Stalker/ON (Osservatorio Nomade), Scatto, 2A+P, MetroGramma, Ellelab and others are formulating entirely new modes of research and practice that resemble nothing like the last decade’s wunderkinden.

These working environments feed from an alternative set of architectural forums—public dialogue, symposia, exhibitions—that often spill out into the world at large, mixing spectacle with research, crossing theater stage with city piazza, reaching an audience that’s not content with single-issue debates. In a sense, the yawning kitsch and glitzy flamboyance so characteristic of Italian television cabarets hover somewhere in the background of these architectural extravaganzas, for reasons that might have to do with the absence of pedantic academic control and oversight. Though the prestigious institutions in the U.S. would appear to behave otherwise, its possible that flexibility and fluidity—the hallmarks of the liberated workshop—is the right model to which to aspire. Exchange is in the air, as we can see from Mark Robbins’s stated concern for “student engagement,” Stan Allen’s search for a new “dichotomy,” Tom Hanrahan’s desire for “living experimentally,” and Tony Vidler’s focus on globalisation. All suggest a direction towards greater awareness of the differences outside our familiar modes of learning. Wigley wants to encourage “a lively ecology that allows the whole school to operate as an intelligent organism, adjusting itself in order to think through each new issue.” The idea of a school as a workshop or a shop is a traditional one that is coming, I think, closer to becoming a reality.

Peter Lang leads Texas A&M’s Santa Chiara Study Center in Castiglion Fiorentino, and is an active member of the Urban Research Group, Stalkerion, based in Rome.

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