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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 promises to take advantage of the arena's waterfront site, thereby contributing to the area's revitalization.

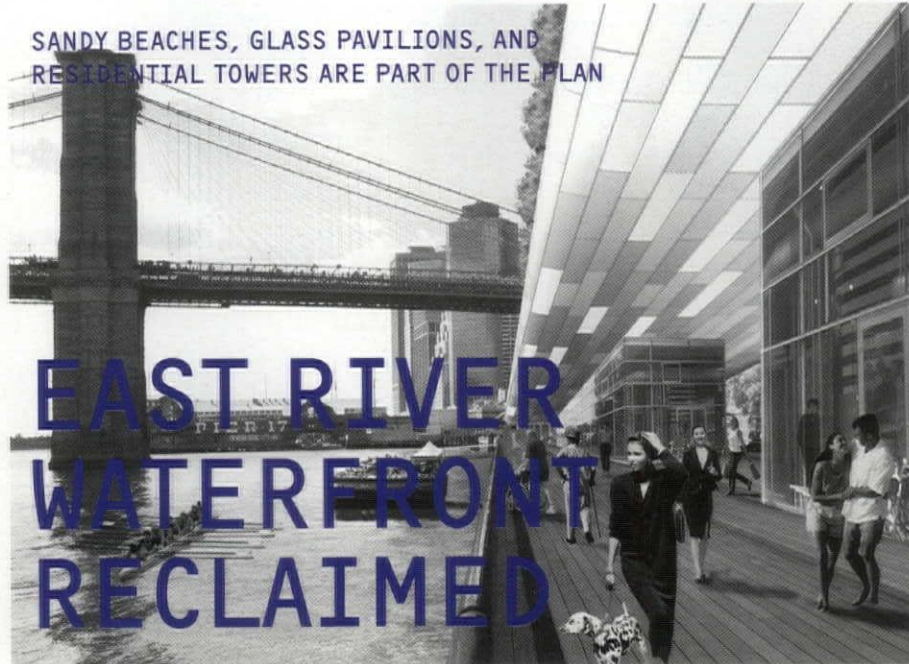
The fight between the two teams got ugly in mid-September when both were quoted in the *Kansas* **continued on page 3**



COURTESY HOK SYE

SANDY BEACHES, GLASS PAVILIONS, AND RESIDENTIAL TOWERS ARE PART OF THE PLAN

EAST RIVER WATERFRONT RECLAIMED



COURTESY SHOP ARCHITECTS

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 design team has been working for seven months on its two-phased proposal. The plan's first or "foundation" phase proposes small scale, quickly built projects like eight 8,000-square-foot glass pavilions built directly beneath FDR Drive. The pavilions would house cultural, community, and commercial facilities, literally **continued on page 2**

GETTY GRANTS SUPPORT PRESERVATION OF EERO SAARINEN'S LEGACY

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 **continued on page 4**

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

DYSON RESIGNS IN PROTEST

Citing his frustration that London's Design Museum now privileges flashy styling and fashion over substance, James Dyson 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 **continued on page 2**



COURTESY DYSON

HARIRI & HARIRI'S LATEST PROJECT UPDATES AN ADVERTISING ICON



COURTESY HARIRI & HARIRI ARCHITECTS

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 1960s 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 café, which is as contemporary as its fictional namesake is rustic. A stainless steel mesh scrim covers the middle three stories of the façade, and has the etched image of the Valdez and donkey logo. The storefront itself features a modish teak wrapper **continued on page 2**



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EDITORS

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-hander" 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 romantic 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 like to dressed as the 13th 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 White were out front—McKim the hard-nosed businessman and White the artistic playboy—Mead 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, NYC2012, 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 single 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 our article in Issue 16, 10.5.2004 announcing the AIA-NY 2004 award winners, the Dalki Theme Park should have been credited to Ga A Architects, Mass Studies, and Slade Architecture.

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 beech trees on a 27-foot-wide median connecting a new waterfront esplanade to Chinatown along 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 developing their design.

The second phase of the plan includes large gestures. 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. Though slim, 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 phase two 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**

graphics, but the general theme would remain the same. In the last 18 months, however, there has been a complete change of direction. It became style over substance."

While Rawsthorn has not publicly discussed the situation, the Design Museum has released a statement thanking Dyson for his role as trustee and chairman. The exhibitions Rawsthorn has developed for the museum since her arrival in 2001 often take a broad view of what constitutes design, and have included the work of shoe designer Manolo Blahnik and milliner Philip Treacy; a current exhibition looks at the cultural significance of 1950s British flower designer Constance Spry. "I admire Blahnik," said Dyson, "but the flowers were the last straw."

The disagreement has been brewing for some time. Dyson said that when Rawsthorn took over, she shut down the curatorial committee and did not allow trustees to make any significant decisions about the museum's curatorial direction. As the exhibition schedule grew more modish and less focused on process and problem solving, he says that he tried to discuss the problem with Rawsthorn, with no results. His first shot over the bow took the form of a piece published on June 12 in the *Times* of London in which he wrote, "Sadly, nowhere is the mentality of style over substance more evident than in the curators' choice of exhibitions at the Design Museum, of which I am chairman. ... It focuses less on industrial design and more on iconography." While the piece caused a stir, his resignation has caused an uproar, and some members of the British design press have been questioning the museum's future. **AG**

JUAN VALDEZ CAFÉ 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 glistening white wall bulges out here and there to create seats for coffee drinkers. The wall, which is made out 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 NFCCG doesn't want to be like Starbucks. They are more interested in creating environments that, like European cafés, are centers for their communities." These cafés also give back to their own communities: For each cup of coffee sold at a Juan Valdez café, NFCCG growers receive approximately 4 to 5 cents, which is well above the industry standard of 1 cent. **ANNE GUINEY**



Juan Valdez Café combines adventurous design with socially responsibility

DYSON RESIGNS IN PROTEST

continued from front page eponymous line of bagless vacuum cleaners, has made his disagreements with the museum's director Alice Rawsthorn very, very public. His arguments are not personal, he said, nor is he looking for Rawsthorn's ouster: "Alice is very intelligent, very energetic, and has enormous enthusiasm for her work." Dyson, who had been a trustee since 1997, and the chairman for the last five years, says that the problem is that the curatorial direction of the museum has strayed far beyond its original focus on industrial design.

"[Sir Terence] Conran founded the museum 15 years ago with the intent of focusing on industrial design and the manufactured object," said Dyson. "Occasionally, there would be lighter shows, or ones on other disciplines such as architecture or

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 do so many of 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 staked into the ground. "This work frightened 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.

HARVARD'S HYGIENE, KARIM BLISTERS

Over at Harvard, it's the gender wars that are getting messy. In response to a bathroom shortage at the Graduate School of Design, administrators recently made most of the loos unisex. And it's caused a total, um, blow-out among women students and staff. "Temperatures are rising," warns one unhappy female camper. "We've had plenty of arguments about whether men should be required to lower the seat. Apparently, they don't all feel like flushing, either." Ew. Meanwhile, female students are horrified by the thought of sharing their most private moments with male instructors, who should be ashamed of themselves for other reasons, too. "Some of them touch the door handles without washing their hands," our restroom reporter gasps. No male members—er, staff members—could be reached by press time....In other plumbing news, Nooch, the new **Karim Rashid**-designed Chelsea hotspot, has had problems of its own. **Andrew Yang**, a contributor to these pages, has filed an eyewitness account of a recent Saturday night water malfunction. "Water, trapped above the latex paint, had formed two large bubbles on the ceiling," he reports. "They were dripping, like coffee, onto the vagina-shaped bar." [Disclaimer: the views expressed here do not necessarily reflect those of the columnist.] Rashid tells us the problem precipitated from a leak in an upstairs apartment. "And I resent the term 'vagina-like,'" he snapped.

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 opening night party, where violations allegedly included smoking, graffiti, and vandalism in the landmark building. (We've also heard rumors of suspicious white powders, lewd acts 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 bowling beer bottles, the architect's daughter ran over and lashed out, "My father didn't design this building for idiots like you to be bowling bottles!" Come hang out in the Meatpacking District, Susan! They need you.

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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-

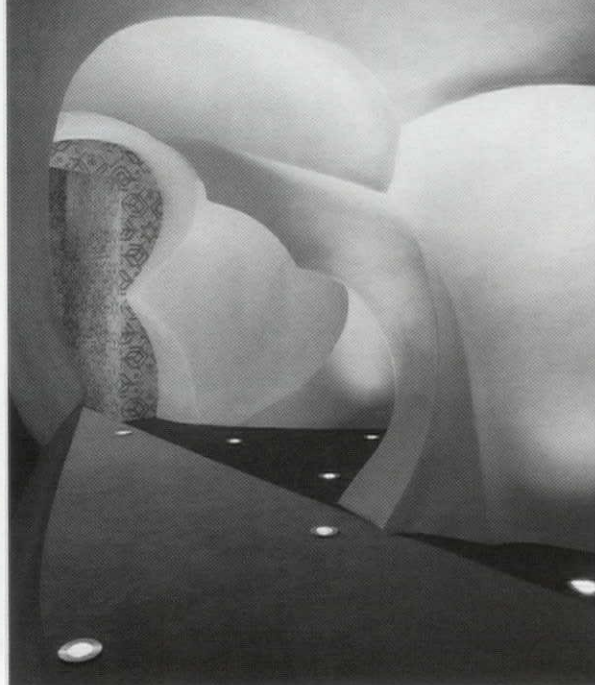
hood. The city invoked eminent domain to seize the property. In response, seven residents of 13 parcels of land in Fort Trumbull sued the city, claiming improper use of the law.

Federal law states that eminent domain can be used for reasons of health, safety, or welfare. Historically, it

has been used primarily in situations of extreme urban blight or to make way for public transportation projects. The September ruling enacts the city's power to seize private property that stands in the way of economic development.

The plaintiffs have appealed the ruling, and the United States Supreme Court accepted the case. If the Connecticut decision stands, a new national precedent could be set. At this point, only six other states allow the power of eminent domain to be used for economic development: Kansas, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, New York, and North Dakota. **GH**

FOUR YEARS IN THE MAKING, THE HOTEL ON RIVINGTON SET TO OPEN IN DECEMBER



COURTESY HOTEL ON RIVINGTON

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 far behind. Real estate developer Paul Stallings 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 Ortlieb, who was the opening general manager of Andre Balazs' Mondrian Hotel and The Mercer, as well as Ian Schrager's Hudson Hotel.

The building was initially meant to be a brick-clad residential building but Stallings, who has owned residential property in the area since 1979, changed his mind as the neighborhood began to gentrify. He commissioned 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 massing, structure, and to some extent, its layout, with the

Marcel Wanders designed the hotel's first-floor restaurant and lounge; pictured is the "Eggtrance," a large-scale extrapolation of his famous Egg Vase

service core pre-established. Their biggest challenge, according to Grzywinski, was changing the building's envelope to glass, which the architects thought would better exploit the fact that the building has no tall 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 chose four 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 still 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, Stallings tapped designers Marcel Wanders, Piero Lissoni, India Mahdavi, and Matthew Tirschwell to shape interior spaces. Zaha Hadid is reportedly designing the hotel's penthouse, though the project is still in negotiation. **CATHY LANG HO**

HOME TEAM WINS, GEHRY GOES DOWN

continued from front page *City Star* as accusing each other of designing drab, monotonous architecture. In a September 12 *Star* story, Gehry was quoted as describing HOK's work as "cookie-cutter." In the same article, Brad Schrock, lead designer of the HOK team, shot back by calling Gehry's work repetitive: "It's a simple drum with his 'stuff' attached to one end ... A leafy salad attached to one side."

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

Kansas 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 teams' rivalry. 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, "though the HOK team left the decision in the hands of the court."

The project will break ground in the spring and is slated for completion in 2007.

GUNNAR HAND



The design brings sense of excitement to the street

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 glass 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 cut-away glass enclosure accommodates a greenhouse. The building's opposite façade looks out over the Connecticut river, with a glass observation deck sloped 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."

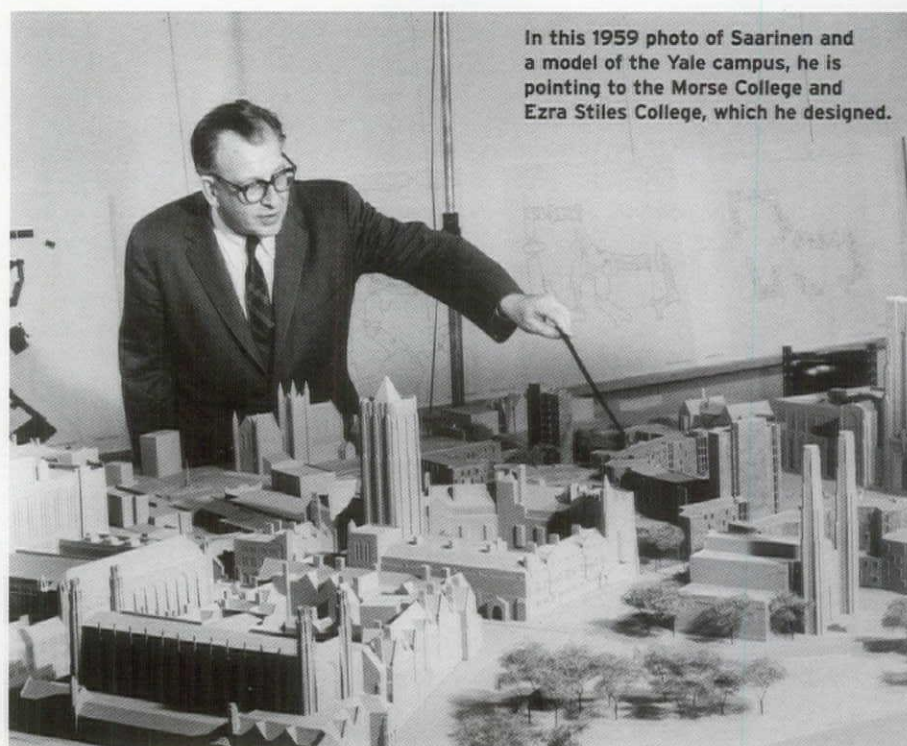
The design will be completed in 2005, with groundbreaking planned for the fall of that year. It is scheduled to open in 2007. **DEBORAH GROSSBERG**

LOCAL OFFICE WINS INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION

CESAR PELLI TO DESIGN HARTFORD SCIENCE CENTER

New Haven-based Cesar Pelli & Associates beat out three other firms—Zaha Hadid Architects, Moshe Safdie and 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 CTCSE spokeswoman Christine Moses. "We're aiming for a minimum LEED rating of silver." CTCSE will announce an RFP for exhibition design this fall.



In this 1959 photo of Saarinen and a model of the Yale campus, he is pointing to the Morse College and Ezra Stiles College, which he designed.

SAARINEN REVIVED

continued from front page
relegated to second-class status by the onslaught of postmodernism. *Shaping Postwar Culture* hopes to change that.

"Saarinen was one of the most unorthodox, popular, prolific architects of the 20th century, and yet 50 years later, we only know four or five of his buildings," said Donald Albrecht, who is co-curating the project with Yale School of Architecture professor Eeva-Liisa Pelkonen. "The goal of the book is to reveal the full extent of his work and to put it in the cultural context of the 1950s."

The project got its impetus from the 2002 donation of several hundred boxes of Saarinen's papers and drawings to Yale by Kevin Roche John Dinkeloo and Associates, whose offices are also in New Haven. Both Roche and Dinkeloo worked under Saarinen, and they inherited his office—and all the materials it contained—after his death. A separate Getty Foundation grant will fund the archiving of the materials, which join an already extensive collection at Yale's Manuscripts and Archives department.

"Kevin Roche felt nervous. He's 82 years old now. He was concerned that there be a home for the materials in the long term," said Peter Papademetriou, a professor of architecture at the New Jersey School of Architecture who is working on a critical biography of Saarinen and has spent more than 20 years cataloguing Roche Dinkeloo's Saarinen hold-

ings, an effort that often meant digging files and correspondence out of attic corners. "I concurred with Kevin that it would be a wise idea. That way the materials would stay in New Haven. And the technology and space existed at the archives."

The project coincides with a newfound appreciation of Saarinen by both academics and practicing architects. Whereas 20 years ago no one would admit to even liking Saarinen, today both emerging and established architects—most notably Santiago Calatrava—cite him as a major influence on their work.

"There are two things at work," said Papademetriou. "One is a kind of accepting view of eclecticism and the other is a tolerance and reconstitution of modernism. I am struck by, over the last half decade, the reappearance of Saarinen furniture and architecture in popular imagery."

The Roche Dinkeloo

donation, though not yet incorporated into the existing archives, is already being used by Yale professors and students, noted Robert A. M. Stern, dean of the Yale School of Architecture and keynote speaker at the project launch. "Quite a few seminars are already using the drawings," he said. "There will also be an informal show curated by five students in the Manuscripts and Archives Gallery in the spring."

Spring will also see the Saarinen symposium, to be held at Yale in early April. Of particular interest is the decision to have venerable architectural historian and critic Vincent Scully give the keynote speech. Scully, after all, was one of Saarinen's most vociferous critics, declaring soon after the architect's death that he regretted everything that was wrong with American architecture. Whether Scully has changed his mind since then is a question sure to be on everyone's mind. **CLAY RISEN**

HONORS

Seventy-nine-year-old German architect and structural engineer **Frei Otto** won the **2005 Royal Gold Medal**, presented by the **Royal Institute of British Architects**.

James Carpenter, innovative glass sculptor, engineer, designer, and president of James Carpenter Design Associates, was named a **2004 MacArthur Fellow**. The "genius" award is accompanied by a no-strings-attached \$500,000 grant, paid in quarterly installments over five years.

The **National Trust for Historic Preservation** picked **Susan Reynolds**, a recent graduate of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, as the first **Robert Silman Fellow for Preservation Engineering**.

On September 22, the **International Association for Bridge and Structural Engineering** presented its **2004 Outstanding Structure Award** to **Santiago Calatrava** for his 2001 expansion of the Milwaukee Art Museum.

The **Whitney Museum of American Art** announced the 2004 participants in its Architecture and Urban Studies Program: **Sarina Basta, Jacqueline Miro-Abreu, Lize Mogel, Graham Parker, and Paul Schuette**.

The **AIA New York State** chapter gave City College of New York architecture professor **Lance Brown** the **2004 President's Award**, and **Der Scutt Architect** a citation in design from the organization for its façade restoration of 381 Park Avenue South.

Edward A. Feiner, chief architect of the GSA, **Bruce S. Fowle**, principal of Fox & Fowle Architects, **Matthew Goldstein**, chancellor of the City University of New York, and **Patricia J. Lancaster**, commissioner of New York City's Department of Buildings were honored by the AIA New York and the New York Foundation for Architecture at the 2004 Heritage Ball in October.

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LETTER DATED AUGUST 30, 2004, FROM FORMER NYC LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSIONER ANTHONY M. TUNG TO CURRENT LANDMARKS CHAIR ROBERT B. TIERNEY

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 weight 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 Cavaglieri** *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 Kroessler** *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 Zemaitis** *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 pioneer Modernist architect Edward Durrell 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 faxes TODAY 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.

Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg – go to <http://nyc.gov/html/mail/html/mayor.html> and enter your message, or 212-788-2460 (fax)

LPC Chair Robert B. Tierney – comments@lpc.nyc.gov, 212-669-7955 (fax)

Council Member Gale A. Brewer – gale.brewer@council.nyc.ny.us, 212-513-7717 (fax)

MAD Director Holly Hotchner – holly.hotchner@madmuseum.org, 212-459-0926 (fax)

Paid for by Friends of 2 Columbus Circle. For more information, call 212-496-8110 or email info@save2columbus.org. Visit us at www.save2columbus.org



Era Stoller, 1964 ©ESTO

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."

TERMINAL 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 constrictions, 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 6, 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 estimated necessary to realize the project, the city has committed \$43.5 million to date. The new 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

Roger Shepherd, a professor of fine arts at Parsons School of Design, resigned from his post on September 17 due to a plagiarism scandal. Shepherd stands accused of copying passages from Meredith L. Clausen's book, *Pietro Belluschi: Modern American Architecture* (MIT Press, 1995) as well as three Princeton Architectural Press titles in his work, *Structures of Our Time: 31 Buildings That Changed Modern Life* (McGraw Hill, 2002). MIT Press is currently suing McGraw Hill for damages.

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**HOUSING TAKES**

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.

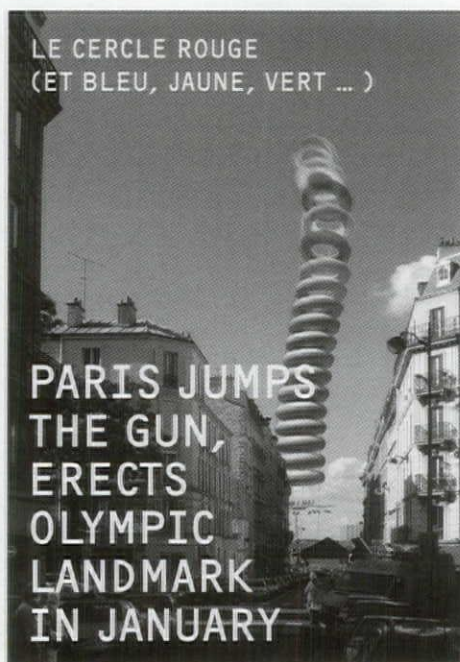
When the Bush Administration released its 2005 budget in February, four months after the standard October deadline, it effectively attempted to overhaul all HUD programs. Within this measure was

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 reductions 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 97 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 \$52.1 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



Does Paris, a city filled with architectural landmarks, have room for one more? In January, a new monument will rise less than two miles from the Champs-Élysée. But unlike the squat and weighty Arc de Triomphe nearby, this new structure will fly light and high. The winner of an international competition to design an Olympic marker—Paris is among the bidders for the 2012 games—the 260-foot-tall tower of helium rings, designed by French architects Yves Pagès and Benoît Le Thierry d'Ennequin, will flex with the wind. A stationary platform situated below the flexible donuts will serve as a new public space.

Colored to match the Olympic rings, the structure will be illuminated at night and visible from across the city. It will be sited in the heart of Paris' planned Olympic village in Les Batignolles. Juror Jean Nouvel said, "The selected project evokes a light symbol of optimism." **DE**

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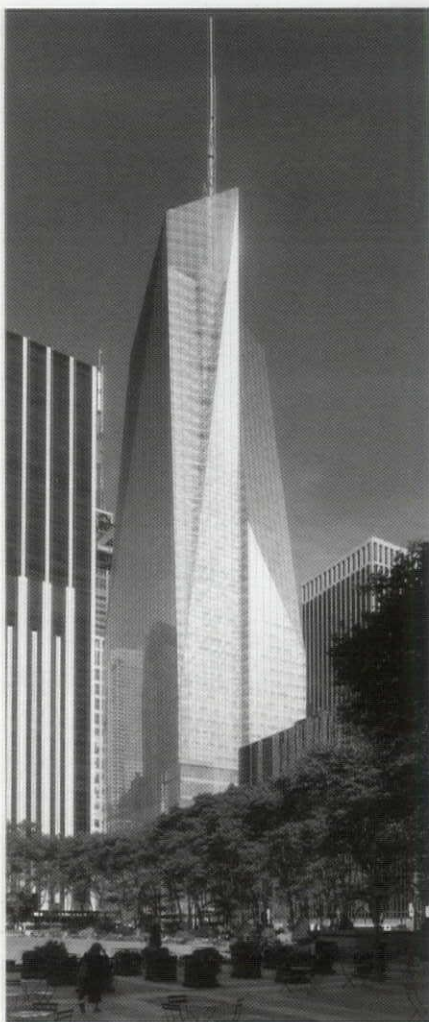
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recipients by averaging out generally lower housing costs of suburban areas with those in urban areas.

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." **GH**

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 spire 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 dbx. 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? **GH**



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COURTESY BALMORI ASSOCIATES; FRIENDS OF THE HIGH LINE

SINGULAR GLORIES ARE A THING OF THE PAST,
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BIG AND SMALL, YOUNG AND ESTABLISHED,
INDEPENDENT AND CORPORATE—ARE COLLABORATING
TO CREATE NEW DESIGN MODELS, IN PROJECT
AND IN PRACTICE.

Landscape designer Diana Balmori and architect Joel Sanders' collaborative design of the equestrian center for NYC2012 (top). Field Operations and Diller Scofidio + Renfro with Olafur Eliasson, Piet Oudolf, and Buro Happold's winning entry in the High Line competition (below).

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 emerged to take on large, complex public projects. When competing for large-scale urban redevelopment undertakings such as the High Line, the East River Waterfront, 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 all-powerful creative genius—such as the mighty hand of Corb—is slowly starting to dissipate 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 expertise or profile required by a 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 Condé Nast Building, not far from *The New York Times* site). When the two firms started 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 drastically. Along with other details, a dramatic cantilever in the base was eliminated in favor of a more realistic structure.

Previously, many collaborative arrangements have seen one firm leading the others, and the others working in the service of the lead firm. The nature of collaborations might be shifting, however, with firms seeking collaborations not out of necessity but out of desire to enrich their own design processes and, ultimately, the final product.

When the firm Hardy Holzman Pfeiffer

disbanded last summer after 37 years of practice, partner Hugh Hardy named his new venture H³ Hardy Collaboration. "We're not making an exclusive practice of just working with other architects. We think of collaboration as a big idea," said Hardy, who is working with Frank Gehry on a new theater for the Brooklyn Academy of Music cultural district, as well as entering into a competition with Enrique Norten for a new theater at Ground Zero. "The collaboration involved with each project—even when it's your own firm project—involves everybody—clients, consultants—*everybody*."

The close circles of the architecture profession often dictate the many reciprocal relationships that now crowd the competition scene. While Ben van Berkel and Caroline Bos have built their practice, UN Studio, on a model of collaborations between various specialists for years, the United Architects team is one of the most visible and memorable collaborative efforts within recent years. The relationships among its members—which include New York-based designers Reiser+Umemoto and Kevin Kennon and Mikon von Gastel of the motion-graphics studio Imaginary Forces—had been in place for many years when they all decided to participate in the WTC competition together. "In our case, we were teaching and became friends, and slowly began to influence each other's work," explained van Berkel. Some members of the group had met at a conference years ago that was organized by Jeffrey Kipnis at Ohio State University. "There were heavy brainstorming of the quality of each other's work," said van Berkel. The relationships were beginning to form. "Nobody knew it at that time, but we called ourselves 'The Ohio Group.' We were invisible at the time."

Meanwhile, SHoP's partnership with Rogers' firm resulted from a simple cold call. According to Chris Sharples, one of the five partners of SHoP, the firm had wanted to go after the East River project, but did not have enough significant civic projects under its belt. SHoP had always wanted to work with Rogers. So they called London, and the rest is becoming history.

Regardless of how collaborations are formed, many architects are finding the experience rewarding. Since winning the job earlier this year, both SHoP and Rogers have learned to integrate their operations, despite the dramatic difference in each office's size. "We've gained a tremendous amount of knowledge working with their team," said Sharples. "There's a lot in their partner structure that we'd like to integrate into our office in the future"—for example, weekly directors' meetings (at Rogers, partners are titled directors) to review each other's projects.

However, not all collaborative relationships are as rewarding and collegial as they may seem. There have been several reports that, within both the Holl/Meier/Eisenman 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 one party running off with the commission, or controlling it to the extent that it can dump other collaborators—something that architect Michael Sorkin unfortunately experienced when he teamed up with land-



COURTESY FRIENDS OF THE HIGH LINE; UN STUDIO

scape architect Margie Ruddick for the Queens Plaza project earlier this year.

Landscape architect Diana Balmori, a finalist for the High Line competition, a team consisting of Zaha Hadid, Skidmore, Owings, and Merrill, and Studio MDA, warned that working relationships need to be carefully considered, and that collaborations often don't work the way they seem to. Speaking from her own experiences, she said, "Right now, the model is very different than it was in the past [for landscape architects]. Collaboration didn't work—and doesn't work," she said, since most collaborations come in the wake of a scramble for RFPs that doesn't allow the time for proper exchange. Teams are built for the sole purpose of assembling an image, and "that really doesn't give you the time to put the different pieces together."

The High Line project, which was eventually awarded to the formidable team of Field Operations, Diller Scofidio + Renfro, Olafur Eliasson, Piet Oudolf, and Buro Happold, was heavily sought after by teams that consisted of not only structural engineers and landscape architects but also graphic designers, artists, and consultants for elevators, lighting, and historic preservation. "The High Line was one of those rare cases, a very satisfying experience," said Balmori. "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 totally 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

Zaha Hadid Architects with Balmori Associates, Skidmore, Owings and Merrill, and Studio MDA's finalist design for the High Line competition (top). The Arnhem Central Station by UN Studio and engineer Cecil Balmond (below).

Collaboration Elaboration

To make architectural magic, architects echoed a few points to keep in mind if you, too, are to avoid a catfight of the Libeskind-Childs magnitude.

Be honest about who you can work with

"We get asked to team a lot more than we do. The chemistry has to work, and sometimes, it doesn't."—Bruce Fowle

Know what you're getting into

"A successful collaboration has to do with early negotiations."—Diana Balmori

Negotiate a fee that is fair and takes all factors into consideration

"How famous and well known and experienced your office is—it's all going to affect the fee structure as well as who has the burden of day-to-day responsibilities."—Chris Sharples

Be interested in exchange

"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

Work more

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



The New York Times headquarters has been a collaborative effort by Renzo Piano Building Workshop and Fox & Fowle Architects.

COURTESY FOX & FOWLE ARCHITECTS

super-projects, a star-studded team is a marketer's (and developer's and politician's) dream. Never mind the actual results. A project could be considered a blockbuster on the basis of its cast alone (think of *Ocean's Eleven*).

A less skeptical reading of this trend, however, is the genuine interest that many architects express in expanding process and sharing ideas. The assembly of architects as a true union of peers is a heartening development in a field where a big ego is a survival tool and in a world that has not yet lost its taste for signature architecture. For some, eschewing the "star vehicles" of the past in favor of collaboration is the best expression of the balance of ideas that design should embody.

Since the High Line experience, Balmori has made a permanent commitment of sorts to working with architect Joel Sanders to pursue projects, an effort that has required reorganizing each office. Their first joint project was the design of an equestrian center for New York's Olympic bid. The alliance between a landscape architect and an architect is hardly unusual but this sustained and equal collaboration is telling of how Balmori and Sanders approach their work. They see context—how a building fits into its surroundings—as a paramount concern and don't regard one aspect of a project as any more or less important than another.

Collaborations must be carefully considered, however. "Because we're not a style-based practice, we're not trying to protect something or impose something on a project that doesn't want it," said

Sharples. "If we were working with someone with a strong style, they would want to make sure that their style is in there." They found a perfect match. According to Ivan Harbour, a director at Richard Rogers Partnership, "Our approach is very fluid—it's not 'We want this, this, and this.'"

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 an Alessi teapot," 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," said van Berkel. As long as they get a good product, he explained, "they don't care about how many names they have to put on the press release."

"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, contextualism—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*, DWELL, AND THE NEW YORK TIMES.**

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Left: Rohner Office Building (2000) Baumschlager & Eberle Architects. Photo © Archphoto - Eduard Hueber
Right: Auditorio de Tenerife (2003) Photo by Alan Karchner for Santiago Calatrava

CERAMIC TILES OF ITALY DESIGN COMPETITION 2005

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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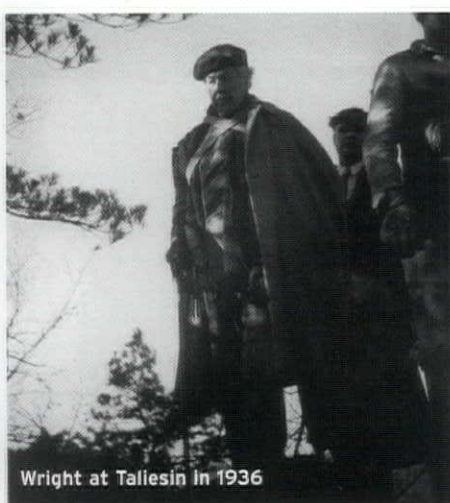


Ceramic Tiles of Italy

WRIGHT ON

Frank Lloyd Wright: A Penguin Life
Ada Louise Huxtable
(Liver/Viking, 2004), \$19.95

Three biographies have been written about Frank Lloyd Wright since his death in 1959 a few months prior to his 92nd birthday. His own *Autobiography*, published in three editions from 1932 onward, provided the core material for his biographers but was more about his life than his work. 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. Brendan 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, *Many Masks* (1987), did its best to sensationalize him. Meryle Secrest's *Frank Lloyd Wright* (1992) 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 Marlin finally launched serious research on what was intended to be Wright's definitive biography. Former editor



Wright at Taliesin in 1936

EDMUND TESKE / COURTESY FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT FOUNDATION

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. Olgivanna, 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 synch 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, Ada Louise 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 new ground, 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.

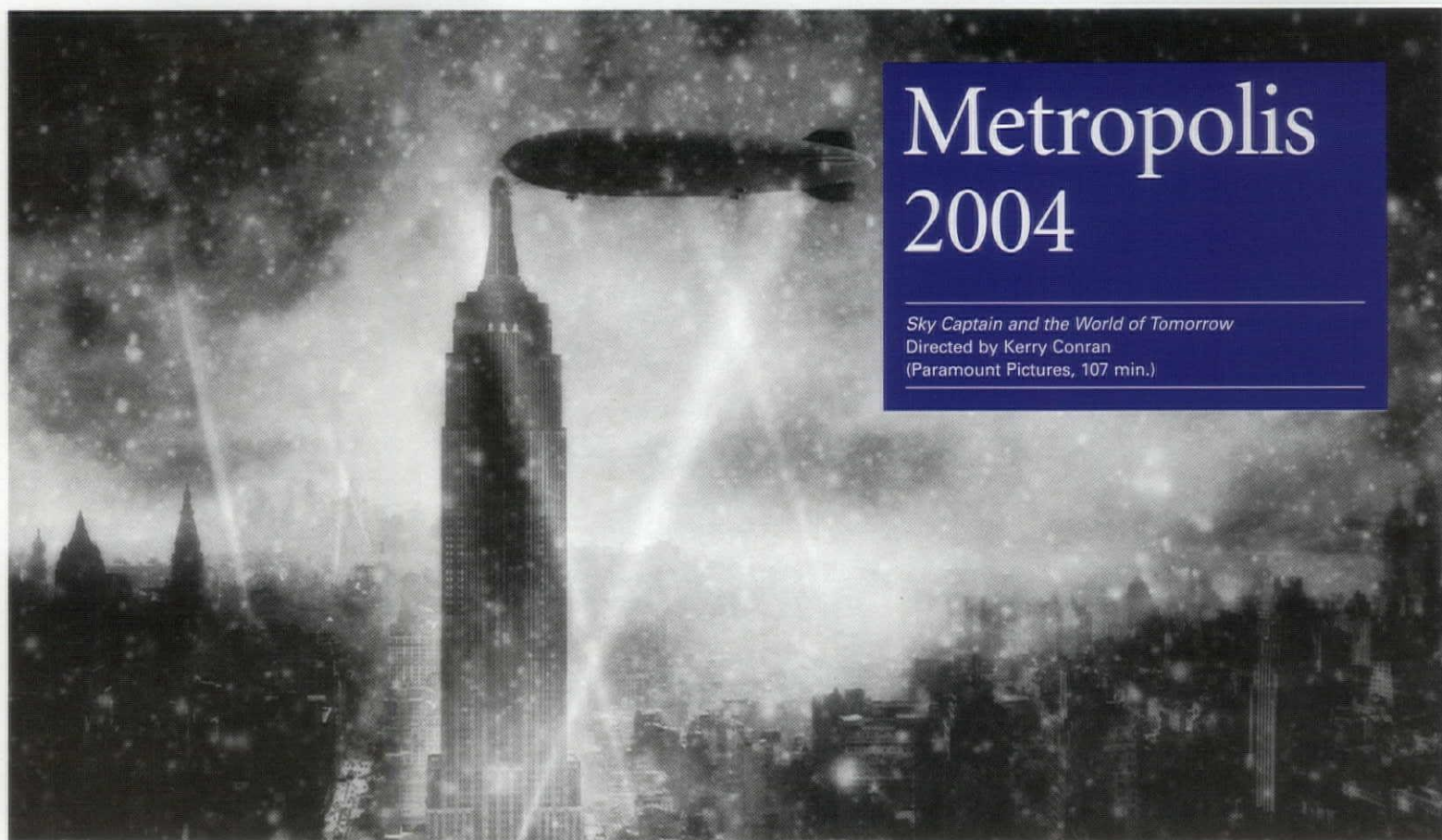
Huxtable's approach is to juxtapose Wright's retrospective accounts with more factual explanations of his life and his architecture, and to let the reader savor the differences. We read of many familiar accounts of Wright's upbringing, but Huxtable also updates the documentation on Wright's involvement with feminism and the idea of marrying for love, not social obligation, which I introduced in my own book, *Frank Lloyd Wright: The Lost Years, 1910-1922*, published in 1993. Focusing on several of Wright's well known built works, she balances her biographical accounts with concise and perceptive descriptions of his buildings. Fortunately, she 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

and built in phases from 1913 to 1922, is no mere gloomy pile as some contend after looking at photographs of the now-destroyed building. Mysterious indeed, it was the crucible for Wright's experiments in diagonal geometry. Designing hundreds of patterns—generally dismissed as ornament by modernist polemicists—allowed a revolution to emerge in his design processes as seen in his early projects of the 1920s. Wright added diagonal planning to his compositional methods while retaining rectilinear formats and the use of the grid as an organizing element for both. Now that ornament is returning to architectural discourse such work may provide a rich trove of new design insights.

That Huxtable's biography is state of the art does not mean that art won't progress. Still, much needs to be done for a more thorough biography similar to those appropriate for other major figures of modernism, such as John Richardson's multi-volume studies of Pablo Picasso. Our grasp of the last 20 years of Wright's career—some of the most prolific and complex of his career—involves not only numerous unbuilt projects but his largest foray into domestic architecture and the dispersal of his ideas through the mass media with widespread imitation, reinterpretation, and misinterpretation. Pushing scholarly work on Wright is difficult as a cottage industry of picture books gluts the market and seduces even once serious researchers to join the commercial fray. Eventually, the lacunae in Wright's life and work will be filled. Meanwhile, Huxtable's book is the best introduction to the architect currently available, providing an elegant and balanced view of the man and his myths.

ANTHONY ALOFSIN IS ROLAND ROESSNER
CENTENNIAL PROFESSOR OF ARCHITECTURE AT
THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN.



Metropolis 2004

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

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

air battles in the canyons of Manhattan. 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 out-dated 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 Ferriss' charcoal renderings, *Sky Captain* will surely be a new favorite in the genre of “cinemarchitectural” action films, like *Bladerunner* and *The Matrix*. **ANDREW YANG IS A REGULAR CONTRIBUTOR TO AN.**

One of the most visually ambitious film in years, *Sky Captain and the World of Tomorrow* is a noir-ish fantasy film about a pseudo-

World War I pilot and an intrepid reporter/damsel-in-distress battling a secret evil genius who has a plot to (naturally) destroy the earth.

The film stars Jude Law as the Sky Captain, Gwyneth Paltrow as reporter and love interest Polly Perkins, and Angelina Jolie as Frankie,

captain of an airborne refueling station.

Opening with a scene of Sky Captain docking his dirigible at the Empire State

Building—a real-life fantasy that was fulfilled only once—the story goes on to encompass missing scientists, giant flying robots, and mad

COURTESY PARAMOUNT PICTURES



WIJNANDA DEROO / COURTESY ROBERT MANN GALLERY

Wijnanda Deroo's color photographs, on display this month at Robert Mann Gallery in Chelsea, document mundane interiors across the globe. Hotels, cafés, mobile homes, courtyards, and factories appear in Deroo's images, which are always devoid of people yet signal a human presence. (The work, *Bar Normandy, Curaçao*, 2000, is pictured above.) Deroo is among a growing number of artists exploring the extraordinary in the ordinary.

Wijnanda Deroo
Robert Mann Gallery, 210 11th Avenue, 10th Floor
Through November 13

LECTURES

OCTOBER 19

Bernardo Fort-Brescia, James Carpenter, Thomas Phifer
Miami: The Courthouse as Urban Catalyst and Architecture and Art Collaboration
6:00 p.m.
Center for Architecture
536 LaGuardia Pl.
www.aiany.org/civicspirit

Jan Kaplicky
otherworldly

6:30 p.m.
Urban Center Books
457 Madison Ave.
www.mas.org

Brent Brolin
The Designer's Eye: A New Way of Seeing Architecture
6:30 p.m.
Center for Architecture
536 LaGuardia Pl.
www.aiany.org

Colson Whitehead

The Colossus of New York
6:30 p.m.
Cooper Union
Great Hall
7 East 7th St.
www.cooper.edu

High Line Community Input Forum
7:00 p.m.
Metropolitan Pavilion
110 West 19th St.
www.thehighline.org

OCTOBER 19, 21

Thomas S. Hines
Modernism and Regionalism: Los Angeles Architectural Culture, 1900-1970
6:30 p.m.
Columbia GSAPP
Buell Center
114 Avery Hall
www.arch.columbia.edu/buell

OCTOBER 20

Diana Mendes, et al.
Transportation Forum: Lower Manhattan Redevelopment
8:00 a.m.
General Society of Mechanics and Tradesmen
20 West 40th St.
www.pwcusa.org

Hugh Hardy

6:00 p.m.
New York School Of Interior Design
Arthur King Satz Hall
170 East 70th St.
www.nysid.edu

Hillary Ballon

Frank Lloyd Wright: The Vertical Dimension
6:30 p.m.
Center for Architecture
536 LaGuardia Pl.
www.aiany.org

Jürgen Mayer H.
Activators

6:30 p.m.
Columbia GSAPP
Wood Auditorium
113 Avery Hall
www.arch.columbia.edu

Bruce Davidson
In Transit

6:30 p.m.
Museum of the City of New York
1220 5th Ave.
www.mcny.org

OCTOBER 21

Edward Feiner, M. Gensler, Jr., Robert Peck
First Impressions Program
8:00 a.m.
William Caine, Jennifer Gibson, et al.
Art in Architecture Program
12:00 p.m.
Center for Architecture
536 LaGuardia Pl.
www.aiany.org/civicspirit

Camilo José Vergara
Subway Memories
12:00 p.m.
Urban Center
457 Madison Ave.
www.mas.org

Maxine Leighton, Michele Renda, et al.
Working with the SF 330: An Update
5:30 p.m.
Center for Architecture
536 LaGuardia Pl.
www.smpsny.org

Peter Rolland

Big Projects/Small Office: Collaboration
6:00 p.m.
City College
95 Shepard Hall
Convent Ave. and 138th St.
212-650-7118

Monica Ponce de Leon
Figuring Configurations

6:15 p.m.
Yale School of Architecture
180 York St., New Haven
www.architecture.yale.edu

OCTOBER 22

Aloisia Moser, Birgit Ramsauer, et al.
Gesamtkunstwerk in the 21st Century
6:00 p.m.
Cooper Union
Great Hall
7 East 7th St.
www.cooper.edu

OCTOBER 23

Congressman Charles Rangel
New Development Uptown
2:00 p.m.
Museum of the City of New York
1220 5th Ave.
www.mcny.org

OCTOBER 25

Galia Solomonoff
The Urban Complex
6:15 p.m.
Yale School of Architecture
180 York St., New Haven
www.architecture.yale.edu

Rafi Segal, Eyal Weizman
The Architecture of War and War Through Architecture
6:30 p.m.
Columbia GSAPP
Wood Auditorium
113 Avery Hall
www.arch.columbia.edu

Eliot Sander, Sam Schwartz, et al.
Transportation: Civic Talks with Henry Stern
6:30 p.m.
Museum of the City of New York
1220 5th Ave.
www.mcny.org

OCTOBER 26

Andrea Leers, Mack Scogin
Function and Form in Today's Federal Courthouses
6:00 p.m.
Center for Architecture
536 LaGuardia Pl.
www.aiany.org/civicspirit

Rosalie Genevro, Hamilton Smith, LOT-EK
8:15 p.m.
92nd St. Y
35 West 67th St.
www.makor.com

OCTOBER 26, 28

Marianne Eggler-Gerozissis
Have a Seat: The Modern Chair at MoMA
12:30 p.m.
Arts Consortium
1 East 53rd St.
www.moma.org

OCTOBER 27

Cathy Whitlock
Interior Design in the Movies
6:00 p.m.
New York School Of Interior Design
Arthur King Satz Hall
170 East 70th St.
www.nysid.edu

Mack Scogin, Merrill Elam, Matthew Urbanski, Michael Van Valkenburgh
15 Years of Collaboration
6:30 p.m.
Cooper Union
Great Hall
7 East 7th St.
www.archleague.org

James B. Garrison
Mastering Tradition: The Residential Architecture of John Russell Pope
6:30 p.m.
General Society of Mechanics and Tradesmen
20 West 44th St.
www.classicist.org

OCTOBER 28

Kenneth Grunley, Ralph Johnson, Linda Phillips
Construction Excellence Program
8:00 a.m.
Center for Architecture
536 LaGuardia Pl.
www.aiany.org/civicspirit

Odile Decq

12:00 p.m.
Pratt School of Architecture
302 Higgins Hall North
200 Willoughby Ave., Brooklyn
www.pratt.edu

Victoria Meyers
Of Relatively Little Girth or Circumference
6:00 p.m.
City College
95 Shepard Hall
Convent Ave. and 138th St.
212-650-7118

Regina Leibinger, Frank Barkow
rock / paper / scissors
6:15 p.m.
Yale School of Architecture
180 York St., New Haven
www.architecture.yale.edu

Frank Gehry
Pre-Puberty
6:30 p.m.
Columbia GSAPP
Wood Auditorium
113 Avery Hall
www.arch.columbia.edu

Alexis Karolides
Biomimicry: Innovative Design Solutions from Nature
6:30 p.m.
Parsons School of Design
Glass Corner
25 East 13th St., 2nd Fl.
www.parsons.edu

OCTOBER 30

Robert Campbell, Henry Cobb, Ellsworth Kelly, Judge Douglas Woodlock
A Lesson in Civics: The Architecture and Art of the Boston Federal Courthouse
10:00 a.m.
Center for Architecture
536 LaGuardia Pl.
www.aiany.org/civicspirit

NOVEMBER 1

Sheila Kennedy
SOFT: The Spatial Implications of Smart Materials in Architecture
6:15 p.m.
Parsons School of Design
Glass Corner
25 East 13th St., 2nd Fl.
www.parsons.edu

NOVEMBER 3

Richard Meier, Antoine Predock
No Official Style: Creating the Modern Courthouse
6:00 p.m.
Center for Architecture
536 LaGuardia Pl.
www.aiany.org/civicspirit

Manuel DeLanda
Deleuze and the Use of Genetic Algorithms in Architecture
6:00 p.m.
Princeton School of Architecture
Betts Auditorium
www.princeton.edu/~soa

Amy Ogota
Art Nouveau in Belgium
6:00 p.m.
New York School Of Interior Design
Arthur King Satz Hall
170 East 70th St.
www.nysid.edu

Bruce Mau
Massive Change: The Future of Global Design
6:30 p.m.
Fashion Institute of Technology
Haft Auditorium, Building C
West 27th St. and 7th Ave.
www.urbancenterbooks.org

Sylvia Lavin
The Conversation
6:30 p.m.
Columbia GSAPP
Wood Auditorium
113 Avery Hall
www.arch.columbia.edu

NOVEMBER 4

Joan Goody, William K. Hellmuth, A. Eugene Kohn
Peer Review by Design Excellence Peers
8:00 a.m.
Center for Architecture
536 LaGuardia Pl.
www.aiany.org/civicspirit

Enrique Norten
12:00 p.m.
Pratt School of Architecture
302 Higgins Hall North
200 Willoughby Ave., Brooklyn
www.pratt.edu

David Stravitz
New York, Empire City: 1920-1945
12:00 p.m.
Urban Center
457 Madison Ave.
www.mas.org

Martha Schwartz
Recent Work
6:00 p.m.
City College
95 Shepard Hall
Convent Ave. and 138th St.
212-650-7118



NEW from PRINCETON ARCHITECTURAL PRESS

NEW YORK CHANGING
REVISITING BERENICE ABBOTT'S NEW YORK

Douglas Levere

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New York photographer Douglas Levere revisited the sites of 100 of Abbott's renowned photographs and meticulously shot them again, duplicating her compositions with exacting detail. The result—*New York Changing*—is a remarkable commentary on the evolution of this great metropolis.



Available from your local bookseller or
www.papress.com

Peter Eisenman
What Is a Diagram?
6:15 p.m.
Yale School of Architecture
180 York St., New Haven
www.architecture.yale.edu

Greg Lynn, Lorcan O'Herlihy, Joseph Giovannini
Neutra or Schindler?
A Conversation on the L.A. Legacy Today
6:30 p.m.
Columbia GSAPP
Wood Auditorium
113 Avery Hall
www.arch.columbia.edu

Christo and Jeanne-Claude
Two Works in Progress
6:30 p.m.
Cooper Union
Great Hall
7 East 7th St.
www.archleague.org

SYMPOSIUM

OCTOBER 18 - 22
Design 101
Steve Kroeter, Barry Bergdoll, et al.
NYU Woolworth Building
15 Barclay St.
www.design101.info

OCTOBER 22
Energy Technology:
Toward a Sustainable Bronx
8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
Bronx Community College
Center for Sustainable Energy
University Ave. at
West 181st St., Bronx
www.rebuild.org

OCTOBER 22 - 23
The Constructed Environment: Design and the Politics of Naturalization
Joan Ockman, Julie Bargmann, et al.
Columbia GSAPP
Wood Auditorium
113 Avery Hall
www.arch.columbia.edu/buell

Architecture and Technology:
Concrete Futures
Princeton School of Architecture
Betts Auditorium
www.princeton.edu/~soa

OCTOBER 28 - 30
NOMA-NYCOPA Building Bridges Conference
Grand Hyatt
Park Ave. at
Grand Central Station
www.nynoma.org

OCTOBER 29
Putting Two Truths Together:
Exploring the Creative Genesis of Baroque Religious Buildings
John Clagett, Wolfgang Jung, Christian F. Otto, et al.
2:00 p.m.-6:00 p.m.
CUNY Graduate Center
365 5th Ave., 9th Fl.
www.cuny.edu

OCTOBER 29 - 31
ACSA 2004 Northeast Regional Meeting
Michael Speaks, et al.
Syracuse University School of Architecture
103 Slocum Hall, Syracuse
soa.syr.edu

NOVEMBER 4
Neighborhoods & the Expanding Institution
Center for Architecture
536 LaGuardia Pl.
www.aiany.org

EXHIBITIONS

OCTOBER 21 - NOVEMBER 7
City Lights: Works from the City Lights Design Competition
Museum of the City of New York
1220 5th Ave.
www.mcny.org

OCTOBER 27 - JANUARY 2
Xavier Veilhan
The Photorealist Project
National Academy of Design Museum
1083 5th Ave.
www.nationalacademy.org

OCTOBER 28 - JANUARY 16
Isamu Noguchi: Master Sculptor
Whitney Museum of American Art
945 Madison Ave.
www.whitney.org

OCTOBER 28 - JANUARY 28
Louise Bourgeois: The Reticent Child
Cheim & Reid
547 West 25th St.
www.cheimread.com

OCTOBER 29 - NOVEMBER 19
Palaces of Prayer: A Photographic Tribute to Jewish Synagogue Architecture
Angel Orensanz Foundation
172 Norfolk Street
www.orensanz.org

CONTINUING EXHIBITIONS

THROUGH OCTOBER 24
War! Protest in America 1965-2004
Memorials of War
Whitney Museum of American Art
945 Madison Ave.
www.whitney.org

David W. Dunlap
From Abyssinian to Zion: Photographs of Manhattan's Houses of Worship
New-York Historical Society
2 West 77th St.
www.nyhistory.org

THROUGH OCTOBER 29
Doug Michels: Life and Work
Pratt Schaefer Gallery
200 Willoughby Ave., Brooklyn
www.pratt.edu

Variable City: Fox Square
Van Alen Institute
30 West 22nd St., 6th Fl.
www.vanalen.org

THROUGH OCTOBER 30
Architecture and Revolution in Cuba, 1959-1969
Storefront for Art and Architecture
97 Kenmare St.
www.storefrontnews.org

Reiser + Umemoto
Flux Room
Artists Space
38 Greene St., 3rd Fl.
www.artistsspace.org

The Riders and the Rebirth of City Transit
Urban Center Gallery
457 Madison Ave.
www.mas.org

THROUGH OCTOBER 31
Andy Goldsworthy on the Roof
Metropolitan Museum of Art
1000 5th Ave.
www.metmuseum.org

THROUGH NOVEMBER 5
PSFS: Nothing More Modern
Yale School of Architecture
180 York St., New Haven
www.architecture.yale.edu

THROUGH NOVEMBER 7
Around Town Underground
New-York Historical Society
2 West 77th St.
www.nyhistory.org

THROUGH NOVEMBER 13
Wijnanda Deroo
Robert Mann Gallery
210 11th Ave., 10th Fl.
www.robertmann.com

Freedom of Expression
National Monument
Foley Square
www.creativetime.org

Place for the Self
apexart
291 Church St.
www.apexart.org

THROUGH NOVEMBER 15
The Voting Booth Project
Parsons School of Design
2 West 13th Street
www.parsons.edu/votingbooth

THROUGH NOVEMBER 19
Variable City: Fox Square
Van Alen Institute
30 West 22nd St.
www.vanalen.org

THROUGH NOVEMBER 28
Ant Farm
Media Burn, The Eternal Flame
International Center of Photography
1133 6th Ave.
www.icp.org

THROUGH NOVEMBER 29
Rita McBride
Exhibition
SculptureCenter
44-19 Purves St., Queens
www.sculpture-center.org

THROUGH NOVEMBER 30
Vibrant Communities: Green Maps of New York and the World
Urban Center Gallery
457 Madison Ave.
www.mas.org

THROUGH DECEMBER 4
Tracing Tony Smith's Tau
Hunter College
Bertha and Karl Leubsdorf Art Gallery
Lexington Ave. and 68th St.
www.hunter.cuny.edu

Bob the Roman: Heroic Antiquity and the Architecture of Robert Adam
New York School of Interior Design
69th Street Gallery
161 East 69th St.
www.nysid.edu

SITE: Architectural Drawings and Models
Senior & Shopmaker Gallery
21 East 26th St.
www.seniorandshopmaker.com

THROUGH DECEMBER 8
Civic Spirit: Changing the Course of Federal Design
Center for Architecture
536 LaGuardia Pl.
www.aiany.org/civicspirit

THROUGH DECEMBER 11
Electrifying Art: Atsuko Tanaka 1954-1968
New York University Grey Art Gallery
100 Washington Square East
www.nyu.edu/greyart

THROUGH DECEMBER 17
Leonard Ursachi
Refuge
6th Ave. and Canal St., Duarte Square
www.parks.nyc.gov

THROUGH DECEMBER 18
Terry Winters: Recent Drawings and Lithographs
Pratt Manhattan Gallery
144 West 14th St.
www.pratt.edu

THROUGH JANUARY 2
Christo and Jeanne-Claude: The Würth Museum Collection
National Academy of Design Museum
1083 5th Ave.
www.nationalacademy.org

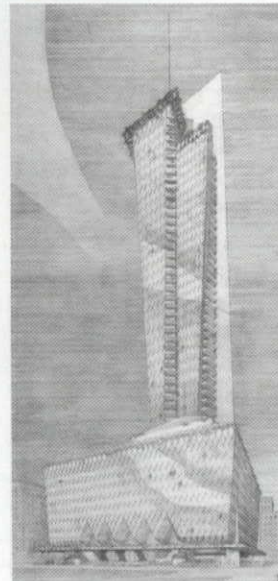
THROUGH JANUARY 9
Frank Lloyd Wright: The Vertical Dimension
Skyscraper Museum
39 Battery Pl.
www.skyscraper.org

Faster, Cheaper, Newer, More: Revolutions of 1848
Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum
2 East 91st St.
ndm.si.edu

THROUGH JANUARY 17
Subway Centennial
Museum of the City of New York
1220 5th Ave.
www.mcny.org

THROUGH FEBRUARY 27
Josef and Anni Albers: Designs For Living
Design + Art: Functional Objects from Donald Judd to Rachel Whiteread
Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum
2 East 91st St.
ndm.si.edu

PREVIEW



FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT: THE VERTICAL DIMENSION
Skyscraper Museum
39 Battery Pl.
Through January 9

The Skyscraper Museum presents the first exhibition to focus solely on Frank Lloyd Wright's highrise buildings. The show seeks to prove that Wright's organic approach was expressed not only in his low buildings that literally hug the earth, but also in numerous skyscrapers that explore the concept of the taproot tower. Replacing typical skeletal frames with cantilevered structures, his glassy, open skyscraper designs allowed for formal flexibility that often led to unusual shapes, as in his unbuilt 1946 design for the Rogers Lacy Hotel in Dallas (pictured above). Related to the exhibition will be lectures by the show's curator, Hillary Ballon on October 20, and Anthony Alofsin and Wendy Evans Joseph on November 10.



ISAMU NOGUCHI: MASTER SCULPTOR
Whitney Museum of American Art, 945 Madison Ave.
October 28-January 16

This year marks the 100th anniversary of Isamu Noguchi's birth, and a new exhibition co-organized by the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden and the Whitney Museum of American Art will duly honor the prolific Japanese-American sculptor's work. Sixty sculptures (such as *The Ring*, 1945-48, pictured above) and 20 related drawings, organized chronologically, will be on view in the Whitney's galleries through mid-January. The show parallels the more design-oriented holdings of the Noguchi Museum in Queens, which re-opened as part of the centennial celebration for the artist in June. *Isamu Noguchi and Martha Graham*, a show focusing on the artist's set design for the modern dancer and choreographer, will open at the Noguchi Museum in December.

SMPS New York Area Chapter Upcoming Events

Thursday, November 11

Book Party: A Marketing Celebration
Membership/Networking Event
Co-sponsored with the AIA-NY Marketing Committee

It's a special moment for the New York A/E/C marketing community and we're going to celebrate! Two must-read books on marketing, each by a New York marketing leader, are being published this year. The party - a classic networking, catch-up-with-friends event - features a discussion with the two authors: **Joan Capelin** and **David Koren**. Joan's book, "Principles for Principals," and David's, "The Architect's Essentials of Marketing," will be available for purchase and signing. Registration and more information at www.smpsny.org.

Event Sponsor: Fox & Fowle

Friday, November 19

Strategies to Plan and Execute Effective Proposals
Professional Development Half-Day Program

The arrival of a new RFQ or RFP shouldn't send you into a tailspin. This program will give you the necessary tools to streamline the process, including: how to read an RFQ/RFP; how to develop a process for determining whether or not to submit; basics of layout design and production; how to track the success and failure of your proposals; and how to get helpful feedback. Registration and more information at www.smpsny.org.

Details/Registration: www.smpsny.org

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_9.7.2004), 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, Istituto Universitario di Architettura di Venezia, known as IUAV), have gone a long way to address these problems. For the most part, the sheer 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 demanding 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 super-stars 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 workshop to develop strategies that are increasingly gaining international currency. Stripping away references to individual identities, groups like Cliotstraat, gruppo A12, ma0, UFO, IAN +, AVATAR, Multiplicity, Stalker/ON (Osservatorio Nomade), Sciatto, 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 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, it's 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 Robbin'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 globalization. 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 workshop as a school is coming, I think, closer to becoming a reality.

PETER LANG LEADS TEXAS A&M'S SANTA CHIARA STUDY CENTER IN CASTIGLIONE FIORENTINO, AND IS AN ACTIVE MEMBER OF THE URBAN RESEARCH GROUP, STALKERON, BASED IN ROME.

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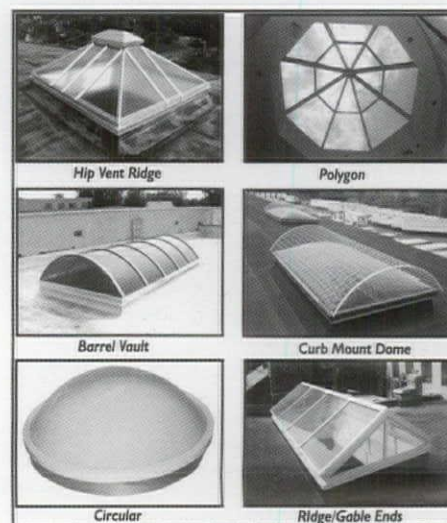
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