When Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg released his Solid Waste Management Plan—a $500 million proposal to overhaul the management of the city's recycling and garbage programs—in October 2004, the Department of Sanitation (DOS) issued a request for proposals for private firms to process the city's recyclables over the next 20 years. Hugo Neu Corporation, a scrap metal recycling company, won the RFP and is expected to finalize a 20-year contract with the DOS in late March.

The centerpiece of Hugo Neu's bid, a $25 million recycling plant on Pier 30 in the Sunset Park neighborhood of Brooklyn, was designed by New York-based architecture firm Weisz + Yoes Studio with RRT Design & Construction and Hugo Neu's in-house team. The design aptly features a number of environmentally friendly elements, such as the use of recycled materials wherever possible. "We're aiming for 60 percent of all construction materials to have recycled content," said Mark Yoes, principal of Weisz + Yoes Studio. Three sorting areas, devoted to metal, glass, and plastics, are covered with vaulted metal sheds that are...
There is a story—apocryphal or real—that the young Louis I. Kahn, the child of a stained-glass artisan, was so attracted by the color of coals burning green instead of red or blue that he reached into the fire to pull some onto his apron. They flared up, permanently disfiguring his face. His mother believed this experience placed her son in touch with his destiny to become an architect. (His disfigurement distance him from other children, and he retreated into art.) Not many architects can claim such a dramatic encounter with light, but Kahn made light a central part of his designs, using it to divide space, create geometries, and deepen human experience.

Today architects have become engaged with light in a totally new fashion. A premium on natural light is still a given among architects, but technology has improved to the point where artificial light sources are more efficient, durable, responsive, and flexible than they've ever been. Post-digital architecture almost begs for its own lighting language—for example, precise pinpointes to accentuate complex forms, or computer-controlled systems that can morph a building's appearance depending on the day of use or historical moment. As Emilie Sommerhoff recounts in our feature (page 10), the way that architects at Amsterdam-based UN Studio and New York firm Peter Marino + Associates deployed LEDs in their recent projects—both, coincidentally, in Asia—steps away from the Times Square or Las Vegas approach, in which extravagant exterior lighting schemes effectively conceal poor architecture or make architecture disappear completely. In the case of UN Studio's Seoul Galleria West shopping mall, Peter Marino's Chanel building in Tokyo, and the revised New York Sports and Convention Center by Kohn Pedersen Fox (which Eva Hagberg writes about on page 12), light is an integral part of larger, thoughtful architectural and urban concepts. As it should be.

CATHY LANG HO AND WILLIAM MENKING

CORRECTION
In Vishaan Chakrabarti's byline (Shoptalk, AV03_2.16.2005), we stated that he left the Department of City Planning in September 2004. In fact, he left in January 2005.
THE DARKEST SIDE OF IKEA

We stopped shopping at IKEA when we looked around our apartment and realized that a large piece of furniture just shouldn’t be an impulse buy. We also questioned the Swedish design giant’s 2003 decision to demolish part of Marcel Breuer’s 1969 Pirelli building in New Haven to make way for an IKEA parking lot (apparently, its commitment to design only runs so deep). But now there’s something else to consider when one heads to the big box retailer: personal safety.

As widely reported in the UK, pandemonium broke out last month when 6,000 overexcited homemakers, lured by such promotions as $90 leather sofas and $60 beds, overran the midnight opening of a new IKEA in north London. According to reports, punches were thrown, pregnant women fainted, and wooden mallets were swung about as crowds overwhelmed security guards and played tug of war with sofas. Nine ambulances were called, around six people were injured and many others suffered heat exhaustion. (Heat exhaustion? In London? In February?) This follows a more serious incident last September when, under similar circumstances, three people were killed and 16 injured at the frenzied opening of an IKEA in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. Anyone who finds the most shocking part to be the fact that IKEA is in Saudi Arabia should note that it has stores in about 35 countries and counting. As it happens, we were chatting in Stockholm with the company’s design chief, Lars Engman, just a day or two before the London stampede and found it amusing when he started complaining that despite IKEA’s presence in all parts of the world, when questioned about IKEA’s possible role in this globalization, the otherwise jovial Swede responded, “No one is forced to shop at IKEA.”

CRANBROOK’S NEW HEAD

EavesDrop has learned that Bill Massie, currently an architecture professor at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, has been tapped as the new head of architecture at the storied Cranbrook Academy of Art in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan. “Bill will bring a new trajectory to the department through his very innovative work which combines new technologies with a strong aesthetic sensibility,” the school’s director, Gerhardt Knodel, told us. Massie, who starts his new post this summer, will take over from Peter Lynch, who announced his plans to leave in November, just before heading off for an American Academy in Rome fellowship.

WWW.ARCHPAPER.COM

MVRDV LIGHT CLOUD COMBATS WINTER BLUES

Up, Up, and Away

If Rotterdam-based architecture firm MVRDV has its way, northern Europe’s long, bleak winters may soon be eased with a little light. For four nights in early February, MVRDV orchestrated a test run of a light installation over the city of Tallinn, Estonia. Designed by architects Winy Maas of MVRDV and Veronika Valk of Estonia-based ZZi and YoYo, along with lighting designer Rogier van der Heide of Arup Lighting Amsterdam and lighting technician Jan Post of Philips Eindhoven, the project was conceived at a workshop for young architects held at the Union of Estonian Architects in November 2004, and was funded by the city of Tallinn.

MVRDV hopes to recreate the project in cities across Europe to mitigate Seasonal Affective Disorder (SADI), a form of depression brought on by light deprivation that affects 10 percent of northern Europeans each year. Said Maas, “The concept was to cover the sky with a dome of light that would give the city a level of safety and comfort even in the middle of the winter.”

The design called for 500 meteorological balloons to form a canopy lit from below by 10,000 Philips ArenaVision high-pressure sodium floodlights. To intensify the reflection of light, the balloons were engulfed in a cloud of fog generated by smoke-emitting candles (like those used in the film industry), set on surrounding rooftops.

In an unfortunate turn of events, however, MVRDV’s test run misfired. On opening night, 300 balloons flew away due to insecure groundings. With the practical lessons learned from the Tallinn test, MVRDV hopes that the next stop on the project’s European tour will be London, in 2006.

GUNNAR HAND

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Under the direction of dean George Ranalli, City College's architecture program has been growing stronger and, as if in recognition of that vigor, the school will soon have its first-ever dedicated building. Rafael Viñoly Architects' design takes a 132,000-square-foot, five-story modernist library and strips it down to its floor plates and columns, essentially cutting a huge hole in the middle to create a bright atrium.

Double-height studios line the perimeter of the building on the second and third floors to take advantage of natural daylight. Aluminum louvers over the glass curtain wall on these two levels are calibrated to adjust for light levels at different times of day. More public areas, such as the exhibition space and a library, occupy the ground floor and radiate from the open atrium space, which also doubles as the primary circulation spine.

A series of bridges and stairways criss-cross the atrium, even though there are also straightforward staircases and elevators connecting each floor. Beyond getting around, students and staff can use the bridges as perches from which to overlook the crits happening below. For even grander views, there is a rooftop amphitheater with a vista of the whole campus.

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Typical faculty level

North/south section
Build outside the box.

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Create an iconic global headquarters for H&R Block that also serves as a centerpiece in the revitalization of downtown Kansas City.

**Realized:**
By adopting an Autodesk building information modeling solution, 360 Architecture will break the traditional square mold of KC's skyline by creating an inspirational modern ellipse. They are able to design with the best possible information, document the construction more efficiently and reduce coordination problems to make sure that every dollar spent goes into the beautification of the area. From skyscrapers in the Midwest to surf shops in Melbourne, Autodesk's products and solutions can help architects and engineers realize their ideas to compete and win. To learn more, visit autodesk.com/building.

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said Lewis. After the event, the design in southwestern Virginia," conversation about environmental design competition for affordable housing. Since then, more than 40 public and private organizations, companies, and individuals have contributed money, time, land, and materials to the cause. Lewis secured major grants from chemical company BASF, the city of Roanoke, and the Home Depot Foundation, as well as pledges of donated materials from James Hardie Siding Products and MechoShade. The Roanoke Redevelopment and Housing Authority donated two parcels of land, and two private companies, Old Southwest and Building Specialists, each donated one plot. McDonough served as a competition juror along with Daniel Libeskind, Alexander Garvin, Randall Stout, and Sarah Susanka. In addition to prize purses of a few thousand dollars, the four C2C-Home student winners were offered on-site paid internships. So far one winner has signed on. In all, the open competition drew more than 600 submissions from 41 countries. By and large, the winners are young and unknown. Two of the eight, including the first-place student winner, Sean Wheeler, a fifth-year undergraduate at Virginia Tech, focused on modular systems of recycled and recyclable materials. Wheeler’s project incorporates materials readily available in the Roanoke waste stream, such as train car panels and billboards. The first-place winner in the professional category, a Seattle-based design team led by Matthew Coates and Tim Meldrum, attempted to redefine the home as a creator of energy rather than a consumer. The team centered its design on a service stack sheathed in a photosynthetic plasma skin capable of generating more energy than needed for a single family. The technology, which harnesses power from photosynthesis in spinach, is still years away from practical application, so photovoltaics will be substituted in the meantime.) The design also includes community gardens providing gray water storage and waste treatment for neighboring houses. The first-place winners have not yet been tapped by developers to be built. Third-place professional winner Russell Ashdown and fourth-place student winner Robert Gay are now headed toward construction with the help of private developers. And Habitat for Humanity, which has been involved with the competition since its inception, is in the final stages of securing board approval to sponsor the construction of the second-place student design by Damien Linnen of Clemson University. Linnen adapted the porch, an architectural feature popular in Roanoke, to fit the principles of sustainable design. Habitat selected the project for its compatibility with the organization’s capabilities and $80,000 budget, according to Karen Mason, executive director of Habitat for Humanity’s Roanoke chapter. “If this project is successful, we will share the plans with other (Habitat) affiliates,” she said. Organizers hope that the other winning designs will be realized on a speculative basis by developers or with the help of additional sponsors. Better yet, they hope the competition will inspire similar efforts elsewhere. Lewis claimed that communities in Norfolk, Virginia; Minneapolis, Minnesota; Scottsdale, Arizona; New Haven, Connecticut; and even New York City have expressed interest in running their own C2C-Home competitions. “This is a prototype project,” said Lewis. “It will have a life beyond what we’re doing right now. What that life will be remains a question mark.”

COMPETITIVE EDGE continued from front page began to materialize when eight winners in two categories—one for professionals and one for students—were selected, and at least three designs are on track for completion by October. C2C-Home’s design brief was based on William McDonough’s anti-waste treatise, Cradle to Cradle: Remaking the Way We Make Things (North Point Press, 2002). The competition was conceived at a McDonough lecture Lewis and Smith orchestrated as a fundraiser for the Roanoke Council of Community Services in 2003. “At the time, there was almost no conversation about environmental design in southwestern Virginia,” said Lewis. After the event, the council asked Lewis, Smith, and McDonough to help them plan a design competition for affordable housing. Since then, more than 40 public and private organizations, companies, and individuals have contributed money, time, land, and materials to the cause. Lewis secured major grants from chemical company BASF, the city of Roanoke, and the Home Depot Foundation, as well as pledges of donated materials from James Hardie Siding Products and MechoShade. The Roanoke Redevelopment and Housing Authority donated two parcels of land, and two private companies, Old Southwest and Building Specialists, each donated one plot. McDonough served as a competition juror along with Daniel Libeskind, Alexander Garvin, Randall Stout, and Sarah Susanka. In addition to prize purses of a few thousand dollars, the four C2C-Home student winners were offered on-site paid internships. So far one winner has signed on. In all, the open competition drew more than 600 submissions from 41 countries. By and large, the winners are young and unknown. Two of the eight, including the first-place student winner, Sean Wheeler, a fifth-year undergraduate at Virginia Tech, focused on modular systems of recycled and recyclable materials. Wheeler’s project incorporates materials readily available in the Roanoke waste stream, such as train car panels and billboards. The first-place winner in the professional category, a Seattle-based design team led by Matthew Coates and Tim Meldrum, attempted to redefine the home as a creator of energy rather than a consumer. The team centered its design on a service stack sheathed in a photosynthetic plasma skin capable of generating more energy than needed for a single family. The technology, which harnesses power from photosynthesis in spinach, is still years away from practical application, so photovoltaics will be substituted in the meantime.) The design also includes community gardens providing gray water storage and waste treatment for neighboring houses. The first-place winners have not yet been tapped by developers to be built. Third-place professional winner Russell Ashdown and fourth-place student winner Robert Gay are now headed toward construction with the help of private developers. And Habitat for Humanity, which has been involved with the competition since its inception, is in the final stages of securing board approval to sponsor the construction of the second-place student design by Damien Linnen of Clemson University. Linnen adapted the porch, an architectural feature popular in Roanoke, to fit the principles of sustainable design. Habitat selected the project for its compatibility with the organization’s capabilities and $80,000 budget, according to Karen Mason, executive director of Habitat for Humanity’s Roanoke chapter. “If this project is successful, we will share the plans with other (Habitat) affiliates,” she said. Organizers hope that the other winning designs will be realized on a speculative basis by developers or with the help of additional sponsors. Better yet, they hope the competition will inspire similar efforts elsewhere. Lewis claimed that communities in Norfolk, Virginia; Minneapolis, Minnesota; Scottsdale, Arizona; New Haven, Connecticut; and even New York City have expressed interest in running their own C2C-Home competitions. “This is a prototype project,” said Lewis. “It will have a life beyond what we’re doing right now. What that life will be remains a question mark.”

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RECYCLING RETURNS TO THE CITY  
continued from front page layered with photovoltaic panels. The design also includes an intricate wetland reintroduction scheme to filter the facility's run-off and gray water. Said Yoes, "We wanted the design to reflect the open cycle of recycling and highlight a new connection to the unused waterfront." To brighten nighttime visual appeal, Weisz + Yoes hopes to commission lighting artist Leni Schwendinger for an installation at the plant. The plant will begin construction this summer and is slated for completion in early 2007.

The Hugo Neu plant promises to bring further amenities to the Sunset Park community. The company plans to hire 100 employees locally as well as attract local manufacturers to process the plant's recycled commodities into saleable products. A visitor's center will provide tours of the plant, as well as education programs in waste stream management in an effort to discourage waste and promote recycling throughout the city.

The city now pays Hugo Neu, which was under a five-year contract, about $51 per ton to unload recyclables, but their new 20-year agreement sets a ceiling price of $48 per ton. The price would be tied to the commodities market, allowing even lower fees for the city when the demand for recyclables slows down. Robert Lange, director of the Bureau of Waste Prevention, Reuse, and Recycling at DOS, said, "A long-term recycling contract will enable private interests to build the needed infrastructure for recycling to continue in New York City."

The construction of the recycling plant has added environmental benefits for the city. Hugo Neu consultant Tom Outerbridge estimates that the Sunset Park plant will reduce the number of miles traveled by collection vehicles in the city by 60,000 per year. Hugo Neu plans to deliver recyclables by barge from retrofitted scrap metal plants in the Bronx and Long Island City to Sunset Park for processing. From there, processed recyclables would be shipped to a shipping distribution center in Claremont, New Jersey, for export to international markets.

DOS is also currently seeking state and federal approval for a marine recycling transfer station on Pier 52, next to the Meatpacking District. The Environmental Defense Fund encouraged environmental artist Michael Singer to develop a generic model for such a facility, which has been presented to the DOS. The design is easily adaptable to different sites and includes solar panels, water recycling, and a recycling education center.

The DOS hopes to build the Meatpacking District facility by 2010, but its approval is complicated by its location in Riverbank State Park, EIS processes, and opposition from local residents. If and when the marine transfer station opens, Hugo Neu will then be able to barge recyclables from Manhattan to Sunset Park for processing.

GUNNAR HAND
Fine, handcrafted woods can rival even the beauty of a mountain lake. We build our windows from unique specialty woods, so they are equal to the views they capture.
The new, state-of-the-art Ironworker's Training Facility in Long Island City, NY is a big winner — not only as a showcase for the talent and skill of the union members who helped build it, but for its architect, Daniel Goldner Architects, whose work recently won the American Institute of Architects New York Chapter 2004 Design Award.

While the facility's form has been recognized as achieving the highest aspirations of the design profession, perhaps its function — as a place where ironworkers develop the skills to help realize those design aspirations — is its greatest achievement.

For more details on this project, see the Project Showcase section of our website, www.ominy.org.
BRIGHT LIGHTS, BIG CITY

Though ethereal, light is one of architecture's most important materials. Whether natural or artificial, light can accentuate architectural genius, mask mistakes, grab attention, make a place feel sacred or safe. New lighting technology and educational programs are keys to keeping architecture's spark alive.
LEDs are everywhere, and not just in traffic lights and digital alarm clocks where they started several decades ago. LEDs, short for light emitting diodes, have been steadily making their way into architectural applications around the world.

Until recently, LEDs were considered impractical for widespread use in large environments but the technology has improved dramatically—they’re smaller and brighter, use less power, can be computer controlled, and cycle through all the colors of the rainbow—enticing more and more architects and designers to integrate them in their work.

Many manufacturers (even those that only recently incorporated the technology into their lines) have now made LEDs, if not a core component of their product offerings, part of their R&D. “We consider implementing LED technology for every new product under development,” said Ted Chappell, president of New Jersey-based Erco Lighting, which did not bring LED-based technology into their lines) have made it hard to replace other components. 

The extremely long life of LEDs makes them a particularly sound solution in situations where fixtures are hard to maintain. Paul Gregory, principal of Focus Lighting in New York City, specified LEDs for the new Semiramis Hotel in Athens, Greece, for example, for areas where limited space would have made it hard to replace other lamp types. Gregory, who collaborated with Karim Rashid on the project, felt confident in the choice, having used LEDs on the Morimoto restaurant in Philadelphia four years before, which he says has been extremely low maintenance and still looks good. “The questions is always, Can you do something complex and still have it look great in four years,” he said. “Not with Par cans (theater lighting); not with MR16e.”

While the overall lumen output from available LED sources remains low, there are extremely bright LED products for small-area applications, such as display cases or enclosed spaces. The technology is also ideal for low-light-level outdoor applications, like step lights and pavers, because the technology operates under a wide range of temperatures, unlike fluorescents which do not respond well to cold, and HID lamps, which do not start or extinguish immediately. Also, since they use few watts, LEDs can be solar or battery powered, which makes them appropriate to situations where uninterruptible power is important. Erco Lighting began its foray into LED-based fixtures with products dedicated to this application. “We marketed them as ‘orientation’ luminaires,” said Chappell. “They serve as excellent task applications.”

The Arketto lamp, which Luxo released in 2004, produces virtually no apparent heat and has a 90,000-hour life, according to the company. That LEDs do not produce any heat is a myth, however, according to Benya. “An LED does not radiate heat, which actually means it cannot cool itself in this way, but still has to conduct the heat away from the source. The higher the wattage, the bigger the heat problem.” If an LED source is not cooled, he notes, it negatively affects light output and longevity. He believes this problem is the Holy Grail for the industry; if it can be resolved, then LEDs will enter more standard architectural applications like downlights and spots. This and other shortcomings—low overall light output, cool white range (lacking the warmth of incandescent), high price—have kept LEDs out of mainstream architectural applications, but have also been the focus of manufacturers’ research. For example, Color Kinetics recently introduced IntelliWhite, which offers an expanded range of temperatures. And, according to Dave Shepard, national sales manager with lighting manufacturer Luxo, which recently released an LED task light, the price of LED components seems to come down every six months or so. continued on page 13
As the battle over the development rights of the Hudson rail yards enters its next phase (March 21 was the MTA's deadline for competing bids), the most prominent contender and mayoral favorite, the New York Jets, unveiled a revised design for its proposed New York Sports and Convention Center (NYSCC) that brightens and softens Kohn Pedersen Fox's (KPF) original scheme.

KPF's first try was a clunky, closed box plunked down between 31st and 33rd streets, split by a central axis that ran down 11th Avenue. The Municipal Art Society (MAS) put its carefully considered two cents in, and the architects listened. In the revised design, the structure's height is reduced by 120 feet. The wind turbines that were supposed to line the rooftop were also eliminated. Shrinking the structure improved it, but it was still a big awkward box.

"One of the initial driving forces in the new design was the Municipal Art Society's desire to create a strong axis on 32nd Street," Bill Pederson said. "They felt that the plan would be strengthened by a strong east-west orientation." The architects responded by creating an asymmetrical façade and reorienting the complex toward a new pedestrian-friendly entrance plaza on 11th Avenue, a planned retail corridor.

The most dramatic revision by far, however, involves the skin of the building. The designers have wrapped the core volume in a translucent glass veil, giving the structure the appearance of floating.

Toronto-based graphic designer Bruce Mau, originally brought in to develop wayfinding and graphic imagery, got into the collaborative design spirit and contributed by conceptualizing the entire 60,000-foot exterior surface as a single image, with each 6-by-12-foot pane of glass dotted alternately with translucent and transparent film. "If you think about a pane of glass as a pixel, you can make an image that reads on an urban scale," Mau said. "From far away, it's very soft, light, and diaphanous; on an intimate scale it's very pop and graphic."

The Jets' desire to make the project less monolithic and more appropriately scaled to the neighborhood is furthered by the contribution of lighting designer Hervé Descottes, founder of New York–based L'Observatoire International. "We wanted to work with different degrees of transparency," said Descottes, discussing the wrap-around LED screen to be installed at the structure's ground level. The lighting designer envisions seven distinct lighting schemes that can be deployed, changing the building's profile from day to night and event to event. At times, the stadium would reflect the Hudson River, while at others it would shoot two beams of light—one straight into the sky and one right into New Jersey—to communicate game-day excitement. "It's subtle but strong signage," he noted.

Will the NYSCC's inventive use of media and light be enough to win over its objectors? Time will tell.

EVA HAGBERG IS A NEW YORK-BASED WRITER.
electrical system; when one goes, the entire lighting system may have to go. "It's a monumental paradigm shift," he said. "A luminaire is now a throwaway wrapper around an expensive light bulb, as opposed to the other way around."

Perhaps indicative of how far LEDs have come is that primary complaint about the technology from designers is not about their performance, but about their architectural applications. "My criticism is about how the technology has been used in the last few years," said Douglas. "In the early 1990s, everything had to be MR-16; it didn't matter whether they were the right fixture or not. LEDs are like that. People are making things flash and dance even if it isn't a building that should be doing that."

EMILIE W. SOMMERHOFI S THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF OF ARCHITECTURAL LIGHTING.

Lighting Designers, and then resolved to transform the degree back into a two-year MFA with a fresh slant. The resulting program, which kicked off its first semester last fall with full capacity by 24 matriculated students, puts lighting design and architecture students in the same studio space. They share faculty as well as history and theory courses, and even work in tandem on the same design projects. "It's radical for an architecture program to have such a strong relation to lighting design," said Wheelwright. "Although they think they do, few architects today really know how to design with light."

Key players in launching the new MFA are David Lewis, director of Parsons' graduate architecture program and a principal of Lewis, Tsurumaki, Lewis, and lighting designer Linnaea Tillett. The program's advisory board includes lighting designer Paul Marantz of Fisher Marantz Stone. Since Lindsley left the program in 2004, Wheelwright has served as acting director, while talks of a search for a new head are in development, said Wheelwright. "The new MFA needs an academic to run it, someone who understands the relationship of design to social practice."

Extending his theory that cooperation yields greater benefits for related disciplines, Wheelwright has widened his students' access to educators and facilities by networking with Parsons' main competitor in the field, the Lighting Research Center at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (RPI). "RPI is doing something very different," he said, explaining that their Master of Science in lighting research is focused more on scientific research and development. "They're inventing light bulbs; we're designing. So we've begun to strategize linkages." Students from Parsons have already visited Rensselaer, and RPI faculty members have given lectures as Parsons.

Most other lighting design programs in the U.S., such as those at Illinois State, Florida State, and Carnegie Mellon, are concentrations within their schools' theater design departments. Wheelwright believes that Parsons is embarking on a program that is unique. "I hope [this year's class] will be the first batch of students trained in the history and theory of lighting design, who will look at light from a phenomenological point of view, as well as learning its mechanics and techniques. If we do that," he claimed, "We'll be doing what one else does."

ANNA HOLTZMAN IS A NEW YORK-BASED WRITER.
Europe's output of architecture magazines—many of them internationally distributed and printed in English or with English translations—is massive compared to that of the United States. For example, Italy alone produces six architecture magazines of note (Domus, Casabella, L'Arca, Abitare, Lotus, Ottogon) and the UK has four (Building Design, Architect's Journal, Blueprint, Architectural Review), despite the fact that both countries have far fewer architects than the 100,000 served by Architectural Record and Architecture in the U.S.

When Rachel Whiteread's House was unveiled in 1992, the uproar was as unexpected as it was ferocious. A full-size cast of a Victorian house slated for demolition in a working-class neighborhood in east London, House was a logical outgrowth of Whiteread's earlier casts of interior spaces and architectural forms shown in galleries and museums, none of which had caused any consternation. But something about the project engaged the public's anger and affection. The academic debate House fuelled has continued to this day, and is crystallized in The Art of Rachel Whiteread, a paperback collection of eleven critical essays, peppered with 50 full-color prints. The first scholarly publication covering the full range of the artist's work, the book of essays explores a span from Whiteread’s domestic pieces of the late 1980s to her mid-career public works including Water Tower (1998) in New York, Holocaust Memorial (2000) in Vienna, and the more recent Monument (2001) and Room 101 (2003). The collection focuses on Whiteread’s role in the art historical context of post-minimalism, and the political acuity of her work.

Whiteread is remarkable for her ability to materialize everyday, human, often poignant subjectivity as it is situated within (and constituted by) specific architectural spaces and social institutions. She achieves this sense of the personal within overwhelming political contexts, in which individual lives are easily eclipsed by both historical erasure and by later memorializing efforts.

The Art of Rachel Whiteread lacks the immediacy of the art it describes, but not the subtlety. Editor Chris Townsend's description of Whiteread's intervention in the public archive of historical memory balances concept and aesthetic, much as Whiteread does herself. Townsend points out that it is the "elements of the archive" that determine who we are—the accumulations of discourse and its material effects, predicated on power, as famously conceptualized by theorist Michel Foucault. Whiteread gives a deceptively simple form to these shifting forces and in doing so, reveals the dynamism within the politics of memory. As Townsend puts it, "Only by engaging with their complexity might we begin to see, and inhabit, both our own place in the world, and the spaces and rights of others, who we can't otherwise see, who we brush against at best; at whose forms, when we collide, we can only guess."

A welcome addition to existing publications about the artist, The Art of Rachel Whiteread joins The Art of Tracey Emin and The Art of Bill Viola in a loosely conceived series edited by Townsend and published by Thames & Hudson. Two essays in the book will be of particular interest to architects: Melanie Morris's "Moving On," a look at minimalism and the Architectural group in the context of Whiteread's later innovations; and Angela Dimitrakaki's "Gothic Public Art and the Failure of Democracy," an in-depth discussion of the social and political issues raised by House. At an average length of twelve pages each, these essays are both scholarly and accessible.

Europe is gaining yet another voice, A10, edited by Hans Ibelings. The Dutch editor, author, and curator aims to distinguish his bimonthly publication, which debuted with a December 2004/January 2005 issue, as a truly European magazine, departing from the approach of Domus, L'architecture d'aujourd'hui, Architectural Review, Bauwelt, as well as Architectural Record and Architecture, to name a few, whose content is often perceived as either too linked to the national point of view of the magazine's staff or too attuned to the international activities of celebrity architects. By contrast, A10 "has deliberately rejected coverage of the entire world in favor of detailed coverage of one continent [which has] the highest density of interesting architecture," according to its website (www.a10magazine.com). Ibelings has assembled a European network of editors to guarantee a more pluralistic, non-national mentality. He also promises that his magazine will have a more expansive approach, reaching beyond the usual famous names to discover what young and emerging architects are doing. Judging from the first issue, A10 delivers what it promises, presenting buildings from all over Europe designed for different functions, conceived for different contexts, and structured by different formal approaches. Among them are a shopping center in Budapest, a car park in Lisbon, a fire station in Antwerp, a library in God's School in Tallinn, an animal shelter and veterinary practice in Luxembourg, a university library in the Azores. Incomparable as they are, put together these buildings express a European vitality deepened by a sense of serendity. Most refreshing is the publication's tacit acknowledgment that it's too early to canonize or categorize the works of budding talents. The first issue of A10 also features an interview with Sam Jacob of FAT, an iconoclastic young English firm; and a guide on recent Italian architecture, a place missed by other magazines despite its interesting recent design developments. The latter is a sign of a cultural geography redefined by the digital revolution, where periphery has no longer periphery.

Luigi Prestinenza Puglisi is an architectural critic. He teaches at the University of Rome.

ALLISON FARROW IS AN ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE AT SAX/BROOKLYN ARTS EXCHANGE.
Emily Katrencik's project Consuming 1.956 Inches Each Day For Forty-One Days consists of her eating a rectilinear hole into the wall of LMAKprojects' Williamsburg gallery, opening a view towards the gallerist's living quarters. The work is intended to resist set environments by breaking through them, opening up a space for the reformation of oneself.

Using the realm of architecture both literally and symbolically, Katrencik's deadpan action-based art philosophy also chews through contemporary art historical precedents, such as the work of Bruce Nauman, Gordon Matta-Clark, Rachel Whiteread, Janine Antoni, and Marcel Duchamp, whose voyeuristic peep show Etant Donnés: 1°La Chute D'eau 2°Le Gaz D'éclairage (Given: 1. The Waterfall, 2. The Illuminating Gas) is evoked by Katrencik's creation of a view into a dimly lit, sometimes populated, utterly unexpected mise-en-scène.

In contrast to the works of most of these artists, Katrencik's performance is most intent on making structures disappear. In fact, she internalizes architecture without any concern for the byproducts of ingestion—unlike Piero Manzoni, who canned his feces and labeled them art. The notion of what is public and what is private is explored in the very act of eating, affecting the installation: Katrencik cannot consume architecture continually during gallery viewing hours and says that she can become self-conscious while eating when viewers are present, so a DVD plays a continuous, close-up, black-and-white image of her performance, accompanied with a loud soundtrack.

Sensitive viewers should brace themselves: teeth on wallboard can produce a visceral effect similar to that of fingernails on a blackboard. The gallery also includes an unvarnished wooden shelf on which sits a homemade loaf of bread with some slices cut from it. The words "contains drywall" are tool-cut into the shelf. This author was offered a fresh, warm piece of the tasty bread topped with a dab of butter, and began to chew and swallow it, joining the artist in the act of making architecture vanish.

ROBERT THILL IS A NEW YORK-BASED WRITER WHO RECENTLY WROTE ON INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY AND ART FOR LEONARDO: JOURNAL OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR THE ARTS, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY IN PRESS).
French conceptual artist Yves Klein is best known for patenting the color International Klein Blue and directing women as living paint brushes in body paintings he called "anthropometries." But Klein was also engaged with architecture, as a new show at Storefront for Art and Architecture proves. Curated by Francois Perrin, Air Architecture explores Klein's vision of an architecture constructed of the pure energy in nature's elements: fire, air, and water. Klein proposed climate-controlled cities enclosed with "roofs of flowing air," where "the inhabitants live naked...the former patriarchal structure of the family no longer exists...[and] the community is perfect, free, individualistic, impersonal." The show feature drawings, texts, photography, and film, and from the Yves Klein Archive in Paris, and includes Klein's collaborations with architects Claude Parent and Werner Ruhnau, such as the Fire Wall Experiment at the Kupperbusch Factory in Germany in 1958 (left).

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WILL ARCHITECTS
BECOME IRRELEVANT?

One of the most difficult concepts to explain to students in my professional practice course at Yale is the division of labor in a typical building project. Over the years, I have come upon an effective formulation: architects think about design and articulate ideas, and contractors try to build based on those thoughts. This stark separation—between the ideas and making—makes it easier to explain a myriad of arcane characteristics of the current building environment, such as why architects must avoid the "means and methods" of construction.

But just as I have refined these descriptions, they are starting to break down. The building industry, having reached the limits of usefulness in the separation between design and making, is starting to redefine itself, and is struggling to reintegrate what has taken so many years to separate. The component pieces of the building process—architecture and engineering, design and fabrication, construction and building operation—are beginning to reconnect and recombine. As these pieces change in definition and position, how will the architect's role be defined? Great opportunities—or marginalization—hinge on the answer.

The context in which architects will answer these questions is complex and evolving. With the increased drafting productivity of today's CAD programs come higher standards for coordination and accuracy. And it would seem that architects are struggling to meet the resulting expectations of their clients. In a recent survey by the Construction Management Association of America, 70 percent of building clients believe document quality is decreasing. 60 percent are convinced that those drawings are completed by subcontractors rather than designers, and 98 percent felt that architects should be held more responsible for higher-quality documents.

Processes that are well understood in today's manufacturing industry are beginning to emerge in building. Sophisticated digital models are the first step in the design and fabrication of cars and airplanes, and analogous approaches can be seen in the work of Kieran/Timberlake and SHoP/Sharples Holden Pasquarelli, which blur the line between design and fabrication and in some cases obliterating it completely. These firms are at the vanguard of design and construction.

Architects are trained to synthesize a wide array of constraints and facts. It would seem these trends emphasize the role of the architect while bringing the players in the process under a single tent, but this is not a foregone conclusion. Contractors, increasingly savvy about new technology, may choose to create a digital model of a project themselves when they can't get the original article from the design team. Standard-form contracts for construction published by their trade association, the Associated General Contractors, don't even mention the architect in name or role. Attorneys representing several owners groups advocate reducing—or in some case eliminating entirely—the architect from the traditional role of decision-maker during construction. A new delivery approach called "design assist" limits the architect's deliverables to design development documents and stipulates that construction documents be completed in the shop drawings. These trends are a result of growing dissatisfaction with projects that are too frequently late, over budget, and fraught with technical failures.

New opportunities to integrate the building process are possible with digital technology. An organization called the Construction Users Roundtable recently declared that critical problems in building today would be solved by integrating project delivery structures through open information-sharing and building information-modeling. (The whitepaper is available at www.curt.org.) Design is the headwater of the construction process, and the information that architects and engineers create is its core. Using digital tools to create the most robust, integrated and open information possible will reposition the architect as the leader of the integrated design-to-build process. Integration is a key skill of competent architects, and using those skills is in the best interest of the building project—and architecture itself.

It is clear that those skills will soon be in high demand in our industry. Should architects fail to assert our role at the beginning of the building process, using all the tools at our command, we will have ceded our last and best chance to lead.

PHILIP G. BERNSTEIN, FAIA, TEACHES PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE AT YALE UNIVERSITY, AND IS VICE-PRESIDENT OF BUILDING SOLUTIONS AT AUTODESK. PRIOR TO JOINING AUTODESK, HE WAS AN ASSOCIATE PRINCIPAL WITH CESAR PELLI & ASSOCIATES.

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