**DCP Proposal Brings Zoning in Line with High Line**

**New Zoning for West Chelsea**

On the east side of the High Line, bulk regulations will require 25-foot setbacks at High Line level for 60 percent of a building's frontage.

FIRST PUBLIC SCHOOL IN PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT LEADS TO RE-DESIGN OF RATNER'S DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT

**Gehry Highrise Design Delayed**

In late March, Gehry Partners began design work on the new public school to be included in Forest City Ratner Companies' mixed-use high-rise development in Lower Manhattan, according to Margie Feinberg, a spokesperson for the New York City Department of Education (DOE). Gehry's design for the 1-million-square-foot, $570 million 750-foot-tall tower at Beekman, William, and Spruce streets—the architect's first highrise project—was originally slated to be unveiled in December, but has experienced delays due to a change in tenants. "The content of the building was finalized later than expected," said Michele de Milly, a spokesperson for Forest City Ratner. "That slowed the design process."

In November, Pace University, whose campus neighbors the development site, withdrew from negotiations with Ratner to lease 330,000 square feet in the building for classrooms, dorms, offices, and an art gallery.

**Kenzo Tange, 1913–2005**

Kenzo Tange, whose work became a barometer of Japan's emergence from the postwar period to a leader in contemporary design, passed away on March 22 at the age of 91. First enticed into architecture in high school by images of the socialist realist Palace of the Soviets, Tange's obsession with modernism propelled him through Tokyo University, where he received a masters and doctorate of architecture. In 1946, Tange's career took off with the unveiling of a winning design of a coastal fort in the United States. In 2003, it was turned over to the National Park Service (NPS) and the State of New York.

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“Sometimes too much money can be a curse,” said Richard Gluckman when speaking to us about his experience designing a pro bono library for the Robin Hood Foundation’s Library Initiative, the subject of this issue’s feature (page 10). “It’s good to be forced to design on a limited budget, to see what you can do with less,” he continued. Many architects, working on any type of project, would echo this sentiment.

The social relevance of the Library Initiative served as great motivation for architects to get involved. “Many of our projects are luxury,” said Zack McKown of Tsao & McKown. “We were thrilled to have the chance to apply ourselves to a project that reaches out to public school students.”

Several years ago, the Robin Hood Foundation struck a deal with the Department of Education, offering millions of dollars worth of in-kind donations and architect-designed schemes to overhaul the city’s neglected or non-existent public elementary school libraries. The city, to its credit, matched those millions, in an unprecedented partnership that has resulted in 31 magical learning places for children in some of New York City’s most disadvantaged neighborhoods.

First-time Robin Hood architects were given $10,000 to cover their expenses, while returning architects—who already “donated” a library in the first round—received $400 per library and were asked to design multiple libraries.

While the Library Initiative is eminently worthwhile, it does raise the question of how much a profession as low-paying and unprofitable as architecture can afford to do pro bono work. Architects have jumped to be a part of the Library Initiative, turned on by the public nature of the work (a nice change from those bathroom-kitchen/loft remodels) and the chance to pad one’s portfolio.

Older, more established firms can absorb the burden of pro bono work much better than smaller, emerging firms (those with the portfolios that are so in need of padding). For her part, Kathryn Wolf of Dean/Wolf Architects found it difficult to accomplish what she wanted to on such a tight budget, and that hopes for future Library Initiative architects are offered more than her firm was. (After all, what’s a few thousand dollars more from a construction budget that’s $400,000, and an overall budget of $1 million?)

Even if architects do have a magnanimous attitude—exemplified by Billie Tsien, who said, “We all do things that don’t make money, like competitions, but this is something that will give a kid a great memory”—that doesn’t mean they should go poor, either. Tsien is right, but Wolf is also right. Architects have been so used to working long hours for little or no pay, that sometimes people don’t even notice when they are “donating” their services.

GEHRY HIGHRISE continued from front page citing an unexpected increase in the financial obligations on the part of the school. In February, Ratner announced that a $65 million public elementary and middle school funded under the DOE’s five-year capital plan would occupy 100,000 square feet in the building’s first five stories. The institution is the first public school in New York City to be built on private land by a private developer, according to a DOE press release.

The remaining space will be filled with an estimated 700 market-rate condominiums and rental units, an ambulatory center for the adjacent NYU Downtown Hospital, parking garages, commercial retail, and public open space. Ratner is in the process of applying for $190 million in tax-exempt Liberty Bond financing for the residential portion of the project. Construction is expected to begin in 2006, and the project is slated for completion in September 2008. As for the design, Gehry Partners declined to comment. “It will be released sometime this year,” said de Milly.

LAURA WOLF-POWERS

JETS SCORE YARDS continued from front page required to authorize additional development in the the 80-block area that was rezoned by the city in January as part of its Hudson Yards plan. The rezoning, which designates a Special Hudson Yards District that spans most of the blocks between 30th and 41st streets and between 8th and 11th avenues, already makes it possible to achieve floor area ratios as high as 33 on some blocks by granting bonuses for inclusionary housing and district improvement and allowing development transfers from the railyards’ eastern portion to elsewhere in the district.

The document signed by the six developers proposing to acquire the development rights on the western railyards from the MTA did not specify how and where they would distribute the 4.4 million square feet, and observers note that it would be difficult to find a home for it in an area already slated for super-structures. Hell’s Kitchen activists fear that the bulk would be transferred into the blocks east of 9th Avenue, which they have kept at a moderate density until now.

The status of the site’s TDR could have a dramatic impact on the city’s own master plan for the Far West Side. One possible outcome is high-density residential construction on the eastern portion of the railyards, where the city’s plan envisioned predominately commercial and institutional uses. “All the work that the Department of City Planning (DCP) did—it’s all just thrown out now,” said Chuck Lauster of the Newman Institute for Real Estate at Baruch College. “No one would ever create a residential district on that corridor intentionally. This is the antithesis of the development.”

While the DCP would not comment directly on the impact of the MTA’s decision on its Hudson Yards plan, spokeswoman Rachael Ray said, “The city will evaluate a specific rezoning proposal when it is received and in accordance with typical processes.” Many are now questioning the legitimacy of the Jets’ bid, given its substantial reliance on a development package based on zoning changes that may or may not occur. The developers signed a piece of paper promising to buy cheap development rights should they become available at some point in the future, but those rights have not even been given up by the MTA, said Meta Brunneme, an architect who works with the Hell’s Kitchen Neighborhood Association. “This whole bid was a fiction created so that the high sum of $720 million could be attached to the Jets’ proposal.”

Cablevision certainly thinks as much. The company is now suing the MTA, alleging the transportation agency accepted a bid that was inferior to its own $600 million proposal.
ANOTHER CHANCE FOR BARUCH
We all but gave up on Baruch College when it built the bloated, beached whale between East 24th and 25th streets that it refers to as its Vertical Campus, designed by Kohn Pedersen Fox. But now we hear that a new, more promising master plan is in the works by Gordon Kippping, the G TECTS principal who collaborated with Frank Gehry on Issey Miyake's Tribeca store. We've talked to Kippping's proposal, which would involve Gehry in some yet-to-be-determined way, includes inserting a new 17-plus-story atrium in the central bay of the college's 1929 building at Lexington and 23rd. That atrium would face the street in the form of a glass wedge housing a dramatic spiraling column of stairs that twists as the glazing tapers, in addition, a new through-block structure would connect the building with KPF's monstrosity while, hopefully, also blocking out one's view of it. If all goes well, construction could begin in 2007.

DESIGNERS OF CONSCIENCE
Last month, designers turned out for the launch of The Face of Human Rights, a 720-page book of images and essays from the Swiss publisher Lars Müller. Milling about the National Arts Club's intimate Accompanied Library to hear Müller, Yoko Ono, Nobel Laureate Tawana Wiesel, and U.N. Human Rights adviser Walter Kaelin speak were, among others, Steven Holl, Charles Renfro, landscape architect and preservationist Michael Gotkin, and graphic designer Keith Godard. "Lars is a good friend," said Holl, who also informed us that the construction giant Skanska just bought space in his own publication, the Beijing-New York architecture quarterly 32BJN. "It's our very first ad," he beamed.

ARCHITECTS IN TIGHT JEANS
Zaha Hadid did it for Vitra. Winka Dubbeldam posed for Panasonic. But soon, it's one of the boys who's modeling for a Levi's advertisement. We went on the lookout when we heard about the company's casting call for male architects, between the ages of 18 and 45, for a New York ad shoot. Candidates had to be "Real-looking men with good bodies, handsome, interesting, rugged." (Notice that "wears chunky black eyewear" was NOT listed.) We can think of some architects who fit the bill. But we're not sure either of them is available. (Aw, we're just teasing.)

The British clothing line Reiss opened its first store in New York City this month. Architect Dorrian Hopley of the London-based firm d_r won unwittingly referenced and updated a beloved piece of local design: the bar at the Four Seasons. The central feature of the SoHo shop is a chandelier made out of 1,000, acrylic rods hung from a cone in the center of the 21-foot ceiling, each fitted with a fiberoptic cable. Hopley, who hasn't even gone to the Four Seasons, said that the inspiration was homegrown: "I started thinking about it as a reference to London's rain, and wanted to suggest that watery quality." Hopley explained that he wanted to keep the space close to its raw condition and add a series of refined layers as contrast. The rough brick walls are partially lined with glass panels, each with a faint image printed on it, and the new floor is a smooth engineered timber made out of shredded cedar bonded with resin. These elements recede behind the high drama (if muted light) of the chandelier, whose length frames the store's central display space.
NEW ZONING FOR WEST CHELSEA continued from front page

The DCP has developed several bulk regulations for new constructions abutting the High Line to preserve light, air, and views of the envisioned open space. New buildings along its east side must provide open space (whether public or private) at the level of the High Line; similarly, new buildings west of the High Line must provide a setback of 15 feet at High Line-level. Along 10th Avenue, adjacent buildings have a series of bulk controls such as setbacks and maximum heights to enhance the characteristic mix of high and low street walks.

In order to appease property owners below and adjacent to the High Line—who have long opposed its conversion into a park for preventing them from redeveloping their parcels—the DCP is proposing the creation of the High Line Transfer Corridor (HLTC), a 100-foot-wide area that includes the entire High Line structure and abutting properties. With this proposal in place, property owners within the HLTC can sell development transfer credits to sites within the Special West Chelsea District. Joshua David, cofounder of Friends of the High Line, said, "The idea of using planning mechanisms to preserve a historic resource and community amenity is a way to capitalize on all the needs of the area."

The zones where most galleries currently exist would not be available for these development credits. DCP spokesperson Rachael Raynor explained, "The wider avenues and the northern section abutting the anticipated higher density Hudson Yards development are better suited by transportation and can more easily accommodate additional density. By maintaining the manufacturing zoning on the mid-blocks, we protect the galleries from residential development pressure."

The hearing attracted a large contingent of affordable housing and community advocates, who voiced concern about the nature of the development that the rezoning would encourage. Bill Borak, president of Chelsea Community Block Association, said, "We would not like to see new development that disrupts the architectural and social texture of this diverse neighborhood."

The DCP will vote on the rezoning proposal in May, and will pass its recommendation to the City Council where it will be voted on and sent to the Mayor soon after.

KENZO TANGE, 1913-2005 continued from front page when the Japanese government granted his request to create the reconstruction master plan for Hiroshima. Three years later, he won the competition to design the Hiroshima Peace Memorial and Park, thereby solidifying his reputation.

Tange, an avid scholar, published writings on Japanese architectural history and theory including his Prototype of Japanese Architecture (MIT Press, 1965) and Katsura: Tradition and Creation in Japanese Architecture (Yale University Press, 1960). However, he hoped that tradition never carried through into his work. "If there can be a trace of tradition in my works or in those of my generation, then our creative powers have not been at their best," he told Ernesto Rogers at the 1995 CIAM conference.

The power of Tange's work came from clear, uncompromised forms that held a universal and visceral appeal. From projects that hovered, such as the Hiroshima Peace Memorial, to anchored projects that combined Japanese building techniques with modernist materials, such as the Kurashiki Museum of Art, Tange made a trace of tradition in my works or in those of my generation, then our creative powers have not been at their best," he told Ernesto Rogers at the 1995 CIAM conference.

The founding president of the Japan Institute of Architects in 1917, Tange received the profession's highest honors: the AIA Gold Medal (1966), the Pritzker Prize (1987), the Premio Imperiale (1993), and Japan's First Order of the Sacred Treasure (1994). He also helped train an entire generation of architects in his studios, including Fumihiko Maki, Arata Isozaki, Kisho Kurokawa, and Tadao Ando.

Tange was never content to rely purely on ingenuity and command respect through dedication and hard work. Tange saw the strength through his work—they were—he listened without interruption, thought before speaking, never raised his voice, and used words economically. During my time at his firm, Tange Tange Associates, he empowered young architects by standing quietly during our project presentations—his concurrence was emphasized through his silence. He motivated people and gave them the resources to achieve solutions rather than provide them with answers. He gently humbled me when I spoke of difficulties of working in Bangkok by lecturing me on the obstacles that Le Corbusier overcame in Chandigarh.

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PHILBROOK FOLLIES

On April 24, garden pavilions designed by five firms, three of them from New York, will open at the Philbrook Museum of Art in Tulsa, Oklahoma. LANDed: Innovative Garden Structures includes follies designed by Manhattan firm Lyn Rice Architects and Brooklyn-based Della Valle + Bernheimer Design and MADE, as well as Mitnick Roddier Hicks of Ann Arbor, Michigan, and designsubset of Austin, Texas. The five winning designs were chosen from a group of 15 entries in an invited competition to populate the museum’s newly renovated 23-acre grounds, which were designed by H. Herbert Hare, a student of Frederick Law Olmsted, in collaboration with Edward Buehler Delk in 1927. The gardens house sculpture installations and two classical garden follies. According to Brian Ferriso, executive director of Philbrook and the show’s organizer, “The museum was looking for proposals that reinvented the garden structure for the 21st century.” Competition jurors included Wendy Evans Joseph and Louise Harpman as well as Ferriso and six others.

For Ferriso, the winning designs were “all about seeing differently through manipulation of the landscape.” Lyn Rice’s project [AND]SCAPES, a slim, head-height box balanced on four steel V-trusses which visitors must duck into, frames the landscape through two horizontal, mirrored cuts, one opening up toward the sky, and the other looking out over the garden. “It references both Le Corbusier’s cropped landscapes in the Villa Savoye and Superstudio’s Continuous Monument,” said Rice. Mitnick Roddier Hicks’ structure Split/View functions as both a closed box—“like a Donald Judd sculpture in the field,” according to Keith Mitnick—or as an open frame. “It deals with the difference between viewing at and viewing through,” said Mitnick.

Della Valle + Bernheimer’s design, Butterflies, features laser-cut steel with a lacy, abstracted butterfly pattern painted sky blue and white; MADE’s project, Vines, is a latticework of CNC-milled strawboard ribs and hemp rope rigging for climbing plants; and designsubset’s lightweight aluminum and polycarbonate honeycomb structure called ROAMroom roves throughout the garden, questioning the tradition of garden structure as fixed point.

Each winner was awarded a $5,000 materials budget as well as a $2,500 honorarium, but many of the firms are rolling their prize money over to cover fabrication costs, and some are dipping into other funds to complete their projects.

The pavilions will inhabit the Philbrook through October 16, at which point the structures might be auctioned off, according to Ferriso. “We may do a competition like this on a recurring basis,” he said.
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For more details on this project, see the Project Showcase section of our website, www.siny.org.
Housing Grandparents Raising Grandkids

In mid-April, Presbyterian Senior Services GrandParent Family Apartments, New York's first affordable housing development devoted entirely to grandparents raising their grandchildren, opened in Morrisania in the South Bronx. Designed by New York firm Goshow Architects, the six-story building contains 51 reduced-cost apartments as well as a childcare facility, a library, a community center, and a counseling office.

MetrLife Building Sold for $1.72 Billion

On April 1, Tishman Speyer Properties, owners of the Chrysler Building and Rockefeller Center, paid $1.72 billion for New York's landmark MetLife building located at 200 Park Avenue. The famous structure, designed in 1958 by Walter Gropius, Pietro Belluschi, and Richard Roth for Pan American Airlines and completed in 1963, contains nearly 3 million square feet of office space. The price was reportedly the highest amount ever paid for a single New York highrise.

How to Choose an Architect

In a recent episode of The Simpsons, Marge decides that Springfield needs to elevate itself a little, and convinces the town to build a concert hall. And which lucky architect got the commission? "Think Marge think," she says to herself. "Culture...culture...birds of prey...pray in a church...the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost...ghosts are scary...scary rhymes with Gary...that's it, architect Frank Gehry!" It quickly becomes clear that Springfielders aren't big on Beethoven, so the hall is closed down the day after it opens. The owner of the town's nuclear power plant, Mr. Burns, buys the building and converts it into a prison.

Forty Percent Affordable

On April 3, Brooklynites packed City Hall for a public City Council meeting to discuss the waterfront rezoning plan for Greenpoint and Williamsburg. Community members and politicians demanded that 40 percent of the residential development planned for the neighborhood's industrial shoreline be designated for low- and moderate-income families. The plan, which City Council will vote on in May, calls for 10,000 new housing units, 23 percent of which are designated affordable.

SHAKESPEARE IN THE PARK continued from front page working with NPS, which administers the 22-acre National Monument of which Castle Williams is a part. The New Globe Theater team saw huge potential in the amphitheater structure. It is perfectly round and three-tiered, and by some fluke, identical in size and shape to Shakespeare's original London Globe. The new nonprofit, formed to rehabilitate Castle Williams as a performing arts center, invited Foster and Partners to design the facility.

In his scheme, visitors enter the new Globe's heavy Newark sandstone structure and reach a fully glazed five-story foyer. A top-lit circulation space would separate the theater's entrance from the exhibition spaces, guest amenities, and the entrance lobby, which幸运 architect got the commission.

Castle Williams as a performing arts center.

The New Globe Theater in Castle Williams is perfectly round and three-tiered, and by some fluke, identical in size and shape to Shakespeare's original London Globe. The New Globe Theater team saw huge potential in the amphitheater structure. It is perfectly round and three-tiered, and by some fluke, identical in size and shape to Shakespeare's original London Globe. The new nonprofit, formed to rehabilitate Castle Williams as a performing arts center, invited Foster and Partners to design the facility.

In his scheme, visitors enter the new Globe's heavy Newark sandstone structure and reach a fully glazed five-story foyer. A top-lit circulation space would separate the historic envelope from the new 1,200-seat, three-tier auditorium.

While the proposal for the new Globe stays true to the intense staging and acoustics of an original Shakespearian theater, it uses modern materials and acoustics based on three-dimensional modeling with sound prediction techniques. Engineers at Arup, the consultant on the project, said it will be the world's most scientifically informed theatrical space. It is intended to be a space not just for Shakespearian plays but contemporary drama, chamber music, and dance.

A sustainable design strategy respecting the Castle's historic fabric means the new construction would be a green insert. A new roof will protect the fortification and the new theater inset within its open courtyard. The architects are working with engineering firm Battle McCarthy on low-energy and passive design solutions, such as using the thermal mass of the Castle in an energy efficient way and installing a sun tracking shade, that minimize future adverse environmental impact. Besides back-of-house facilities, there will be bars, a bookshop, exhibition spaces, guest amenities, a library, and a boardroom for the resident theater group. From the roof-level bar and deck, visitors would have panoramic views of the Verrazano and Brooklyn bridges, the Statue of Liberty, Ellis Island, Lower Manhattan, and Brooklyn. The proposal has generated wide official support. But then Foster is hardly a beginner at breathing new life into historic buildings: the British Museum, for instance, and the dome of the Reichstag in Berlin.

"Over the coming decade, Governors Island will surely become the Central Park of the Harbor," said the theater's head of operations Dr. Barbara Römer. "A five-minute ferry ride will place you in a bucolic haven that no ten-hour car ride can rival."

The New Globe Theater in Castle Williams is still a proposal, and is one of several under consideration by the GIPEC. The goal of bringing life to the Island has led to community planning workshops to consider plans for other surviving structures on the site. GIPEC is currently soliciting public input on the website www.govisland.com.

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CATHERINE HO REPORTS
In 2001—three years before Mayor Michael Bloomberg won approval for his $13 billion school construction and improvements campaign, which is just now beginning to be implemented—Lonni Tanner, then director of special projects at the Robin Hood Foundation, decided that New York City’s public schools needed serious attention. Robin Hood, a poverty-fighting, grant-giving nonprofit, had just funded the renovation of a library in a charter school in Brooklyn, undertaken by Karen Davidov and Henry Myerberg of the since-dissolved partnership Helfand Myerberg Guggenheimer. “I was curious if other schools needed a similar resource,” said Tanner, so she canvassed 250 of the city’s 650 public elementary schools. “I was shocked at what I saw,” she said. “I saw a few dusty books on some shelves, old Wang computers—nothing that could be close to being called a library.” At the time, 60 percent of New York public school students in grades three through eight were...
reading below grade level. Believing that education is the key to fighting poverty, Robin Hood, in a groundbreaking partnership with the city’s Board of Education, launched the Library Initiative.

Today, the program boasts 31 alternatives to the bleak public school norm, created by 16 architects who worked mostly pro bono over the course of two phases (see sidebar for complete list). The highly publicized results of the pilot phase, completed in 2002, prove that there are myriad ways to skin a cat. Charged with creating distinct spaces for instruction, presentation, and private reading, accommodating 10,000 books (donated by Scholastic) and several computer workstations (donated by Apple), and ensuring clear sightlines throughout the space, among other requirements, ten firms produced wide-ranging prototypes of lively, child-friendly spaces that are rigorously programmed for learning as well as cost-efficient, durable, and easy to maintain. Because the libraries departed so dramatically from their standard-issue, institutional contexts, they quickly became magnets within their schools and larger communities, captivating students who regard them havens, retreats—places where they want to be.

Custom responses were integral to conveying to students, many of them economically underprivileged, that they are important and deserve special attention. Custom responses were equally important to the Library Initiative. "The idea from the outset was to develop a standard, since the aim is to get architects to all the schools eventually," said Myerberg, who was instrumental in helping define the Library Initiative and worked with Tanner to recruit first-phase architects. "But we didn't want a cookie-cutter approach, like Starbucks, either."

This inquiry into how to allow the libraries to be unique expressions of their contexts and their architects while capturing economies of scale has intensified in the second round of libraries, completed the last month. In phase two, 9 firms produced 21 libraries. Four of the firms—Tsao & McKown, Tod Williams Billie Tsien, Richard H. Lewis, and the Rockwell Group, where Henry Myerberg now works—were architects returning from the first round, and who were asked to design multiple libraries, nudging the potential of serialization further. "We love the idea of the libraries having distinct identities, but the cost pressure is continually growing so the impulse to standardize grows stronger," said Robin Hood's chief of external affairs Joe Daniels, who oversaw the build-out of phase-two libraries. The libraries were budgeted at about $1 million each, encompassing the cost of construction as well as training and staffing librarians, which Robin Hood considers essential to the program's success. To date, Robin Hood has contributed $7.5 million to the initiative, which the Board of Education matched funding three-to-one, putting in $22 million. The libraries average about 2,000 square feet; the construction cost of each was roughly $400,000, or $200 per square foot.

Second-round architects,
like many in the first, found vibrant colors, playful furniture, irregularly shaped spaces, and bold lighting and graphics to be effective accomplishments in creating high-impact, low-cost gestures. Many new architects had the urge, like Weiss/Manfredi did with its award-winning first-round project, to create something that was present and magic of the library into the rest of the school. Rogers Marvel offered tantalizing views into their library at P.S. 105 in Far Rockaway by filling two unused doorways that face the adjacent corridor with alternately clear and frosted glass blocks, while they also sited benches so that silhouettes of readers inside would be visible to passers-by.

Opposite: Marpillero Pollak Architects (P.S. 105) Dean Wolf Architects (P.S. 151) Gluckman Mayner Architects (P.S. 192)

As the Library Initiative enters its third round—a list of 25 schools and architects will be determined this summer—cost savings will be even more crucial, as the Board of Education reduces its matching funds from three-to-one to two-to-one. But the Library Initiative has already developed a certain cachet in the architectural community, with many clamoring to be involved. The same goes for vendors, many of which have donated or discounted their materials and services. Luckily, there are plenty of libraries to go around. "31 down," said Tanner, "619 to go."
With every high-budget building project shooting at least one documentary about itself, architecture on film is inescapable. Yet Montreal’s annual Festival International du Film sur l’Art (FIFA), which ran from March 10 to 20, offered more than the usual suspects. Some 20 films at FIFA dealt with architecture and design, part of a broader program of more than 200 films covering visual arts and performance. Calling them “films” may be a misnomer, however. Most were shot for television, where they are likely to be seen, in addition to museum screenings. These architecture films have shown or will play on ARTE, the European cable channel, and on other European outlets, and the Canadian La Rue: Zone Interdite will premiere on the Canadian Broadcasting Company. (So far, no American broadcast dates are set for any of the films discussed here.)

THE ARCHITECT’S NEWSPAPER APRIL 20, 2005

FROM BRICK TO SCREEN

Moïse Safdie: The Power of Architecture (Donald Winkler, 2004), 91 min.
Tall: The American Skyscraper and Louis Sullivan (Manfred Kirchheimer, 2004), 80 min.
Les Maisons d’Anti: Lovag (Huguets Peyret, 2004), 57 min.
Rio Vu par Elizabeth et Christian de Portzamparc (Cristelle Ouanooune, 2003), 26 min.
Le Bic Cristal (Danielle Schirman, 2004), 26 min.
La Rue: Zone Interdite (Gilbert Duclos, 2005), 60 min.

The Power of Architecture

The much-anticipated Yves Klein: Air Architecture exhibition has finally arrived at New York City’s Storefront for Art and Architecture. Curated and designed by architect Francois Perrin, and first shown at the MAK Center for Art and Architecture’s Schindler House in Los Angeles in May 2004, this exhibition is the first serious treatment of Klein’s projects and proposals for architecture, town planning, and social organization.

Perhaps because this French enfant terrible is infamous for his blue monochromes and his patented color, International Klein Blue, his architectural oeuvre has until now remained secondary. Yet, as this strikingly installed exhibition suggests, during a meteoric career cut short by his sudden death in 1962 at the age of 34, Klein envisioned a radical project for an immaterial form of “air architecture” that was both realistic and futuristic.

Working alone or in collaboration with German and French architects Werner Ruhnau and Claude Parent, Klein produced a vast output of drawings, films, plans, lectures, performances, sound pieces, and texts, which, as Perrin shows, he took great care to patent. This hybrid body of work, which preoccupied Klein most intensely between 1957 and 1962 and which was located between object and concept production, focused on the negation of the material infrastructure of architecture. In place of walls, roofs, and rooms, Klein imagined a “living environment” sustained by pure forms of energy: transparent habitation, streams of air to protect against rain, colored vapors to screen against solar radiation, sheets of fire and water to replace walls, “air beds” suspended in thin air. By harnessing natural elements and forces—air, water, fire, and gravity—and merging them with electricity and what he called “climate machines,” Klein designed a new model of society. The existing Marshall Plan-driven, commodified world of object relations and discrete man-made dwellings would be replaced by an Edenic open-air idyll of leisure and expansive, fluid climates, atmospheres, and sensibilities. This technologically mediated utopia would release space from the constraints imposed upon it by modernist architectural practice while maintaining...
DERRIDA REMEMBERED

In recognition of the death of philosopher Jacques Derrida last October, a conference was held on March 21 in Cooper Union's Great Hall—the same space in which Peter Eisenman and Derrida launched the publication of Chora L Works (Monacelli Press) in 1997. The book was the only tangible read by architects with the same devotion once displayed towards Derrida, won't simply be anotherarchitect's work to his "encyclopedia curiosity," a quality that Bernard Tschumi also celebrated in a recent essay in the journal Log. Ingraham also took the opportunity to remind us of the importance of plurality in architectural discourse, which seemed especially relevant as most of the panel agreed that Derrida's influence has been replaced by that of philosopher Gilles Deleuze. One wonders if Deleuze's work calls for an architectural practice. "Now more than ever, it's time to look at Yves Klein because his work calls for an architecture that adapts itself to the current climatic, economic and geographic situation while still using contemporary technologies," said Perrin. "His complexity is that he was both traditional and his concepts were realistic and visionary—and his solutions were ahead of his time. Today, we need to understand our surrounding ecology and build within it. It is time to be both relevant and participate in the evolution of the world."

MUITI SAMA IS A PHD CANDIDATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ART HISTORY AND ARCHAEOLOGY AT COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY.
The Sonnabend Gallery presents Japanese photographer Hiroshi Sugimoto's 2004 series "Conceptual Forms," which was recently on view at the Fondation Cartier in Paris. Divided into two parts, "Mathematical Forms" and "Mechanical Forms," this grouping of large-scale images references the work of Marcel Duchamp by looking at objects created without artistic intention. "Mathematical Forms" consists of photographs of turn-of-the-century plaster models used by German mathematicians as visualization tools, such as Mathematical Form 0003 (Dini's Surface, A Surface of Constant Negative Curvature Obtained by Twisting a Pseudosphere) (above, left). "Mechanical Forms" depicts mechanical models created in England around the same time, as in Mechanical Form 0025 (Screw) (above, right).

Hiroshi Sugimoto, Conceptual Forms
Sonnabend Gallery, 536 West 22nd Street, April 30 through June 30
Jürgen Mayer H., Alex Schweder
Henri Urrachs Architecture
526 West 26th St., 10th Fl.
www.huagallery.com

THROUGH MAY 27
Jonathan Smith
Photo Urbanism 2: The Bridge Project
International Center for Tolerance Education
25 Washington St., 4th Fl., Brooklyn
www.designtrust.org

THROUGH MAY 28
New York NOW
Center for Architecture
528 LaGuardia Pl.
www.alamy.com

THROUGH MAY 29
City of Change:
Downtown New York
SkyScaper Museum
36 Battery Pl.
www.skyscraper.org

THROUGH MAY 30
Thomas Demand
Museum of Modern Art
11 West 53rd St.
www.moma.org

THROUGH JUNE 3
The Gatehouse
Museum of the City of New York
1220 6th Ave.
www.mcny.org

THROUGH JUNE 8
The Eye of the Storm:
Works in situ by Daniel Buren
Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum
1071 5th Ave.
www.guggenheim.org

THROUGH JUNE 10
The Landmarks of New York
Municipal Art Society
407 Madison Ave.
www.mas.org

THROUGH JUNE 17
Jennifer Bolande, Dan Graham, Louise Lawler, et al.
Out of Place
UBS Art Gallery
1285 6th Ave.
www.ubs.com

THROUGH JUNE 30
Changing Streetscapes:
New Architecture and Open Space in Harlem
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David Burney was appointed commissioner of the New York City Department of Design and Construction (DDC) in January 2004. Prior to his appointment, Burney directed the Design and Capital Improvement Division of the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) from 1990 to 2004. He is also a licensed architect. During Burney’s 14 year tenure at NYCHA, he helped to turn the country’s largest housing authority into what is arguably its most architecturally progressive: the authority has commissioned work from Agrest & Gandelsonas, Caples Jefferson, George Ranalli, and Hannan Myers, among others. The Architect’s Newspaper took the one-year anniversary of his appointment as an opportunity to check in with Burney.

Why did you leave NYCHA for the DDC? I was invited to join the DDC, and I left NYCHA with deep appreciation for 14 great years. The Bloomberg administration is dynamic and innovative and is focused on design and construction excellence. I knew if there were to be major change, it would come under Mayor Bloomberg’s leadership. It is an honor to serve and I would point out that I serve at the pleasure of the Mayor.

What do you consider to be your major accomplishments in your first year at DDC? DDC was established in 1996 to deliver the city’s capital construction projects in a safe, expedientious, and cost-effective manner while maintaining the highest degree of architectural, engineering, and construction quality. We have been very successful in the timely delivery of projects and we hope to build on that success in the area of design and construction quality. We plan to achieve this through a variety of process improvements in the design and construction process.

Have you changed the process by which the city hires architects? Yes. Our innovative procurement of design services is replacing previous methods with an eye to attracting higher quality consultant firms for city capital projects. Previous procurement methods relied too heavily on price competition. That resulted in fees that were not adequate for the design teams to produce careful work and deterred many firms from participating. Using procurement methods introduced by the Mayor’s Office of Contracts we opened our requests for proposals (RFPs) to all qualified firms rather than limiting to pre-qualified lists, and selected firms based on qualifications and experience. A pre-set fee curve is intended to pay fair and reasonable prices for design services. We have selected eight firms for individual requirements contracts on projects over $5 million and 24 firms for requirements contracts under $5 million. It was heartening to see that many responded to the RFPs who had not previously done city work. Although DDC has maintained pre-qualified lists (PQLs) for a number of different construction-related services in the past, we have temporarily suspended their use and new applications. During this period, all new contracts will be procured using open RFPs to be available on DDC’s website at www.nyc.gov/buillnyc. Notices of RFPs will also be published in The City Record at www.nyc.gov/html/cityrecord/home.html. Firms listed on the Citywide Vendor Source will also be notified directly. If architects have not already registered with Vendor Source, it is a good idea to do so in order to be notified of specific opportunities at www.nyc.gov/html/moc/html/bidderform.html.

What challenges lie ahead? We are expanding the use of professional peers during the design process. We use peer review so that design teams have the benefit of independent critique before the design solution is set in stone. We also use outside peers during the consultant selection process. This has been a very successful improvement in our design process and DDC is now assisting other capital agencies that are looking to adopt these processes. We are serious about fostering a team-based approach during construction to replace the traditional adversarial relationships. Common objectives will be emphasized through regular coordination meetings, joint strategies, and a cooperative approach. The idea is to be proactive—to anticipate and rapidly resolve potential conflicts before they impact the progress of the projects.

DDC is also the lead agency in promoting the mayor’s goal of sustainable design in public works. One future challenge is to expand sustainable design throughout the portfolio, including our infrastructure work. All of our future procurement will be available for everyone to participate in the selection process. I am encouraged by the results so far and am optimistic about greater success in the future.