FOUR POSSIBLE SCENARIOS FOR GOVERNORS ISLAND MADE PUBLIC

Conversations about what to do with Governors Island may seem like the longest-running show in New York City real estate, but things are moving ahead, albeit slowly: On October 19, the Governors Island Preservation and Education Corporation (GIPEC) held a public meeting to present four conceptual schemes for the future of the island, which was decommissioned in 1996 after 200 years as a military base. In his brief introductory remarks to a crowd of about 200 people gathered at the Fashion Institute of Technology, GIPEC chair Daniel Doctoroff said that the development of the 172-acre island is one of the top priorities for Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg's second term.

Formed in 2004, GIPEC is a subsidiary of the Empire State Development Corporation and is charged with overseeing the island's redevelopment. Its 12-member board, appointed by Bloomberg and Governor George Pataki, is working on the island's redevelopment with the National Park Service, which controls 22 acres in the form of a National Monument. In January of 2004, GIPEC selected Robert Charles Lesser & Company, Ehrenkrantz Eckstut & Kuhn Architects, and Urban Strategies Inc. to do preliminary planning and analysis, and create the conceptual plans that were presented to the public that evening.

After Doctoroff left the stage, interim GIPEC president Paul Kelly briefly explained the history of Governors Island and the planning process. He ticked off eleven priorities for the island's future development, including improved public access, coordination with other waterfront projects throughout the city, and economic self-sufficiency. Drawing from responses to a Request for Expressions of Interest (issued in spring of this year) and input from consultants, GIPEC developed four possible directions for redevelopment: Minimum Build Island, Destination Island, continued on page 10

VANDALS STRIKE REMOTE ART INSTALLATION

Art Outpost

Marfa, Texas, has enough cachet to attract culture seekers, but a new permanent installation by Scandinavian artists Michael Elmgreen and Ingar Dragset is giving art pilgrims added incentive to make the trek to the Chihuahuan Desert. The $100,000 work, called Prada Marfa, is actually located 40 miles outside of Marfa near a border town called Valentine (population 217), where undocumented immigrants have been known to cross into the United States. During his first trip to the site, South Carolina architect Ronald Rael—who along with fellow architect Virginia San Fratello, worked with the artists to design the sculpture/store—was surrounded by three border patrol vehicles and questioned about his reason for being there. continued on page 6

Sculpture Into Architecture, the title of Santiago Calatrava's show at the Metropolitan Museum of Art (on view through March 5), asks visitors to consider how the Spanish architect/engineer's art-works have led to a new class of architecture. An "architecture," perhaps. The prospect is as gratifying as the show itself, starting with the wheezy crank of Shadow Machine, a lightweight but noisy resin claw-in-motion that is attached to the wall over the show's entrance. Just architecture would have been more satisfying. It has been a long time since the Met celebrated a living architect in depth and the honor has fallen to one who apparently doesn't care to leave any unvarnished traces of his actual thinking. The show inadvertently reveals how sculpture and architecture are actually not that compatible on display. People go to museums to be awed or challenged continued on page 7
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Criticism is at the heart of architectural education and practice. Through studio critiques, client presentations, and community reviews, architecture is transformed to the process by which their work is analyzed, interpreted, judged, and nudged toward conclusion. Still, many practitioners are ambivalent about criticism. Of course, they love when their work is written about (it’s gotten so that work doesn’t seem to matter unless it’s published), and they also mouth support of discourse. But if any negative criticism is directed at their work, they’ll dismiss it as a matter of opinions.

This is partially the fault of those writing the criticism and their editors. Architecture criticism has devolved over recent years, from being consciousness-raising, progressive, and pleasurable to read—a standard that Ada Louise Huxtable worked hard to define from the moment she became The New York Times’s and the country’s first full-time architecture critic over 40 years ago—to being ad hominem, celebrity-obsessed, object-centric, and obtrusive—a trail blazed by Herbert Muschamp, who was the Times architecture critic for 12 years before retiring last year. Is it any wonder that no one—professional or lay reader—wants to read criticism anymore?

But Muschamp’s idiosyncrasies would not have been so detrimental had there been other prominent voices to balance him out. The problem is, the field is atrophied: When the country’s first and second generation of architecture critics started retiring in the 1990s, the newspapers that employed them didn’t bother to replace them. City magazines, alternative weeklies, and other special-interest general-interest magazines—with the exception of The New Yorker and a few others—didn’t exactly fill the void. The Village Voice never produced an architecture critic of consequence after Michael Sorkin stopped writing his column nearly 10 years ago. Finally, the trade publications, while providing an important platform for established, treasured critics, as Architectural Record does for Sorkin and Robert Campbell of the Boston Globe—could do more to nurture young critical voices. Architects can help, too, by being more open to criticism and less controlling about how their work is portrayed.

The New York Times protected the position of architecture critic when other publications didn’t, but its protective instinct went too far. Muschamp was notoriously territorial about his subject, obstructing other writers from covering architecture-related stories, even from a journalistic standpoint. The newspaper, the profession, and the public were all shortchanged. (Muschamp did not respond to our request to interview him for this issue, which is a shame because he is an important part of the evolution of American architecture criticism.)

So where does all this leave us? Architecture criticism has lost its place in public dialogue in a larger sense. In newspapers across the country, architecture stories appear in Arts, Home, and Real Estate sections, reflecting their increased emphasis on aesthetics and lifestyle. If written properly, architecture criticism could touch on issues such as technology, politics, urban planning, sociology, ecology—arenas that merit appearance across a newspaper’s sections, and across media outlets, for that matter. Retired architecture critic Allan Temko’s stories regularly appeared on the front page of the San Francisco Chronicle and, as a result, helped build literacy about and sympathy for the field.

Critics fill the important role of linking architecture to the values we hold and the world in which we live. We’re grateful to critics—and editors—who understand this.
NO MORE GEHRY?

Get your Frank Gehry while you can. We took notice the other day when we saw a story in the UK publication Building Design that quoted architecture's Big Daddy as saying, somewhat awkwardly, "I'm 76. We have tonnes [sic] of work now, so that to finish it will probably be most of it for me" [sic, sic, and sic]. Adding that Gehry currently has about five years' worth of projects in the pipeline, the article implied that he'll call it quits after they're done, at which point he'll be 81. Could the end be in sight? Who will mentor Brad Pitt? And what, we dare ask, will become of all those underlings when there are no more crumpled bits of tin foil to transform into masterpieces? "That comment [in Building Design] was out of context," a Gehry rep curtly insisted. "It isn't accurate." We're aware that—unlike us—the British press has a tendency to make something out of nothing. Nevertheless, expect every would-be Medici and deep-pocketed arriviste to start scrambling for a piece of whatever action might be left.

WAH-WAH WANDERS

The cocky Dutch designer Marcel Wanders isn't feeling so smug about THOR, his new restaurant at The Hotel on Rivington. And recent New York cocktail party natters for Netherlands Architecture Institute director Aaron Betsky, Wanders was whining to anyone who would listen—and we do mean anyone—about how he's unhappy with how his design for the interior turned out. He blamed the client, who he called "an asshole."

JOHN DOE, AIA

As if the rhetoric of Rem Koolhaas wasn't bad enough, you can now add identity theft to the occupational hazards of the architecture profession. We've learned that, last month, an employee of the New York City Department of Education's construction unit was arrested for unlawfully posing as a licensed architect. In an apparent moonlighting scheme, one James Arriaga allegedly used the bogus stamp and seal of an unnamed, bona fide architect on building plans, permit applications, and other documents for more than 150 duped clients. "The lesson is that you should watch your seal," a Department of Buildings rep told us. "Also, periodically check applications filed under your name in the city's Building Information System, and be mindful that if you hire someone, they clearly have access to your license number and so on." Um, aren't there better ways to illicitly make money?

THE WOBBLY WIFE

We have some good news to share with a particularly prominent architect in our community: Your wife was not recently mugged, as you thought. Now, the bad news: She's a lush. And so, we ask our readers: Which architecture couple, no matter what group that included one of its key members before the wife got so drunk that she busted her nose? We hear the husband left early, but she stayed on for a nightcap or three and got so trashed that her companions had to practically carry her home. Once there, she fell on a stone floor and got a bloody nose—claiming she'd been mugged instead. Don't worry, dear, he would drive us to drink, too.

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On noisy, colorful Rivington Street on the Lower East Side, a protruding wooden prong directs attention to an understated glazed storefront. It is the edge of a bamboo plywood corner, which extends all the way inside DASH dogs, an acronym for Dan, Allen, and Steven's Hot dogs, the establishment's owners. The bite-sized place is the latest by Lewis/Tsurumaki Lewis, which has made a cottage industry out of designing hip eateries. With a limited budget and only two months to design and build the standing-room-only space place (which expects to have the most traffic in the wee hours), the architects decided to use tough, urban materials. Gray cement board covers the side walls while a steel parquet sleeve shapes the ceiling, floor, and serving counter, stretching from the front of the space to the rear. The floor actually rises and the ceiling drops as one moves through DASH; the only element that remains level is the continuous bamboo counter. Principal Paul Lewis explained, "The design engaged the limits of a very small place by, in a sense, making it smaller, thereby increasing its idiosyncratic quality."

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On October 21, a small triangular plot at the intersection of Canal Street and the West Side Highway reopened as a park after 85 years of serving, by a combination of accident and oversight, as a parking lot. Canal Park was unveiled amid fanfare that included a free concert by neighborhood residents Reed and Laurie Anderson, both members of the Canal Park Conservancy, which was established in 2004 to care for the almost-lost park.

The park is actually the site of one of the city's oldest public squares, dating to 1807. It was home to a produce market for several decades before being transformed in 1871 to a viewing park. In 1888, Calvert Vaux, who worked with the design of Central Park, and Samuel Parsons redesigned the park to make it more pedestrian friendly, adding an S-shaped walkway and lush plantings.

Jump to 1821: The park was closed and loaned to the New York/New Jersey Bridge and Tunnel Authority for four years while the Holland Tunnel was under construction. Despite the stipulation that the park be rebuilt when the tunnel was completed, it remained closed, so as not to impede master-planner Robert Moses' desire to place an expressway along Canal Street. Though that plan was defeated—largely through the work of urban activist Jane Jacobs—the site remained barren and began to fade from memory until 1998, when neighborhood residents Richard Barrett, Jama Illosohn, and Carole De Saram unearthed the history of park.

In 2000, the Canal West Coalition, founded by Barrett in the mid 1990s, and the Tribeca Community Foundation, founded in the 1970s in part by De Saram, brought the matter to the courts. It took only one year for them to win their case. The Department of Parks and Recreation put $2 million toward the creation of the park, designed by the department's landscape architect Allan Scholl, with Renata Sokolowski and Wim de Ronde. The new design is based on Vaux's plan, with a central walkway lined with benches along a wrought-iron fence which is a replica of the original. Some changes are modern—of course: They raised the material that the park be placed to an expressway along Canal Street.

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CALATRAVA'S SQUEAKY CLEAN SHOW continued from front page by an artistic vision so complete that it breaks free of average human constraints to communicate its message. Sculpture can make mute stones speak. Architectural exhibitions necessarily offer something less complete: a sense of process, raw materials about to be transformed and forces willed by, but not entirely in the control of, the architect. The object itself, the building, is someplace else waiting to be experienced.

With its discernible theme of process through art, the show offers nothing that looks originary, firsthand, or reeking of creative effort. Instead it feels sanitized or, worse, like an incredibly slick presentation models under the guise of a working. Someone call an engineer!

Even I have seen Calatrava elicit gasps when he whipped off one of his mirror-drawings of a dove in flight at a presentation to the editorial board of The New York Times. Corny but, until now, quite effective. Such over-processed showboating undermines Calatrava's real achievements. His engineering feats are innovative (if on a slow evolutionary track). In fact, some of his mobile mechanisms don't look much more complicated than gigantic whirligigs. There's no denying that Calatrava understands better than many architects working today that people yearn, with almost gothic fervor, to experience the soaring side of architecture. But recent architectural designs, like his Malmo Apartment Tower in Sweden (reportedly unstable) and the Tenerife Concert Hall in the Canary Islands (plagued with functional problems), once again prove that looks are never everything.

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COMMUNITY AT ACROSSROADS

Chris Sharples and Gregg Pasquarelli, partners of New York-based SHoP Architects, first met the philanthropist Martha Murphy after winning a juried competition to build a new academic building at Tulane University in New Orleans. That project was put on hold indefinitely when Hurricane Katrina hit the region on August 29. Like nearly all of her neighbors in Pass Christian, Mississippi, Murphy lost her home. She now lives out of her car in the parking lot of one of the area’s few remaining buildings: it is an elementary school in nearby DeLisle, Mississippi, and Murphy has set up a clinic and dispensary.

"It was profoundly disturbing, there was just nothing left. The town was completely obliterated—people were swimming out of their homes around me," Murphy recalled. "We were going to do something. It was a proverbial blank slate, and we needed someone who could help with immediate planning." Knowing SHoP’s experience with emergency architecture—she saw the firm’s design of the Rector Street Bridge, the first new infrastructure to be created at the World Trade Center site after 9/11—Murphy called on the firm to help knit the community back together.

Sharples and Pasquarelli arrived in the small unincorporated town of DeLisle on September 10, along with engineer Craig Schwitter of Buro Happold. The group quickly evaluated the situation and began sketching ideas. They decided to construct a temporary structure on a 55-acre vacant lot that Murphy owns across the street from the elementary school. The 39571 Project (the name refers to the zip code of the affected community) is a 10,000-square-foot space composed of two 3,100-square-foot sheds backed with a parking lot and fronted by a covered porch. The 200-foot-long porch has no railings and no barriers and is meant to welcome and shelter the whole community.

The team returned to New York on September 12 to hand off the plans they had sketched that morning to Reese Campbell, an architect at SHoP, and Andrew Coats, an engineer at Buro Happold. The pair studied the plans with the partners before flying to DeLisle, where they began surveying the site the same day. Later they were joined by another young SHoP architect, Federico Negro.

"We couldn’t take a month to figure it out," said Sharples. "We did it in less than 30 hours. But it’s not only about design and building, it’s about leadership and directing. This sort of initiative can’t wait years. We’re not waiting for [planners] to tell us what to do."

Phase one of the project included clearing the swampy site, covering two acres with gravel, and paving a road. Simultaneously, phase two—a 5,000-square-foot tent—was erected so that Murphy could immediately transfer the clinic and supplies from the elementary school.

Luckily, Campbell had previous construction experience. When he arrived, the Army Corps of Engineers and FEMA had mobilized manpower and supplies but were unsure of what direction to take. With no surveying equipment and limited bulldozers, he and Coats strategized their first step and began to lay out the road with sticks and string lines. With four bulldozers and 30 men, they began to excavate. When someone from the nearby DuPont factory asked if they needed anything, Campbell asked for a back hoe, a front-end loader, and more bulldozers. The 27-year-old architect was orchestrating the first major construction in the area since the hurricane struck. (Coats is 32, and Negro is 26.)

"Reese, Federico, and Andrew quickly became part of the fabric of this community," Murphy marveled. Working and sleeping on site, the team devised phase three. The initial concept, two open sheds turned at 13 degree angles to form a V with a wide patio did not change, but the program quickly evolved to accommodate the community’s needs. Originally imagined as a temporary structure, the 39571 Project is now intended to become a permanent center for commerce and economic development, while also serving as a space where the whole town can assemble.

The availability of building materials has affected the design along the way. "At first we were coming up with this elegant storefront system, and then we stopped and said ‘Wait a minute, we can’t have windows like that, this is a place still at risk,’ so we changed our approach," said Campbell.

Wood and concrete, along with simple forms and a single sloped roof, have come together to form something greater than the sum of their parts. One smart but simple move that pushed the project to a higher level was to pull the roof off the same 12-foot plane as the sheds and thrust it high above the porch.

Murphy remembers the architects in a small, windowless box trailer, where they worked and slept, drawing and planning until early in the morning. She saw images of roofs tacked up on the wall and realized, "They were working so hard, really pouring their heart and soul into all this, but they weren’t able to do what they do so well. They were so concerned about budget and limited materials that they weren’t being creative, innovative, unusual. So I asked them, ‘If you could do one thing that SHoP does best it would be the roof, right?’ I saw their faces light up, so I told them to rip the roof, there needed to be a soaring aspect. Something that would let the building sing."

Murphy reinforced that the project’s power to inspire was just as much a part of the program as its functionality. The act of building in a landscape that others were still laboring to clear, clean, and rehabilitate has been a positive force in itself. The presence of the architects and engineers, said Murphy, "offered great reassurance."

The design of the porch roof is now 18 feet at its highest point, with a series of 12-foot-tall, 8-by-4-foot timber posts as supports, and is covered with metal sheets. With its vast, inviting porch, the project pays homage to, without mimicking, Southern vernacular. "We didn’t want to recreate our past," said Murphy. "We needed a real building. It’s what our future’s going to be."

At the end of October, Campbell and Negro were back in New York, furiously searching for a general contractor to complete the project. "We were a day away from doing it ourselves with military help," admitted Campbell, "but we realized we reached our limit. It’s an enormous amount of work to do without a legitimate contractor—we couldn’t have regular people lifting huge 12-foot timbers by hand." In the meantime, locals are using the temporary tent as a place to start businesses, while other nonprofits are looking to the 39571 Project as the best place to locate their services. If all goes according to plan, this piece of architecture will be the heart of a community on the mend.

JERRY PORTWOOD

The 39571 Project features two shed buildings set at 5 degree angle to form a flat V (site plan, top right). The two are connected by a 200-foot-long porch designed to hold the whole community (below) and is covered by an expressive, slightly torqued roof (section, above right). Meanwhile, a temporary tent has been erected, to house a clinic and local businesses (above, left). The architects joined with community members to kick off construction.
a greater floor-to-area ratio (FAR) than a residential development on the same site. In the case of P.S. 64, the new community facility could be almost twice as high as the existing school. Meanwhile, the art center and other “squatters” (mostly artists using classrooms as studios) remained illegally in the center until they were evicted in 2001, said EVCC project manager Elizabeth Ruf-Maldonado, who had a studio in the building for five years. “Since then, the building is home only to pigeons.” Gregg Singer formed a group with several anonymous partners called the 9th and 10th Street, LLC, and sought to erect a university dormitory—which qualifies as a community facility—on the location. According to Department of Buildings (DOB) press secretary Jennifer Givner, an application to construct the dorm was pre-filed in October of 2004 and denied the following January. “They tried to file a number of applications in different ways, using different methods,” said Givner. “All of them were rejected during the late fall and spring.”

The developer in fact did not have an affiliation with any educational institution, which raised eyebrows at the DOB. As previously reported here (“Dorms, Redefined,” A/V08_05.11.2005), there have been a slew of developers stretching the definition of dormitory to take advantage of density bonuses to build what are essentially standard rental apartment buildings. As a result, the Department of City Planning (DCP) passed a series of amendments on September 9, 2004 that stiffen the requirements to qualify as a community facility. This serves communities by curbing excessive large developments, said Rachael Raynoff, press secretary of the DCP.

The 9th and 10th Street, LLC planned to provide a condo-like dormitory at below market rates for faculty, but the DCP’s zoning amendments specifically exclude faculty housing from dormitories. The design, by Beyer Blinder Belle, preserved much of the school’s C-shaped façade while adding a 19-story tower, said Legardi-Laura. After being rejected in January of this year, the developers filed an appeal to the New York City Board of Standards and Appeals (BSA).

Both the DOB and the DCP wrote statements this past August to encourage the BSA to deny the application, arguing that the developers needed to “demonstrate a legally binding relationship with an educational institution” to take advantage of extra-bulk allowances. Both also pointed out the need for a strict distinction between dormitories and residences “to prevent an owner from building an illegal, oversize structure.”

On October 18, the BSA rejected the appeal, blocking the proposed development once and for all. Since the decision, Singer’s group has put the building on the market through Massey/Knakal Realty Services, said Legardi-Laura, with a hefty price tag of $75 million. Future development might be restricted if the building is landmarked, which is possible now that the Landmarks Preservation Commission has planned a hearing (not yet scheduled) for this fall.
FANTASY ISLAND continued from front page

Innovation Island, and Iconic Island. Each was presented with an explanation of its presumed economic costs and social benefits.

The Minimum Build scenario focuses on restoring the historic northern quadrant for hotel, restaurant, retail, and cultural uses while leaving the entire southern portion open as a park. Destination Island would devote the south end to major tourism uses—the UK's Eden Project, the Cirque du Soleil in Orlando, and Ontario Place in Toronto were all cited as precedents—while devoting the restored north for heritage tourism. Iconic Island looked to Chicago's Millennium Park, the Miyazaki Ocean Dome in Japan, and—perhaps inevitably—the Guggenheim Bilbao as examples of ways to draw visitors, while Innovation Island's mixture of educational and commercial research facilities was presented as a potential economic engine for the city. Kelly continually stressed that these scenarios are merely suggestive, and that a great deal depends on finances, both public and private. The money that must be spent on infrastructural improvements like sewage systems and transportation links, as well as the restoration of the historic quarter, is significant. According to Joe Berridge of Urban Strategies, basic site preparation may cost up to $368 million, while rehabilitating the buildings in the northern section is estimated to cost about $650 million. These numbers will come into sharper focus as GIPEC completes its infrastructure plan, which it expects to release in early 2006. The plan is a prerequisite for the Request for Proposals GIPEC hopes to issue to developers in the summer of 2006.

ANNE GUINEY

Four possible development scenarios (clockwise from top left): Minimum Build Island, Destination Island, Innovation Island, and Iconic Island. Each scheme—and whatever is ultimately built on Governors Island—includes a public promenade running the perimeter, a public park of at least 20 contiguous acres, and the restoration of the historic buildings in the island's northern side.
In Foster and Partners' master plan for a new cultural district in Kowloon, a massive curving plastic canopy shelters an array of buildings and uses, including, possibly, a joint museum by the Guggenheim and Pompidou.

GUGGHEIM TEAMS WITH POMPIDOU TO TACKLE ASIA

Mission Hong Kong

Thomas Krens has long had his eyes on Asia as the site for a Guggenheim Museum. Now he may have finally found the beachhead that he sought, by allying with a French partner, Chinese financing, and a British architect. Last week the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation and the Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris announced that the two institutions had joined forces as part of a bid to create an art museum in the West Kowloon Cultural District in Hong Kong (WKCD). The museum would be part of a 100-acre mixed-use development. The new museum, which Krens said will cost some $400 million, will be designed by Foster and Partners, the London firm headed by Sir Norman Foster, which is also responsible for the WKCD master plan. That master plan now involves covering much of the site with a gently curved clear plastic canopy. No completion date has been set for the project.

Before the two museums agreed to collaborate, each was part of a developer's plan for the district that included a museum in a commercial and residential mix. The museums united when those developers merged into a new company, Dynamic Star. The Pompidou/Guggenheim entente comes as something of a surprise, even though the two museums have organized exhibitions together. Only last year, the Centre Pompidou shrugged off notions of such a museum-building alliance involving the Guggenheim, with one representative commenting to Hong Kong journalists that its leadership didn't like the idea of adding branches, comparing it to licensing Coca-Cola bottling plants. (The Pompidou now denies that any such comment was made.) Besides reversing itself on that prospect, the Paris museum is also planning its first satellite, designed by Shigeru Ban, in the northeastern French city of Metz. ("Louvre Lens in Focus," AN 18, 11.2.2005)

Krens' new gambit comes as less of a surprise. Hong Kong is far from the first Asian city he's courted. A Guggenheim "presence" in Tokyo has been discussed for years. In 2002 and '03, the Guggenheim had plans for a $200 million airplane-shaped museum designed by Zaha Hadid in Taichung, Taiwan. The project, which also included other civic and cultural buildings in an urban master plan, never advanced past a feasibility study, for which the Guggenheim was paid $2 million. (Also, it turned out that Taichung lacks a major airport.) And in an interview just last May, when the Guggenheim had already signed on as the cultural component of a bid by the Sands Hotel of Las Vegas for a $2.5 billion 40-floor hotel and casino in Singapore, Krens said, "The Guggenheim is very interested in a position in Latin American and Asia." (Soon after that a design for a Guggenheim Guadalajara in Mexico was unveiled; see "Artistic Licensing," AN 11, 06.22.2005). The Singapore plan is one of 12 competing for the same site; another is a hotel/casino collaboration with the Louvre.

Compared with that the odds in Singapore, the critical mass of two museums working together in a development plan makes Hong Kong a better bet. The wealthy city still lacks a major museum for modern and contemporary art.

The choice of Foster as architect seems an unlikely one for the Guggenheim, whose institutional brand tends to be linked to edgier work by the likes of Hadid and Jean Nouvel. Foster was already attached to the developer's master plan, said a Guggenheim spokesman, who noted that Foster designed the stations for the new metro in Bilbao. And Bilbao credentials don't hurt in Hong Kong. "The developers were very impressed by the success of the Guggenheim Bilbao," the spokesman said. Foster's London office said that the project was in its early stages, and referred all calls to the developer.

The announcement of the Hong Kong collaboration, potentially involving the collections of both museums, comes at a time when doubts are growing about the replicability of the Bilbao model, i.e., expanding a museum into a high-profile building by a celebrity architect, intended to lift a local economy. In January, the Guggenheim's chairman and major donor, Peter Lewis, quit the board museum when he became convinced that Krens' expansionist ambitions could not be sustained. DAVID D'ARCY
QUIET VOICES

On September 16, after six and a half years of operation, ArchVoices, a nonprofit devoted to architecture education, released its 265th and final newsletter. The web-based publication was established in 1999 to foster exchange about architectural education, including the subject of internships and licensure. According to its website, the all-volunteer newsletter took too much time and energy from everyone involved. ArchVoices plans to continue with its essay competition and possibly with internship initiatives.

NOT DEFLATED

On November 1, the U.S. Commerce Department released its September report on construction spending. In September, construction spending in the U.S. reached a new high of $1.12 trillion, up 0.5 percent, mainly from a boost in private residential construction spending, which increased 1 percent to $624.3 billion. The report showed no sign that the housing market is weakening, despite widespread speculation that the real estate bubble is ready to pop. Although the housing sector is expected to decline in 2006, the New York City market anticipates its annual holiday spike will continue. The local increase coincides with year-end Wall Street bonuses, which account for 7.5 percent of the total wages earned in the city and infuses the market with new money.

JERZEY SOLTAN DIES

On September 16, Jerzey Soltan, professor emeritus of architecture and urban design at Harvard's Graduate School of Design (GSD) died at age 92. Born in Latvia in 1913, Soltan moved to Poland to attend the Warsaw Technical Institute before he was drafted into the Polish army during World War II. He was captured by the Germans in 1939 and spent the rest of the war in prisoners' camp in Murnau. After the war, Soltan joined Le Corbusier's firm in Paris, but after five years, returned to Warsaw to help with his country's reconstruction. He became a professor in the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw but soon found himself struggling with the postwar communist government, which rejected his modernist, avant-garde tendencies, so he moved to the United States. He began teaching at the GSD in 1959, gained tenure in 1965, served as chair from 1967 to 1974, and then retired in 1979. Soltan is credited with bringing Le Corbusier to Harvard to design the Carpenter Center, the only Corbusier building in North America. In 2002, he was awarded the American Institute of Architects and Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture Topaz Medalion for excellence in Architectural Education.

SLOW AND STEADY

On October 26, the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation conducted a ribbon cutting ceremony to officially open Phase II of Brooklyn Bridge Park, an 85-acre project designed by Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates, in collaboration with several other design firms. The $23.7 million second phase, between Adams and Plymouth Streets, includes a rocky beach, a waterfront esplanade, and a children's playground. For those in the area, the ribbon cutting came a little late considering the park has been in use for over a year. Upon completion, the park will span 1.3 miles from Atlantic Avenue to the Con Edison site north of the Manhattan Bridge and comprise 85 acres of open space.

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PRINCE OF WALES WINS VINCENT SCULLY AWARD

continued from front page

Jerzey Soltan

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Architecture criticism, whether written for the profession or the general public, has one primary purpose: to parse the good from the bad. Of course, criticism involves much more than thumbs-up, thumbs-down assessments. Architecture is far too complex, demanding analyses on far too many levels. The critics interviewed in these pages depend on a wealth of technical, architectural, sociological, political, ecological, cultural—have shaped their approach to a field they helped create. Meanwhile, a new generation of critics are joining ranks in what Ada Louise Huxtable calls “an uphill battle,” setting out to prove that responsible criticism benefits not just the profession but society at large.

Ada Louise Huxtable

In an attempt to legislate an impossible balance between a profitable city and a livable city, New York has created a monster—call it Frankenstein zoning. The result is that many of the city’s efforts to control urban development are turned into an urban nightmare which has been growing for decades. But what has been happening, insidiously and slowly, is that the whole idea of zoning has been turned upside down. It has been subverted from a way to control building bulk and size to a method for getting bigger buildings than ever. If that seems like an anachronism, it is exactly the kind of overbuilding that is being encouraged by the law that was designed to prohibit. The result, which is just beginning to be visible, is the rapid appearance of rows of oppressively massive, sun- and light-blocking structures of a size that we have never seen in such concentration and scale. This disease and impact appeared first on Madison Avenue from 53rd to 57th Street, with the 42-story block-long building from 53rd to 54th Street, another tower across Madison at 86th Street, and the gargantuan AT&T and IBM buildings, from 55th to 56th, and 56th to 57th Street. This enclose of blockbusters was joined by the huge Trump Tower looming on the Bowery side at 56th and Fifth.

When the first of these immense projects designed under the city’s revised 1961 zoning regulations appeared, such as Olympic Tower on Fifth Avenue or Chrysler on Lexington, they seemed unique; as singular scenes that helped create their neighborhoods. These new buildings, therefore, are equally revealing of a social welfare—their stories are practical or aesthetic merits—their powers to generate a field that helped create. Meanwhile, a new generation of critics are joining ranks in what Ada Louise Huxtable calls “an uphill battle,” setting out to prove that responsible criticism benefits not just the profession but society at large.

JOAN OCKMAN READS THE DAILIES AND FINDS CRITICISM THAT’S FLUENT, FORCEFUL, AND OFTEN FLAT.

Fewer than 45 of the approximately 140 newspapers in the United States, with a daily circulation over 75,000 have a regular architecture column. The following is a 2001 survey by the National Arts Journalism Program (NAJP) at Columbia University and only a third of them pursue architecture critically. Some newspapers like Houston, Detroit, and Las Vegas—places that have undergone huge building booms in recent years—lack a regular architecture voice. Of the papers that do have critics, half feature fewer than two dozen stories a year; that’s less than one every two weeks. And while architecture implicates not just aesthetics and culture but so much else—political economy, ecology, social welfare—these stories are normally relegated to the Style, Home, or Home sections. Thus, the NAJP study concludes, “major buildings and developments routinely go up with no public course on their practical or aesthetic merits—the most public of art forms receives the least amount of arts coverage.” (The study was overseen by András Szántó, director of the now defunct NAJP.) If this state of affairs is lamentable, it’s necessary to acknowledge that architecture journalism for the profession or even for the general public is limited. The New York Times, for example, publishes articles on architecture on a limited basis, and with notable exceptions like Montgomery Schulter at the New York Times in the late 19th and Lewis Mumford at The New Yorker during the middle decades of the twentieth. It was Ada Louise Huxtable, beginning her tenure at the New York Times in 1963 amid that decade’s urban upheavals and preservation battles, who coalesced a wide audience for engaged and outspoken architectural criticism.

Thayer Long, director of the NAJP, has summed up the state of affairs this way: “Our critics are not a dedicated group; we do not have a critical mass. It takes a lot of effort to get them to do their job.” Indeed, the NAJP study found that the role of the architecture critic “has largely lapsed or shriveled.” The role is the same but the emphasis has changed. A critic has a lot of responsibility. It is largely informational and educational—to let them know the difference between good and bad, how to distinguish a work of art. Today, I think the emphasis is too much on chashing celebrities, which has emerged all through society.

I want people to understand that architecture is an art. That’s been my life’s battle, to increase awareness of the field. But the way things have gone...don’t wish for what you ask for! Architecture is definitely more in the public eye today than before, but I don’t think it’s understood any better.

How do you deal with any controversy your pieces elicited? It was always difficult but I’m not capable of doing anything else. I’m a generation that was not brought up to work in a man’s world, to deal with jealousies—I’m fairly thin-skinned. But the New York Times was always wonderful. There were times that powerful people demanded meetings with the publisher to continued on page 21

Robert Campbell has been architecture critic at the Boston Globe since 1974. Trained as an architect—he received his MArch from Harvard’s GSD in 1967—Campbell, now 68, garnered the third architecture Pulitzer (after Huxtable and Paul Goldberger) in 1996 for his “knowledgeable writing on architecture.” His short-ish articles are conversational, descriptive, and well-illustrated. He complains about “conservative Boston” while at the same time avoiding “the smugness” of mistrust of avant-garde “pizza pies” and his taste runs to “plain old-fashioned modernism.” This doesn’t prevent him from acknowledging that Steven Holl’s new Simmons dormitory at MIT, if perhaps “too inven­­tive,” is daring and beautiful; he likewise reserves final judgment on Gehry’s Stata Center, which, despite appearances of being “a big, abligatory structure,” reflects “serious thinking about how people work and live.” He frequently covers significant events outside Boston, but writes most often and generously about lesser-known architects at home. His interest in architecture as a register of urban and social history is reflected in a regular “city scenes” feature for the Sunday magazine section on which he collaborates with photographer Peter Vanderwarker.

Blair Kamin is strongly civic-minded and devoted to nurturing architecture in his hometown. A self-professed “activist critic,” he uses the platform he has held at the Chicago Tribune since 1992 not as a bully pulp but as a leading
When Allan Temko started writing for the San Francisco Chronicle in the early 1960s, he didn't see himself as a regional critic, despite outsiders' perceptions to the contrary. Back then, the city was a fast-growing metropolis, the Golden State's financial capital. But Temko hardly limited his writings to the region. He wrote a book on Eero Saarinen and wrote endless articles for Architectural Forum (which he was its West Coast editor), Horizon, and other magazines. Still, Temko, now 81, is best known as an activist who unhappily took on anything that threatened the Bay Area's soul—the first downtown civic center, for example, and the horrendous plan to criss-cross San Francisco with freeways. Without Temko's voice, the Bay Area would be markedly different, and decidedly less beautiful, today.

Fifteen years have passed since Temko, now 81, left his post. One realizes, talking with him, that the people he wrote about were often his friends, despite his reputation for making enemies. He was admired, even by his targets, for his ability to place design in a cultural context he so clearly loved.

How did you become a critic?

When I left Columbia University in 1947, my professors helped me get an American Lecturehip at the Sorbonne. I was in France, teaching American literature, for seven years. Most of this time, I looked at Gothic churches, which to me had everything—rational structure and daring new forms to suit new conditions. But I also saw modern architecture, like Le Corbusier's. Because there was no good book in English on Notre Dame, I wrote one. (It was published by Viking Press in 1965.) Lewis Mumford edited it. When I returned to the U.S., I suggested I do what he was doing for the New Yorker, but for a mass audience. I knew the executive editor of the New Yorker, Scott Newhall, so I went there.

What's changed since then?

In the 1950s and '60s, people talked about painters, sculptors, and politics. Now they talk about buildings, spaces, and important environmental problems. The need for good criticism has never been greater, but if you look around, it seems mighty sparse. There are some outstanding critics, like Blair Kamin of the Chicago Tribune, but not many writing today understand activist criticism—the need to get out there and fight with fang and claw. With a big debate that is essential to creating it.

How were you edited at the Chronicle?

Newhall read my things. So did the city guys, the assistant managing editor, and if they couldn't understand something, I'd rewrite it. They were good stand-ins for the public. Newhall encouraged me to be controversial and shielded me—continued on page

Christopher Hawthorne, the Los Angeles Times architecture critic at 35, was appointed to his post at the Los Angeles Times after Ourossoff's elevation to New York. A graduate of Yale's architecture school, he was previously architecture critic at Slate.com. Hawthorne writes lucidly and forcefully, appreciates the complexities of urban planning and the pragmatics of building construction, and doesn't hesitate to tackle intractable issues like the politics of sprawl. He is interested in the back story, and isn't afraid to state his opinion, even if it's unlikely to win friends. He reserves a certain irony with respect to "high-wattage" architecture, as he finds it "monumental to the relentles.s forces of mediocrity," speaking of Hope and the future have not been able to survive the pressure for a single-minded commitment to the tragic past... No one has had the courage, or conviction, to demand that the arts be restored to their proper place as one of the city's greatest strengths and a source of its spiritual continuity. We have lost what we hoped to gain—a creative rebirth for San Francisco. At Ground Zero, what should be first is last. An affirmation of life is being reduced to a culture of death.

From "Colombo Boondoggle: San Francisco's "New Era Airport,"" San Francisco Chronicle, April 20, 1964 Allan Temko

All that is maddeningly incompetent, stupider than before, brutally insensitive and almost incredibly inartistic in San Francisco—city that perhaps did "know how" to build in William HowardTaft's time, but would be hard pressed to erect a decent municipal doghouse today—is epitomized in our "New Era Airport," which in fact is one of the most old-fangled, incomestensive, and wastefully designed facilities in the world.

As a gateway to San Francisco, it should be blasted with the inscription of Dante's Inferno: "Abandon all hope, ye who enter." For if this is the best we can do in the way of large public works that, precisely because of their staggering cost, are supposed to serve long-term needs, we had better give up hope for the future environment in this part of the world.

Albert Ourossoff's voice, the Bay Area would be markedly different, and decidedly less beautiful, today.

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from which to educate the public and to good architects and municip­

officials in socially constructive directions. A graduate of Yale's Master's of Environmental Design program and, like Campbell, a Pulitzer Prize winner (in 1999), the 48-year-old critic has collected his directions. A graduate of Yale's program and, like Campbell, a Master's of Environmental Design Pulitzer Prizewinner (in 1999), the pal officials in socially constructive...
ALLAN TEMKO continued from page 15 from the owners. When the architect of Pier 39, Sandy Walker, sued me for $2 million, the Chronicle defended me. Actually, Bill German, then the executive editor, told me that if I lost, the paper would pay half! The suit was thrown out, but Walker applied for $5 million. I learned that the case was back in court, I asked Chronicle executive chiefs Dewey why I hadn’t been told. “We want to win this thing,” he replied. When you’re trying to stop something, you have to go straight for the jugular. Most critics do that—but neither do their papers. I’m vain enough to think that I could have stopped the whole Bay Bridge fiasco if I hadn’t been ill.

What influenced you as a critic?

My years in France led me to see art and architecture as expressions of great civilizations. I always cared about heightening the public’s sensitivity. I wrote for the educated public, but I wanted everyone else to be able to understand my articles and enjoy them.

I saw my role as achieving better design for the whole region. I might have been the only architecture critic in this period who looked at cities at a larger scale—even as large as, say, the Bay Area’s seashore, which became a national park. Today, you can walk on public land along the ocean for 50 miles north and south of San Francisco. That wouldn’t have happened without people fighting for it, and stopping things like the nuclear reactor that PG&E wanted to put on Bodega Head. I played a big part in these initiatives, writing articles and then getting the Chronicle behind them. Those things are the causes that I’m still protecting Frank Lloyd Wright’s store on Maiden Lane from retrofitting, sparing Market Street the mediocrity of the early design for San Francisco Center, taking Silicon Valley seriously, helping make the Presidio a national park. That’s an appropriate range for a critic.

Did you make enemies?

Sometimes I was a bit harsh. People say I was brave, but that wasn’t the point. It sold newspapers. It still would today but, despite media’s resources, there’s still not enough serious coverage of the media (i.e., literary, shelter, or weekly publications). Of course, yours are stricken by architecture that seems, at first, to be alien: the pristine glass towers of the gargantuan former Wanamaker store on Broadway: set by places like Cooper Union, the Public Theatre, and the large city architecture that Miranda’s Freedom Tower plan: the fifty-story spire of the still-riseful Manhattan. That wouldn’t have happened without people fighting for it, and stopping things like the nuclear reactor that PG&E wanted to put on Bodega Head. I played a big part in these initiatives, writing articles and then getting the Chronicle behind them. Those things are the causes that I’m still protecting Frank Lloyd Wright’s store on Maiden Lane from retrofitting, sparing Market Street the mediocrity of the early design for San Francisco Center, taking Silicon Valley seriously, helping make the Presidio a national park. That’s an appropriate range for a critic.

What do you think of today’s critics?

There are very few people writing things that you’d remember the next day. Part of our purpose, after all, is to be entertaining. What do you think of today’s critics?

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John PARMAN Co-EDITS "COMMENTARY" FOR SAN FRANCISCO'S LIME
encouraged her bosses to choose somebody who would be quite junior to her, so there’s no who question the senior voice was. And I fit the bill.

How did you go about picking your topics?

I was young, eager, loved the opportunity to put my passions into print and would do anything. And the Times had, and still has, a vast appetite for copy. The needs were enormous. I recall very few instances of being told “No, it’s not a good idea. Don’t do it.”

When you reviewed a work, did they ever question your opinion?

I don’t remember that happening too many times. The Times has traditionally been pretty good about backing its claims. I recall having two arguments with the executive editor while I was there. One was a piece about the Art and Architecture building at Yale. The editors thought it was too arcane. It was the only time I was ever told that. I was never told about that writing any other time.

There was another thing that had nothing to do with the newspaper—a freelance piece in another magazine about the truly wretched design of the Times newsroom. This was the first time they re-did it to accommodate the first generation of computers. Big carpet, tile floors and horrible lighting, and fake-wood Formica furniture. It was really tacky. The executive editor was quite upset, and thought I was disloyal. As an employee, I was supposed to say positive things about newspaper, no matter what.

When you were starting out, were you self-conscious about the role or responsibility of an architecture critic?

An architecture critic has a lot of authority but not much real power. Power is a much more raw and direct force. Authority is respect and trust. I don’t think architecture critics have the power. It used to be said that The New York Times theater critic can close a Broadway show. Well, that’s power. But nobody tears down a building if an architecture critic doesn’t like it.

The most important responsibility of the critic is not to be stupid, not to be vicious, and not to be ad hominem. And I believe I’ve never been any of those things as a critic. I was never interested in attacking people as people—I only wanted to discuss the work. Negativity was always often interpreted as personal attacks, which obviously they are not.

Frankly, as I look back at what I did at the Times, I am proud of all of it. The things I might redo are not the times when I was too harsh on something, but situations where I think I was too kind and too generous, too patient and too forgiving.

You’re willing to admit you’re wrong?

I’ve been wrong on some things. I think I’ve been a little bit too generous about good intentions. Therefore what enters in judgment—I’ve made over the years have come from the mistake of putting too much weight on good intentions, which can bring bad results.

What’s the most important quality for a critic?

I would say a combination of a passion and a thick skin—two things that don’t always go together. Angry responses or reactions are part of the territory. I am the happiest when people realize I’m just doing my job. I would hope [angry readers] would not personally direct their anger to me.

Speaking of having a thick skin, are you friendly with Michael Sorkin today?

Yes, we actually are. I have great respect for him. The issue on which we probably had our number of clashes was Times Square, many, many years ago. And that’s probably—if I were going to give you any example where my inclination to think in terms of good intentions rather than results was most manifest—it was in my writing on Times Square. I was far too slow to realize how badly conceived that project was, and how bad [Philip] Johnson’s design was initially. I don’t believe I was wrong in thinking that the basic premise of the master plan was basically right—it was basically right. The basic design schemes were terrible, and I was much too forgiving of them.

Was it the thick of postmodernism that clouded your judgment?

I think that might be right. And I think I was probably a bit more forgiving of postmodernism in general, too, because that, too, was about intentions. In the end, most of that stuff was more than transition architecture to wean us away from something. Now we’ve come to a much more mature modernism, a more intelligent modernism.

How has the role of the critic changed since you’ve left the Times?

Everyone interprets the role differently. I don’t think the role or obligation changes very much. The Times plays a very central role in the civic dialogue of New York.

How is your job different now writing for a weekly magazine?

It’s different. At The New Yorker, we don’t try or aspire to be exhaustive. We don’t try to cover everything. The New York Times has an obligation to cover everything. It’s like, “If a tree falls in the forest and Times Square is not there to write about it, does it make a sound?” Can you write about a project, but once it’s built. At the New Yorker, we just write about what we’re interested in, and what, over the course of the year, would make interesting types of pieces.

ANDREW YANG IS AN ASSOCIATE EDITOR AT AM.

Michael Sorkin started his career in criticism as the Village Voice in 1978 and went on to write the alternative weekly’s architecture column for ten years. In the Voice’s permissive, free-wheeling editorial environment, he developed an unfinishing, pugnacious writing style—indebted as much to the gonzo journalists of the 1960s as to his evolution in the design fields, from an essay to Jane Jacobs to Robert Venturi. He quickly became notorious as a silver-tongued antagonist of the architectural elite. Taking Philip Johnson to task for his Nazi past, as well as adopting a New York Times architecture critic Paul Goldberger (one of his unfor-gettable pieces was titled "Why Paul Goldberger Is So Beautiful [Example of Case of Times Square]"). Sorkin is the embodiment of the fearless critic, becoming a hero to many (and a thorn in the side of a few).

Since his Voice days, Sorkin, now 57, has continued to write, as well as practice and teach. In all his work, he has consistently championed environmental issues, sustainability, and social justice. With his regular contributions to the Critique column in Architectural Record, Sorkin continues to serve as the profession’s voice of outrage—and of moral reason.

Currently, he serves as director of the Graduate Program in Urban Design at CCNY, a program that he founded. His New York-based architectural practice, Michael Sorkin Studio, continues to promulgate his idealist, socialist vision in both practical and the-oretical projects. His Village Voice columns are reprinted in Exquisite Corpse (Verso, 1991) and most recent book is Starting From Zero: Reconstructing Downtown New York (Routledge, 2003) and he is currently preparing five other titles, including Indefensible Space: The Architecture of the National Insecurity State (Routledge), Work on the City (Monacelli), and Fifteen Minutes in Manhattan (Reaktion Press).

Why and how did you get started as an architecture critic?

I first started writing about architecture in college, but I had always been interested. My mother gave me a copy of [Lewis] Mumford’s The City in History when I first came out, which was always a touchstone for me. For years I thought Vaillyng (the Swedish sustainable town) was the template of the city of the future. Fortunately, I finally saw it! Having always been interested in both architecture and writing, criticism was a natural progression. When I got to New York I quickly started writing for the Village Voice, which allowed me to indulge another of my arords, left-wing politics.

Do you feel that left politics was much more of a cultural motivator when you started? And did that carry over into the architecture writing of the era?

Absolutely, I was under the spell of the doughty Marxism of the day. But there was very little architecture writing at the time—almost none in the daily press. Ada Louise Huxtable was the major exception, but there was very little architectural journalism in general. Some of the more influential cultural critics were anthologized in New York Times magazine, The Whole Earth Catalogue, and Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture—that were beginning to unsettle the moribund architectural climate from very different directions. continued on page 18
THE ARCHITECT’S NEWSPAPER NOVEMBER 16, 2005

Michael Sorkin

Reports of the death of modern architecture appear to have been greatly exaggerated. This, at any rate, seems to be the drift of the Museum of Modern Art's latest catalogue. Transformations in Modern Architecture. Instead of a Cultural Revolution we get "Let a Hundred Flowers Bloom." That was pinned on matte-board: Drexler couldn't make up his mind. But so was the pressure. Anybody with any sense knew that old-fashioned modernism, with all its imposed evils, had to go, but what would replace it? The megastuctural manicas seemed to have been superseded by that new thing we used to call the avant-garde, and the new avant garde we call the postmodernists. Everyone would have the quaint eclecticism or the new non-classicism. That was certain that everyone, except the most uncorrupted historians, was yapping for a change. Still, MoMA tempered its hiss, keeping but never summing up... All hope for clarification was pinned on Tarsilli's. Designers trumpeted over drafting tables, pens nervously raised, waiting to be told what to do next. Expectation was euphoric; fortune was right on its heels, a street down the Avenue shows a collection every season and the air is electric every time. The New York Department makes a major statement only a few times in a lifetime. What was the hope in this case? Alas, MoMA copped out. The show is like Hamlet on malt and his most articulate muse. Instead of a Cultural Revolution we get "Let a Hundred Flowers Bloom." Instead of leading, vocabulat... Of course, that's really not very interesting about the complications... Who's going to let you write? Here, the changes get worse. Alfred Philip Johnson gives an essay that is included but not even a single Albert Alper. Anybody could become Philip Johnson given the right historical cirumstances but only Alper could have been Alper. Vulgarly, with a perfect smugness, he said, "We will be a shining example of the idea. The Mall forms survive the last cut but Pier Luigi Nervi doesn't. Even a small triumph. Even a small success. But splendid Dutchman Herman Herzberger and Aldo Zan's are certain but not sure. And then there are the mur­ derous prides. Where is SITE? Wasn't the Guggenheim financed by a group of architects? We've taken up into the culture of building. I think that it is possible for architecture criticism to embody resistance, but it seems in most cases that irony and analysis stops short of availing an original position. People are too accepting of the will of the levianthan and they want their piece of the action.

Do you think that the same can be said of architecture these days? In which case do you feel about the state of architecture? I have mixed feelings. Most architecture and criticism are driven by motives so limited, by the bottom line or branding. But are both public projects and our architectural practice and my writing are always concerned with their social effects, their contribution to a more just environment. While I don't believe that architecture creates democracy, architects aren't mindless enough of the distributive effects of planning, the way in which architecture organizes privilege and equity. I think it's important for architecture to make propaganda for a better life, to resist the horror of Bush-world. I truly loathe the smug surfacer culture that seems to be in the saddles these days.

MICHAEL SORKIN continued from page 17

Robert Campbell

Since 1973, Robert Campbell has been architecture critic of The Boston Globe and for many years, has been a regular contributor to Architectural Record's "Column". At 68, Campbell is a consistent, informed voice on the scene, his writing enriched by his backgrounds in journalism and architecture. In a September 2004 Architectural Record column, Campbell wrote, “I’ve always thought that a good model for any critic is Alice, the heroine of Alice in Wonderland and Through the Looking-Glass. Alice is constantly running into creatures who are crazy—the Queen of Hearts, the Mad Hatter, the White Rabbit—but they’re crazy in a special way. They’re obsessed by ideas, and they ignore real-world experience...Alice isn’t fooled or overly impressed by her crazies, and neither should any critic be.” Campbell’s sobriety and unique insight, as one of the field’s own practitioners, earned him a Pulitzer Prize for distinguished criticism in 1996 and the medal for criticism from the American Institute of Architects (AIA) in 1980.

Why and how did you begin your career as a critic? I was an English major and I didn’t want to be a professor, so I went to Columbia University and tried journalism in New York for a few years, but I didn’t like it. I decided to become an architect, and got my degree from Harvard’s GSD in 1987. I had no thought of writing at that point, and didn’t write for many years, while I was practicing. I met an editor from The Boston Globe and started writing for the newspaper in 1973. There was a great deal of enthusiasm about criticism at that time. There was an interest in progressive thinkers, and there was a feeling that there was a new wave. I was around at the time, and I was impressed by her crazies, and neither should any critic be.” Campbell’s sobriety and unique insight, as one of the field’s own practitioners, earned him a Pulitzer Prize for distinguished criticism in 1996 and the medal for criticism from the American Institute of Architects (AIA) in 1980.

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What do you think of “activist criticism,” which Kamin, as well as Allan Temko in San Francisco, advocate? I certainly think that activist criticism is appropriate and can be a powerful critique. Just as a paradigm in the world, we are doing this. It is not my temperament to take that attitude, but it’s certainly a valid strategy.

What are your feelings about what’s going on in architecture?
today—the influence of computer technology on design, the rise of sustainable design, and other developments?

Certainly, computers are important. Young people are very good at them and they can make shapes that have never been made before. They are playing a game. It’s easy to dream up new shapes, but it’s difficult to give them meaning.

I am very interested in the growing importance of landscape architecture and the increasing integration of architecture and landscape architecture. As far as I can tell, many are increasingly symbolic. The bigger issues are sprawl and energy. I think, certainly, symbols are important, and architects should take opportunities to produce high-performance buildings that are also visually exciting in ways that time and history alone just can’t do. The only long-term green solution involves reorganizing the patterns by which we inhabit the earth.

How do you choose your subjects? How do you converse about a subject that many people may not understand?

I intuit what I think will be interesting. No one boys tickets to see buildings, so you have to think about what purpose you serve: to get people thinking and talking about the built environment. You might write about a building because it’s great, bad, or otherwise important. I choose all my own topics. As for conversing about a subject that people care about but may not understand, I do the best I can. I enjoy making things clear.

What can be done to enhance the level of architectural literacy in this country, where only 2 percent of construction involves architects?

The level of architectural literacy is going up rapidly. The subject is in the magazines and newspapers more than before. Maybe people in the media are interested in more of them moving from city to city, or because they are all traveling more.

Did you ever change your mind about anything you’ve written?

Of course I have... many times. But I don’t go back to revise. There’s not much room at a paper to say “I was wrong about that.”

Do you think that having been a practicing architect gives you a special understanding of buildings?

Yes, in the same way that art historians or others bring special perspectives. I understand how collaborative architecture is, and the importance of time and money.

What critics have been significant influences for you?

Jane Jacobs was a huge influence, but beyond her, I can’t really cite major architecture critics as my biggest influences. My models are from the English literature side of my background: Randall Jarrell, George Bernard Shaw, and Edmund Wilson.

You have talked about how the “single issue experts” are to blame for poorly designed cities, and that generalists—such as design-minded mayors—should be running the show. Why?

I don’t think traffic experts and others should be deciding issues of city design. You need a broader perspective. The age of the expert is over. I think of the worship of experts is way down; even doctors and lawyers don’t get the respect they once did. But I must note that it’s been replaced by healthy collaboration.

The saddest story affects the country’s two most important architectural magazines, which were once so influential. On the one hand, The New York Times Magazine (which I edited from 1982 to 1996) has lost its traditional critical influence and position in the debate about architecture. On the other hand, Domus has assumed a conventional and modish take on architecture as fashion. Domus has opened itself to the strong influences of the visual arts or those who wish to substitute buildings with “events,” influenced by Koolhaasian sociological spontaneity.

If we exclude the publications that deal strictly with the history of architecture, even the history of modernist architecture, the architectural essays typically produced in Italy can be divided into two major types: monographs on currently practicing architects (Italian and non) and specifically critical essays. While the specimens in former group are over-abundant, even in the rhetoric of their editorial presentation, examples of the latter are quite rare and tend to receive much less attention. A third type of publication is the architecture exhibition catalogue. In this category, particular importance is held—in my opinion, entirely negative—by the architectural reviews of the Venice Biennale, the Triennale di Milano, or other elaborate, event-like productions, such as the 2004 Arte et Architecture exhibition organized in Genoa by Germanno Celant, who concedes the confusing architecture and the visual arts, attempting to reduce the first to the second.

Naturally, plenty of writers are preoccupying themselves with fashionably affordable topics, such as computer-generated design, the politics of urban planning, ecology, or general aesthetic trends. This despite the fact that there are a number of twin possibilities are, in general, hurriedly deducted and poorly understood. The debate between ancient and modern is particularly relevant in the Italian historical-geographical context. It is contested on the one hand by the globalist and anti-continentalist, on the other by those that tend to make any work of architecture the minimal enlarged design object, and on the other by institutions that tend to concentrate debate on single, monumental examples rather than dealing with the design of the urban environment or the landscape; an essential part of the actual construction of architecture. In this arena, Salvatore Settis is undoubtedly one of the most seriously involved figures operating at the critical level. The professor at the Scuola Normale Superiore in Pisa has recently been appointed to the board of the American Research Institute for the History of Art writes for diverse publications, including Il Sole 24 Ore. Practicing architects write very little, unless it is for reasons of self-justification. If I had to name two writers who are dealing intelligently with theoretically-based issues, I would limit myself to mentioning Giovanni Servadio and Dino Salvioli

What twins [ Marilyn Monroe] and the [Guggenheim Bilbao] in my memory is that both of them stand for an American style of freedom. That style is voluptuous, emotional, intuitive, and irrational. It is hiding behind fluid, material, mercurial, fearless, and as fragile as a newborn child. It can’t resist doing a dance with all the voices that say “No.” It wants to take up a lot of space. And when the impulse strikes, it likes to let its dress fly up in the air.


If the very idea that has, arguably more than any other, helped define Southern California as a CENTURY has been rendered obsolete, what does that mean for the region’s vision of itself? Will density spell the end of the unique relationship between Angelinos and their houses? Will residential architecture simply fade as a factor in defining the city in the coming century? The great challenge for the city’s residential architects over the next couple decades will be making the old model of affordable charismata fresh and relevant again for a post-sprawl (or even a post-post-sprawl) Los Angeles.

Christopher Hawthorne, Los Angeles Times, July 7, 2005

Even at this early stage, the [planned East River esplanade] is one of the few current projects to give voice to a young generation of architects intent on redefining our vision of the contemporary metropolis. Along with the High Line—which transforms a section of gritty elevated tracks in downtown Manhattan into a public garden—it represents a clear and much-needed break from the quaint Jane Jacobs-inspired vision of New York that is threatening to transform Manhattan into a theme park version of itself, a place virtually devoid of urban texture. Reasons that there are still in the city who are culturally daring, even if their numbers at times seem to be dwindling.


Lincoln Center has sometimes seemed less the vibrant source of the neighborhood’s energy than the empty hole in the middle of the doughnut. Often there is more buzz on the sidewalk in front of the multiplex theater a couple blocks north, or amid the parade of mall-like retail stores that now line Lincoln Center, than there is at Lincoln Center.... Lincoln Center needs, desperately, a shot of adrenaline... Paul Goldfinger, The New York Times, July 7, 2005

From “What's Wrong With the MoMA?!” Architectural Record, January 2005 Robert Campbell

A critic is supposed to stimulate a dialogue, not be one. So much for my success with Sole 24 Ore. I seem to be one of only a few critics around who aren’t crazy about the new Museum of Modern Art in New York. Maybe I’ll change my tune a few more times—Sole 24 Ore—inversely recognizes my judgments sometimes, and it’s great to my credit—and if I do, I’ll perform a mea culpa. But for now... I’m in a state of shock. There’s nothing bad about it. It’s just that it isn’t good enough. It’s elegant, but it lacks life and imagination, and those are qualities we used to associate with modernism.

New museum critics are open with a blizzard of hope. It’s hard for critics not to be caught up in excitement. Years ago, that happened with M. P. Eustis East Building for the National Gallery in Washington. More recently, it happened with Herzog & de Meuron’s Tate Modern in London (I didn’t like either of them at the time and still don’t). And I think a consensus opinion, over the years, has been building. The AIA’s Recent Twenty-Five Year Award to the East Building. I recall when the East Building opened, the architect Jean Paul Carthan, who founded the AIA’s Committee on Design, said, “It’s an airline terminal. It’s a car and in most of the cases, I don’t think it works.” The edges of a vast, self-regarding, nearly empty confines. Anyone who pokes my problems with MoMA.

There isn’t any architecture. The design architect, Yeoh Tiongkip, was quoted more than once as saying that if MoMA given enough money, he could make the architecture even more architecturally succed ed. Most of the museum consists of an endless rabbit-warren of unidentical white-walled galleries with tack-littered ceilings. Every attempt is made to remove any sense of the presence of architecture. A typical gallery wall, for example, appears not to touch the ceiling, the floor, or the adjacent walls. Instead all surfaces are divided from one another by a thin recessed shadow line. The effect is to make the wall appear to be floating, without substance. It looks not like a wall, but like a white projection screen. The paintings on it, as a result, begin to feel like projected images. You are in the placeless, timeless world of the slide lecture. Because the wall doesn’t feel real, neither does the artwork. You begin to feel unreal yourself. Architecture has failed to result, begin to feel like projected images. You are in the.

Yoshio Taniguchi, was quoted more than once as saying of the art crammed into residual spaces around the museum. The effect is to make the wall appear to be floating, without substance. It looks not like a wall, but like a white projection screen. The paintings on it, as a result, begin to feel like projected images. You are in the placeless, timeless world of the slide lecture. Because the wall doesn’t feel real, neither does the artwork. You begin to feel unreal yourself. Architecture has failed to result, begin to feel like projected images. You are in the...

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Devyen Sudjic lives in an elegant Victorian house on the fringes of Regent's Park. In contrast to the opulence of the neighborhood, the room where we talk is rigorously stripped of detail, with austere white walls and a vast bleached wood table—not a book in sight. "Truth is," says Sudjic, "I'm between books right now." His latest, The Edifice Complex (just out in the U.S.), has, perhaps understandably, drained his formidable energies. The book, subtitled How the Rich and Powerful Shape the World, is a visceral, uncompromising analysis of the 21st century über-architect, whom Sudjic criticizes as venal, opportunistic, only too eager to deal with tyrants.

This critical stance is characteristic of Sudjic, who co-founded Blueprint in the mid-1980s specifically to provide an alternative perspective on the profession. Sudjic also made time to write books, including the highly acclaimed 100-Mile City (HarVest/HBJ Books, 1992), a scholarly assessment of late-20th century urbanism. A supreme networker, Sudjic was named editor of Domus in 2000. His stewardship of the Milan-based magazine transformed it into a truly international forum for architecture, art and design, which in turn made him an obvious choice to direct the 2002 Venice Architecture Biennale. He has also curated London exhibitions at the British Museum, the Royal Academy, and the Institute of Contemporary Arts. He is currently architecture critic for The Observer, the Sunday edition of the daily newspaper The Guardian.

How did you come to write about architecture?

My father was a journalist and my mother was hell-bent I shouldn't become one. Jeez, they had their work cut out for them. I, however, am a naturale, having been brought up to love magazines. When I was 10, my mother gave me my first break. After a year then editor of the Sunday Telegraph gave me my first break. After a year of work—this was the early 1980s—I reckoned that writing was, despite my father's dire warnings, the way to go. I certainly learned a great deal more about architecture as a writer than I had done studying it.

It wasn't long before you started Blueprint. What prompted you to do it? Did you feel architecture in the UK was too pompous or stuffy? Blueprint was meant to be a bit of a throwaway project, an opportunity for the architects to demolish the other culture. It looks best reduced to a huge on a letterhead or to the confined spaces of one of those Effie Tower in a sense. Sometimes papers have tables to about inspiration but ends only in the obvious. The search for the dramatic limitations of my skills—not least during my year out in the Chelsea offices of Chamberlain Powell & Bon, architects of the Barbican complex in East London—I was also editing the student newspaper—Bigchin I used to have at least an obituary of Philip Johnson for which some bright spark came up with "A Nazi Piece of Work." There's no going back from that one!

Can you identify key differences between criticism in the UK and that of U.S., or Italy, where you worked?

These are three very different cultures. Dogmatists were acutely aware how different the Anglo-Saxon discussion was from the Italian—never mind the difference that was the quality of the translation, or the sometimes maddening diffusion of the Italian language. Sometimes Anglo-Saxon directness translated into Italian offended people. I remember Mario Botta complaining to the magazine's owner that I had hired a gang of English mercenaries to disparage him. I suspect that Americans think that the Brits are a bit limited. We do not have the same intellectual rigor. In the newspapers, the U.S. gives its critics more space—2,000 words is common in The New York Times, whereas 900 is a standard length here. Personally I prefer not to write a detailed architectural description, I tend to talk about what a project means, rather than how it looks.

In a recent interview, Neil MacGregor, director of the British Museum, suggested that the basic principles of a museum should celebrate John Locke's civic humanism. Can you point to leading architects whom you feel champion the notion of civic humanism? I believe great cities are the product of every individual. If I feel most is not a conversation, no discussion. Don't get me wrong, I'm not against shift making buildings, but let's just not grab the next tower off the shelf, dust it off, and build it. There are inspired architects, great architects who want to engage in real ideas. The key thing is to create a forum where that's possible and it's the role of the critic to build that debate.

Do you believe that criticism has a direct effect on the evolution of architecture? Is there, or should there be, a tangible link? No. As Charles Jencks says, critics are the messenger boys.
ADA LOUISE HUXTABLE continued from page 14: protest my pieces. One time, a developer pulled a big advertising section because of something I wrote, but I was never blamed. The publisher only asked me, "Do you have all your facts and are they right?" It's a great lesson for all critics. You've got to have all your facts.

My feelings of insecurity were always before I wrote. I won't worry, Am I going to be able to write this piece? And I'd work doubly hard. I remember one the first pieces I wrote about Colonial Williamsburg. I wrote about how much of it was wishful thinking, how much was destroyed to build it, and how it was a false form of preservation that denigrated real history. I heard that later that they put up a sign there that read "Ada Louise Huxtable is a Tory!"

Who do you consider your audience?

I don't really ask myself that question when I'm writing. If you have enough belief and pleasure in what you are writing, and write in an understandable manner, then an audience finds you.

One complaint I've heard from lay readers about architecture criticism—particularly of Herbert Muschamp's writings—is that they think they must have a background in the field to understand it. That is the fault of the people writing it. A lot of writing has been self indulgent, really. You can imagine how I feel about it. The Times didn't know better, I suppose. It's as innocent about the field as anybody. Architecture criticism is still an uphill battle. That's why the responsibility of the critic is so great. It's the way my editor, Clifton Daniel, felt. He trusted me. He always said, "I knew if you got in trouble I'd hear about it soon enough."

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CATHY LANG HO IS AN EDITOR AT AN.

JOAN OCKMAN continued from page 17: combines smart visual commentary with informed historical contextualization. It's hard to say whether his greater-depth approach is sufficiently accessible to the general readership. I'm impressed, though, and look forward to following his writing more closely.

It is hardly surprising that in each case the critic reflects the newspaper and city in which he writes. It is also the case that, while all four write professionally, fluently, and at times with passion and verve, none approaches the commanding intellect and culture of, say, a Mumford, or the witty acuity of a Reyner Banham. Huxtable, in her classic "Will They Ever Finish Bruckner Boulevard?" period, used her podium to galvanize a broad base of support for urban improvement, as Jane Jacobs did during the same epoch with her blockbuster Death and Life of Great American Cities. More recently, Muschamp, for all his excesses, has the job of exposing the conditions in which architecture is produced and consumed; to paraphrase Manfred Tafuri, it's a matter of going backstage rather than continuing to observe the spectacle from a seat in the audience. Beyond this, it helps to love architecture and cities, and to write with a deep knowledge of history, a strong commitment to the public and environmental good, a precise understanding of how buildings are constructed, and (not least) a discerning eye.

JOAN OCKMAN, AN ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIAN, TEACHES AT COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY AND IS THE DIRECTOR OF THE TEMPLE HOYNE BUELL CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF AMERICAN ARCHITECTURE.

MARISSA BARTOLUCCI continued from page 17: own Palestinian citizens and neighbors. "Eminence has its responsibility," he observed, "which extends beyond the realm of professional practice." An intrepid thinker, a joker, a scholar, a moral iconoclast, Sorkin represents what every young architecture critic should aspire to be. Certainly, he is a model for Philip Nobel, who has enlivened the pages of Metropolis for the past few years. Nobel sure writes well. Like adolescent love letters, Nobel's columns can ache with emotion. And that's not a bad thing. He makes you believe great buildings matter. But the trouble with adolescents, who like Nobel swing between idealism and cynicism, is they're self-absorbed. No matter what Nobel writes about, it always comes back to him. At times he verges on slipping into Muschampian territory, which can lead, as we all know, to critical oblivion. Architecture needs smart, brave voices. Nobel's got one. If he can concentrate on substance, he might make more architects into readers. And just maybe improve the profession. MARISA BARTOLUCCI LIVES IN NEW YORK AND WRITES ABOUT DESIGN.

ROBERT CAMPBELL continued from page 19: the absence of experts, it is possible to observe the spectacle from a seat in the audience. Beyond this, it helps to love architecture and cities, and to write with a deep knowledge of history, a strong commitment to the public and environmental good, a precise understanding of how buildings are constructed, and (not least) a discerning eye.

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NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2005

THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER NOVEMBER 16, 2005

Lari Pittman Gladstone Gallery 515 West 24th St. www.gladstonegallery.com FLM & THEATER Shelter (Bill Morrison, Laurie Olinder, et al., 2006), 60 min. 6:00 p.m. Drawing Center 35 Wooster St. wwwdrawingcenter.org FRIDAY 18 LECTURES Alain Badiou Art's Imperative: Speaking the Unspoken 6:00 p.m. Center for Architecture 530 LaGuardia Pl. www.ainy.org SYMPOSIUM AIA New York Design Awards Presentation and Symposium Hilary Balson, et al. 6:00 p.m.–8:00 p.m. Center for Architecture 530 LaGuardia Pl. www.ainy.org WEDNESDAY 30 LECTURE Gardens in the Spirit of Place 6:00 p.m. New York School of Interior Design 170 East 70th St. www.nyuid.edu SYMPOSIUM Mathias Wackernagel, et al. One Planet Budgeting 6:00 p.m. CUNY Graduate Center 385 5th Ave. www.cuny.edu EXHIBITION OPENING Standard Gauge: Film Works by Morgan Fisher Whitney Museum of American Art 945 Madison Ave. www.whitney.org DECEMBER THURSDAY 1 EXHIBITION OPENING Cities: 10 Years of Approaches to City and Open Territory Design Harvard Graduate School of Design 48 Quincy St., Cambridge www.gsd.harvard.edu FRIDAY 2 LECTURE Sara Caples, Everardo Jefferson, Kaci Arief Architecture and Books 6:30 p.m. Center for Architecture 536 LaGuardia Pl. www.skyscraper.org MONDAY 5 SYMPOSIUM Technology: Hit or Miss Wilbur Hasbrook, Winka Dubbeldam, et al. 6:00 p.m. CUNY Graduate Center 385 5th Ave. www.cuny.edu SATURDAY 10 EXHIBITION OPENING Breaking & Entering: Art and the Video Game PaceWildenstein 545 West 22nd St. www.pacewildenstein.com SYMPOSIUM AIA New York Design Awards Presentation and Symposium Hilary Balson, et al. 6:00 p.m.–8:00 p.m. Center for Architecture 530 LaGuardia Pl. www.ainy.org WEDNESDAY 30 LECTURE Gardens in the Spirit of Place 6:00 p.m. New York School of Interior Design 170 East 70th St. www.nyuid.edu SYMPOSIUM Mathias Wackernagel, et al. One Planet Budgeting 6:00 p.m. CUNY Graduate Center 385 5th Ave. www.cuny.edu EXHIBITION OPENING Standard Gauge: Film Works by Morgan Fisher Whitney Museum of American Art 945 Madison Ave. www.whitney.org

IN DEPTH: THE HOUSE OF SPIRITUAL RETREAT BY EMILIO AMBASZ
Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53rd Street November 23 to March 26

The most recent exhibition in MoMA's In Depth series, the evocative and stunning House of Spiritual Retreat by New York-based architect and designer Emilio Ambasz, proves that a single building can certainly be worthy of its own show. Originally designed in 1976, the architect's private residence was finally built in 2004 in Seattle, Spain amid an arid landscape of gently rolling hills. "The myth and mystery of the house is a perfect self-portrait by the architect," noted Tita de Carlo, curator of the show.

The design acknowledges regional typology while criti­
cizing its efficiency. While the house's two giant walls sug­
gest the archetypal Andalusian courtyard residence, this
vernacular notion only goes so far as they serve little function
beyond demarcating the space from the surreal landscape.

The living quarters of the house are recessed below ground
to use natural insulation as protection against the blistering
heat of the area while thin and curving skylights let in light.

The show contains two models and several drawings of
the house, documenting it from concept to execution. Some
of the exhibition's serene photographs show the startling
contrast between the house and the surrounding landscape
while others play up its fantastical quality with images of
sheep horses grazing nearby. MoMA's series is impressive
in its range: Ambasz's project is following the recent closure
of MoMA's first exhibition, on the transformation
of New York's High Line into a park.
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More than a century after taking off, the concept of flight still inspires awe, an enduring symbol of human progress and optimism. Aerospace Design is a taut, thoughtfully edited exhibition that presents the phenomenon of modern flight as a feat of ingenuity, engineering, and, ultimately, design. Organized by John Zukowsky, chief curator of the Intrepid Sea, Air, and Space Museum, in conjunction with NASA’s Tony Springer and Tom Dixon, the selection of artifacts, taken from NASA’s archive, showcases the far-reaching impact of aerospace research and iconography, from the Vornado fan to modern architecture.

While Aerospace Design charts major milestones in NASA’s history—from the 1915 founding of the National Advisory Committee on Aeronautics to the 1981 space shuttle—chronological narrative plays second fiddle to formal explorations. Photographs, charts, and models illustrate how wing configuration, proportionality, material selection, computer-aided technologies, and other design variables abetted achievements like supersonic flight (the F-102’s “wasp waist”) and improved performance of warplanes.

Aerospace Design: The Art of Engineering from NASA’s Aeronautical Research
Pratt Manhattan Gallery
144 West 14th Street, New York
Through December 17

Virginia, is quietly compelling.

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Jennifer Coutts Clay’s Jettliner Cabins, published in 2003, is a testament to the Wright brothers’ first sustained flights at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina, and their impact on the development of aviation. The book, which is a companion to the 1990 exhibition at the Smithsonian Institution’s National Air and Space Museum, provides a comprehensive overview of the Wright brothers’ contributions to aviation, as well as the broader historical context of their work.

The book, written by Jennifer Coutts Clay and published by Wiley-Academy, is divided into five main sections:

1. **History of Aviation**
   - The Wright brothers’ first flight
   - The development of early aircraft
   - The impact of Wright brothers’ work on aviation

2. **Design Considerations**
   - The Wright brothers’ aerodynamic design principles
   - The role of wind tunnels in aircraft design
   - The influence of the Wright brothers’ work on modern aviation

3. **Materials and Construction**
   - The use of materials in Wright brothers’ aircraft
   - The evolution of aircraft construction techniques
   - The impact of Wright brothers’ work on aircraft manufacturing

4. **Engineering and Performance**
   - The Wright brothers’ engineering innovations
   - The performance of early aircraft
   - The influence of Wright brothers’ work on aircraft design

5. **Impact and Legacy**
   - The influence of Wright brothers’ work on aviation history
   - The impact of Wright brothers’ work on modern aviation
   - The Wright brothers’ legacy in aviation

The book also includes a wealth of photographs, diagrams, and illustrations, providing a comprehensive overview of the Wright brothers’ work and its impact on aviation.

In addition to the Wright brothers’ contributions, the book also covers the development of early aviation, focusing on the role of wind tunnels in aircraft design and the impact of Wright brothers’ work on modern aviation.

The book is written in a clear and concise style, providing readers with a comprehensive overview of the Wright brothers’ work and its impact on aviation. It is a valuable resource for anyone interested in aviation history or the Wright brothers’ contributions to aviation.

The Wright brothers’ first flight at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina, in 1903, is a testament to their ingenuity and determination. Their work laid the foundation for modern aviation, and their legacy continues to inspire and influence aviation today.

Overall, Jennifer Coutts Clay’s Jettliner Cabins is a valuable resource for anyone interested in aviation history or the Wright brothers’ contributions to aviation. It provides a comprehensive overview of the Wright brothers’ work and its impact on modern aviation.

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**Flight Plan**

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How can an architect mediate between city officials, banks, NGOs, and the North American Free Trade Agreement to legalize and improve the living conditions of immigrant communities? Teddy Cruz, an architect who teaches in the Visual Arts Department at the University of California in San Diego, tried to answer this question in a lecture he gave last month at Columbia, as the winner of the 2004-2005 James Stirling Memorial Lecture Competition.

Cruz sees the architect as a new kind of policymaker, obliged to act within unconventional urban systems. Since the 1990s, the Guatemalan-born, San Diego-based architect’s work has centered on housing and community centers, primarily serving immigrants. In 2000 he started collaborating with Casa Familiar, a nonprofit community-based organization in San Ysidro, an American city near the U.S.-Mexico border. Cruz and Casa Familiar are currently working together on two projects that not only answer the needs of local residents but also propose strategies against gentrification, as well as ways of financing low-income housing through microloans. Living Rooms at the Border, a conceptual housing project containing 12 rental units for senior citizens, organized around a flexible green that could double as an open-air mercado; and Mi Pueblo: Affordable Housing Overlay Zone (AHOZ), an urban plan to reclaim the town’s...
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Within days of its unveiling, Rachel Whiteread's Embankment, installed in the grand turbine hall of the Tate Modern, provoked an avalanche of comment, not all flattering. Some speculated that the space forced Whiteread's hand, obliging her to respond to its grandeur. Others argued that her recurring theme of loss, so poetically expressed in "House," was now crumbling, as the Turner Prize

In fact, the installation is an impressive, haunting, ambivalent piece. It makes us wonder, what is it exactly that we are witnessing? The attic of a half-forgotten life, or the sterile corridors of a morgue? As ever, Whiteread strives to find an end note to the process of clearing out her late mother's house, an homage to the many intricacies of another woman's life. Embankment has a curious architectural quality—it's not an impossible task, it just takes a bit of editorial discipline.

The mazelike installation, despite its welcoming scale, cannot be wholly inhabited by the visitor. As a result, the visitor feels a bit like an intruder, rummaging unbidden through a baffling sequence of opaque spaces, struggling to find clues in a snowbound necropolis. Whereas the Teatro's architects Andrea Palladio and Vincenzo Scamozzi resorted to tilting floors and distorted perspective to conjure visual trickery, Whiteread plays with unnerving contrasts—between fluid and static, seen and unseen, discovered and elusive. Far from repetitive, Whiteread's work over the last decade elaborates and reinterprets with increasingly layered delicacy her perceptive response to architectural space, especially the forgotten domestic rituals once played out and remembered, like most of inSite's projects) converted a parking lot into "a place of people rather than cars," and included a wood-frame structure that, after the exhibition, would be transported to Tijuana and given to a family. He referred to a common practice in San Diego, whereby bungalows that are scheduled for demolition to make way for new developments are sold in Tijuana, where they are mounted on a one-story metal frame, creating a local version of Le Corbusier's Maison Domino. "Tijuana recycles the leftover buildings of San Diego," noted Cruz, "recombining them into fresh scenarios, creating countless new opportunities open to the unpredictability of time and programmatic contingency."

"Very easily, one risks romanticizing these environments and, with a sort of ethnographic gaze, patronizing their fragile conditions," he continued, while showing some of his housing studies. "We cannot forget that they are the product of a historical center with ready-made housing."

Cruz touched on these projects briefly, devoting the bulk of his lecture to discussing border conditions, particularly where San Diego meets Tijuana. His research centers on the small yet significant physical, economic, legislative, and cultural gap between these two cities, and how this gap affects the urbanism of both. Art has been a crucial way for Cruz to transgress the disconnection between the installation and the space, in fact, there are deliberate reverberations. For example, the translucent white cubes echo the box-like extrusions that architects Herzog & de Meuron provided to allow viewing galleries above the vast space—a space that Whiteread has made part warehouse, part archive. Only the tapering, Babel-like tower above the vast space—some that Whiteread was striving to find an end note to her composition. Nonetheless, Embankment is an impressive, haunting, ambivalent piece. It makes us wonder, what is it exactly that we are witnessing? The attic of a half-forgotten life, or the sterile corridors of a morgue? As ever, Whiteread keeps us guessing.

ROBERT TORDAY IS AN ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR AT ING MEDIA, LONDON, AND WRITES FOR ARCHITECTS' JOURNAL AND ICON MAGAZINE.
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In the weeks since President George Bush's speech in New Orleans' Jackson Square, in which he promised to spare no effort in rebuilding the area, FEMA has alarmed the country to advance any plan for the return of evacuees to temporary housing within the city or to connect displaced locals with reconstruction jobs. In fact, new barriers are being erected against their return. In Mississippi's ruined coastal cities, as well as in metropolitan New Orleans, locals are being galvanized by rumors of gentrification and soaring land values, beginning to institute mass evictions. Although the oft-cited Lower Ninth Ward is actually a bastion of blue-collar homeownership, most poor New Orleanians are renters.

Civil-rights lawyer Bill Quigley has described how renters have returned "to find furniture on the street and strangers living in their apartments at higher rents, despite an order by the Governor that no one can be evicted before October 25. Rents in the dry areas have doubled and tripled."

Secretary of Housing Alfonso Jackson, meanwhile, seems to be working to fulfill his notorious prediction that New Orleans is "not going to be as black as it was for a long time, ever again." Charlotte Jones, spokesperson for the Forest Park Tenants Association, recently protested that the agencies in charge of these housing complexes, including HUD, "are using allegations of storm damage to these complexes as a pretext for expelling working-class African-Americans, in a blatant attempt to co-opt our homes and sell them to developers to build high-priced housing."

Minority homeowners also face relentless pressures not to return. Insurance compensation, for example, is typically too small to allow homeowners in the eastern wards of New Orleans to rebuild if and when authorities re-open their neighborhoods.

Similarly, the Small Business Administration—so efficient in recapitalizing the San Fernando Valley in the aftermath of the 1994 Los Angeles earthquake—has so far dispersed only a few million dollars despite increasingly desperate pleas from tens of thousands of homeowners and small businesspeople facing imminent foreclosure or bankruptcy.

As a result, not just the black working class but also the black professional and business middle classes are now facing economic extinction while Washington dawdles. Tens of thousands of blue-collar white, Asian, and Latino residents of afflicted Gulf communities also face de facto expulsion from the region, but only the removal of African-Americans is actually being advocated as policy. Since Katrina made landfall, conservatives—beginning with Congressman Richard Baker’s (R-LA) infamous comment, "We finally cleaned up public housing in New Orleans. We couldn’t do it, but God did"—have openly gloated over the possibilities for remaking New Orleans in a GOP image. Republican interest in reducing the black Democratic vote in New Orleans—the balance of power in state elections—resonates with the oft-expressed desire of local elites to purge the city of "problem people."

As one major French Quarter landowner told Der Spiegel, "The hurricane drove poor people and criminals out of the city and we hope they don’t come back. The party’s finally over for these people and now they’re going to have to find someplace else to live in the United States."

The architectural heritage of New Orleans is typically too small to allow homeowners, most poor New Orleanians are renters. The secretary of housing Alfonso Jackson, meanwhile, seems to be working to fulfill his notorious prediction that New Orleans is "not going to be as black as it was for a long time, ever again."

The New Urbanism meets the Old South into this fraught and sinister situation now blunders the circuslike spectacle of the Congress of New Urbanism (CNU), the architectural cult founded by Miami-designer Andres Duany and Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk of Duany Plater-Zyberk (DPZ). Twenty years ago, when Duany was first barnstorming the nation's architecture schools and preservation societies, New Urbanism seemed to offer an attractive model for building socially diverse and environmentally sustainable communities based on a systematization of older City Beautiful principles such as a pedestrian scale, traditional street grids, an abundance of open space, and a mixture of land uses, income groups, and building forms. In practice, however, this diversity has never been achieved.

Despite the populist language of the CNU manifesto, Duany has always courted corporate imaginers, mega-developers, and politicians. In the mid-1990s, HUD, under Secretary Henry Cisneros incorporated New Urbanist ideas into many of its HOPE VI programs. Originally conceived as replacement housing for the poor, HOPE VI quickly morphed into a new strategy for replacing the poor themselves. Strategically sited public-housing projects like New Orleans' St. Thomas Homes were demolished to make way for neo-traditionalist townhouses and stores (in the St. Thomas case, a giant Wal-Mart) in the New Urbanist spirit. These mixed-use, mixed-income developments were typically advertised as little utopias of diversity but, as in St. Thomas, the real dynamic was exclusionary rather than inclusionary, with only a minority of project residents being rehoused on site. Nationally, HOPE VI led to a net loss of more than 50,000 units of desperately needed low-income housing.

Smart developers have been quick to put New Urbanist haos over their otherwise rampant land grabs and neighborhood demolitions. While the architects like Paul Weyrich have increasingly recognized the obvious congruence between political traditionalism and architectural nostalgia, Weyrich, the founding president of the Heritage Foundation, recently wrote that "New Urbanism needs to be part of the next conservatism," a conservatism that remakes cities by expelling their criminal underclasses. (On Hurricane Katrina, Weyrich strongly defended House Speaker J. Dennis Hastert's right to question whether New Orleans, with its welfare state and entitlement mentality—"a prototype for Liberals"—should be rebuilt at all.)

Weyrich was the spiritual bridesmaid, at least, during the recent nuptials between the CNU's Andreas Duany and Halina Barbour, the sleazy tobacco lobbyist and chair of the Republican National Committee who became governor of Mississippi by wrapping himself in the Confederate battle flag. Barbour is trying to extract as much long-term political and economic advantage from Katrina as possible. One of his declared priorities, for example, is bringing the casinos ashore into larger, more Las Vegas-like shoreline property values and squelch any debate about resettling the population on defensible higher ground. A rather brilliant stroke for Barbour to invite the CNU to help Mississippi rebuild its Gulf Coast "the right way." The first phase was a so-called mega-charrette, held October 11 to 14, which brought 120 New Urbanists together with local officials and business groups to brainstorm strategies for the physical reconstruction of their communities.

Duany whipped up a revivalistic fervor that must have been pleasing to Barbour and other descendants of slave-owners: "The architectural heritage of Mississippi is fabulous... really, really marvelous."

With Gone with the Wind as their apparent script, the CNU teams spent a frenzied week trying to show the locals how they could replace their criminal underclasses. (On Hurricane Katrina, Weyrich strongly defended House Speaker J. Dennis Hastert's right to question whether New Orleans, with its welfare state and entitlement mentality—"a prototype for Liberals"—should be rebuilt at all.)

Mike Davis teaches in the history department of U.C. Irvine. His forthcoming book, Planet of Slums, is due out on October 25.

A portion of this article appeared on Mother Jones' blog on October 22.
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