HENRY URBACH NAMED ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN CURATOR AT SFMOMA

The San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (SFMoMA) has named Henry Urbach as the Helen Hilton Raiser Curator of Architecture and Design. Urbach is a gallerist who has run Henry Urbach Architecture (HUA) in New York since 1997. He succeeds Joseph Rosa, who left the position nearly a year ago.

SFMoMA is one of the leading contemporary art museums in the country, and one of the few major museums with an extensive architecture and design department with a collection and a fulltime curator position. The spot has been vacant since June 2005, when Rosa resigned to take over the Art Institute of Chicago's architecture and design department, which he hopes to expand (see "Wanted Curators," continued on page 7).

FENCED OUT

The United States and Mexico share nearly 2,000 miles of border spanning four states; soon, 370 miles of it will be fenced off, following the Senate Judiciary Committee's May 17th approval to fund its construction. The Senate's measure is a scaled-down version of a measure passed last December by the House of Representatives that called for 700 miles of fencing. Both provisions are part of larger legislative efforts to address the problem of illegal immigration. But since the particulars of the two bills are at odds—the House version focuses heavily on enforcement, while the Senate's includes provisions for naturalizing many of the estimated 12 million illegal aliens—it is unclear how much of the fence will be built. Several citizens groups who support the idea of a fully fenced or patrolled border have already taken matters into their own hands. The Minuteman Civil Defense Corporation (MCDC), an organization based in Scottsdale, Arizona, has begun erecting fences along the border on private land. Senator Jeff Sessions of Alabama (R) proposed the amendment continued on page 13.

ICE ARCHITECTURE BIENNALE TO SPOTLIGHT 16 CITIES.

FOR FULL STORY, SEE PAGE 10.
CLIMB IN, FASTEN YOUR SEAT BELT, & TAKE A TEST DRIVE!

REGISTER NOW for a free, half-day Test Drive! Come to one of our training labs in the morning or afternoon, get some brief instruction, and then get hands-on and put the software of your choice through its paces. (And, don't forget to put a friend in the passenger seat!)

➤ RESERVE YOUR SEAT at www.microdesk.com/events/tan

Shift Gears From Test Drive to Training!

Once you've completed your Test Drive, shift into overdrive and get trained on Autodesk's newest releases with Microdesk, an Autodesk Authorized Training Center (ATC).

Train Your Way

CUSTOM: Tailoring a class to your specific goals is the best way to ensure that your CAD staff learns exactly what they need to know in the shortest amount of time.

ONLINE: An excellent option for firms with many locations. We still address your specific needs, and everyone can train without traveling and incurring expenses.

ONSITE: Can't come to us? We'll come to you! Custom courses can be scheduled at our lab facilities or our MOBILE LABS can easily bring the laptops to your firm for training.

Why train with an ATC? You not only get quality training that exceeds your expectations, you also get:

- Authorized Autodesk product training on the latest releases
- Certified ATC Instructors
- Autodesk Official Training Courseware (AOTC)
- Certificates of Completion from Autodesk Training Center

Why Microdesk? When people complete a Microdesk training class, they leave knowing 48% more of the functionality they need to reduce redundant tasks and increase time bringing ideas to life. Call us today or visit www.microdesk.com/training/knowitall and learn how our training can help you retain people, improve processes, decrease stress, increase skills, and increase profits.
Through October 25

WITNESS THE FUTURE OF ARCHITECTURE

ZAHA HADID

Zaha Hadid Architects. Phaeno Science Center, Wolfsburg, Germany, 1999-2005. Photo © Werner Huthmacher

GuggenheimMUSEUM

5th Ave at 89th St
Sat – Wed 10am – 5:45pm
Fri 10am – 7:45pm

Information 212 423 3500
Buy Advance Tickets at guggenheim.org/hadid

This exhibition is made possible by

Oldcastle Glass®

Where glass becomes architecture™

AIA Members are invited to view the exhibition at no charge as guests of Oldcastle Glass. Visit www.oldcastleglass.com for details.
A watertight lighting concept
It's happening everyday all over the world, though it often goes almost unnoticed at first. Enthusiastic building owners meet up with inspired designers and the result is original and visionary architecture. Pragmatic and poetic, each structure is part of the world we'll live in tomorrow - and far too good to be allowed to sink into darkness after sunset. But we have now colonized the night with technology. Light has become a material, the fourth dimension of architecture. The architecture of light creates the images that go around the world. ERCO provides the tools for shaping and mastering light, tools for use in interiors and exteriors alike, whatever the weather. These durable, powerful and precise luminaires use state-of-the-art, environmentally friendly light sources such as LEDs and metal halide lamps, so that architecture is not only turned into a nocturnal landmark but has a clear conscience too.

Light is the fourth dimension of architecture: www.erco.com
The future begins with a visionary system.

Visit our showroom or request detailed information.

USA: USM U. Schaerer Sons Inc., 28-30 Greene St., New York, NY 10013, Phone 212-371-1230, info@usm.com
International: USM U. Schäfer Söhne AG, 3110 Münzberg/Switzerland, Phone +41 31 720 72 72, info@usm.com
Showrooms:
- New York 28–30 Greene Street
- Berlin Französische Strasse 48
- Bern Gerechtigkeitgasse 52
- Hamburg Neuer Wall 73–75
- Milan Via S. Radegonda 11
- Paris 23 Rue de Bourgogne

www.usm.com
The architecture community in California works under similar conditions to that in its blue state sister New York. They both exist in overheated real estate markets with sophisticated local clients and patrons. Both are comprised of dozens of internationally acclaimed design studios, large corporate offices working around the globe, and hundreds of smaller firms scrambling for private residences and challenging new public buildings. Each region has several high-quality architecture schools providing a constant stream of new talent to local firms and teaching gigs for professionals young and old (in many cases, financially subsidizing practices), and forming an important intellectual network for all.

But despite the perception that architects in big cities like New York and Los Angeles are all savvy practitioners who engage in sophisticated dialogue with their contemporaries, when we started publishing The Architect’s Newspaper in November 2003 we discovered that, in reality, many architects in New York felt disconnected from each other and from the media. We felt we can take some credit for fostering a sense of community among the design professionals in New York by providing a platform for stories about important local work—which does not always find a place in the design monthlies, let alone daily newspapers or city weeklies.

Our regional focus has been key in enabling us to bridge conversations among New York City’s various design factions, cliques, and camps. Our notion from the start was to publish other regional editions of The Architect’s Newspaper. We have taken the National AIA Convention (held at the L.A. Convention Center from June 8 to 10) as a good occasion to test the idea of a West Coast edition. Our hope is that next year, our California edition will be permanent, followed thereafter by a Chicago/Midwest edition. We look forward to hearing what our readers think of our effort.

The enormously able Greg Goldin, architecture critic for Los Angeles magazine, guest-edited this issue, and we are fortunate to have the contributions of many other notable L.A. voices, including Frances Anderton, Michael Webb, Sam Hall Kaplan, Ken Ehrlich, and Morris Newman. We would also like to bid farewell and good luck to Gunnar Hand, who has been with us as an editorial intern and assistant for two years. Armed with his masters in city and regional planning from the Department of Regional Planning. His new employers—and the city of L.A.—will soon learn how lucky they are to have him.

Urbach will start in September and, in addition to thematic shows, hopes to curate more installation-based exhibitions at the museum just as he did in his gallery. At HUA, Urbach worked with artists who skirt the line between art and architecture, including Lebbeus Woods and Kiki Smith as well as firms Freecell, Aziz + Auguste, Langan & Bell, and LOTEK, which also designed Urbach’s gallery. Urbach, who is 42, received a master’s degree in the history and theory of architecture from Princeton University, and is also currently a Ph.D candidate there. He also holds a master of architecture from Columbia University.

"The fundamental premise of Henry Urbach Architecture was to create a forum where contemporary art and contemporary architecture could meet," said Urbach. "The idea was to appropriate the model of a commercial art gallery to advance current architectural practices. I see some of that mission moving forward into this new context."

ANDREW YANG

DEPARTMENT HEADS WANTED continued from front page exhibit a wide range of approaches to renewing leadership positions—from injecting new energy from outside sources to standing by the old guard and looking close to home. Yet surprisingly, none of them seem concerned with star architect power, either opting for a below-the-radar stand-by or opening the door to a relatively untested newcomer.

The dichotomy of methods can be seen most clearly between the two University of California schools, as Berkeley assistant professor Lisa Iwamoto attested. "It’s amazing that Berkeley and UCLA are in the same system because they’re run so differently," said Iwamoto—who has been short-listed for the UCLA chair. "It’s refreshing to see how [UCLA] operates like a smaller institution. Looking outside its faculty for candidates is emblematic of that," Iwamoto reports that at Berkeley, "there was a move to look outside the school for candidates, but it was not supported by the entire faculty," she said. Yet despite some strife, she said, "everyone is on board with Mary.”

Iwamoto, principal of IS-A IwamotoScott Architecture, was also surprised that UCLA would consider such a varied list of candidates, ranging from herself, with no prior administrative experience, to Andrew Zago, former director of the master of architecture program at City College in New York. The other two finalists are cultural historian Jeffrey Schnapp of the Stanford Humanities Lab and Japanese architect Hiroshi Abe. According to inside sources, Abe, who is based in Sendai, Japan, is the university’s choice for the chair, and an announcement could be imminent. University officials would not confirm or deny these developments. According to UCLA Dean of Art and Architecture Christopher Waterman, whoever assumes the new chair will be instrumental in growing the department’s faculty and implementing a proposed architecture-focused bachelors’ degree. The school currently only offers graduate-level architecture degrees.

Runners up for the deanship at USC include NBBJ design principal Peter Pan; Dana Cuff, professor of Urban Planning at UCLA; Qingyun Ma, principal of the Shanghai firm MADA spmm; and Margaret Crawford, professor of urban planning and design at Harvard’s Graduate School of Design. Like UCLA’s shortlist, USC’s reflects a wide swath of experience levels and a change from previous hiring practices. "Traditionally, we’ve had a dean who comes from professional practice," said USC assistant professor Kara Bartelt. The current candidates include two with mostly academic backgrounds—a move that may take into account the school’s addition of a new graduate center that emphasizes research.

As USC gets more theoretical, UCLA may be experiencing a theory backlash. UCLA professor Craig Hodgetts postulated. "I think in general [in seeking a new chair], there is a desire to move toward a practitioner as continued on page 15
L'ale

Lighting fixture designed by William Pedersen

A 4'8" long, compact fluorescent pendant designed to be used singly or in multiples at the same or varying heights. Dimmable indirect/direct with slender line voltage suspension/power cable.

AIA National Convention booth #705

Ivalo Lighting Incorporated
www.ivalolighting.com
7136 Suter Road
Coopersburg, PA 18036
telephone 610.282.7472
cable 610.282.7600
The garden will be sited on the roof of a parking garage behind the museum, and will be accessible from the museum's top floor via a bridge. The winning scheme was selected among six proposals in an invited competition that included Mark Cavagnero Associates, envelopeA+D, Fougeron Architecture, Kuth/Ranieri, and Plau Architecture. David Meckel, chair of SFMoMA's Architecture and Design Accessions Committee and director of research and planning at California College of the Arts, oversaw the competition. Principals Mark Jensen and Mark Macy wanted the garden to be a part of the museum, not an extension of it, so they proposed replacing the fifth floor's entire rear wall with a panoramic window. The passageway is generously proportioned, to keep an easy flow between the two structures. The project has not yet been budgeted or scheduled.

CATHY LANG HO

**OPEN + BOUTIQUE**

Since taking over the menswear collection at Dior, designer Hedi Slimane has given the brand a consistently modern and elegant image, where skinny men are uniformed in even skinnier neckties and close-fitting black suits. The fashion designer has also been instrumental in designing the global outposts of Dior Homme, from Tokyo to Shanghai to New York. Dior Homme recently opened in Beverly Hills—the brand’s 15th stand-alone men’s store. Though each outpost is custom-designed, Slimane sticks to a palette of stark black and crisp white, and every store features an art installation. Beverly Hills got a completely Euclidian space, 1,300 square feet shaped by sleek planes of shelves with illuminated surfaces, as well as thin, grid-like hangar modules. Installation artist Daniel Arsham created wall sculptures in the fitting rooms that seem to grow from the walls, plastic scales that overtake benches and mirrors. (Ugo Rodinone and Doug Aitken have done art installations in other shops.) Refreshingly spare, Dior Homme is a perfect physical interpretation of the brand’s subtleness.

**SEMOMA PLANTS NEW SCULPTURE GARDEN ON PARKING GARAGE ROOF**

San Francisco firm Jensen & Macy Architects has won a competition to design a 14,400-square-foot sculpture garden for the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (SFMoMA). The garden will be sited on the roof of a parking garage behind the museum, and will be accessible from the museum's top floor via a bridge. The winning scheme was selected among six proposals in an invited competition that included Mark Cavagnero Associates, envelopeA+D, Fougeron Architecture, Kuth/Ranieri, and Plau Architecture. David Meckel, chair of SFMoMA's Architecture and Design Accessions Committee and director of research and planning at California College of the Arts, oversaw the competition.

Principals Mark Jensen and Mark Macy wanted the garden to be a part of the museum, not an extension of it, so they proposed replacing the fifth floor's entire rear wall with a panoramic window. The passageway is generously proportioned, to keep an easy flow between the two structures. The project has not yet been budgeted or scheduled.

CATHY LANG HO

**Imagine:**

Your firm is awarded the design of a new project and you don't have a full team.

Now imagine having a resource to get you ready.

It's all about people.

**Microsol Resources Placement Division**

212-465-8734 • microsolresources.com
Venice Biennale To Focus on Cities

On Friday, May 12, the President of the Venice Biennale, Davide Croff, and Richard Burdett, its director, hosted a press conference at the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) to announce the theme of the 10th Architecture Biennale. According to Croff, after the board of directors settled on the theme Cities, Architecture, and Society, they turned to Burdett—who founded the Cities Program at the London School of Economics—to realize the exhibition. Milanese designer Aldo Cibic will design the exhibition. Since it was launched in 1980 as an alternate-year sibling to the Venice Art Biennale, the Architecture Biennale has become the most important international exhibition of architecture, design, and urban planning. It will be held in the Biennale’s primary exhibition space, theArsenale, and around the Giardini, from September 10 to November 19.

Burdett explained that the exhibition will focus on 16 world cities: Shanghai, Mumbai, and Tokyo in Asia; Caracas, Mexico City, Bogotá, and São Paulo in Latin America; Johannesburg and Cairo in Africa; London, Barcelona, Istanbul, Milan, and Berlin in Europe; and finally Los Angeles and New York in North America. Each city’s presentation will be organized locally; New York City Director of City Planning Amanda Burden is in charge of the New York exhibition. Burden also spoke at the MoMA press conference, and said she wanted to feature some of the major planning projects currently underway in the city, like the High Line Park, the conversion of an elevated freight line into a greensward; Fresh Kills, the transformation of a landfill in Staten Island into one of the largest urban parks in the country; and the creation of the East River esplanade. She described these as “projects that will channel the future growth of New York.”

The Los Angeles portion of the exhibition is still in development, but several elements are in place. Jeffrey Inaba will coordinate the section, which includes a film by students from UCLA’s department of regional and urban planning about the city’s public space and a written profile of the city by author D. J. Waldie.

The 40 countries that will be presenting work in their own national pavilions typically (though by no means always) follow the lead of the fair’s theme. The United States exhibit will be curated by the editors of Architectural Record magazine (see “U.S. Curators Named for Biennale,” AA/08_05.10.2006), and will focus on the rebuilding of New Orleans. According to Burdett, the Italian pavilion will feature new directions in Italian urban thinking; it will be organized by the Roman architect Franco Purini. Of the French pavilion, he said, “The curators themselves will be moving into their pavilion for the duration of the fair.” Intriguing as this was, Burdett was unsure what it meant for the group’s direction or theme.

Burdett and Croff did not seem the least bothered that the program for the fair—set to open in three months—is still not completely worked out. Several initiatives seem to still be in early stages of development: Organizers have asked 12 architecture schools, including Harvard and MIT, to establish working studios on the fair grounds where students can address urban issues. Burdett also explained that he would like to invite mayors and other public officials from innovative and changing cities to come to Venice and discuss problems and solutions to the state of world cities. Finally, he said that awards would be presented to those “who have devoted their life to solving urban problems.” When pressed further about the awards, he said they were still working out the details.
Rudolph M. Schindler's John DeKeyser Residence (1935) is wrapped in green roofing and tan-toned stucco to match the bark and leaves of the surrounding eucalyptus. It has two-bedroom main residence and separate one-bedroom inlaw unit.

Schindler's Mak on continued from front page later assigned the protracted $800,000 job to local firm Space International (SI). The work proceeded in three-month intervals in between the artists' residencies. Located on the Miracle Mile, the Mackey Apartments showcase Schindler's genius for creating eternally fresh, deeply individual spaces. Here, the complex's interlocking volumes signal different uses and moods, while the windows are orchestrated to allow spaces to be washed and dappled almost completely with light. Most of SI's contributions remain invisible. Still, Schindler remained an inspiration: "Schindler worked with an economy of means, yet was able to push them to their limits and to challenge their cultural meaning," said SI principal Mike Fersuson. Alas, not all of Schindler's creations are fortunate to have a patient and willing benefactor. Just a few miles north, in Studio City, another Schindler apartment building is decaying while its owner tries to sell it for $6 million. Built in 1949, the 20-unit Laurelwood Apartments features two wings aligned along a narrow path that follows the incline of a 325-foot deep lot. As one tenant wrote in a website devoted to preserving L.A. modernism, "the bathroom was rotten/moldy, the floors were off-white carpet dirtied from years of use...You could see the beauty of the architecture peeking through but this particular apartment needed a thorough renovation."

Little wonder, as realtor Crosby Doe conceded, the complex has been hard to sell. The building has twice fallen out of escrow after buyers realized just how extensive restoration would be. The city's rigid zoning code may be what's causing the apartments to literally crumble: The law requires more parking spaces than now exist on site, so a new owner would have to install an additional garage. The issue of parking seems to be affecting the sale of another Schindler residence. The John DeKeyser "Double Residence"—a 1935 woody hillside duplex 65 steps above Highland Avenue, near the Hollywood Bowl—is only accessible by foot. The 2,300-square-foot property is selling for $795,000. According to Jennifer Ehrman of realty company The Value of Architecture, which is handling the sale, the reasonable price reflects the reluctance of most Angelenos to buy a home without its own parking. Like many Schindlers, the building is well-loved but not perfectly maintained. For that, one will have to shell out roughly double to buy the pluperfect 1938 Wolfe Residence in Studio City, which was updated with a state-of-the-art kitchen and a koi pond. John Aaroe Realty is handling the sale. Even decades after Schindler made his mark on Los Angeles, and as great as his creations were, finding the right inhabitants still isn't easy.
BETWEEN STATIONS IN GSA’S DESIGN EXCELLENCE PROGRAM TOUCHES THE BORDER

The architects newpaper June 7, 2006

In the new U.S. Border Patrol Station in the Temecula Valley, the exterior of the building (far left) was designed to reflect the surrounding landscape. Portions of the building are above ground while other portions are hidden below. Natural daylight streams inside via windows as well as skylights (near left).

In the scrub brush and rolling hills north of San Diego, where housing tracts are being laid out like crop circles, a new U.S. Border Patrol Station has been built, fitting in with the contours of the land and the desert’s warm colors. New York-based Garrison Architects recently completed the $39 million structure, which was commissioned just after 9/11. The Temecula station was an early part of the U.S. General Services Administration’s (GSA) broader effort to improve the design of its border facilities, an effort that was an early part of the U.S. General Services Administration’s (GSA) Design Excellence Program he launched remains unclear.

Excellence Program he launched remains unclear. After the project has been dropped. Meanwhile, the GSA’s former chief architect, Ed Feiner, has not been replaced since his departure last year, and the fate of the Design Excellence Program he launched remains unclear.

The new station is a conscious effort to instigate a dialogue with the gently undulating, semiarid landscape. The building zig-zags and rises and falls according to the topography. Seen from a speeding car, the station dips into and out of the land, becoming a natural part of the landscape. Part of the exterior wall was made by masons who randomly selected materials from among standard-color, precision-cut concrete blocks. Obviously man-made, the wall nevertheless evokes the texture and motifs of the dry surroundings. Said Garrison, “The building is neither subservient to the land, nor wholly separate from it.”

Along its western edge, the station is shielded from the hard sunlight by an earthen berm. Every day around 2:00 p.m., a breeze washes over the berm and passes through operable windows placed low to the ground. The mass of air exits through high windows on the opposite side, pushing accumulated warm air outside. The prevailing winds become passive air conditioning.

Meanwhile, the GSA’s former chief architect, Ed Feiner, has not been replaced since his departure last year, and the fate of the Design Excellence Program he launched remains unclear.

SCHOTT’s fire-rated glass products are now available through GGI. The innovative Pyran® series bridges the gap between safety and aesthetic value. Pyran Star-F, Pyran Crystal-F and Star Laminated products are impact safety-rated and meet the requirements according to ANSI and CPSC (Cat. I and II). Pyran Crystal offers a higher quality of clarity, transmission, and true color rendition, while Pyran Star is both beautiful and economical. Both Pyran Star and Pyran Crystal product lines are UL classified for fire-ratings up to 90 minutes and are offered in case quantities or cut to size.

Getting fire-rated glass just got a whole lot easier.

Visit us at AIA - booth No. 3855
Continuing from front page to S.2611, the Comprehensive Immigration Reform Act of 2006, which called for the construction of a fence in several highly trafficked areas of the border in California, Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas. In December of last year, Republican Congressmen James Sensenbrenner of Wisconsin and Douglas Hunter of California sponsored a similar measure in the House. Both amendments call for the construction of "two layers of reinforced fencing" as well as "physical barriers, roads, lighting, cameras and sensors" along the U.S.-Mexico border.

Fencing already exists in limited areas. In San Diego, the barrier is constructed from recycled panels of rigid steel that were originally used in helicopter landing strips from the Vietnam War, as well as recycled chain link fence and barbed wire. The fence extends 40 feet into the Pacific Ocean. The San Diego fence will be improved and extended, but most of the $1 billion allocation will go towards erecting barriers in other urban areas along the Arizona/Mexico line. The reason for placing fences in these areas is that "the minute they get over the fence," stated Ryan Patmintra of the office of Arizona Senator Jon Kyi, "they have access to the major interstate highways," giving immigrants—and many argue, potential terrorists—the capability of traveling anywhere within the United States. This flurry of legislative activity does not satisfy everyone, of course, and President George Bush recently announced that he would send up to 6,000 members of the National Guard to patrol the border. The MCCD martial law, "the border continues to be a battlefield," as earlier stated.

On May 27, MCCD worked with local volunteers to break ground on a fence at a small farm that abuts the border in Cochise County, Arizona. "Local farmers in all four border states have decided to participate," said Hair. Funding for these fences comes from dona-

FENCED OUT

The barrier proposed by We Need a Fence is modeled after fencing now in place in sections along the border between Gaza and the West Bank from Israel.

by local supporters, she explained, and so far has totaled more than $100,000. The MCCD based its design on a fence developed by the Westchester, Pennsylvania-based We Need a Fence Inc., advocacy group devoted to closing U.S. borders. The group's proposal is in turn loosely based on some of the Israeli barriers installed in Gaza and the West Bank. According to We Need a Fence's president Colin Hanna, it would cost between $4 and $6 billion to construct their fence design along the 2,000-mile border.

"We know about [We Need a Fence's] design," said Joe Kasper, a press secretary for Representative Hunter, explaining that officials would keep it in mind when planning the new fence. STEPHEN MARTIN

LIGHTS, CAMERA, INACTION!

Stepping into the glare of center stage in Los Angeles as appointed planning director is Gail Goldberg, who comes from an apparently successful long run in a similar role in the regional political theatre of San Diego. So far the response to her appointment in February has been respectful, but this is L.A., Jake, where the dictum "If it works, don't try to fix it," but rather "If it works, break it." As Goldberg makes the rounds meeting the city's winsome Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa. She has talked about the city coming to grips with the demand for more density, the obvious benefits of transit-oriented development, and the importance of involving neighborhoods and consensus building.

However, Goldberg is more guarded in her comments on how she will deal with the city's 13 capricious councilpersons who have traditionally considered what passes for planning in L.A. their prerogative. It certainly frustrated the city's last planning director, Con Howe, who will be remembered most for avoiding conflicts and thus further weakening the office.

"I do intend to take on this issue," she said with an edge that reveals a determination for which she has much practice in her 17 years in San Diego. But she added that the department first must establish credibility to gain the confidence of the politicians and the public, and that requires fashioning practical plans that prompt projects addressing real needs.

As Goldberg anticipated, she has suggested more transit-oriented design, and improved streetscaping that can knit L.A.'s diverse neighborhoods into community fabrics. To this end, Goldberg said she intended to use her position as a bully pulpit to rally public support—a challenge for an entertainment-driven, celebrity-obsessed town such as L.A., where land use is just not a very sexy issue for the attention-deficit media. If there is a crucible for Goldberg it will be downtown L.A., which happens to be one of the real urban regeneration success stories in a city not known for its urban acumen or fondness for regeneration. An impressive 18,226 residential units have been produced in the area over the last decade and 19,564 are in the pipeline, according to the Central City Association, a business membership organization. Historic office buildings as well as derelict warehouses have been recycled while new construction is mushrooming everywhere. But this is L.A., Jake, where the dictum of local government is not, "If it works, don't try to fix it," but rather "If it works, break it." As Goldberg makes the rounds meeting the city's presumed movers and shakers, the L.A. City Council approved a moratorium on conversions of industrial buildings into residential lots out of concern that industry and jobs are being driven out of the center city. The fact that most of the conversions have been of vacant buildings and the loss of jobs is due to factories relocating outside the city apparently is beside the point to a department that has given in to pressure to view gentrification with suspicion. Whatever, the discussion has at the moment cast a chill over downtown redevelopment.

Another problem is the department's timidity, as recently witnessed when the new downtown police headquarters was sited on what had been identified and hailed in protracted public-private planning effort as a park. Despite the department's own involvement in developing the plan (falling short of zoning it appropriately), it backed away from taking a position on the issue.

As soon as a particular plan generates a modicum of controversy, the department has tended to fade into the wallpaper. In many respects, the planning department and municipal government reflect the usual posture of the city's dominant entertainment industry. Both are very much into generating dreams: In the industry they take the form of scripts; in government, plans. Most of the efforts for movies and TV, as well as plans for a more livable city, tend to wind up in limbo—in the industry, called a "turnaround" in government, the study file. And in both cases, there's always the chance the dreams might be realized. As for Goldberg, it remains to be seen whether she will be acting in a drama, melodrama, or comedy, and whether her directorial call will be "action" or "inaction.

S.A.M. HALL KAPLAN IS A PLANNER AND WRITER. A FORMER DESIGN CRITIC FOR THE L.A. TIMES, HIS COMMENTARIES APPEAR IN THE L.A. DOWNTOWN NEWS AND ON SELECT WEBSITES.
Cesar Pelli Unveils Last Building in His Pacific Design Center Complex

PACIFIC RISING

Since it opened in 1975, the Pacific Design Center (PDC) in West Hollywood has long been seen as an important, if not spectacular, example of postmodern architecture. This fact, coupled with its enormous size and vivid color, earned it the nickname the Blue Whale. (The Los Angeles Times originally described it as "an attempt to hide a whale in a backyard swimming pool.") Designed by New Haven-based Cesar Pelli, the PDC grew in 1988 when the whopping 750,000-square-foot Blue building was joined by the 450,000-square-foot Green building. Now, nearly 20 years later, Pelli, with his recently renamed firm Pelli Clarke Pelli, and the PDC's new owner Charles S. Cohen have unveiled the design of a 400,000-square-foot addition, which is slated for completion in 2009. The addition will be sheathed in bright red glass and is an updated version of a building Pelli conceived in the original 1970s plan.

As the name suggests, the Pacific Design Center houses showrooms and office space for high-end interior decorators, and the complex's primary colors have obvious importance for the design community. But interestingly, according to Edward Dionne, the design leader for the current project, the colors were originally selected because of Pelli's interest in the architectural uses of glass and "the reflections and changes of light" that the material created. Whatever the thinking, Pelli's ideas have evolved considerably with the Red building. Originally planned to be a single monolithic structure, the new design breaks the volume into two separate towers—one six and the other eight-stories high—and introduce a slightly sloping roofline and curved exterior. This is perhaps a response to what has always been perceived as a problem with the center: Massively scaled, the complex is isolated and un-urban. "We went through a conscious effort of aiming walls upward to create more light and space, and hoped that breaking it into two parts would make the green and blue of the other buildings more visible [from the interior]," said Dionne.

Cohen's move to expand the complex might seem surprising given that it has suffered lagging occupancy rates—a mere 60 percent as late as 1998. Some see it as part of a larger strategy for Cohen to add hype and prestige to what many are calling his "design empire." Cohen owns design centers in Miami, Houston, and New York, though by his own estimation, Southern California is the second largest market for high-end design products. He considers New York the largest market, where his D&D building is a mere 600,000 square feet. The PDC is by far the largest of his centers. Whatever his motives, things seem to be looking up for the PDC. Since Cohen took over the PDC in 1999, occupancy rates have slowly risen to over 90 percent. The new Red building may just help alleviate those fussy problems of scale, not only by bringing the center into accord with its more diminutive surroundings, but also by redirecting attention to the center of the PDC's 14-acre campus. Dionne has taken to calling it the "Beloved Beast" of West Hollywood, a nickname that may well force the Blue Whale into retirement.

David Giles

Introducing FSB's Metric Series of Bath Accessories

After a century of manufacturing museum quality, ergonomic door hardware, FSB has broadened our offering to include the Metric series of satin stainless steel bathroom products. Metric's astutely balanced proportions have a soothing effect and can blend harmoniously with a variety of design concepts.
The latest outpost of Wolfgang Puck's culinary empire is CUT, a new steakhouse designed by Richard Meier and Partners, and located in the venerable Beverly Wilshire Hotel. Created in conjunction with Meier's West Coast design partner, Michael Palladino, CUT is the second restaurant, after 66 in New York's Tribeca, to be designed by the architect. The architects and project designer Rick Irving have created a minimal but woody interior featuring an open food-prep area with a backlit orange screen, along with a display of appetizers that draws diners in from the hotel's rear lobby. A wedge-shaped skylight pulls natural light into the long room, and a picture window frames the kitchen. A semi-circular trellis emphasizes a curved bay window and wraps around the angular room. Oak floors and European ash cabinetry supply the warm, tactile surfaces that are a distinct contrast to the white and chilly interior of 66. A light bar extends across the lobby to link the restaurant to Sidebar, a lounge space, also by Meier.

MICHAEL WEBB

The Grand Rapids Art Museum (GRAM) recently unveiled its design of a new museum, designed by Kulapat Yantrasast of Los Angeles firm Workshop Hakomori Yantrasast (wHY). The $55 million, 125,000-square-foot building, scheduled to open in Fall 2007, is the city's first-ever museum construction. According to museum director Celeste Adams, GRAM specifically sought an emerging architect to design the structure, consistent with its mission to support emerging artists. Yantrasast, a native of Thailand, worked for years for Tadao Ando, serving as project architect on the Modern Art Museum in Fort Worth, Texas. His design for GRAM includes a façade with a floating concrete roof that reaches toward a new adjacent park, designed by Maya Lin. The building is organized around a central open-air courtyard and reflecting pool.

The Grand Rapids Art Museum (GRAM) recently unveiled its design of a new museum, designed by Kulapat Yantrasast of Los Angeles firm Workshop Hakomori Yantrasast (wHY). The $55 million, 125,000-square-foot building, scheduled to open in Fall 2007, is the city's first-ever museum construction. According to museum director Celeste Adams, GRAM specifically sought an emerging architect to design the structure, consistent with its mission to support emerging artists. Yantrasast, a native of Thailand, worked for years for Tadao Ando, serving as project architect on the Modern Art Museum in Fort Worth, Texas. His design for GRAM includes a façade with a floating concrete roof that reaches toward a new adjacent park, designed by Maya Lin. The building is organized around a central open-air courtyard and reflecting pool.

DEPARTMENT HEADS WANTED continued from page 7 opposed to a theorist. The theoretical pursuits will continue—people like David Erdman and Greg Lynn will keep on trucking. But there is also a desire to address issues that are not out on the edge.”

Despite the schools' differences, there are those at all three institutions who share a common desire for decisive leadership. According to USC's Bartelt, “Everyone on our faculty is looking for someone to come in and be a leader ... [Accordingly], the candidates are not all seasoned deans.” At Berkeley, Iwamoto explained, order is generated “bottom-up, not top-down—it's a faculty-run school,” she said, “I think it would be very hard for a new person to come in with a vision and make it work in three years,” which is the standard tenure for a chair at the school. “Sylvia Lavin was chair for ten years [at UCLA]. We need a Sylvia [at Berkeley].” Lavin declined to comment for this article. Hodgetts surmised that she will go on to teach at other institutions, and said, “I know that she's thrown her hat into a bunch of other rings.”

ANNA HOLTZMAN

King of diamonds

Hailed as one of the most architecturally distinct structures built in New York City in decades, Hearst Tower was a marvel to behold, even as construction was underway. Credit for this bold, destined-to-be landmark goes to Hearst Corp. and its architect, Lord Norman Foster, and to steel for giving shape to its critically-acclaimed, diamond-like façade.

Structural Steel for stronger design
RICHARD MEIER RETROFITS 1960S ART BUILDING AT UCLA

This September, students returning to UCLA will find the new Eli and Edythe Broad Art Center, designed by Richard Meier & Partners. The Broad Art Center will house studios, classrooms, exhibition spaces, and performance facilities for the department of art as well as the department of design and media arts. A retrofit of a mid-1960s building by William Pereira, the center was damaged in the Northridge earthquake of 1994, which weakened parts of the building's lateral bracing and concrete shear walls. Instead of reinforcing the building's structure from within, the architects went outside, designing a buttressing system on the west side of the tower. The design team reclad the entire building—the original heavy brick contributed to the structural damages—and replaced the building's facade with light-colored architectural concrete. "The decision to replace the facade was made partly because of its weight, and partly because the studio spaces were not getting daylight," said Michael Palladino, Meier's L.A.-based partner in charge of the project. The design opened the floor plans to be used as studios and installed wooden brise-soleil screens to control the amount of daylight that penetrates the interior. The building also restores a major north-south axis on campus, bringing more energy to UCLA's top-notch art and architecture departments. ANDREW YANG

Inside one of L.A.'s most renowned new buildings, the Walt Disney Concert Hall, a new bar and restaurant now serves patrons of the Roy and Edna Disney/CalArts Theater. The aptly named Redcat Cafe—the name is an acronym of its host institution—serves breakfast, lunch, and light dinner. Squeezed in between the theater, which is host to both live performances and screenings, and the new Redcat Art Gallery, the entire mini-complex within the Disney Concert Hall is a kind of alternative, independent venue run by CalArts, the prestigious art school which was in fact founded in 1961 by Walt Disney and served for years as a finishing school for his animators. With a window to the street, the cafe will help lure audiences inside.

For the Redcat Cafe's interiors, architect Peter Zellner fashioned the walls and bar out of a clear-coated and waxed plywood which, he said, is meant to echo Frank Gehry's own use of the rough material in his early work. His mission, he said, was to "make the bar more bar-like" and create "lockable storage for books and wine bottles." After two long years of proposals and development, the result fits in well with its dazzling host. Zellner echoed Redcat director Mark Murphy's words, saying, "It looks like it's been here forever." DAVID GILES

DeSimone Consulting Engineers, PLLC is an award-winning, high-quality, creative structural engineering firm servicing architects, owners and developers. As we continue to grow, DeSimone remains dedicated to tailoring resources to meet client needs.

We have an extensive portfolio that includes high-rise, residential, mixed-use, hospitality, commercial, industrial, design and gaming projects.

www.desimone.com
On June 1, the Los Angeles Architecture + Design (A+D) Museum opened its latest exhibition in its latest home, in a 7,000-square-foot first-floor space within a two-story office building on Wilshire Boulevard, across from the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA). The museum has moved twice since it was founded in 2001 by architects Joe Addo, Stephen Kanner, and Bernard Zimmerman, who shared the goal of promoting innovation in the design professions and raising awareness among a general audience about the importance of design. The new exhibition, New Blood, featuring the work of emerging Los Angeles architects, is the first since the museum closed in April 2005.

Since its founding, the A+D Museum has mounted 19 exhibitions on regional, national, and international subjects, ranging from a study on urbanism in L.A. to a retrospective on Ray Kappe to a show titled Cuban Artists in Exile. But its impact and profile have been diffused by its lack of a permanent home. Its first home was in the historic Bradbury Building in downtown Los Angeles, in a space that was donated by philanthropist Ira Yellin, the building’s owner. Yellin was committed to revitalizing the area until his death in 2002. After his death, the building was sold and the museum relocated to another free and temporary space. The museum’s second home was prime real estate, on Sunset Strip in West Hollywood, but by 2005, the museum’s directors were looking for new space.

The museum’s current home is owned by the Ratkovich Company, which is also involved with downtown’s revitalization. Ratkovich agreed to provide the space free of charge to the museum, which has undertaken a modest renovation, involving installing simple white walls and a custom gridded ceiling lighting system designed by Richard Meier and Partners. Tibbie Dunbar, who has been the museum’s director since 2004, and public affairs director Ann Videriksen view the space as a long-term home. According to Ratkovich’s senior property manager, Beatrice Hsi, the company has a licensed contract with the museum that requires a certain amount of notice (between 30 and 60 days), but does not stipulate length of tenure. Hsi also noted that the company is looking for a paying tenant for the space, so the museum’s past may well repeat itself.

The museum has no set yearly operating budget and, as a nonprofit, is funded primarily by grants and donations, both financial and in-kind. Artisans donate labor and materials for the installation of the exhibitions while the board of directors and advisors—which includes Frank Gehry and Thom Mayne—all work to ensure that the museum maintains its operations. Dunbar is the museum’s only full-time paid employee.

Dunbar noted that shows are scheduled through 2007, including exhibitions on Louis Kahn and Richard Meier. With or without a permanent home, the museum is confident they will go forward.
Joining the wave of architects who have embraced prefab housing, veteran modernist Ray Kappe is currently completing a pre-fabricated house in Santa Monica's Ocean Park district, the first in a series of architect-designed homes for a new company called LivingHomes. Started last year by Steven Glenn, a self-described "frustrated architect" and one-time high-tech and software developer, LivingHomes promises to be the "leading home-builder" for buyers who "value design, health, and sustainability."

Beyond its appeal as an authentic example of California modernism—it is one of the founders of SCI-Arc—the Kappe house embodies several tall ambitions for prefab homes. Not only has Glenn made a point of reining in construction costs to around $250 per square foot, he is also targeting LEED Platinum accreditation for the prefab structure, a rating that no residential fabricated housing has yet earned to date.

With the Kappe prefab, as well as another module commissioned from local architect David Hertz, Glenn is carving a unique platform for his LivingHome products. "We are trying to provide the project has earned to date."

Can design sell prefabs? Apparently so. According to Kappe. "I've already had a dozen inquiries about the model home," he said, "and I'm not even on the sales team."

MORRIS NEWMAN
READY COLISEUM
On May 19, the Los Angeles City Council approved plans to renovate and expand the Memorial Coliseum, including an approval for increased signage throughout the site. The $800 million modernization of the 83-year-old national historic landmark is considered a milestone in the city’s efforts to bring a National Football League (NFL) team to Los Angeles. An alternative site in Anaheim is also being considered for the new franchise, and design work by HOK+Sport has already begun. The Coliseum plan calls for the construction of a new 68,000-seat stadium within the walls of the existing stadium—something preservationists worry could revoke the landmark status of the building. Earlier in the week, the Los Angeles Community Redevelopment Agency approved $25 million for infrastructure upgrades in the Exposition Park area. The NFL is currently conducting feasibility studies for both sites.

GOING FOR BROKE
Last month the Go For Broke National Education Center, formerly the 100 1/442 WWII Memorial Foundation, secured a 50-year ground lease with the City of Los Angeles for a 37,405-square-foot parcel on Temple and Alameda streets. The land is adjacent to the monument the group erected in 1999 to honor Japanese-American WWII veterans. The group has commissioned Michael Maltzan to build a 15,000-square-foot, two-story building, house its offices and education center. The $15 million center is expected to open to the public in 2010.

NEW MUSEUMS
The Harvard University Art Museums announced on May 16 that Los Angeles-based Daly Genik Architects will design a visual arts center at the university’s Allston-Brighton campus. The new art center will consolidate two adjacent buildings to create the new Allston Art Center, which will include museum offices, storage space for more than 250,000 objects, teaching and research facilities, a study center, conservation laboratories, and gallery space. As part of a museum masterplan released last February, Harvard expects the new center, slated for a 2008 completion, to house all three of its museums—the Fogg Art Museum, the Busch-Reisinger Museum, and the Arthur M. Sackler Museum—while the current Art Museum in Cambridge undergoes an extensive renovation, designed by Renzo Piano.

SET YOURSELF APART.
LITERALLY.

EKU Divido is a room-height partitioning system that gives designers more freedom to define space the way they want. It not only offers flexibility of materials, it’s also very easy to install. So your contractor can help you realize your vision, and your clients can have high drama without a high budget.

hafele.com
1-800-423-3531

FINDING BETTER WAYS
Finally, a controllable roller shade that’s as precise as your designs.

Sivoia QED® Quiet Electronic Drive shading systems

- precision alignment of multiple shades to within 1/8”
- ultra-quiet operation (44dBA at three feet)
- seamless integration with Lutron lighting controls
- symmetrical fabric light gap of 3/4” per side

Visit www.lutron.com/shadingsolutions or call 1.877.258.8766 ext. 568 to learn more about Sivoia QED.
They all use it. Shouldn't you?

When so many talented designers choose the same architectural design software to drive business forward, it's more than a trend. It's a sign you may be missing out on an exceptional resource. VectorWorks Architect offers architectural design firms powerful BIM features, unparalleled performance and uncommon value. Your competitors are taking advantage of top speed, as well as superior production and presentation capabilities—plus, seamless integration of 2D, 3D and building data. Shouldn't you? Call 1-877-202-9100 or visit www.vectorworks.net/newyork to find out more.

Check out our show specials at the AIA National Convention in Los Angeles—booth #4149.
Downtown Los Angeles is thriving, in unexpected places. It’s not the new, multi-billion dollar projects and sweeping conversions of old bank buildings into posh lofts that are invigorating the famously sleepy city core. It’s the old, scruffy 1920s streets and the life that fills them. Greg Goldin interprets the scene.
Downtown Los Angeles is misunderstood. To most observers, there is no there there. Like the rest of the great metropolis, downtown is amorphous, indecipherable, a suburb in reverse that is occupied by day and empty by night. Yes, we’ve got the Frank Gehry–designed Walt Disney Concert Hall—a crown jewel to rival any city’s crown jewel. (And, don’t forget, ours was designed first, before Bilbao!) But the concert hall stands in singular loneliness, surrounded by parking lots, drab government behemoths, and piles of granite and glass tombstones occupied by elite bankers and law firms. What L.A. needs now is some big-time infill.

To an extent, this is underway. The Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation estimated in February that there has been $12.2 billion worth of built and planned construction in the downtown area since 1999. Lofts and condos are hot. More than 26,000 new residential units have been added since 2000. Thanks to an Adaptive Reuse Ordinance that eased the city’s regulations for restoring old buildings, historic properties are being converted at an unprecedented rate. The city has a new cathedral by Rafael Moneo and a new state transit building by Thom Mayne of Morphosis, while an arts school by Wolf Prix is the works. Meanwhile, local firm Rios Clemente Hale is designing a 40,000-square-foot plaza to anchor a 3.8-million-square-foot hotel-cum-mall-cum-residential-complex, known as L.A. Live!, adjoining the Staples Center, home court of the Lakers. The arena, which will open its doors to fans in July, is a major talking point for city planners.

Still, the view of a neglected and empty downtown persists because the city’s civic leaders, their developer patrons, and their acolytes in the press remain committed to transforming the admittedly grim but prominent civic center, which sits relatively removed from the rest of downtown, at the top of Bunker Hill. Bunker Hill has suffered more from the misguided attention of city bigwigs and planners than perhaps any neighborhood in Los Angeles. In 1961, bulldozers began clearing hundreds of flophouses, SROs, fine Victorian homes, and small shops—the very things that made it a genuine, lively community. More than 10,000 residents were displaced. In one way or another, the city has been trying to get them back ever since, but 50 years of urban renewal has produced an eyesore and an international embarrassment. This is the “downtown” that gets all the attention, and is frequently mistaken for the city’s real, other, downtown.

Unfortunately, this predicament is perpetuated by relentless efforts to pour more capital into Bunker Hill. The latest, a $1.8 billion scheme, was given the official seal of approval in late April when, after nearly two years of anticipation, Gehry unveiled a design for what is called the Grand Avenue Project. The private-public development, headed by New York–based The Related Companies, aims to “transform Grand Avenue into a destination not only for downtown but for the entire region,” in the words of one leading public official. “When it’s all completed, we’re going to have Gehry in stereo,” he boasted.

Whether Gehry in stereo can convert a 9-to-5 bureaucratic stronghold into a 24/7 boomtown is anyone’s guess. Still, the mistake is one of interpretation. Downtown Los Angeles has several centers. Bunker Hill, which is cut off from the rest of downtown by geography and freeways, is a hilltop governmental-cultural ghetto. The action, as a more sober Frank Gehry used to admit, is elsewhere. (Gehry once famously said that if the choice had been his own, he would have built Disney Hall somewhere along Wilshire Boulevard. That street, which connects downtown to the beaches in Santa Monica, is, as Gehry said, our true downtown, “only it’s vertical.”)

Downslope from Bunker Hill is Broadway, L.A.’s oldest main street. You can’t find a stronger contrast to the arid altiplano rising several blocks to the west. Broadway is teeming. You can get your shoes shined on the street. You can pop into the Grand Central Market and stand at a counter to snack on marinated cabbage and gorditas. You can stroll the wide, bustling sidewalks, in search of a fedora or a wedding gown. You can get married on Broadway, and pick-pocketed, too. You can buy bootlegged Mexican movies and tiny packets of Chiclets chewing gum.

Broadway bustles because it has hundreds of ground-floor shops, tightly spaced—like any good main drag. As John Kamp, a local city planner points out, Broadway is also successful because it has so many bus stops. “People come to Broadway because it is part of their everyday trajectory through the city, not a special trip to an unlikely destination.” The crowds justify high rents, which in some cases are higher per square foot than on Rodeo Drive in Beverly Hills.

A bit further south and east is another area on the rise, the Fashion District, which borders Skid Row. In the past several years, the neighborhood has sprung to life with none of the fanfare or money heaped on Grand Avenue. The district has, in fact, benefited by being overlooked. A vestigial industrial zone where building owners are not required to have front yards, rear yards, or other setbacks, it contains a large stock of urban-friendly buildings. Buildings typically have multiple entrances. One, on the 800 block of South Main Street, has 14. Others might have a dozen small storefronts in the span of 150 feet of sidewalk frontage. The pedestrian-friendly scale allows wholesalers to open their doors to retail. While garment workers sew upstairs, fashionistas ply the streets below, hunting for cheap knock-offs and bargain trendy buys. Here, too, rents rival those on Broadway. Buildings are selling for as much as $570 a square foot.

These are but two examples of other downtowns. There are still others, such as Little Tokyo and the nearby Arts District, Chinatown, Lincoln Heights, and Boyle Heights. These parts are thriving not because someone has managed to give them a theme but because visually interesting, authentic, aurally stimulating businesses are pressed together. The pedestrian-friendly scale allows wholesalers to open their doors to retail. While garment workers sew upstairs, fashionistas ply the streets below, hunting for cheap knock-offs and bargain trendy buys. Here, too, rents rival those on Broadway. Buildings are selling for as much as $570 a square foot.

Downslope from Bunker Hill is Broadway, L.A.’s oldest main street. You can’t find a stronger contrast to the arid altiplano rising several blocks to the west. Broadway is teeming. You can get your shoes shined on the street. You can pop into the Grand Central Market and stand at a counter to snack on marinated cabbage and gorditas. You can stroll the wide, bustling sidewalks, in search of a fedora or a wedding gown. You can get married on Broadway, and pick-pocketed, too. You can buy bootlegged Mexican movies and tiny packets of Chiclets chewing gum.

Check them out, and you will see that Los Angeles has a downtown. It’s just not where you’re told to find it.

GREG GOLDIN IS THE ARCHITECTURE CRITIC AT LOS ANGELES MAGAZINE AND A REGULAR CONTRIBUTOR TO THE L.A. WEEKLY. HE GUEST-EDITED THIS ISSUE OF A.K.
Frank Gehry: King of the Hill

In 1980, Frank Gehry was one of the more modest members of the “L.A. Dream Team” assembled to develop a visionary, but ultimately unrealized scheme to redevelop what remained of Bunker Hill in downtown Los Angeles, whose decaying Victorian mansions had been bulldozed 20 years before in the name of urban renewal. He was still regarded as an outsider seven years later when he won the competition to design Walt Disney Concert Hall in the same Grand Avenue area. Now he’s back as king of this particular hill, with schematic designs for this particular hill, with schematic designs for a shopping center on the site beyond—an element that was never built.

The current iteration of the Grand Avenue Project attempts the same lively mix of uses and attractions as proposed by the original developer, Los Maguire Partners and their Dream Team in 1980. Defying all the conventions of urban development, they wove together contributions by different architects, including a plaza by Gehry, a highrise residential tower by Barton Myers, an office tower by Cesar Pelli, a hotel-condo block by Ricardo Legorreta, fanciful pavilions by Charles Moore, a modern art museum by Hardy Holzman Pfeiffer, and landscaping by Lawrence Halprin. The plan included contrasting buildings surrounding by walkways, fountains, and greenery.

The proposal was widely acclaimed by the public and in the architecture press, but the Community Redevelopment Agency, a hapless band of amateurs, preferred Arthur Erickson’s sleek office towers. His scheme was a series of isolated objects with no connective tissue, and which failed to engage the street. The featured public amenity was Arata Isozaki’s Museum of Contemporary Art (MoCA), but this was pushed below the street so as not to block the view of a shopping center on the site beyond—an element that was never built.

Twenty-five years later, Gehry is back, and has released a preliminary design that includes two L-shaped towers—one of offices, the other for a hotel and condos—that act as frames for Disney Hall and a 250,000-square-foot retail-restaurant complex. This is the first of three milestones the developer, now called Maguire-Thomas Partners, spurred a redesign of Pershing Square, which had become as blighted as New York’s Tompkins Square Park. Legorreta understood how Mexican plazas work and landscape designer Laurie Olin drew on Rittenhouse Square, a lively oasis in his native Philadelphia. The block-long park was opened to the street, colorful structures beckon pedestrians, but few enter except to retrieve their cars from the underground garage. As Robert Venturi once observed, Americans are reluctant to sit in outdoor public places except to eat and be entertained, and the city authorities failed to provide concession stands or programming. Even the crowds of shoppers a block east on Broadway ignored this one patch of greenery in east-central L.A. What does that say for the chances of the new park included in Gehry’s scheme?

Grand Avenue links some of the city’s most cherished public buildings, including the classic Central Library, Museum of Contemporary Art, and Disney Hall, as well as the Colburn Music School and the aloof citadels of the Music Center and Rafael Moneo’s Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels. Even Disney Hall, everyone’s favorite new civic icon, hasn’t noticeably boosted foot traffic on the street, and most concertgoers arrive by escalator from the underground parking garage. The residential population of downtown has boomed over the last decade, and there has been a flurry of loft conversions and new apartment blocks. Urban homesteaders need shopping and services, but will they find those in the new retail center? For the newly crowned Gehry, this may be the toughest challenge of his 50-year career.

IF YOU ADAPT IT, WILL THEY COME?

For more than 20 years, downtown Los Angeles has been the exclusive playground of bohemian artist-types who preferred cheap rents to Traulsen refrigerators and anonymity to swanky eateries. Not anymore. Downtown L.A. is slowly evolving into a collection of distinct neighborhoods each catering to new high-end condominium and apartment conversion projects complete with rooftop swimming pools and fitness centers. You can even find an occasional cup of coffee, or drop into a gallery, as you cross downtown from your concrete-floored, skylit loft to your glass-enclosed office tower.

Newly minted lawyers, businessmen, and accountants, raking in mega starting salaries, think downtown will be a hot real estate market for years to come. Maybe it’s a chicken-and-egg situation, but they’re signing on to long waiting lists or pre-purchasing units before construction has even started. When the historic Douglas Building Lofts, renovated by Rockefeller Partners Architects, went on the market in 2004—nearly 18 months before the Spring Street property was completed—all 50 units sold within a week. At the Flower Street Lofts, one of the first residential developments in the South Park district, several of the original buyers took advantage of the appreciating market and flipped their units within a year of purchase.

Emboldened by what appears to be an insatiable appetite for urban living, developers continue to increase unit prices, even as the rest of the L.A. market begins to flatten out. According to the Downtown Center Business Improvement District (OCBD), in the first quarter of 2006 the average cost per square foot was $547.80, an astonishing 18.8 percent increase from last year at the same time.

The market, in other words, is booming. Since 1999 nearly 7,000 new condominiums and apartments have been created in downtown Los Angeles. If all goes as projected by the OCBD, there will be nearly 20,000 more by 2015.

But, as the residents and workers in downtown Vancouver have learned, a thriving community won’t necessarily emerge just because you’ve built and occupied thousands of new units. Although one is in the works, up to now, there hasn’t been a grocery store downtown for decades—nor Whole Foods are far from the drawing boards. And no such thing as Sarabeth’s Kitchen or Frette is even imagined. Add to this a lack of community and no green space and downtown had little more to offer than lofty spaces with skyline views. Developers have worked to remedy this by enticing cafes and small businesses to open in the ground floors of residential developments, while others are creating courtyards and rooftop recreation areas. The uncertain promise is that there’s more to come—enough to lure buyers out of the suburbs and into the core.

Clearly, an influx of new homeowners and businesses in downtown will be an economic boon for the city, but for the thousands of poor and homeless living in the area’s shelters and low-cost residential hotels, gentrification means one thing: eviction. Already, developers have converted some of the 240 hotels (many of them functioning as SROs) into market-rate apartments and condominiums. Fearful that more of the downtown poor will be displaced, the Los Angeles City Council recently approved a one-year moratorium on the conversion of demolition of low-cost hotels citywide, with the option for an extension. In an effort to further help the transient poor, Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa proposed a $1 billion bond to pay for subsidized apartments. The funds would cover housing as well as social services.

And other plans to bring improvement to downtown are in the works. In March, L.A. County officials unveiled a $100 million campaign that would house the estimated 14,000 homeless concentrated downtown’s Skid Row by expanding much needed courthouse programs and providing more emergency and transitional housing, and health services. The campaign is part of a $12 billion investment plan to build 50,000 housing units countywide over a ten-year span.

Ten years ago nobody would have believed any of this was possible. And had it not been for the new public icons, Disney Concert Hall, Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels, and Staples Center, it might not have been. And while major cultural and entertainment projects are no doubt paramount in a successful urban environment, the most important ingredient of all is the local population, be they new condo owners, low-income tenants, factory workers, or artists. Finding a way for all income levels to thrive in the new downtown will be the challenge of city officials and developers.
The Los Angeles office of German firm Behnisch Architects has designed one of the first ground-up, loft-style buildings in an area filled with adaptive re-use projects. "We realized early on that because of the low scale of the surrounding buildings, if you built up you could offer amazing views of downtown," said project architect Christof Jantzen. The building, developed by local firm LinearCity, stands on 16 stories high and contains what Jantzen describes as "eight different unit types," ranging from 690 to 2,700 square feet and including single-, double-, and triple-story condos, some following the inverted L-shaped configurations that Le Corbusier used in his L’Unite d’Habitation in Marseille.

In keeping with the spirit of the industrial loft conversions that surround the project, the project has a concrete structure with exposed concrete floors, tall ceilings, and large windows. The materials and fixtures throughout will be sheet metal, fiber cement, and pre-cast concrete panels—all sustainable materials. In addition, operable windows, indirect sun-orientation, a gray-water treatment system, and a passive-cooling ventilation system might just earn the developer the LEED-rating it seeks. Adjacent to the 16-story highrise, a smaller set of "townhouses" shares the same material vocabulary as the loft building, though with more privacy. "I think the developers need to be highly praised for what they’re doing," said Jantzen. "They have a vision for the area that will transform it into a great neighborhood." In 2004, LinearCity also developed and sold lofts in an adjacent building, the ToF Factory, and is engaged in another adaptive reuse project across the street, the Biscuit Company Lofts by Aleks Istanbullu Architects.

Biscuit Company Lofts

1620 Industrial Street

The Lincoln Heights district is roughly 2 miles from downtown, in an area that's still largely undeveloped (parking lots and empty plots far outnumber supermarkets). According to Jantzen, is intended to "divorce the skin and the top floor of the annex into a set of three-story row houses by carving out a mezzanine and adding a floor.

According to Istanbullu, the architects decided to use "the contrast approach" on the additions, by which he means making clear the distinction between old and new. The penthouse and the top floor of the annex are constructed out of steel, stone, and glass, though the colors were chosen to complement the brick building below. It will remain largely intact, though Istanbullu adjusted the circulation to create more space.

The interiors will be minimally outfitted—most won’t even include a refrigerator—dominated by the pre-existing inch-thick maple floors, brick walls, and copper details. Like luxury loft-style condominiums in New York City, prices will likely attract a wealthy clientele.

Vibiana Lofts

683 Mateo Street

When Paul Solomon, founder of the development group LinearCity, called Los Angeles-based Aleks Istanbullu Architects to transform a pre-existing factory into residential condos, the architect knew immediately that he wanted to do something different from a standard conversion. He wanted to design loft spaces that vary in size, plan, and character throughout the bays building, a 1905 biscuit baking factory formerly owned by the manufacturer Nabisco.

The site comprises the 110,000 square-foot, seven-story main structure and a single-story annex; Istanbullu will add an additional floor to each, increasing the total square footage to 153,000 square feet. On the main building, Istanbullu created a large penthouse with extensive outdoor space. He transformed the existing annex into a set of three-story row houses by carving out a mezzanine and adding a floor.

According to Istanbullu, the architects decided to use "the contrast approach" on the additions, by which he means making clear the distinction between old and new. The penthouse and the top floor of the annex are constructed out of steel, stone, and glass, though the colors were chosen to complement the brick building below. It will remain largely intact, though Istanbullu adjusted the circulation to create more space.

The interiors will be minimally outfitted—most won’t even include a refrigerator—dominated by the pre-existing inch-thick maple floors, brick walls, and copper details. Like luxury loft-style condominiums in New York City, prices will likely attract a wealthy clientele.

Fuller Lofts

210 North San Fernando Road

One of the more notable adaptive-reuse conversions downtown is Santa Monica-based Pugh + Scarpa Architects’ restoration of the 1927 Fuller Pick Company, a former office building and a relic of L.A.’s art deco moment. Though not an official landmark, it sports stunning details, including pilasters, sculpted floral bas-reliefs, and according to principal architect Gwen Pugh, "a wonderfully preserved lobby.

Pugh + Scarpa has restored the five-floor, 151,000-square-foot building and added two additional floors, creating a total of 152 units. The architects corralled the center of the concrete building in order to create a 40-foot-wide lightwell and room for a small interior courtyard. The rooftop addition has its own identity, clad in glass and corrugated metal. On the building’s north side, the metal cladding undulates in plan, contrasting with the cube on which it perched—a gesture that, according to Pugh, is intended to be "a box from the box" and make the original building’s undecorated north facade more "interesting." On all sides, irregularly placed windows, resembling constructivist boxes, further disrupt the original building’s simple planarity.

The Lincoln Heights district is roughly 2 miles from downtown, in an area that's still largely undeveloped (parking lots and empty plots far outnumber supermarkets). According to Pugh, the Fuller Lofts is the only project in the immediate vicinity that has been motivated by the city’s new Adaptive Reuse Ordinance, which the city adopted in 1999 (and greatly expanded in 2003) in order to lure businesses downtown.
Civics Lesson

Frank Gehry’s Walt Disney Concert Hall, Rafael Moneo’s Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels, and Thom Mayne’s Caltrans headquarters have changed the way Angelenos understand their downtown. Spectacular, freewheeling, and deeply moving, these buildings have drawn crowds and made architecture relevant, and perhaps essential. So why haven’t more of the new public buildings followed suit?

In the preceding decades, John Portman’s Bonaventure Hotel epitomized L.A.’s style, which typically meant being walled off from the street, virtually impenetrable, and wrapped in a one-way mirror. Now public buildings are increasingly incorporating plazas, street-level portals, and transparent facades. Though many public buildings still embrace the bunker mentality, it might reflect bad planning and site selection as much as architectural design: The city still has the habit of plopping security-conscious buildings cheek-by-jowl to public-conscious ones. Whole street elevations are permitted to go unarticulated and turn a barren carapace to neighbors. Several new public projects reveal how far L.A. has come, and how far it has to go.

Central Los Angeles Area
High School #9

After the Walt Disney Concert Hall, Coop Himmelblau’s High School for the Visual and Performing Arts may be one of the most dramatic structures to be completed in downtown L.A. The new structure, which began construction in March and is scheduled to open in 2008, will feature a dramatic glass and steel lobby and house 1,728 music, dance, visual, and performing arts students. Estimated to cost $205 million, the signature feature of the school will be a 140-foot-tall tower that will give students a clear view of the adjacent Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels.

Los Angeles United States Courthouse

In 2001, Perkins + Will won a commission from the General Services Administration to design a 1,000,000-square-foot courthouse in downtown L.A. The 16-story building features approximately 40 courtrooms with floor-to-floor heights of 19 feet, along with some administrative office space and an expansive ground-floor atrium. Sustainability was crucial for the client and designers: Photovoltaic panels comprise about 50 percent of the large curving glass facade, under-floor circulation systems minimize heating and cooling costs, and clerestory windows throughout the courtrooms bring in natural daylight. The building is in still in design and construction should begin in mid to late 2007.

Los Angeles Police Department Headquarters

Filling most of the block across from City Hall, the L.A.P.D.’s new headquarters went through an extensive public review process while it was under design, and ultimately incorporated the lessons of over 30 community meetings. The architects, DMJM/Roth-Sheppard Design, incorporated necessarily strong security requirements such as 75-foot setbacks to surround the building with public spaces. The 500,000-square-foot building’s two above-ground volumes form an L-shape around a large plaza along First Street. The budget is set for $303 million, and construction is expected to be complete by the end of 2008.
GET THE MOST OUT OF YOUR AUTODESK SOFTWARE

When you buy Autodesk software, you want more than just a box. You want a complete solution. Microsol Resources has been providing Autodesk software and services to the architectural and engineering communities for over 20 years. Our team of application specialists offers superior telephone and on-site support, delivering the answers you need, when you need them. This, together with our Training, Implementation, CAD Standards Development and CAD Management services, means that you will never be left simply holding a box.

So when you buy Autodesk software, you want more than just a box—Microsol Resources provides a complete solution.

When you buy Autodesk software, call Microsol Resources today.
A glowing red laser hologram of two large skyscrapers will be the centerpiece at a SCI-Arc exhibition of a proposed development by the high-profile Austrian firm Coop Himmelb(l)au. The project, called SKY-Arc, is a masterplan proposal for the site directly adjacent to the school’s famed downtown warehouse building, completed in response to a request from the lot’s current owner, Meruelo Maddox Properties. Eric Owen Moss, director of SCI-Arc, recommended the firm to the owner, who contacted principal Wolf Prix to produce a concept proposal. Coop Himmelb(l)au imagined a 24-hour mixed-use district comprised of residential, commercial, and cultural facilities located in two large towers interconnected by sky-bridges (pictured). The exhibition will provide an array of media representing the project, including plans, elevations, 3-D drawings, models, a hologram, and a computer animation shown on a small monitor. Outside the gallery, a video will be shown tracing the firm’s history since its founding in 1988 by Prix and Helmut Svoboda.
The shift from the 19th-century panorama to the 20th-century aerial view is one of the hallmarks of modern urbanism. From Le Corbusier's 1925 Voisin Plan for Paris to Jose-Luis Sert's Can Our Cities Survive? two decades later, the aerial rendering has been the preferred representation for the analysis and rebuilding of modern cities. Recently, however, the evolution of animation software has put this fixed frame to motion, and transformed it into the virtual flyover. Close to the ground, shifting rapidly with the terrain, the flyover has become the simulation of an urbanism no longer confined to the city core; it embraces landscapes and territories with all the freedom of flight.

It is with this viewpoint that we approach Continuities of the Incomplete, the recent installation by Morphosis in the Georges Pompidou Center in Paris. No drawings on the wall, no models on bases, not even any verticals or horizontals. The installation is simply a vast tilted plane of structural glass, gridded in horizontal bands, on which viewers walk freely. Ranged just below are row upon row of miniature models of the firm's major works, interspersed with information panels and flat screens displaying principal Thom Mayne as talking head. And the 250 models do not simply represent the finished buildings, but rather show experiment after experiment, test after test, and state after state along the design process. The effect is that of a movie or a flip-book, as if the design process itself had been constituted as a three-dimensional animation. Here it is the viewer who is in the place of the virtual pilot in the flyover: One walks over the glass plane, necessarily stooped and often kneeling, through June 11.

The first thing you notice at Ettore Sottsass at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA) is that his designer's colors are still shocking, Sottsass, now 88 years old, rattled the design world more than 25 years ago with his potent juxtapositions and diabolical forms. He still does. Among the nearly 100 pieces assembled in this show, the first extensive retrospective of the Italian designer's work in the U.S., are ceramics, jewelry, furniture, tableware, telephones, and a convertible plastic bathroom the size of a steamer trunk. For the first time in a generation, LACMA has removed a barrier blocking a stunning set of windows that overlook the museum's surrounding park, converting the gallery into an almost domestic setting. It is the perfect way to experience Sottsass' joyful, witty works. He makes objects that embody machine-age technologies and materials even as they appeal to the fanciful and irrational. He is the alchemist of modernism.

Outside Europe, Sottsass is as unknown as his work is influential. Though few of us own an original—his pieces are executed, as he says, in runs of "nine, three, fifteen"—much of what he has done has made its way into the design vernacular. His Olivetti Elea 9003 mainframe computer, designed in 1958, preceded the Apple's Power Mac G4 Cube by two generations and established the notion that office equipment could be seductive and decorative, not merely functional. His Valentine typewriter, also an Olivetti commission, a candy-apple red molded plastic portable released in 1969, subverted the idea of the typewriter as a practical instrument—and profoundly influenced designers of today, like Philippe Starck, for whom usefulness is only a part of the design equation.

In the early 1980s, Sottsass' Milan-based Memphis design group produced brightly colored, squiggly patterned, wackily-shaped household furnishings that defied the modernist mantra "form follows function." He took commonplace shapes and forms, piled them in unexpected ways, clad them in obviously cheesy material and, Voila!, the quotidian became a revelation. Postmodernism was off and running—some critics blaming Sottsass and his Memphis group for dragging design (and architecture) into the realm of camp, pastiche, and, worse, historicism.

Sottsass will neither avow nor disavow any of this. He insists that his work is "about the senses, not intellectual constructs." Of course, he is being coy, but the work on view at LACMA certainly defies such dismissive categories. Indeed, the exhibition has revelations beyond the familiar Carlton Room Division for Memphis and his use of protozoa prints.

continued on page 33
The close and sometimes surprising relationship between drawing and construction in the work of Alvaro Siza is the subject of a new exhibit at the Santa Monica Museum of Art. Alvaro Siza/Architect: Drawings, Models, Photographs contrasts the doodle-like and fantastic quality of the architect’s drawings with the outwardly austere character of his buildings.

The show is a small one, but makes its point through five very different buildings, all displayed alongside drawings made during the design process by the Portuguese architect, who won the Pritzker Prize in 1982. The exuberance of the drawings, many of which combine obsessive reworking of architectural details with unrelated freehand sketches, may change visitors’ perceptions of the designs in model or final form, which seem to reject any superfluous gesture.

Sketching appears to be a form of thinking for Siza. “He is always drawing,” said architect Carlos Castanheira, a long-time collaborator, in an interview. According to Castanheira, when Siza comes to his house for dinner, “He starts drawing pictures of animals for my children.” In the Santa Monica exhibit, architectural studies intermingle with images of goddess-like faces, angels, female figures, and horses.

Siza’s Santa Maria Church In Marco de Canavezes, Portugal (1996-1998), is shown. The temporary pavilion for London’s Serpentine Gallery (2005), a collaboration between Siza and Eduardo Souto de Moura.

The spontaneous and imaginative quality of the drawings is key to understanding the built work, said Castanheira, who served as Siza’s representative at the show. (The architect, who is in his 70s, suffers from back pain and elected not to make the transatlantic trip.) Rather than focusing on making monuments, Siza is primarily concerned with the experience of users; visitors to his buildings are typically guided through dramatic transitions in both light and space. Gradations of natural light, as seen in the powerful, bare interior of the Santa Maria Church in Marco de Canavezes, Portugal, are a favorite theme. Unlike some minimalists, however, Siza remains playful and refuses to become oppressively formal. Even in a project as disciplined as the columnar water tower for the town of Aveiro, Portugal (1988-89), Siza provided a curving, informal walkway across the reflecting pool at the base of the structure.

Even more playful in concept is the Iberê Camargo Museum in Porto Alegre, Brazil (1998). Here, the architect has pulled the circulation ramps forward and away from the mass of the museum building, so the ramps are suspended in space like the legs of an enormous crab. The scheme could be read as a send-up of Frank Lloyd Wright’s Guggenheim Museum, and the tension Wright set up between walking on a ramp and looking at art. Siza made the ramp system almost into a separate building, and by so doing made the act of walking from floor to floor into an experience that’s distinct from that of exploring the galleries.

Another playful, if vertiginous, solution is the garage of the Mario Bahia House in Gondomar, Portugal (1983). Faced with a steep riverbank off the transatlantic trip., Siza made the ramp system suspended in space like a tightrope like drive, which seems to reject the right to be slow. The Santa Monica show is a rarity—a museum exhibit about architecture that is both accessible and enlightening. The relationship between drawing and design is richly demonstrated here. And by looking at these drawings—rapid, fluent and full of sensibility—we can briefly see the world through Siza’s eyes.

PLAYFULNESS AND PLASTICITY

Alvaro Siza/Architect: Drawings, Models, Photographs
Santa Monica Museum of Art

drewings, Models, Photographs
Santa Monica Museum of Art
October 16 - November 20
Santa Monica

Abby Weinberg

The short film 9 Families begins with a series of brief interviews shot in tight quarters, of women who count off the number of years they’ve lived in Tijuana. The anonymous women talk about the homes they’ve left behind—in Jalisco, Michoacan, Oaxaca—while children dart in and out of the frame. “I had it all,” laments one mother, who looks barely older than her three kids. “It’s been tough,” she sighs. “It’s been tough.”

The film is by the collective Torolab, and constitutes half of LAXART Gallery’s SOS: Emergency Architecture. Torolab was founded by Raúl Cárdenas Osuna and mixes architecture, furniture design, graphics, fashion, music, and video with the goal of bringing “comfort and quality of life” to the people of Tijuana. Cárdenas considers the sprawling, ramshackle city of 1.3 million just across the U.S. border his project, and hopes his work moves beyond protest and into the realm of design solutions.

The other element of the show is a billboard on La Cienega Boulevard, a few doors south of the gallery, which simply shows the pleasant faces of the women from 9 Families. Inside the gallery, the video tells the story of the essential human need for shelter. The camera rarely pans away from their faces; their words alone are sufficiently powerful.

One after another, the women articulate what’s missing from the corrugated-steel-and-dirt-floor shantytown in which they live: electricity, running water, sewers, a park. “I would really like to take my children to the park to play,” says one. “I had it all,” sighs another, whose three kids are barely older than hers.

Then, as each woman imagines a true home, her name appears on screen. Azucena says that all she wants is a “pequeña casa”—a small house—with two bedrooms and the services inside, so I don’t have to do the laundry outside in the rain.” Lupita wants her kids to be able to “feel free, to scream, and to play.” Esther wants a garage in front, a garden, and a little walkway and a porch. “I like houses with porches a lot.”

In all, the sounyevuei nhe describe their dreams, and as they do, an animated stream of lines begins to settle into a perspectival drawing of the house they’ve set their hopes on. And that’s it. The film ends. Its message couldn’t be simpler or clearer.

Here is architecture at its most basic: putting a roof over someone’s head.

The short film 9 Families was shot in Tijuana, Mexico, where 1.3 million people live in shantytowns just across the U.S. border. The anonymous women talk about the homes they’ve left behind—in Jalisco, Michoacan, Oaxaca—while children dart in and out of the frame. “I had it all,” laments one mother, who looks barely older than her three kids. “It’s been tough,” she sighs. “It’s been tough.”

The film is by the collective Torolab, and constitutes half of LAXART Gallery’s SOS: Emergency Architecture. Torolab was founded by Raúl Cárdenas Osuna and mixes architecture, furniture design, graphics, fashion, music, and video with the goal of bringing “comfort and quality of life” to the people of Tijuana. Cárdenas considers the sprawling, ramshackle city of 1.3 million just across the U.S. border his project, and hopes his work moves beyond protest and into the realm of design solutions.

The other element of the show is a billboard on La Cienega Boulevard, a few doors south of the gallery, which simply shows the pleasant faces of the women from 9 Families. Inside the gallery, the video tells the story of the essential human need for shelter. The camera rarely pans away from their faces; their words alone are sufficiently powerful.

One after another, the women articulate what’s missing from the corrugated-steel-and-dirt-floor shantytown in which they live: electricity, running water, sewers, a park. “I would really like to take my children to the park to play,” says one. “I had it all,” sighs another, whose three kids are barely older than hers.

Then, as each woman imagines a true home, her name appears on screen. Azucena says that all she wants is a “pequeña casa”—a small house—with two bedrooms and the services inside, so I don’t have to do the laundry outside in the rain.” Lupita wants her kids to be able to “feel free, to scream, and to play.” Esther wants a garage in front, a garden, and a little walkway and a porch. “I like houses with porches a lot.”

In all, the sounyevuei nhe describe their dreams, and as they do, an animated stream of lines begins to settle into a perspectival drawing of the house they’ve set their hopes on. And that’s it. The film ends. Its message couldn’t be simpler or clearer.

Here is architecture at its most basic: putting a roof over someone’s head.

GREG GOLIN IS ARCHITECTURE CRITIC AT LOS ANGELES MAGAZINE AND A REGULAR CONTRIBUTOR TO LA WEEKLY.
I'm able to meet new people here.

The Monacelli Press invites you to a party and book signing with

John Chase  Diane Kanner  Sylvia Lavin  Julie Eizenberg  Mark Robbins  Stanley Saitowitz

Thursday, June 8, 2006
6:00PM - 8:00PM

A+D Architecture and Design Museum
5900 Wilshire Boulevard
Los Angeles, CA
rsvp marketing@monacellipress.com

cocktails provided by

www.aplusd.org  www.monacellipress.com
When you initially conceived of Broken Screen, did you also imagine staging a mixed-media happening?

I originally wanted to do something direct and immediate, and not geared for critics and curators. As that project developed, there was something wonderfully creative and spontaneous about it. I felt that if there were a way of making a physical manifestation of that spontaneity, it would be the next stage for the project. I knew the book had to be mixed-media, and that it couldn’t be about just artists or architects or filmmakers.

As part of a larger conversation-based project called Broken Screen, artist Doug Aitken staged an event in early May in market hall in New York, featuring conversations with artists including Jeff Koons, Miranda July, and Vito Acconci (pictured below).
It is really about the cross-pollination that's going on right now across all disciplines. I also wanted to acknowledge that this mixing has roots that go all the way back to people like Stan Brakhage or Kenneth Anger, and even to Abel Gance's film Napoleon from the 1920s.

I felt this event should also be mixed up, and disciplines should be crossed, instead of having a flowing program or saying, "Okay, I'm working only with artists here." I don't think you'd expect to see Jeff Koons on the Lower East Side on a Saturday night, working with a public art institution. In talking to him, he was very gracious and wanted to reach out and do things that are more populist, which is in many respects is contradictory to his public image.

I also felt that Superstudio had to be a part of the program, because I wanted that idealism and utopianism to be present. Some of the work in Broken Screen is really aggressive, cynical, and even punk rock, some is cinematic and populist; other people's work is visionary and utopian. Superstudio and Jodorowsky, who was also making films at the time, represent that whole moment in time.

The 26 artists you talk with in Broken Screen cover a very wide range. How did you go about choosing them?

Well, I approached it on two levels: It had to be accessible, because I wanted to make a populist book. I wanted it to be able to take ideas that could be quite complex and make them available not only to a 40-year-old who is going to the Guggenheim but also to an 18-year-old who is going to Tower Records. When I was that age, I had exposure to some of the people we are talking about, and it changed my life. I felt like this could be a simple, cheap manifesto that gets out there and helps stimulate conversation.

It is interesting that you refer to it as a manifesto, since no one uses that word anymore, at least with a computing and financial rhetoric. I have this idea that this book is the desire to bring clarity [to the way artists talk about their work], and get away from critical rhetoric, like the kind of thing you find in October magazine. The way Ed Ruscha, who is my neighbor, looks at his work is so simple, it is amazing. John Baldessari is the same way. His is highly conceptual work, but the structure behind it is really storytelling.

How did you decide the book’s organization? The major theme of your conversations is non-linearity, and yet the book is presented in a very linear way. Well, I approached it on two levels: It had to be accessible, I wanted to make a populist book. I wanted it to be able to take ideas that could be quite complex and make them available not only to a 40-year-old who is going to the Guggenheim but also to an 18-year-old who is going to Tower Records. When I was that age, I had exposure to some of the people we are talking about, and it changed my life. I felt like this could be a simple, cheap manifesto that gets out there and helps stimulate conversation.

It is interesting that you refer to it as a manifesto, since no one uses that word anymore, at least with a computing and financial rhetoric. I have this idea that this book is the desire to bring clarity [to the way artists talk about their work], and get away from critical rhetoric, like the kind of thing you find in October magazine. The way Ed Ruscha, who is my neighbor, looks at his work is so simple, it is amazing. John Baldessari is the same way. His is highly conceptual work, but the structure behind it is really storytelling.

How did you decide the book’s organization? The major theme of your conversations is non-linearity, and yet the book is presented in a very linear way. Well, I approached it on two levels: It had to be accessible, I wanted to make a populist book. I wanted it to be able to take ideas that could be quite complex and make them available not only to a 40-year-old who is going to the Guggenheim but also to an 18-year-old who is going to Tower Records. When I was that age, I had exposure to some of the people we are talking about, and it changed my life. I felt like this could be a simple, cheap manifesto that gets out there and helps stimulate conversation.

It is interesting that you refer to it as a manifesto, since no one uses that word anymore, at least with a computing and financial rhetoric. I have this idea that this book is the desire to bring clarity [to the way artists talk about their work], and get away from critical rhetoric, like the kind of thing you find in October magazine. The way Ed Ruscha, who is my neighbor, looks at his work is so simple, it is amazing. John Baldessari is the same way. His is highly conceptual work, but the structure behind it is really storytelling.

On display, too, is the Valentine portable typewriter, the piece for which Sottsass is perhaps best known. "I worked 60 years of my life, and it seems the only thing I did is this fucking red machine," he said soon after the LACMA show opened. "And it came out a mistake." Some mistake.

Greg Goldin is the architecture critic at Los Angeles Magazine and a regular contributor to LA Weekly.

www.archpaper.com

W&W GLASS

FOR OVER 60 YEARS NEW YORK'S SOURCE FOR...

ARCHITECTURAL GLASS AND GLAZING

- Curtain Walls
- Architectural Metal
- Entrances & Storefronts
- Canopies & Skylights
- Fillington Planar Systems

W&W GLASS, LLC... providing superior solutions to your most challenging projects.

www.wwglass.com 1.800.452.7925

continued from page 29

His Stereo Cabinet No. 1, an 8-foot-tall L-shaped tower of jacaranda joined in the middle by three thick charcoal shelves, is a tour-de-force of book-matched veneers. Did the natural pattern of wood ever look richer, more inviting, with those giant leaves of green hardening us back into a forest primeval? The three incised circles in an Offering to Shiva plate (1964) draw us into the spiritual realm and the mysteries of the night sky. An early hanging lamp, from 1957, is a colorful, delicate jellyfish floating upside down, an object come to life.

These are masterworks, deftly executed, with a keen sense of proportion, scale, and rhythm. They reflect the human in nature, and a constant search to find the expressive qualities in even the most up-to-date man-made materials. On display, too, is the Valentine portable typewriter, the piece for which Sottsass is perhaps best known. "I worked 60 years of my life, and it seems the only thing I did is this fucking red machine," he said soon after the LACMA show opened. "And it came out a mistake." Some mistake.

Greg Goldin is the architecture critic at Los Angeles Magazine and a regular contributor to LA Weekly.
Images of Architecture & Design

See www.esto.com for the work of our assignment photographers. Call to discuss photography of your new projects. 914.698.4066.

And now www.estrostock.com, our new online image database. More than 75 photographers worldwide contribute to this archive of important historical and contemporary material. Take a look.

PK-30 system™

The Finest Materials. Extraordinary Engineering. Attention to Aesthetics. Creates a Superior Sliding Door System

TRANSMATERIAL

A CATALOG OF MATERIALS THAT REDEFINE OUR PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT
EDITED BY BLAINE BROWNELL
8.5 x 11 in / 336 pp / 800 color images / $34.95 / paperback
Whether you’re designing a building or a toaster, a savvy knowledge of materials is critical. Transmaterial is an essential tool for any architect or designer interested in keeping up with the rapid developments in the field of materials. With more than 200 materials organized by category and annotated with technical and sourcing information, it’s more than a catalog—it’s a source of inspiration.

Available from your local bookseller or www.papress.com

HIGH-RISE BALCONY DOORS BY DOMEL’
- Meets & Exceeds HC40 Performance Requirements
- Weather-Tight in Extreme Weather Conditions
- Maximum Glass Area
- 5 Point Vault Latch
- Structural Thermal Break
- Interior & Exterior Colors Can Be Different

Domel’ Inc.
800-603-6835 Fax 973-614-8011
3 Gunnel Rd, Clifton, New Jersey 07013
www.domelinc.com

CHOICE OF BUILDERS & INSTALLERS

Looking for that perfect match? Spending lonely nights crawling through lighting catalogs? Run your project through eLumit. Give yourself a break and your clients the sexiest, most current lighting solutions.

www.elimit.com
Q-CAD DRAFTING SERVICES
Hand-Drafted into CAD

PAPER DOCUMENTS
HAND-DRAFTED INTO CAD
• 1, 3, 5, 10, 30-Day Turnarounds
• AIA, LITE, Custom Layering
• AutoCAD, Microstation
• Guaranteed Quality, Accuracy, Turnaround, Satisfaction
• Fixed Price Per Sheet

ABOUT Q-CAD
• 14+ Years in Business
• GSA Contract #GS-25F-0051-L
• Woman-Owned Small Business
• USA Company

800-700-3305 | www.Q-CAD.com | QCAD@QCAD.COM

Earn 4.5 HSW Credits
While You’re On Summer Vacation!
Or Just Hanging Around Town

Study a Building
Study a City
Study a Historic Site
Study an Interior

Choose a site. Download the coursepack.
Complete on your own time and return to
www.sitestudy.com

SITU STUDIO
CNC Services
research design fabrication
www.situstudio.com

SOPPETALER
since 1881

Custom Windows
Doors Hardware

residential
commercial
institutional

traditional
contemporary
as you please

www.sorpetalerusa.com
info@sorpetalerusa.com

RATED #1
NEW YORK
Magazine
May 12-19, 2003

INTERIOR WINDOW SYSTEMS

• Choice of Leading Architects & Interior Designers
• We Design, Manufacture & Install
• All Custom Design, Construction, and Glazing
• Windows, Doors, and A/C Enclosures

HOW IT WORKS
The Cityproof Interior Window works in conjunction with the existing exterior window to create a “Buffer Zone” (air space) that seals out noise, cold, draft, and dirt.

www.cityproof.com
10-11 43rd Avenue, Long Island City 11101
(718) 786-1600 • (800) 287-6869 • cityproof@aol.com

“Improving the Quality of the Living & Working Environment for over 45 Years.”

Tel 203.331.3493 Fax 203.532.9727
THE UN-PLANNING OF PUBLIC SPACE IN LOS ANGELES

On June 14, 2006, Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa and Police Chief William Bratton will preside over a groundbreaking ceremony for the Los Angeles Police Department's new downtown headquarters. Los Angeles-based DMJM Design, in joint venture with Roth + Sheppard Architects, will present renderings of the 500,000 square-foot building with a triangular footprint at First and Main streets, on the block just south of City Hall. Although the architects tried to orient the building toward Morphosis' Caltrans building across the street, and to connect City Hall and the historic St. Vibiana's Cathedral via a diagonal axis, the inelegant design does little to rectify a planning debacle in the making. During the ceremony, the Mayor and the police chief might consider dropping the usual rhetoric—a greener city and improved community relations—as the process for choosing the site defies both.

A bit of background: In 1997, the city and county approved a masterplan to create pedestrian-friendly green spaces to connect City Hall to surrounding government buildings. The centerpiece of the plan was a civic square on the block where the police headquarters will be built. City planners imagined this site as a viable center in a city so often described as lacking a center. It might be a park, it might be a space for a farmers' market, concerts, civic events, and political protests, they suggested. Aside from the symbolic gesture of creating civic or public space, park advocates argued the site could link Little Tokyo and the Broadway District, two nearby vibrant neighborhoods separated by blocks of sterile government buildings and residential hotels.

The civic park proposal gained temporary momentum in early 2004 with the backing of City Councilwoman Jan Perry, who represents downtown, and planning support from the J. Paul Getty Trust. Discussions included constructing an unbuilt work by Robert Smithson from 1973, titled Palm Spiral; in May of 2004, Perry created an advisory committee to help launch the project. In a surprise move that June, however, the City Council abruptly voted to develop the police headquarters on the site instead, derailing years of planning. Overnight, what had been envisioned as an open civic space directly in front of City Hall became a high-tech facility for one of the most militarized police forces in the United States.

The rebuke of democratic planning is epitomized by the way in which the site was ultimately delivered to the L.A.P.D. Councilwoman Perry, who sat through public hearings protesting her reversal—constantly rolling her eyes and issuing audible sighs—apparently took a short driving tour with the city's then-chief legislative officer, Ron Deaton, to scout possible sites. Despite continuing public outcry and proposals of alternate sites, Deaton, now head of the Department of Power and Water, decided the site at First and Main was perfect.

The police headquarters is a prime example of how uninformed design and poor urban planning frequently conspire in L.A. The building's clumsy design is heightened by required 75-foot setbacks, meant as safety buffers. The "open space" elements incorporated into the design as an appeasement for the loss of the park are no doubt function mostly as unused space. Who can really imagine relaxing on the lawn in front of the new facility? Poor planning on this site will exacerbate a plague in this area—streets empty after 7:00 p.m. A bit of background: In 1997, the city and county approved a masterplan to create pedestrian-friendly green spaces to connect City Hall to surrounding government buildings. The centerpiece of the plan was a civic square on the block where the police headquarters will be built. City planners imagined this site as a viable center in a city so often described as lacking a center. It might be a park, it might be a space for a farmers' market, concerts, civic events, and political protests, they suggested. Aside from the symbolic gesture of creating civic or public space, park advocates argued the site could link Little Tokyo and the Broadway District, two nearby vibrant neighborhoods separated by blocks of sterile government buildings and residential hotels.

The civic park proposal gained temporary momentum in early 2004 with the backing of City Councilwoman Jan Perry, who represents downtown, and planning support from the J. Paul Getty Trust. Discussions included constructing an unbuilt work by Robert Smithson from 1973, titled Palm Spiral; in May of 2004, Perry created an advisory committee to help launch the project. In a surprise move that June, however, the City Council abruptly voted to develop the police headquarters on the site instead, derailing years of planning. Overnight, what had been envisioned as an open civic space directly in front of City Hall became a high-tech facility for one of the most militarized police forces in the United States.

The rebuke of democratic planning is epitomized by the way in which the site was ultimately delivered to the L.A.P.D. Councilwoman Perry, who sat through public hearings protesting her reversal—constantly rolling her eyes and issuing audible sighs—apparently took a short driving tour with the city's then-chief legislative officer, Ron Deaton, to scout possible sites. Despite continuing public outcry and proposals of alternate sites, Deaton, now head of the Department of Power and Water, decided the site at First and Main was perfect.

The police headquarters is a prime example of how uninformed design and poor urban planning frequently conspire in L.A. The building's clumsy design is heightened by required 75-foot setbacks, meant as safety buffers. The "open space" elements incorporated into the design as an appeasement for the loss of the park are no doubt function mostly as unused space. Who can really imagine relaxing on the lawn in front of the new facility? Poor planning on this site will exacerbate a plague in this area—streets empty after 7:00 p.m. Not only will the proposal diminish the striking new Caltrans building across the street (specifically designed to face a civic square), but the police department's additional off-site facilities a block away will disrupt an emerging arts district and require the destruction of yet another historic building. The security and surveillance measures required for the police headquarters will increase the aura of inaccessibility around City Hall, and the growing residential neighborhood just south of the site will be treated to intense security measures, increased traffic, and an active police heliport.

The entire facility sabotages a crucial opportunity to develop public space in the heart of downtown L.A. through a truly democratic process. After a lengthy planning period, city officials simply shifted gears and pushed through a hasty agenda that favors the L.A.P.D. rather than the long-term interests of the city as a whole. This entire episode reinforces one of the oldest clichés about Los Angeles: that land-use decisions are made behind closed doors, with only upper-level city officials and a powerful economic elite in attendance. Ideally, a civic space is a distinct environment in which abstractions about democracy come down to earth. In the case of the Civic Park, however, democratic process was scuttled in favor of expediency and top-down decision-making. Maybe it's naive to assume the cliché won't determine the outcome. Perhaps the fact that the Department of Cultural Affairs voted twice to reject the project will cause the right person to question the plan. Maybe those involved with the Grand Avenue development will see that a civic square south of City Hall would lend a little balance to those upscale plans. And maybe someone with a little foresight will do the right thing: Find a temporary home for the L.A.P.D. while its current home, the neighboring Parker Center, is rebuilt. And maybe we could re-start a truly democratic process and go forward with a design for a dynamic Civic Park. "KEN EHRLICH IS A LOS ANGELES-BASED ARTIST AND WRITER. HE IS THE COEDITOR OF SURFACE TENSION (ERRANT BODIES PRESS, 2003)."
WHATEVER HAPPENED TO LOS ANGELES?

When I first visited Los Angeles in 1987 to work on a special issue of the British architecture magazine Architectural Review, I was smitten by what I saw: a freshly minted cityscape of single-family homes built in ersatz styles on verdant streets overlaid with a web of freeways transporting untrammeled car drivers from sea to mountain. Dotted across this terrain were experimental small houses in off-kilter forms, made of banal materials used interestingly by architects like Frank Gehry, Frank Israel, Morphosis, Brian Murphy, and Eric Owen Moss; and their antecedents, experimental craftsmen bungalows from the 1910s, early modern models of new living from their antecedents, experimental craftsmen bungalows from the 1910s, early modern models of new living from the '20s, and their mid-century variants. To a visitor from Scandinavia, early modern models of new living from the '20s, and their mid-century variants. To a visitor from the 1910s, early modern models of new living from their antecedents, experimental craftsmen bungalows from the 1910s, early modern models of new living from their antecedents, experimental craftsmen bungalows from the 1910s, early modern models of new living from their antecedents, experimental craftsmen bungalows from the 1910s, early modern models of new living from their antecedents, experimental craftsmen bungalows from the 1910s, early modern models of new living from the '20s, and their mid-century variants. To a visitor from

Unable to shake off my passion for Los Angeles, I moved here in 1991, and started to get to know my soul city a little better. I learned that L.A. was perhaps not 21st century, rather it was 20th century. Its fabric—though distinguished by good weather and geography, and the presence of Hollywood—was not unlike many other Western, postwar, car-based American cities, and it was starting to be strangled by its car-dependence. Most new houses were not experiments in style and life by quirky architects; rather they were retro-style, skin-deep, increasingly barricated from "the other" in gated communities. Most commercial buildings were mundane corporate towers that could be found anywhere. As urban designer John Chase has written in L.A. 2000+, New Architecture in Los Angeles (Monacelli, 2006), "in recent years Los Angeles has often been misrepresented as an exotic anomaly among American cities, defying the normal rules of city building. In fact the development pattern of Los Angeles today is now typical of American cities, in aspects such as its dependence on the automobile, ethnic and economic segregation, and in its degree of defended space."

Not that this made me love L.A. any less; I just appreciated its tensions and complexity more. But after these revelations came the Rodney King riots (in 1992), then fires, floods and a devastating earthquake. These cataclysms blew L.A. apart, physically, psychically, politically, exposing "ethic and economic segregation," and exposing pressing urban and economic needs for its growing, largely immigrant and often poor, population. The innovative houses in Brentwood and Venice suddenly seemed rather trivial.

These events left the L.A. architecture community more serious. Some of the air had been let out of the balloon. It was as if the brightest spark at a party had OD'd. But at the same time there was a kind of euphoria in the air as architects embraced a new sense of purpose. They turned their talents to the design of schools, libraries, multi-family housing, arts institutions—in short, the public realm. Former maverick house designers like Thom Mayne and Morphosis, Brian Murphy, and Eric Owen Moss; and their antecedents, experimental craftsmen bungalows from the 1910s, early modern models of new living from the '20s, and their mid-century variants. To a visitor from an old European city—where lack of virgin land, coupled with centuries of overbearing architectural precedent, had constrained experimentation—this city was fantastic. L.A. seemed hypermodern, 21st century even, and its occupants liberated by the sense of space and the vast blue skies.

The new Luxo is not just task lights. For Scandinavian design redefined, call for a catalog or visit a showroom near you.

800-222-LUXO www.luxous.com
THE CEMENT LOOK

24"X48" PORCELAIN TILE
IN-Stock

CERAMICA ARNÓN
TILE AND STONE SHOWROOM
134 W. 20TH STREET, NEW YORK, NY
212.807.0876

INDOOR / OUTDOOR
RESIDENTIAL / COMMERCIAL
WHOLESALE / RETAIL

VISIT OUR NEW WEBSITE
WWW.CERAMICAARNON.COM
perfect fit

What if the glass and metal needs on your next project were engineered to integrate seamlessly from one source? Now they can be! Introducing Oldcastle Glass® Envelope™. Architectural glass, operable windows and curtainwall, all designed to work together in perfect harmony. And only Oldcastle Glass® can pull it off. So how do we do it? Simple! We’re the only curtainwall and window manufacturer that truly understands glass. The benefits? Better buildings for starters. Add to that, seamless building envelope solutions and project management all under one roof. When your project calls for architectural glass, curtainwall and windows, rely on Oldcastle Glass® to orchestrate it.

Call 1-866-OLDCASTLE (653-2278) or visit the new www.oldcastleglass.com.

Oldcastle Glass® Where glass becomes architecture™