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YONKERS POLITICAL BATTLE OVER MASSIVE FCR PROJECT HEATS UP

THE BATTLE OF RIDGE HILL



COURTESY FOREST CITY RATNER

This project has everything: Urban renewal. Bickering politicians. Warring communities. Traffic problems. Eminent domain. Angry accusations of backroom deals. Even Forest City Ratner (FCR) is involved, so it must be the Atlantic Yards, right?

Wrong. Since at least 2003, FCR has been working to convert an 81-acre plot at the edge of Yonkers into a mixed-use retail and residential project known as Ridge Hill

Village. The development cleared what could be its final hurdle on June 4, when the seven-member Yonkers Industrial Development Agency voted unanimously to extend \$22 million in tax breaks to the developer.

Several members of the city council have taken issue with the tax break because they say it slipped mysteriously into an agreement between the city and FCR for the developer to buy out its lease, **continued on page 7**

TWO WOMEN-LED FIRMS TO DESIGN HOTEL CONDO TOWER IN TEXAS



COURTESY DEBORAH BERKE & PARTNERS

LONE STAR BERKE

Deborah Berke & Partners, one of New York's most visible and successful woman-led architecture firms, is known for spare, elegantly detailed designs for galleries, residences, and institutional projects. But in recent years, Berke has been expanding her practice and taking on larger commercial projects, including a number of hotels.

Following the success of the first 21c Museum Hotel in Louisville, Kentucky, located in a string of nineteenth-century warehouse buildings downtown, Berke, working with Boston-based (and also woman-led) Goody Clancy, is designing a 200-room luxury hotel in Austin, Texas, from the ground up. It will contain **continued on page 6**

The Cerrito House in Rhode Island as it appeared in 1964.



COURTESY PAUL RUDOLPH FOUNDATION

DEAL TO SAVE CERRITO HOUSE FALLS THROUGH AT LAST MINUTE

ANOTHER RUDOLPH TEARDOWN

A 1956 home designed by Paul Rudolph in Watch Hill, Rhode Island, has been razed. Though as recently as last month the house was slated to be moved and preserved, difficult negotiations led to its demolition on June 14.

In 2000 Jeffrey Hogan, a managing director at Morgan Stanley in Los Angeles, and his wife, Karen, purchased a 3,900-square-foot house built for the Cerrito family (they sold it in 1969). A May 23 *New York Times* article **continued on page 3**

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NEW TOWER AT DEUTSCHE BANK SITE MAY SHADOW PARK

CHASE TO BUILD AT GROUND ZERO

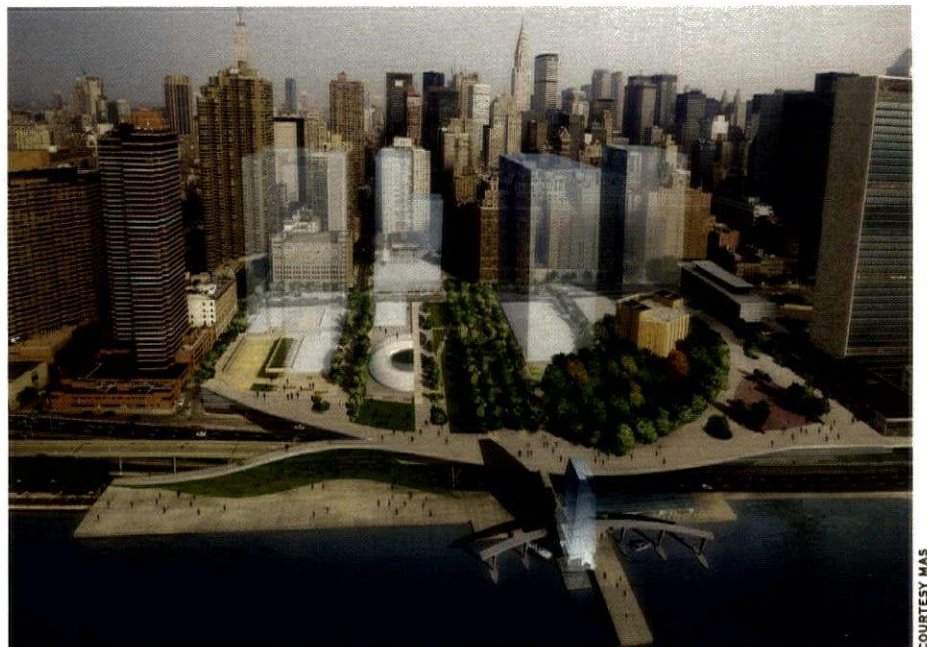
While Governor Spitzer's announcement that JPMorgan Chase's decision to build a new tower at Greenwich and Cedar Streets on the old Deutsche Bank site, just across Ground Zero signaled to many that "downtown is **continued on page 5**

DESIGNERS, DEVELOPERS TALK ABOUT CON ED SITE'S FUTURE

Midtown's Dream Team

Several weeks ago, in one of the most unique planning exercises in recent city history, six leading design professionals donated their time to collaborate on a day-long

charrette in a vacant storefront at United Nations Plaza. They produced a bold new vision for the redevelopment of Midtown Manhattan's forlorn- **continued on page 7**



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The hyper-development currently underway in our large metropolitan centers means that many old structures—even if they are important architectural monuments—are being viewed not only as outdated but even as potential teardowns. In fact, nearly every issue of *AN* features yet another architectural monument facing the wrecking ball. The sad tale of the 1956 Cerrito House is only the latest loss of a distinctive Paul Rudolph design: In January a house in Westport, Connecticut, was destroyed. His Orange County Government Center in Goshen, New York, and Blue Cross/Blue Shield offices in Boston may be next. Buildings that academics consider American examples of the concrete style known as Brutalism seem to be especially under attack today. Marcel Breuer's Cleveland Government building, John Johanson's Mechanics Theater in Baltimore, and even Boston City Hall—arguably one of the great examples of the style—are all potential tear downs.

These buildings defined exciting new ways of living when they were designed but are fraught with problems today. Take any number of Rudolph, Breuer or Johanson buildings. What are we to do with buildings that are wildly unpopular with a public that considers them eyesores and that would happily have them torn down in a second if given a chance? Further, such buildings are often difficult to defend by current standards, as they have histories of poor performance with leaking roofs (the Orange County Government Center reputedly has 87 different roofs and all of them leak). They are definitely not, as we define it, sustainable, since they were built with materials like asbestos, or they are not energy efficient. To make matters worse, quite a few may not even be functional for their current inhabitants.

Let's say the building is by a master like Rudolph. How should defenders of contemporary architecture fight for the survival of an unpopular building? One can argue that it was way ahead of its time in terms of the use of natural light or the arrangement of the floor spaces. Furthermore, it may not be among the master designer's greatest buildings. That said, even lesser works from an architect like Rudolph would be more thoughtful anything that might replace it. Witness the McMansions replacing houses by the New Canaan Five.

But there is another possible solution to consider before resorting to complete demolition. Why not look for innovative re-uses for key parts of the buildings, or rework them into new uses or more functional formats? To save its Edward Durell Stone building on Columbus Circle, the Museum of Arts and Design kept the floor plate and lollipop columns, but wrapped the structure in a new skin, a solution that certainly did not please preservationists. Both the Mechanics Theater and the Cleveland Government building are being considered for partial demolition: Their distinctive lobbies and public spaces may be reused as entryways for the tall high-rises around them. This approach arguably destroys the building's spirit and function, and can lead to a situation such as the one in Washington, D.C. There, ghost-like facades hold the street line for the massive structures behind them, creating the feeling of a soul-less, eviscerated city. Then there are McKim, Mead, and White's Villard Houses. They have retained their solid dignity while providing a protected public space on busy Madison Avenue and create a grand entryway into the mundane hotel behind. This may not work for every unpopular building that deserves a second chance, but it is an answer of sorts. That is, until architects can fashion a better way out of a conundrum that is surely only going to intensify in years to come.

HOTEL PIONEER JOINS FORCES
WITH MARRIOTT ON 100 PROJECTS

SCHRAGER SCALES UP

When they opened Morgans and the Royalton Hotel in New York in the 1980s, Ian Schrager and Steve Rubell launched a whole new category in hospitality that has since spread around the world, the boutique hotel. At a June 14 press conference at his Gramercy Park Hotel, Schrager announced a new partnership with Marriott International to update the idea he pioneered for today's market. The new brand, which Schrager and Marriott chairman J.W. Marriott Jr. didn't name, will comprise at least 100 new hotels of about 150 to 200 rooms each in cities all over the world.

At first, the venture seems unlikely, since what Marriott is good at—providing a consistent level of service and amenities that visitors can rely on finding in any hotel, anywhere—is the very antithesis of what Schrager has built his company on. The two men begged to differ, though: “On the surface, we’re dissimilar, but not in our DNA,” said Schrager. Marriott added that Schrager's impact has been far greater than the number of properties he has developed, but they plan to change that.

The collaboration is good news for designers. According to Schrager, each new project will be unique, since at the heart of the idea of the boutique hotel is a specific point of view, and that is what separates them from their luxurious but cookie-cutter counterparts. “We are taking the industry to the next level by not replicating anything—there will be 100 originals,” he said. “It will create a new standard for identity.” This premium on individuality means that the new brand will clearly have to go deep into the design talent pool. “To keep up the pace of what we want to do, we’ll be obliged to work with a number of different designers, some famous and others not so famous, and [what we choose] will depend on the city it is in.” Gentlemen, start your engines. **ANNE GUINEY**

ANOTHER RUDOLPH TEARDOWN

continued from front page reported that the couple, who did not respond to *AN*'s requests for an interview, had been interested in renovating and adding onto the home before they realized the complexity of their decision, and opted instead to build a new house in its place. The *Times* reported that architects Daniel Sachs and Kevin Lindores would rescue the home by moving it to a lot in Catskill, New York. Charles Cerrito, son of the original owner, was “thrilled” with the solution, which required the Hogans to donate the home to the Paul Rudolph Foundation, a nonprofit dedicated to education programs and the preservation and understanding of Rudolph's work. Nepal Asathawasi, the Rudolph Foundation's coordinator, explained that the deal would have awarded the Hogans with a tax deduction in the amount of the

home's appraised value. The Foundation would own the home for a year, using it for educational programs, before transferring it to Sachs and Lindores, who would pay to move and reassemble the house. By the time the deal was killed, they had already paid to have trees cleared from their Catskill lot.

When Sachs and Lindores first saw the house in early May, they were struck by the fact that the home was intact, and still retained all of its original kitchen and bathroom fixtures and tiles. They identified a mover willing to relocate the structure by cutting it into two parts to be reassembled on the new site. After contacting the Hogans' contractor, who at the time was still planning to demolish the building, they received approval from the Hogans to dismantle the home for the move, although a final agreement had not yet been reached.

After several drafts and negotiations, the parties were unable to agree upon several key points.

“Valuation was always a problem,” said Sachs, explaining that the home, originally listed at \$230,000 in a real estate brochure was later valued at \$1.1 million by the Foundation. Sachs and Lindores felt that the figure did not reflect the home's worth if it was no longer situated on the original site.

In a late May meeting, the Hogans, through their lawyers, requested a June 15 deadline for having the home moved from their lot, which Sachs and Lindores requested to change to June 20. However, the real difficulty seems to have stemmed from a clause that would have returned ownership of the home to the Hogans and allow them to claim damages if Sachs and Lindores failed to meet the deadline. The pair halted the deal on May 25, surprised that things

had become so heated. They believed that the Hogans might have been pursuing a competing offer when the home mover they had hired told them that he received another call to inquire about the cost of moving the home.

On June 7, the Hogans contacted Sachs and Lindores and offered a new contract without the contentious liability clause. Having cancelled arrangements with the contractors and movers, the pair requested that a new time frame be established and that they be allowed to inspect the home. On June 11, Sachs and Lindores arrived only to discover a badly damaged house. The downspout and flashing had been removed, allowing the basement to flood during a rainstorm. But the bigger problem was the demolition in the bathrooms and kitchen. Copper pipes and tiles were missing, the bathroom faucets were

gone, and the kitchen cabinets had been torn out. “All we were left with was wood and sheetrock,” they said, explaining how there was no value without the irreplaceable, original elements. They called off the deal the next day, as reported in a second *Times* article on June 13.

Paula Ruisi, a friend of the Cerrito family, lives in Westerly, about a mile from the site. Curious about how the house would be moved, she drove by the site in early June and discovered an uncovered hole in the roof. Wanting to send Mr. Hogan pictures of the damage, she visited the site on June 13 and found the house still standing. The following day, June 14, Ruisi's mother and brother visited the site and informed her that the house had been demolished in what she calls a “terrible, terrible, and foolish waste.”

SARAH F. COX

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I was recently in Rome for a client meeting and thought, since I'm in Italy, why not attend the Venice Biennale for the first time? Parties galore beckoned, so I arrived in La Serenissima on a wet June afternoon just in time for the vernissage of the American Pavilion held at Peggy Guggenheim's unfinished Palazzo on the Grand Canal. New York architects and their entourages abounded: **Michael Gabellini**, who it turns out is married to the American Pavilion's brilliant curator **Nancy Spector**. It featured work by the artist **Felix Gonzalez-Torres**, including a carpet of edible licorice that all were welcome to try! **Richard Olcott**, a partner at Polshek, whose wife **Betsy** does publicity for the Guggenheim, appeared, as did **Steven Learner**. Also there was **RoseLee Goldberg**, who has her own biennale in New York this fall. It is focused on performance art and suitably called *Performa*. **Laurie Beckelman**, previously of the Museum of Arts & Design, and now a consultant for nonprofits, appeared at the Cipriani and Russian parties. **Ortensia Visconti**, whom I met in Rome, appeared (her great uncle was the great **Luchino Visconti**, who directed *The Leopard*).

At gallerist **Jeffrey Ditch's** dinner in a charming garden near **Palladio's** Il Redentore, I chatted with artists **Tim Noble** and **Sue Webster**, the British punk rock couple whose striking home and studio in London was designed by **David Adjaye**. Tim remarked that after the house was completed, they held a number of wild parties since "a new house should have sex to make it more livable." **Charles Miers** of Rizzoli was making the rounds, looking prescient as the publisher of **Tracy Emin**, featured artist of the British Pavilion. **Craig Robins**, developer of *Aqua* in Miami Beach, had lunch with **Zaha Hadid**, whose new furniture line was presented in a church, a suitably sacred location for the Goddess of Design. Also around town was **Ealan Wingate**, who runs the New York Gagosian Gallery and was seen in Rome recently surveying spaces for a new branch.

The Biennale takes place in two locations, the Arsenale, an old rope factory, and the Giardini. It's the same as the Architecture Biennale only instead of architects pretending to be artists, artists pretend to be politically important and not just big bucks capital investments! Parked outside the Giardini in the Laguna were some massive yachts, including that of **Ella Cisneros**, where the museum consultant **David Resnicow** held court at one of the evening soirees.

Art? Oh yes, **Robert Storr** (formerly of MoMA and now at Yale) was the curator whose theme "Think with the Senses, Feel with the Mind" was interpreted by a series of artists at the Arsenale in a half-mile walk of apocalyptic death, destruction, detention, displacement, war, and torture. In Venice the contemplative answer to this serious presentation is, of course, to drink and party some more! As many as 20 or more events typically took place at the same time causing extreme distress among those who wished to have the X-Men power of immanence. **Damien Hirst's** "New Religion" opening at the Palazzo Pesaro Papafava extended the theme with jewel-encrusted skulls and pharmaceutical metaphors of sainthood at a reception attended by **Peter Blake**, the legendary artist who did the cover of the Sgt. Pepper album. Then there was the Pinault dinner at the Palazzo Grazi, the Scottish party at Palazzo Zenobia, the Ukrainian and the Russian parties...but who can remember them all?

Finally there was a big bash on the Lido sponsored by the German Pavilion for the artist **Isa Genzken** (who had the misfortune to be married to **Gerhard Richter** before he became a superstar), held in an airplane hanger and runway on the beach. As the **Scissor Sisters** proclaimed before playing, "if there isn't a big paycheck from a rich person, it ain't art—here's to the rich people!"

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CHASE TO BUILD AT GROUND ZERO continued from front page the investment capital of the world," some neighborhoods groups have questioned aspects of the plan. The deal will provide generous economic rewards for the city and state—an estimated \$2 billion investment and 7000 jobs—but early renderings show a some-

what awkward design solution to a site problem that is undeniably difficult.

The 42-story, 1.3 million square foot tower will be designed by Kohn Pedersen Fox, and in order accommodate a trading floor, which is larger than the footprint of the building, a large cantilever must project out 100 feet above ground, looming

over a planned park on Liberty Street. Spokespeople for KPF refused to comment at press time, citing concern for the client.

Chase was given a subsidy of \$200 million by the city and state, according to the *New York Times*. In return, it will pay \$300 million to the Port Authority for a 92-year lease.

However, a largely forgotten casualty of 9/11, the 91-year old St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church, may also get overshadowed in the deal. The church was destroyed on 9/11, and congregation officials hoped to rebuild adjacent to the park, though their site will now fall under the cantilever. Church officials refused to comment citing ongoing negotiations with the city, the state and various rebuilding agencies.

ALAN G. BRAKE

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Talk about guilt-free food. At Öko in Park Slope, customers snack on natural, low-calorie frozen yogurt using spoons made from potatoes, not plastic. For another cool treat, they can order a cup of organic, free-trade iced tea or coffee served in biodegradable corn-starch cups and straws. Patrons relax at tables made of sunflower hulls (no VOC-emitting wood preservatives) near a wall with panels of the same substance and bamboo. If they prefer to stand, their feet can feel all ecofriendly, since they're resting on linoleum made of linseed oil. Even the name reflects the theme: Öko means "eco" in various languages. But for Kudos Construction principals John Park and Charles Choi, who helped finance and design the 800-square-foot shop, green design goes beyond branding—it's a natural extension of their lifestyle. "We love the outdoors and we love good food, and we feel very passionate about both those things," Choi said. "We like to go mountain biking or enjoy nature trails, so we like to preserve the environment as much as we can." Their store's unconventional decor has attracted quite a bit of attention—and that's all the better. They hope to spread the green gospel: "Our motto is 'be contagious,'" Choi said.



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LONE STAR BERKE continued from front page two restaurants, meeting facilities, galleries, and a 42-story condominium tower with over 200 units. The project is a clear signal that sophisticated design has become a selling point across the country, as mid-sized cities look to raise their urban profiles. "Austin is just the right fit for 21c," Berke said. "It's a funky, energetic city with a lot of personality. I really try and ground my work in the place where it is."

Initiated by a pair of prominent Louisville art collectors, Laura Lee Brown and Steve Wilson, the first 21c sought to blend art and commerce to create a unique hospitality experience, filled with challenging work by living artists. The effect is intimate and idiosyncratic, and the results have exceeded expectations. The design-savvy couple (along with other partners) is also developing the sixty-story Museum Plaza project in Louisville designed by OMA-offshoot REX Architecture, and is looking to extend the concept in Austin. There, the new 21c will be more than double the size of the original, though the developers hope to retain a quirky spirit. "It's a dynamic market there, and Deborah's design has been a big part of the success of the original 21c," said Steve Poe, one of the developers. "Steve, Laura Lee, and Deborah enjoy working together, so it was logical to bring her into this next phase."

Located near the Convention Center, the Austin project will take up a full block, though the architects have opted to break

up the massing into distinct volumes. A three-story base will include the lobby, the restaurants, gallery space, and some of the meeting areas, and will be topped by a green roof designed by Ten Eyck Landscape Architecture. The hotel, subsidized artists lofts, and some of the condominiums will rise nine stories above that. The remaining condominiums and penthouses will fill out the tallest tower, which is slender but still dominates the complex. Residents will have access to all the amenities of the hotel. "The program is diverse so we are trying to express that diversity architecturally," Berke said. "And we want to contribute to Austin's active street life." Berke's firm is primarily responsible for the public spaces, galleries, and hotel, while Goody Clancy is leading the design for the condominiums; both are working with the local firm Susman Tisdale Gayle. "Goody Clancy brings a tremendous amount of expertise to building at this scale, which has made the project advance quickly," said Berke. "The collaboration has been a wonderful learning experience for us."

Time will tell if Austin will embrace the project, though Louisville was arguably a bigger gamble. "We never expected that there would be more than one 21c," she says. "So we're unbelievably enthusiastic." Poe also hopes the project will be something that Austin will be proud of: "We've been very pleased about how the project has been received in Austin's arts community. That will be the key to its success." **ALAN G. BRAKE**

BATTERY PLAYGROUND WILL BE GEHRY'S GIFT TO CITY.

FRANK AT PLAY

Three months after Frank Gehry's first New York project, the IAC building, was completed, Mayor Bloomberg announced plans for the architect to design a playground for The Battery Conservancy at a June 4 gala benefit for the organization. The city has earmarked \$4 million for construction, while the Conservancy expects to raise additional funds.

Designs for the project, Gehry's first playground, will not be released until later this year. Asked to comment on what schemes had been discussed, Conservancy president Warrie Price said that no details were available at this time. The playground will occupy one acre of the Battery's 25-acre site at the southeastern tip of Manhattan, and replace an existing one.

Gehry will be working pro-bono on the project, construction for which will begin next year with completion expected in 2009. A member of the firm said that Gehry was traveling for the month of June and would not be available for comment; no other member of the firm could be reached. A press release's description noted that a green roof and a vegetal wall will be included, but no other design details were given.

Price explained that a mutual friend encouraged Gehry to discuss the project with her, and they held an initial project meeting

last May. While Price herself does not yet know what the design will look like, she says that Gehry was selected because his aesthetic appeals to children.

After the continuing bad press over the Forest City Ratner Atlantic Yards project, also designed by Gehry, the playground may be an attempt by the 78-year-old architect to endear himself to the city: The playground, a volunteer project to build an eco-friendly public space for children, is as politically agreeable as the Brooklyn megaproject is controversial. **SFC**

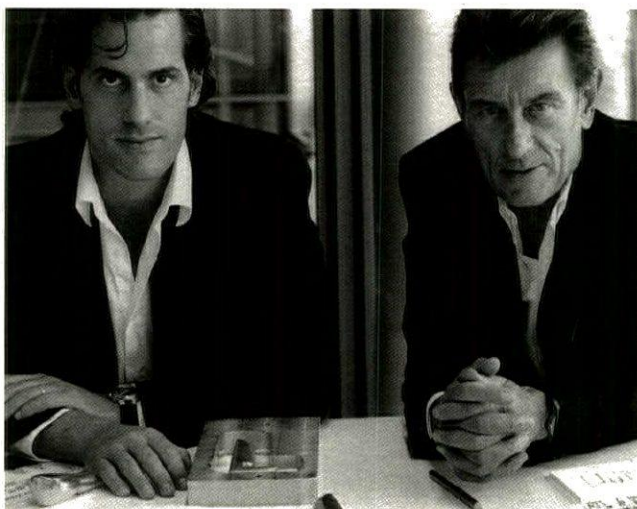
The new playground near Castle Clinton (lower left in blue) in the Battery will replace an existing one (lower right; hatched).



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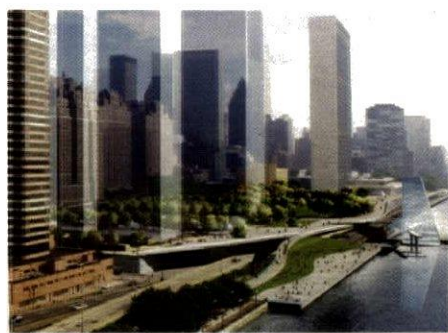
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COURTESY MAS

MIDTOWN'S DREAM TEAM continued from front page looking East River waterfront.

Most of the area that the designers focused on, between East 38th and East 42nd streets, is currently a no-man's land that bears the imprint of a period in planning when cars were given priority over pedestrians. The dominant feature is a nine-acre development site where a Con Edison plant was once located in front of a massive elevated off-ramp from the FDR Drive.

The charrette, which was held under the auspices of the Municipal Art Society (MAS), was an effort to harmonize the development agendas for four proposed projects: the United Nations expansion, the renovation of the FDR Drive, the extension of Manhattan's greenway up the East Side, and the redevelopment of the Con Ed site.

"We wanted to bring all the players together," says Kent Barwick, president of the MAS.

On the morning of the charrette, Midtown East stakeholders—including representatives from Manhattan CB6, the New York State Department of Transportation, the New York City Parks Department, and East Side Realty Company, which is redeveloping the

Con Ed site with a master plan by Richard Meier and David Childs—made a presentation to the participating designers: Ricardo Scofidio of Diller Scofidio + Renfro, Kate Orff of Scape Studio, Margie Ruddick of WRT, Ken Smith of Ken Smith Landscape Architect, Brian Jencek of Hargreaves Associates, and Matthew Urbanski of Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates. This was actually the first time that their representatives, with the exception of the UN, discussed their objectives in the same room.

In many ways the different visions presented appeared to be irreconcilable. For example, some of the stakeholders presented plans showing options for decking over FDR Drive to provide access to the East River. But for the DOT, there are major constraints against building a deck that slopes down to the river, most notably the FDR's elevated 42nd Street exit ramp.

However, the design that was unveiled the following Sunday addressed the various objectives of the different stakeholders. It links together the proposed projects with a 33- to 36-foot-high terrace running from East 38th Street to East 42nd Street, which cantilevers over FDR Drive. A forested hill on the terrace conceals infrastructure, by surrounding a ventilator shaft and covering over the FDR's 42nd Street exit ramp. Access to the waterfront is provided by a pedestrian/bicycle ramp descending from the terrace across the FDR and another extending across the highway. A six story glass pylon at the river's edge would house a restaurant and a ferry terminal. "We realized that if this was going to be viable," said Scofidio, "we would have to please the DOT." **ALEX ULAM**

THE BATTLE OF RIDGE HILL

continued from front page negotiated two years ago.

"The fireworks started when the mayor proposed his budget this year," councilmember Dennis Robertson told *AN*, which is when the tax breaks first became known. Robertson has called upon the four other council members that backed the plan to annul their votes or file suit, though it is unlikely that they will. The clause in the lease is on record with the city clerk's office, but the council has doubted its provenance.

"The point of economic development is to expand the tax base," Robertson said. "This is corporate welfare at its worst. I don't blame the Ratners of the world. I blame our weak mayor." That mayor is Philip Amicone, a Republican against whom Robertson is running as the Democratic challenger in the mayoral race this fall. Amicone's office did not return repeated calls for comment.

When FCR bought the lease for the site from defense contractor Lockheed Martin in 2000, it assumed a 77-year term that required the Brooklyn company to pay

\$6.5 million annually with a five percent annual increase. But during budget negotiations this year, Amicone arranged a buyout of the lease for \$26 million, a number that shocked council members expecting it to generate \$150 million.

Amicone pointed to a stipulation in the buyout agreement that allowed FCR to subtract tax payments from lease payments, which Robertson said he would never have supported. "We were counting on the \$5 million every year," he said, referring to the amount the city would receive after \$1.5 million went to paying off municipal debt. "Now all of a sudden it shows up in the city clerk's office." Another major concern is traffic. Designed by H3 Hardy Collaboration Architecture, the \$660 million Ridge Hill Village includes 1.3 million square feet of retail space, a convention center, and 175-room hotel, offices, and as many as 1,000 apartment units, 200 of which are for seniors, and 135 below market.

There is also the issue of the Yonkers Industrial Development Agency, the city's economic development arm that has been criticized

for cronyism under Amicone. The agency initially tried to maintain control of the \$5 million lease payments, but the city council demanded more accountability and eventually won out. Assemblyman Richard Brodsky, who chairs the committee on Corporations, Authorities, and Commissions and whose district encompasses Ridge Hill, has said he is investigating the agency.

Whether FCR stumbled into a local political skirmish or not, everyone seemed to point back to Amicone. "People who are raising financial questions now about the deal aren't questioning the integrity of the developer," city council president Chuck Lesnick said. "They're questioning whether the mayor got all the money he could have." **MATT CHABAN**



COURTESY FCR

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RAIN AND SHINE



When designers imagined the fabled Icefall—an installation of water flowing around escalators—for the **Hearst Tower** lobby, the big question was how to implement their design without creating a maintenance nuisance. The design team of Foster and Partners, James Carpenter Design Associates, Adamson Associates, and Fluidity Design Consultants chose glass and stainless steel, confident in the skill of the ornamental ironworkers to create the suitably named Icefall.

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PLAY ABOUT BIRTH PANGS OF THE FARNSWORTH HOUSE GOES PUBLIC

Mies en Scene



In architectural terms, *The Glass House*, a new play about Mies van der Rohe's Farnsworth House, is wrapping up schematic design and progressing to design development. After successful private readings this spring in New York, *The Glass House* will open to the public for the first time at the Barrington Stage Company in Pittsfield, Massachusetts, for two engagements this summer on July 27 and 28.

Produced by two brothers, architect Kyle Bergman and director Evan Bergman, and

written by June Finfer, the play looks at the drama behind the country home Mies designed for Dr. Edith Farnsworth, south of Chicago in Plano, Illinois, in 1951. That the Farnsworth House, among the most lauded examples of modernist architecture and perhaps the apotheosis of Mies' residential work, makes a good dramatic subject is no surprise. Whether the legal battle that erupted between Farnsworth and Mies before the house was completed was motivated more by cost overruns or a spurned

lover, and how this house may have influenced another famous modernist glass house (ahem, Philip Johnson), have long intrigued architects, and with this play, is doing the same for nonarchitect audiences.

Kyle Bergman came across the play two years ago while looking for material for an architecture film festival, and he and his brother were quickly drawn in. "When we talked about whether to option the play or not," Bergman remembered, "we asked ourselves, will the drama be interesting to the nonarchitecture world? Ultimately, it's about relationships between clients and patrons and students and teachers."

Julianne Boyd, artistic director of Barrington Stage Company, was similarly fascinated by the story and after attending the first reading in April, she cleared space in a busy summer schedule to bring the play to the next level of development—the public arena. "What interested me is that it's a play about the creative process and what Mies went through when he did something groundbreaking," she said.

The hope of the two Bergman brothers—to complete the architecture metaphor—is to finish construction in 2008, or to stage and produce the play either on or off-Broadway sometime next year. (If Barrington Stage's recent successes are any indication, a bit of the architecture's drama may reach wider audiences yet: *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*, which premiered at Barrington Stage in 2004, won two Tony awards only a year later.) Rumor has it that Liam Neeson might be interested in playing the part of Mies on Broadway.

SAMANTHA TOPOL

GOOGLE'S NEW MAPPING SERVICE PROVIDES ACCURATE—IF OUT-OF-DATE—STREET IMAGES

BUG'S EYE VIEW



Cool or creepy? Street View, the latest feature of Google Maps, is a bit of both. For centuries, maps have offered mostly aerial, abstract diagrams; Street View brings maps down to human scale, offering interactive panoramic photos of urban buildings and pedestrians with the drag of a mouse. Cool, no? Google touts its ability to let users plan trips in advance by scoping out landmarks, shops, hotels, and restaurants. Superorganized types can even zoom in on parking signs to plan where to leave their car. But since the service's launch on May 29, netizens have predictably chosen instead to zoom in on sights such as Stanford babes sunbathing in bikinis or a man relieving himself by the side of the road. Cries of invasions

COURTESY IMMERSIVE MEDIA

Thornton Tomasetti

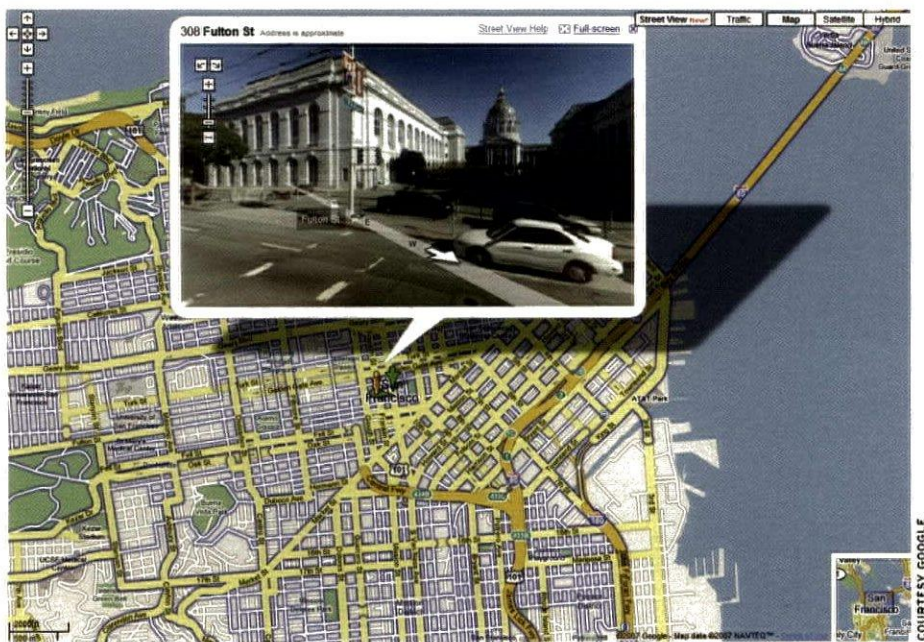
Building Solutions

The New York Times Building



Clockwise from left: the western face of the building; Thornton Tomasetti engineer Jeff Callow with visiting students from Denmark; knuckle joint, in reality and schematic. Background images of knuckle joint and sketch of the New York Times Building by Renzo Piano. Courtesy Renzo Piano Foundation.

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COURTESY GOOGLE

of privacy followed. The technology that generates most of the images looks like Big Brother's wet dream: spherical 11-lens cameras from imaging company Immersive Media glide through the streets mounted on top of Volkswagen Beetles. So for the paranoid among you, forget about black helicopters and start worrying about dark Bugs.

Architecture-and-mapping expert Laura Kurgan, who teaches at Columbia GSAPP and directs the university's Spatial Information Design Lab, was rather underwhelmed when she checked out Street View features of New York, one of five urban areas where it's available. "Everybody tends to look at these kinds of interfaces and say,

Data collectors use 11-lens cameras (facing page) to gather Street View images (above), which are incorporated into the familiar maps.

'Oh wow, I can see everything on my block very clearly.' But I went to my own block, and it's already out of date" because it still shows a restaurant that's now closed, she complained. When queried about Street View's timeliness, Google Maps product manager Stephen Chau said some images were up to a year old at the time of the launch, though the company plans to update them eventually. While the service may not be so great for helping people plan dining destinations, it will be sure to impress voyeurs.

LISA DELGADO

CAN ARCHITECTS HELP NEW YORKERS LOSE THAT GUT?

TRIMMING THE FAT

Mayor Bloomberg's 22-year environmental project, PLANYC 2030, encourages designers to give New Yorkers more ways to exercise, but architects at a June 12 conference complained that fire codes and universal-access requirements frustrate their attempts to encourage a simple walk around the office. Fit City 2, a six-hour workshop at the Center for Architecture, follows a 2006 project in which the local chapter of the American Institute of Architects teamed with the city's Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH) to address the city's mounting obesity epidemic. This year, the same agencies reconvened to explore how its goals could mesh with PLANYC's initiatives to spur new policy. They concluded that changes in building codes and incentives for plaza development could help designers encourage physical activity inside buildings and parks, but that many other forces would work against it.

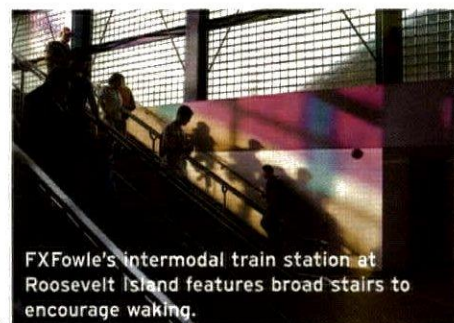
Laurie Kerr, a senior policy advisor to PLANYC, pushed designers to think about obesity as an epidemic. "Cures should be pervasive, invisible, and inescapable," she said: Just as officials beat cholera by building water treatment plants, designers can attack indolence by forcing people to move around more.

The need for such activity is clear. According to DHMH deputy commissioner Mary Bassett, 55 percent of adults and 43 percent of children in New York are overweight or obese. Dattner Architects principal William Stein, who is designing the Via Verde affordable housing plan with Grimshaw Architects, said a building's

flow has measurable impact. "Increase walkability by five percent," he said, "and you can increase physical activity by 13 percent."

But workshop participants said they could not see clear ways to make staircases central to buildings without running into tricky fire-code and universal-access issues. Bruce Fowle, a partner with FXFowle Architects, who designed staircases as the interior focus of the New York Times headquarters in Midtown, complained about post-9/11 requirements that limit the aesthetic range of staircases. "You can't use combustible material, and we have to use these iridescent tapes on each riser," he said. "So you're going against the notion of making these attractive and dual-use."

Participants convened for a working lunch afterward, and local AIA chief Ric Bell said he hoped to see many such smaller work sessions as PLANYC develops. "One conference isn't enough to address the building code, zoning resolution, and agency policies," he told AN. "What is the city going to spend money on?" AA



FXFowle's intermodal train station at Roosevelt Island features broad stairs to encourage walking.

COURTESY FXFOWLE



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Designing a building to stand in plain view of one of the single most seminal architectural works of antiquity can make an architect feel like a kazoo amateur giving a recital in front of the New York Philharmonic, i.e., a little sheepish. Such was the case with the New Acropolis Museum, which is currently nearing completion in Athens, Greece, just a few hundred yards downhill from the Parthenon. "It is intimidating," said Joel Rutten of Bernard Tschumi Architects, which completed the design along with Arup and local architect Michael Photiadis.

Aside from the rather large footsteps to follow, the project presented some weighty programmatic and structural challenges: The Greek government commissioned the museum in part as an attempt to reclaim

artifacts from the Acropolis that are held in other countries, including the Parthenon's frieze, 60 percent of which has been on display as the Elgin Marbles in London since the early 19th century. England has refused to return the figures in the past, arguing that Greece didn't have the proper facilities to protect and care for them—hence the new museum. Of course, safeguarding priceless artifacts in earthquake-prone Athens presents a difficulty that goes beyond providing world-class facilities, as well as another reason for the architect to stay up nights, worrying about the performance of his building.

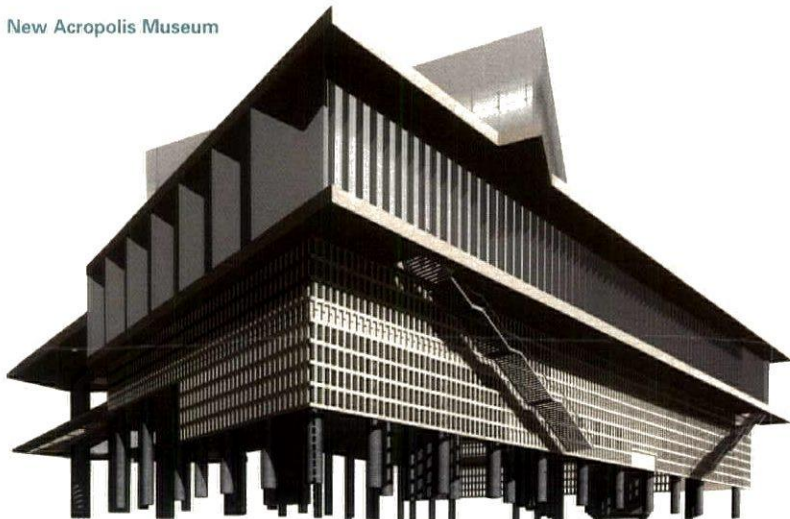
If this weren't daunting enough, after Tschumi won the competition it was discovered that, with the exception of a small

patch where a building had previously stood, most of the site was covered in late-Roman ruins, initiating a major archeological excavation and sending the architects back to the drawing board. After a little head scratching and negotiating, Tschumi and the client decided that it would be possible to continue with the project by lifting the building up on piers and incorporating the excavation into the museum. Once the extent of the ruins was known, the architects compared them with their column grid and found that many of the supports landed smack dab on top of the ancient brick foundations. Rotating the grid alleviated the problem considerably—so that's what they did. Still many of the columns had to be shifted out of the grid, requiring zigzagging beams.

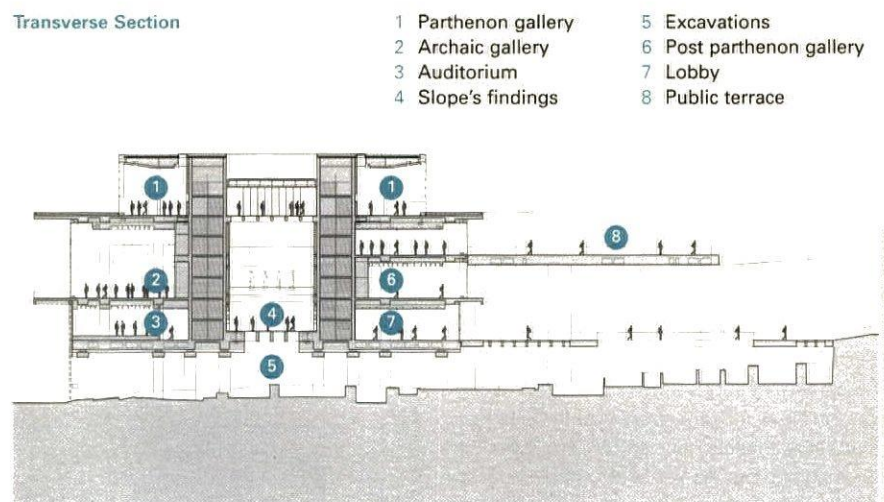
This flubbed the design concept a bit, however. In the competition-winning scheme, Tschumi had aligned the museum to be on the same axis as the Parthenon, with the Parthenon gallery, where the frieze, metopes, and pediments are to be displayed, as a glassy box on the uppermost level, featuring clear views to the Acropolis and the rest of Athens. To salvage this idea, the architects rotated the Parthenon gallery back into alignment with its namesake, which is why the building resembles a Rubik's Cube with a twisted top.

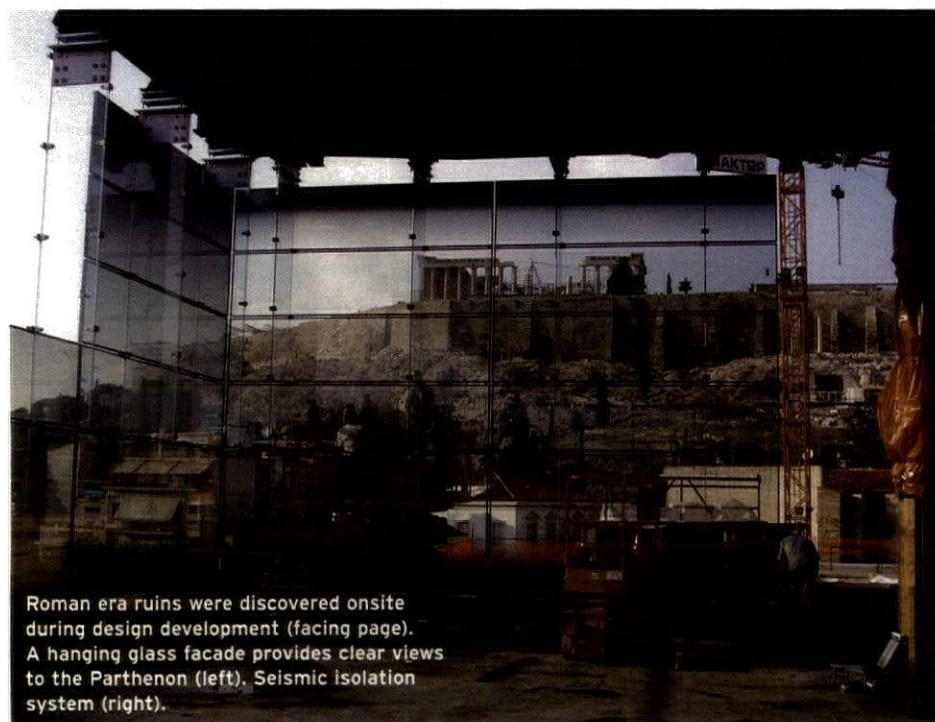
Accommodating the ruins threw a wrench into the structural system as well. The seismic isolation system couldn't be located at the building's lowest level because this would have required placing

New Acropolis Museum



Transverse Section





Roman era ruins were discovered onsite during design development (facing page). A hanging glass facade provides clear views to the Parthenon (left). Seismic isolation system (right).



COURTESY LBERNARD TSCHUMI ARCHITECTS

tubs around the columns where they penetrate the excavation site, increasing the diameter of these penetrations by a foot and encroaching on the ruins. So the designers moved the isolation system above the ruins. The configuration is a grid of columns that sit atop another grid of columns with a foot-wide joint separating them and cutting through the entire structure. The upper regions of the building can move 15 centimeters in all directions and 5 centimeters up and down independent of the ground.

To meet the seismic requirements the

columns themselves are massive—nearly a meter and a quarter in diameter—made of an extremely high-grade concrete, and literally chock full o' rebar. "It's almost frightening how much rebar there is," said Rutten. "This is basically a steel building with a little bit of concrete." The concrete columns support the building up to the slab of the Parthenon galler;, from there a steel post and beam structure takes over. The change in structural system was made because Tschumi wanted unobstructed views as a way of reconnecting the Parthenon's marbles with the Acropolis.

To make the envelope extra glassy the perimeter columns were pulled back from the facade, creating a 9-meter cantilever, a span that would have been very difficult to reach with concrete.

As with everything else in this building, the glass wall had to be able to move without breaking in case of an earthquake. Tschumi specified 4-centimeter-thick double-glazed panels for extra strength and suspended them on cables that hang from the cantilever, allowing 8 centimeters of movement up and down. Glass fins hanging from pivoting

connections handle wind loads and allow side-to-side movement, and 2-centimeter-wide silicone joints hold the panels together. This left one problem—how to handle Athens' impressive heat loads with so much glass. The answer: a second layer of glass on the inside of the fins that descends to just above eye level, and ceramic fritting that coats the wall in a gradient going from zero at eye level to 100 percent at the roof. And when those measures aren't enough to cut the heat on 120-degree days? Well, there are roller shades.

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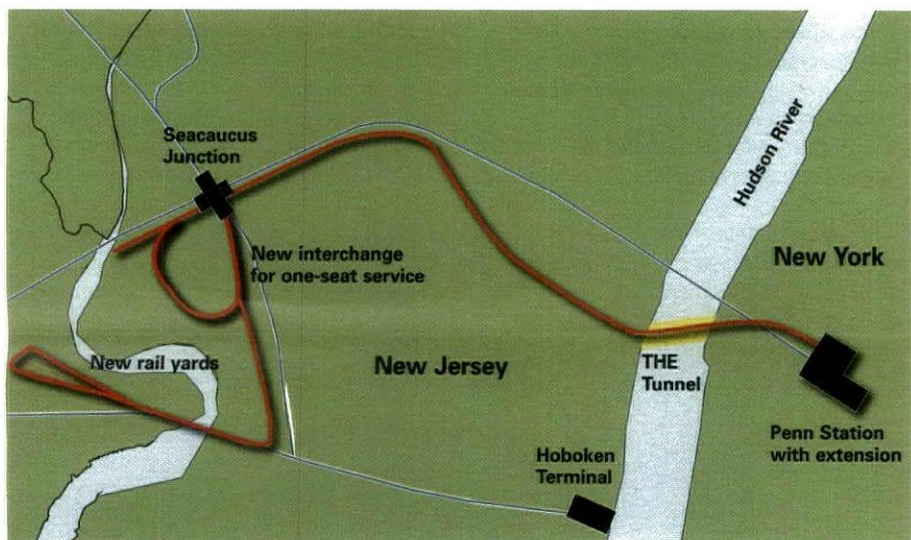
TOWER HAS WEST VILLAGE REACHING FOR PEPTO SCHNABEL'S PINKEYE

When the scaffolds and nets were stripped away from artist Julian Schnabel's West 11th Street highrise, the exposed facade seemed to

blush behind two of Richard Meier's West Street glass towers. But there is nothing shy about this 17-story Mediterranean-style build-

ing: It's flaming pink. "What it actually looks like is a house you would see in the hills above Hollywood—if it were two stories," said preservationist Andrew Berman. Of the former carriage house (See "Before Designation Falls," *AN* 03_02.16.2005), Berman said, "It almost looks as though Schnabel went to great pains to make it as ugly as possible." The Department of Buildings doesn't oversee exterior colors, and while the Landmark Preservation Commission does, Schnabel's building is not part of a protected district. It's not clear whether this is the final color, but Berman expects the worst: "It's a nightmare."

REBECCA WARD



TRANS-HUDSON EXPRESS TUNNEL RECEIVES STATE, FEDERAL SUPPORT

ARC TUNNEL DIGS IN

The transit talk on the front pages of newspapers last month was all congestion pricing, all the time. But while elected officials shot back and forth over Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg's controversial plan, a major capital project that could help ease traffic into Manhattan from across the Hudson took two more quiet steps towards reality.

Known as Access to the Region's Core (ARC), the project has two main components. The first is a new station at 34th Street adjacent to Penn Station. The new station will serve existing lines as well as ARC's second piece, the Trans-Hudson Express (THE) Tunnel, a two-track passenger rail link providing coveted "one-seat" access to Midtown from Rockland and Orange counties in New York. By doubling commuter rail capacity between New York and through New Jersey, ARC should alleviate pressure on Penn Station and

the tunnels laid down by the Pennsylvania Railroad over 100 years ago, which are nearing capacity.

In early June, the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority (NJTPA) diverted \$1 billion in federal highway funds, bringing the allocated money to half the \$7 billion required. U.S. Transportation Secretary Mary Peters also came out in support of the project, a crucial ally who will help to ensure federal approval and funding.

The THE Tunnel is "central to our ability to grow the economy, improve our mobility, reduce congestion, protect the environment, and ensure the quality of life of our residents," New Jersey Governor Jon Corzine said after the planning authority board announced the allocation for the ARC project, according to *The New York Times*. The highway money is being "flexed" from road to rail work, and \$1 billion from the

state's transportation trust fund will repay the federal money over the next 10 years.

"The NJTPA is committed to the success of the ARC project," said NJTPA chair Daniel Sullivan. "Our long-range plan identifies it as the region's highest transit expansion priority, and this funding approach puts us that much closer to seeing it become a reality." ARC funding now stands at \$1.5 billion from New Jersey and a pledge of \$1.5 to \$2 billion from the Port Authority.

For the project to reach \$7 billion, some level of federal funding will be necessary, a reality Peters acknowledged at a May 25 meeting with the governor. "We talked about how important the tunnel is to New Jersey and to citizens here who use the transit systems and all of those who need to commute and what we might do to continue to push that project forward," Peters said at a press conference. **MC**

AT DEADLINE

NORMAN FLETCHER OF TAC AT 89

Norman Fletcher, one of eight founders of the important Cambridge firm The Architects Collaborative, or TAC, died on May 31 at 89. Born in Providence to British immigrants, Fletcher graduated from the Yale School of Architecture in 1940. Three years later, he joined Skidmore, Owings & Merrill. After a year he joined Saarinen, Swanson & Associates before founding TAC in 1945 with wife Jean Bodman Fletcher, Walter Gropius, and five others. TAC blossomed from eight to more than 300 employees and served as a launching ground for many Boston firms. Fletcher worked on projects for Harvard and Clark universities, numerous schools, IBM, and the Clark Art Institute, though he said his favorite was the AIA national headquarters in Washington, D.C. Fletcher stayed with TAC until it closed its doors in 1995 and lived until the end of his life in the TAC-designed Six Moon Hill development in Lexington, Massachusetts.

NEW MOMA CURATOR

Andres Lepik, co-author of the book *Rethinking: Space, Time, Architecture*, will do just that as a new curator of contemporary architecture at the Museum of Modern Art. "Lepik's experience in curating—and working with architects to design innovative and provocative installations—promises not only fresh and pertinent topics of contemporary architecture for MoMA, but also a fresh and critical eye to issues of installation," said Barry Bergdoll, the museum's chief curator of architecture and design. A native of Germany, Lepik comes to MoMA from the Kunstbibliothek, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, where he was chief curator of the 20th- and 21st-century architectural collections.

DALEY TURNS RED, NOT GREEN

Chicago Mayor Richard Daley vowed in 2001 to reduce municipal emissions by 4 percent in as many years, but a recent report in *The Chicago Tribune* revealed that emissions produced by the city government have actually risen by 10 percent. According to the *Tribune*, the city managed to reduce its fuel consumption and plant trees and green roofs, but it could not quench the thirst for energy, which was apparently behind the rise in emissions.

COMING TO AMERICA

Architectural behemoth RMJM of Edinburgh, known for its Palms in Dubai and the Gazprom Tower, announced on June 19 that it is finally venturing into the United States market through a merger with Hillier Architecture. Henceforth to be known in the U.S. as RMJM Hillier, the Princeton-based firm is the nation's fifth largest. Together, the firms boast over 1,000 designers in 16 cities with more than \$15 billion in projects underway.

MTA GOES REGIONAL

Facing congestion and demand along routes outside New York City, the Metropolitan Transportation Authority is preparing to carry its riders over New Jersey Transit routes for the first time. MTA officials say a pilot service from Connecticut and Westchester to football games in the Meadowlands, beginning in 2009, will help the agency address more intricate regional patterns in the future.

The regional rail pilot project, which MTA executive director Elliot Sander announced at a June 5 business breakfast, aims to deliver riders on the authority's Metro-North New Haven line to Jets and Giants games for a single fare. Sander explained that the experiment will test the syncing of trains, staff, and fare collection for possible later route expansions. "You have to crawl before you can walk," he told reporters.

Regional rail service is not a new idea, but demand for extended routes and greater frequency is growing. "Census numbers from 2000 show more than 11,000 New Jersey residents commuting to Connecticut and Long Island and more than 85,000 New York City residents heading to New Jersey and Connecticut for jobs," said Michelle Ernst, staff analyst with the Tri-State Transportation Campaign. "Ridership figures from MTA and NJ Transit suggest that this trend has accelerated since 2000."

Capturing this growth, explained Sander, requires harmonizing schedules and union-driven work rules, as well as signals and trains. The pilot will test all of these factors. According to MTA spokesman Jeremy

Soffin, riders would travel Metro-North's tracks from New Haven, cross over to an Amtrak right-of-way at New Rochelle, and change at Secaucus for New Jersey Transit shuttles to the Meadowlands.

Soffin wouldn't address potential next steps, although Sander did hint at the idea of a "beach train" from the Bronx to the Hamptons at the breakfast. The MTA is also pursuing construction projects to foster new routes on its own territory. An underground link from the Long Island Railroad to Grand Central Terminal is under construction, and Sander eagerly seeks to add a third track to the LIRR's primary line. "A third track would allow LIRR to increase reverse commuting service," said Ernst.

According to Allison de Cerreno, who runs New York University's Rudin Center for Transportation Policy and Management (where Sander used to work and remains a fellow), the test challenges the MTA, Amtrak, and New Jersey Transit to align oversight without costly capital purchases. "It's a really good first step to test with a smaller group," she told *AN*, since future expansions can depend more on logistical coordination than big spending. "You don't need big investments to coordinate schedules, and technology is there for fare collection," she said. "And coordination needs to be a priority for all agencies because growth over the next 10 to 20 years will be across networks." **ALEC APPELBAUM**



Bold Print

The New York Times has moved into a new home and from the 'Renzo-red' lobby to the state-of-the-art newsroom the Gray Lady has never been brighter. **Marisa Bartolucci** takes the first look.

Renzo Piano selected a sunny palette for the expansive new lobby. With waxed Venetian plaster walls and 21-foot ceilings, the lobby spans the block between 40th and 41st streets.

Those familiar with the old New York Times Building will understand how startling a makeover the svelte, daringly diaphanous, high-performance building kissing the clouds above Times Square is. To judge from the old offices, one would have thought ink-stained wretches actually thrived in dingy, cramped, fluorescent-flickering warrens devoid of natural light. They didn't, but the Times has long been notorious for taking a certain pride in being a gloomy place to work.

Spectacular, environmentally sustainable headquarters custom-suited to digital news gathering and production, where employees bask in light and space, have become the new standard for media companies. Astonishingly, after so many years of being unresponsive to such advances, the Times rose to the challenge in 1999 and with uncanny insight selected the Italian Pritzker Prize-winner Renzo Piano, known at the time more for intensely crafted, technologically daring smaller buildings primarily in Europe than for corporate icons. More to the point, the architect's particular combination of talent and magnanimity was sorely needed at the Times and he has rendered them a subtle work of greatness.

Piano sees poetry in the press. His tower,

with its architecturally integrated exposed structure, speaks of the lucid integrity great journalism demands. Even its boldly innovative double-skinned curtain wall, composed of a sheath of low-iron clear glass veiled in a scrim of horizontal ceramic rods, speaks of the responsibility to look beyond received wisdom. If the old stony citadel of the Times was once thought to regard the goings-on of the city with Olympian detachment, in its new crystalline headquarters it stands exposed to the hectic squalor of 8th Avenue and long stretches of 40th and 41st streets. If passersby aren't immediately attracted by the hive of activity visible within, the vivid marigold-hued Venetian plaster walls of the lobby's elevator corridors, the "Renzo red" interior walls, and the facade-facing staircases of the upper floors will no doubt hail their attention. This lady is gray no more.

Occupying the building's four-story T-shaped "podium" are the newsrooms. "Renzo calls them 'the bakery' because they burn bright and bustle with activity in the wee hours of the night," says Bruce Fowle of FXFowle Architects, Piano's New York partner and a key advisor on the building's myriad resource-efficient features. Bakeries are typically hot, artificially lit, confined spaces; the newsrooms



Top: Newsrooms are linked by a connecting stair positioned along the exterior wall of every floor except the 14th-floor cafeteria. Lighting is by Zumtobel, with controls by Lutron.
Above: Workstations were manufactured by Unifor.

here are anything but. The Times insisted on an enormous 65,000-square-foot floor plate, so that the different sections of the paper would not have to be stacked many stories high, isolating people and departments. Five or six times larger than those in a typical office building, these floor plates accommodate the entire news operation on just three levels. To enhance communication throughout the organization, Piano installed glass-enclosed, multilevel interconnecting stairways along the facade perimeter, animating the views both within and without the building.

With 11-foot ceilings and open plans—the few executive offices and conference rooms are glass-faced and situated within the building's interior—the podium's news floors feel transparent and luminous. At the eastern end on the third floor, the news desk, the paper's "control room," sits in the well of a two-story interior atrium, topped by a skylight, filtering more natural light down into the room through an automated brise-soleil. The podium itself wraps around an exterior courtyard, which when construction is complete, will feature a garden of moss and birch trees. It in turn will absorb storm water run-off from the building.

Interestingly, the Times insisted that the

architects provide beautiful garden views for the news staff, as they would not have access to the skyline like the business and executive staff who are nested in the tower. According to Fowle, their design has more than compensated: "David Thurm [former vice president of real estate and now vice president of information technology] told me that the executives are already suffering from 'podium envy!'"

How did the architects deal with the glare and heat from all this solar exposure? With ingenuity and six months of solstice-to-solstice research conducted with the interior architectural design team, headed by Gensler, along with Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, at a mockup facility at the company's printing plant out in Queens. As a research-driven enterprise, the Times did not hesitate to take this extraordinary step, so that the team could fully investigate the cutting-edge technologies being employed and anticipate problems that might arise. Through this process, they determined how to space the ceramic rods to best diffuse daylight and filter views. They also tested different dimmable ceiling light systems and automated shades to see how they would respond to different solar conditions. They then developed a plan for efficiently coordinating



WHITNEY COX

their installation: By combining the glass and ceramic bar sections of the facade into unitized panels, the architects were able to cut the estimated construction budget in half, making it just slightly more expensive than standard curtain wall construction. They also helped develop a state-of-the-art shade and ceiling light system that, like their novel curtain wall, will undoubtedly serve as a model for future high-performance buildings.

Another bold technical first, at least in terms of Manhattan office building construction, was the decision to employ a raised floor instead of a standard dropped ceiling for the HVAC and other utilities. This system enabled the architects to employ an ultra-efficient underfloor displacement air distribution system, which pushes stale air out through vents in the ceiling. There are, however, no vents to be seen along the floor. Instead there are tiny holes in the floor tiles and carpeting, specially manufactured by Interface. One of the advantages to this underfloor system is that it makes it extremely easy to reconfigure workspaces, especially important to a company like the Times, which needs to be flexible.

To add a sense of warmth and fun, Piano and his team selected brightly colored biomor-

phic furniture by directional manufacturers like Moroso and Cappellini for the waiting areas in the elevator corridors on each floor. This was an audacious move in terms of style and standard. In the old building, many floors had no casual seating for waiting at all.

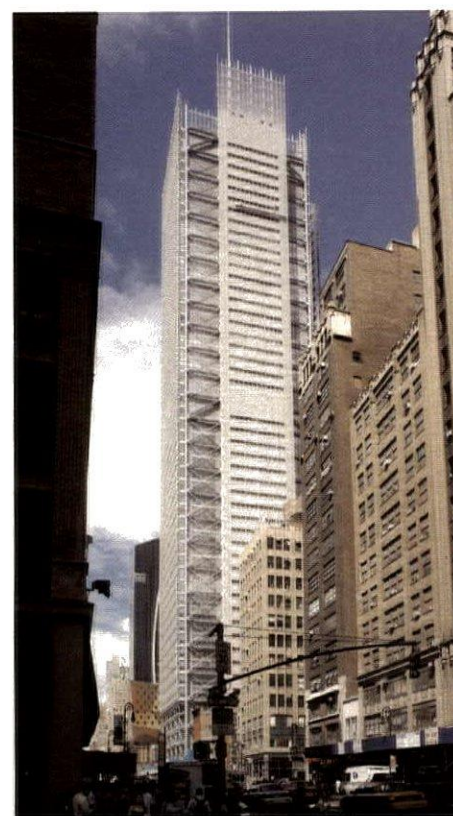
To foster better manners in a culture not known for sociability, Piano placed the cafeteria in the middle of the headquarters on the 14th floor. The old dining room had been furnished with long rectangular tables, where, as one ex-Times employee put it, "people liked to eat in angry solitude." That's something Piano could not abide. He insisted on equipping the bright airy room with round tables capable of accommodating up to six, to encourage people from all the departments to break bread together.

Architecture alone can't change an insular buttoned-down corporation, whose identity is still wrapped up in newsprint, to one that's freewheeling, collaborative, and at one with the virtual. Yet this crystalline tower does speak of the immaterial with a rigorous intelligence, and it possesses a bit of *la dolce vita*, and that's a start.

MARISA BARTOLUCCI IS A NEW YORK-BASED ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN CRITIC.

Above: The 14th-floor cafeteria features round tables to encourage socializing and a mezzanine with armchairs by Le Corbusier.

Right: The 52-story New York Times tower viewed from the south along 8th Avenue.



JULY

WEDNESDAY 4
LECTURE

Julie H. Reiss
The Triumph of American Painting: Abstract Expressionism to Pop
11:00 a.m.
Metropolitan Museum of Art
1000 5th Ave.
www.metmuseum.org

THURSDAY 5
EXHIBITION OPENING
Asher B. Durand (1796–1886): Dean of American Landscape
National Academy of Design
1083 5th Ave.
www.nationalacademy.org

FILM
Walkabout
(Nicholas Roeg, 1971), 95 min.
7:00 p.m.
Socrates Sculpture Park
Broadway at Vernon Blvd.,
Queens
www.socratessculpturepark.org

FRIDAY 6
EXHIBITION OPENINGS
The Color Line
Jack Shainman Gallery
513 West 20th St.
www.jackshainman.com

Easy Rider
Yancey Richardson Gallery
535 West 22nd St.
www.yanceyrichardson.com

SATURDAY 7
EXHIBITION OPENINGS
The Most Curatorial Biennial of the Universe
apexart
291 Church St.
www.apexart.org

What Is Painting?
Contemporary Art from the Collection
The Museum of Modern Art
11 West 53rd St.
www.moma.org

FILM
The Artist and the Computer
(Videos by young contemporary artists), 90 min.
2:00 p.m.
Museum of Modern Art
11 West 53rd St.
www.moma.org

MONDAY 9
LECTURE
Donna Dorian, Susan Lowry, Nancy Berner Moroccan Gardens and Paris Parks
6:30 p.m.
Columbia University
116th St. and Broadway
www.ce.columbia.edu

EXHIBITION OPENINGS
Project for a Revolution in New York
Harold Stevenson, Alain Robbe-Grillet, Domencio Gnoli, et al.
Matthew Marks Gallery
523 West 24th St.
www.matthewmarks.com

Mira Dancy, Saul Chernick, Katherine Keltner, et al. Unfathom
Max Protetch Gallery
511 West 22nd St.
www.maxprotetch.com

FILM
Hand Catching Lead; Hands Scraping; Frame; Railroad Turnbridge; and Steelmill/Stahlwerke
(Richard Serra, 1968–1979), 70 min.
6:00 p.m.
Museum of Modern Art
11 West 53rd St.
www.moma.org

TUESDAY 10
LECTURES
Caroline Hannah
One of a Kind: The Studio Craft Movement
11:00 a.m.
Metropolitan Museum of Art
1000 5th Ave.
www.metmuseum.org

Vivien Greene
In Paint and Film: Riso Amaro
6:30 p.m.
Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum
1071 5th Ave.
www.guggenheim.org

EXHIBITION OPENINGS
Emi Fukuzawa, Yoko Mizukami, Meo Saito, et al. Rough and Refined Japanese Art
Leo Castelli Gallery
18 East 77th St.
www.castelligallery.com

Rob Amory
In the Light of Others
Art Gallery of the CUNY Graduate Center
365 5th Ave.
www.gc.cuny.edu

WEDNESDAY 11
EXHIBITION OPENINGS
Luke Dowd, Anja Schworer, Jesper Just
Perry Rubenstein Gallery
527 West 23rd St.
www.perryrubenstein.com

Peter Coffin: Tree Pants
The Horticultural Society of New York
148 West 37th St., 13th Fl.
www.hsn.org

THURSDAY 12
LECTURES
AIA New Practices New York: Zakrzewski Hyde Architects
6:00 p.m.
Hafele Showroom
25 East 26th St.
www.aiany.org

William T. Vollmann and Richard Drew
Visions and Violence, Culture and Conflict: Then and Now
7:00 p.m.
Whitney Museum of American Art
945 Madison Ave.
www.whitney.org

EXHIBITION OPENINGS
A Brass Menagerie: Metalwork of the Aesthetic Movement
Bard Graduate Center
18 West 86th St.
www.bgc.bard.edu

Jonas Wood
Anton Kern Gallery
532 West 20th St.
www.antonkerngallery.com

Luke Barber-Smith, Birgitta Lund, Carlo Vialu, Kathryn Refi
Road Trip
Mixed Greens
531 West 26th St.
www.mixedgreens.com

Richard Aldrich, Nathan Hylden, Alice Konitz, Michael Wilkinson
Laying Bricks
Wallspace Gallery
619 West 27th St.
www.wallspacegallery.com

Victoria Fu, Ray Rapp, Jeremy Helton, et al. Mystery
Frederieke Taylor Gallery
535 West 22nd St., 6th Fl.
www.frederiketaylor.com

FILM
Wild Strawberries
(Ingmar Bergman, 1957), 90 min.
7:00 p.m.
Socrates Sculpture Park
Broadway at Vernon Blvd.,
Queens
www.socratessculpturepark.org

EVENT
Speak Easy: Reading on the Rocks
7:00 p.m.
SculptureCenter
44-19 Purves St., Queens
www.sculpture-center.org

SATURDAY 14
EXHIBITION OPENING
The Book of War: The Free Library of Philadelphia's Mughal Razmnama Folios
Philadelphia Museum of Art
Benjamin Franklin Parkway and 26th St., Philadelphia
www.philamuseum.org

WITH THE KIDS
The Astor Court Renaissance
The Bronx Zoo
Bronx River Parkway and Fordham Rd., Bronx
www.bronxzoo.com

Family Day at the Center: Feats of Engineering
1:00 p.m.
Center for Architecture
536 LaGuardia Place
www.aiany.org

SUNDAY 15
EXHIBITION OPENING
Joanne Verburg
Present Tense
Museum of Modern Art
11 West 53rd St.
www.moma.org

TUESDAY 17
EXHIBITION OPENING
Siah Armajani, Tony Cragg, Michael Heizer
Sculpture
Lucas Schoormans Gallery
508 West 26th St.
www.lucasschoormans.com

WEDNESDAY 18
LECTURES
Ian Alteveer, Frank Stella: Painting into Architecture
11:00 a.m.
Metropolitan Museum of Art
1000 5th Ave.
www.metmuseum.org

Bye Bye Incandescent? The Effect on Design and Sustainability
5:30 p.m.
Illuminating Engineering Society of New York
Center for Architecture
536 LaGuardia Pl.
www.iesny.org

Nick Billotti, Robert Booth, George Efstathiou, Jordan Gruzen, Robert Ivy
Why Dubai?
6:30 p.m.
New York Academy of Sciences
7 WTC, 40th Fl.
www.skyscraper.org

EXHIBITION OPENING
Lost Vanguard: Soviet Modernist Architecture, 1922–32
Museum of Modern Art
11 West 53rd St.
www.moma.org

FILM
Synthetic Pleasures
(Iara Lee, 1996), 85 min.
8:30 p.m.
Museum of Modern Art
11 West 53rd St.
www.moma.org

THURSDAY 19
EXHIBITION OPENING
Il Lee
Ballpoint Drawings
Queens Museum of Art
Flushing Meadows
Corona Park, Queens
www.queensmuseum.org

FRIDAY 20
EXHIBITION OPENING
50,000 Beds
Artspace
50 Orange St., New Haven
www.50000beds.net

SATURDAY 21
LECTURES
Elinor Richter
Along the Canals of Venice
11:00 a.m.
The Metropolitan Museum of Art
1000 5th Ave.
www.metmuseum.org

Christine Alphonso
The Art of the Worker in Glass: Medieval Windows, Vessels, and Enamels
12:00 p.m.
The Cloisters
Fort Tryon Park
www.metmuseum.org

EXHIBITION OPENING
The Second Annual Dining Room Show
Andrea Rosen Gallery
2 Ocean View Ln.,
Amagansett
www.andrearsengallery.com

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LOST VANGUARD:
SOVIET MODERNIST ARCHITECTURE, 1922–32
Museum of Modern Art
11 West 53rd Street
July 18 to October 29

British-born architectural photographer Richard Pare first became curious about Russia in boyhood, when he heard pro-Soviet sermons in Canterbury Cathedral in the mid-1950s. In 1993, his interest was reignited on seeing a photograph of Vladimir Tatlin constructing an architectural model in the 1920s. After discovering that many Soviet buildings of that time were in peril due to decay or development, Pare began a decade-long quest to capture some on film. Around 75 of his photos of that architectural "lost vanguard" are on display in this exhibition, which has an accompanying book from Monacelli Press. Pare's light-suffused image of the late avant-garde architect Konstantin Melnikov's self-built cylindrical residence (above) shows the era's innovative spirit that prevailed over rationed resources. Arbitrarily placed hexagonal studio windows hint at the honeycomb-latticed frame made of brick and wood, filled in with scraps. Other photos document structures decaying along with their accompanying ideologies, such as Moisei Ginzburg's Narcomfin Communal House, whose skeletal remains contrast with the skyscrapers of capitalist Moscow in the background. Since Pare captured these works, many have collapsed or been demolished; this show offers a rare glimpse of some extraordinary structures.



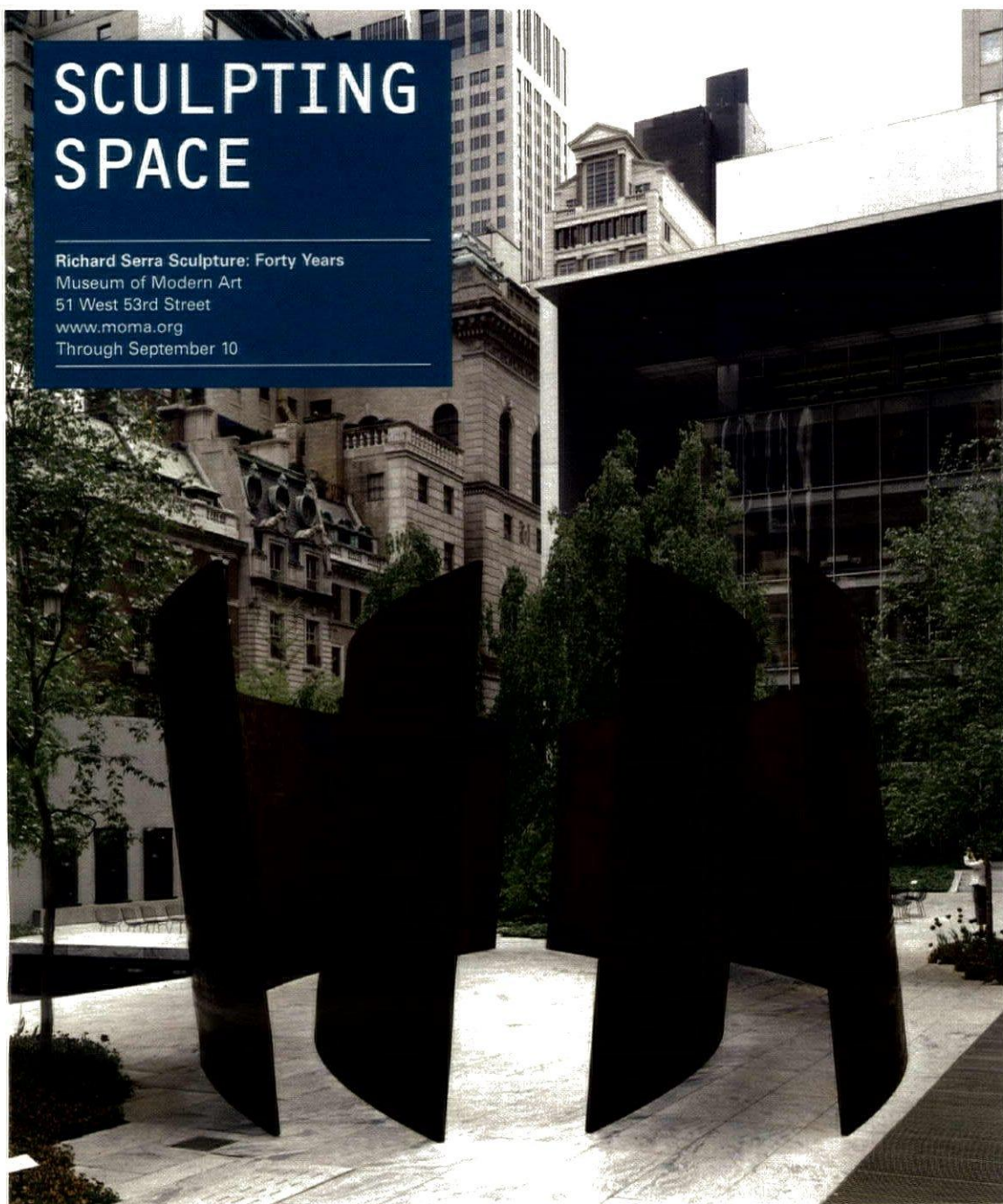
50,000 BEDS
Various locations in Connecticut
July 20 to September 23

Hotel rooms are antiseptic yet strangely alluring, offering a space and time outside of ordinary existence. No wonder filmmakers are endlessly fascinated with their narrative and aesthetic potential. In a new project commissioned by architecturally trained artist Chris Doyle, 45 filmmakers or teams each created a short film set in a hotel, motel, or inn in Connecticut. Ranging from documentaries to narrative fiction to video art, the results are displayed in the exhibition *50,000 Beds* (the title refers to the number of beds available for travelers in Connecticut). In Jorge Colombo's film *Scott* (above), frazzled business traveler finds small oases of rest in a sumptuous hotel bed. Training the camera on the shadows on the wall of a room in a B&B, Simon Lee and Jim White concocted a surreal world with shades of film noir, in *1/50,000*. Amy Yoes focused on a window instead, where she crafted her stop-motion animation *Room 863*, using abstract shapes to mirror the built and urban landscape outside. To see those films and all the others, a little traveling is required (appropriately enough). The three-part show runs for varying dates at Hartford's Real Art Ways, Ridgefield's Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum, and New Haven's Artspace.

WWW.ARCHPAPER.COM

SCULPTING SPACE

Richard Serra Sculpture: Forty Years
Museum of Modern Art
51 West 53rd Street
www.moma.org
Through September 10



In the Museum of Modern Art's Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Sculpture Garden, Richard Serra's *Intersection II* (1992–93) and *Torqued Ellipse IV* (1998) dwarf pieces by Henry Moore and Rodin, making the otherwise-beloved

statuary seem trivial by comparison. The shape and rusted patina of the Corten steel match nothing nearby, but in their scale, curvature, and way of dividing space, they coexist successfully with the trees of the garden, the people in it, and the

buildings that frame their setting. Visitors have their pictures taken at the entrance to *Intersection II* as the branches gently ruffle the top of the steel.

And it's not just in the garden that Serra is resculpting the museum's

space. The 26 works on display in the major retrospective *Richard Serra Sculpture: Forty Years* transform galleries on the first two floors of the Museum of Modern Art as well. While theorist John Rajchman's essay in catalogue touches on the Lacanian term "extimate" (combining "external" and "intimate") to describe how the sculptures work, the proof of their effectiveness is the children running carefree inside *Band* (2006) and *Torqued Torus Inversion* (2006).

Although they contain the justly crowd-pleasing selections, the garden and second floor house work from just 15 of Serra's 40 years of production. The rest is crammed into 20 years worth of early work on the spaciouly designed sixth floor. The ability of these works (aided and abetted by Kynaston McShine and Lynne Cooke's curation) to expand into the volumes of the museum affects the way visitors view the new International Council Galleries.

The earlier pieces stand alone—especially *Circuit II* (1972–1986) and the *Prop* series—but the surprisingly cramped feel of the floor makes them seem like studies for the later works: *Belts* (1966–67) has the curves that recur later as ellipses and torques, *Equal-Parallel: Guernica-Bangasi* divides the vertical space of the gallery, and the *Prop* series begins the paradoxical investigation of massive weightlessness that characterizes especially the *Torque* series. Even the materials—rolled steel, vulcanized rubber, and lead—seem to progress inexorably to the patinated steel of the later works.

The past is, however, always shaping the present in its own form. Since Serra's work is intended for specific sites (the Fish gallery of Frank Gehry's Guggenheim Bilbao springs most readily to mind), the retrospective as a whole demands to be read in context. The the new

MoMA building's corporate avant-gardist stance to the radical is especially highlighted by the Serra exhibition—sponsored as it is by the luxury goods conglomerate LVMH (Louis Vuitton, Moët, Hennessy). In contradistinction to Dan Perjovschi's almost-already-appropriated scribbled installation against capitalism (*Project 85*) that covers the wall of the main hall, Serra's works throw up impenetrable, inappropriable, uncoverable barriers.

Band, Sequence (2006) and the various torqued pieces that have made Serra the most recognizable and desired sculptor of the twenty-first century are not simply assimilated. Unlike the broken column of Barnett Newman's *Broken Obelisk* in that same main hall, Serra's sculptures seem neither broken nor dwarfed by their surroundings. Rather, they express and bend with the prevailing post-industrial zeitgeist in the same way that the Joseph Beuys wax and felt sculptures (displayed in the permanent collection) bent with and reconfigured a Cold War domestic situation a generation earlier. Beginning at least with *Delineator* (1974–75)—two huge rectangles of rolled steel placed at ninety degrees to one another on the floor and ceiling of the gallery—Serra uses industrial materials and processes for an art that sculpts the space of the observer. What the observer is meant to do in that space, and what Serra means to say about those tools which come to him from industrial processes and cultural imperatives, remains inscrutable.

DAN FRIEDMAN HAS A PHD IN COMPARATIVE LITERATURE AT YALE UNIVERSITY AND IS THE FOUNDING EDITOR OF THE JOURNAL ZEEK.

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BRINGING BACK MOSES

Robert Moses and the Modern City: The Transformation of New York
Edited by Hilary Ballon and Kenneth Jackson
W. W. Norton & Company, \$50

For most of its seven miles, the Cross-Bronx Expressway flows straight and smooth from east to west. Except for the high density of the neighborhoods around it, it looks and feels like a typically bland product of the federal highway system. But as we drive the mile or so from Webster Avenue to Jerome, across the Grand Concourse, the ride gets

jagged and jerky, sharp boulders and giant glacial outcroppings surge up around us, lanes make strange curves and merge instantly so we have to slow down fast. Around us, especially near the Concourse, we see grand apartment houses reduced to rude fragments, some propped up with massive brutal walls, some pitched on weird axes defined by vanished streets. Did some malevolent giant rip this road rudely from the earth? This is my old nabe; where I grew up, until that giant forced our family out. It is a weird thrill to feel myself as a minor character in history, one of the many thousands of victims of Robert Moses' cruelest work, the nadir—or was it the summit?—of his long career.

Robert Caro's 1974 bio, *The Power Broker: Robert Moses and the Fall of New York*, still looks like the ultimate in Robert Moses studies. But the book's Citizen Kane-like power has ironic results that neither Caro nor his reviewers seemed to grasp. He nails Moses' viciousness and malignancy again and again. But he also demonstrates Moses' enormity, the breadth of his horizon, how much of our

world he had put in place. But after a certain point, the very exhaustiveness of his research and passionate intensity of his writing become counterproductive, and enlarge the stature of the man he wants to tear down.

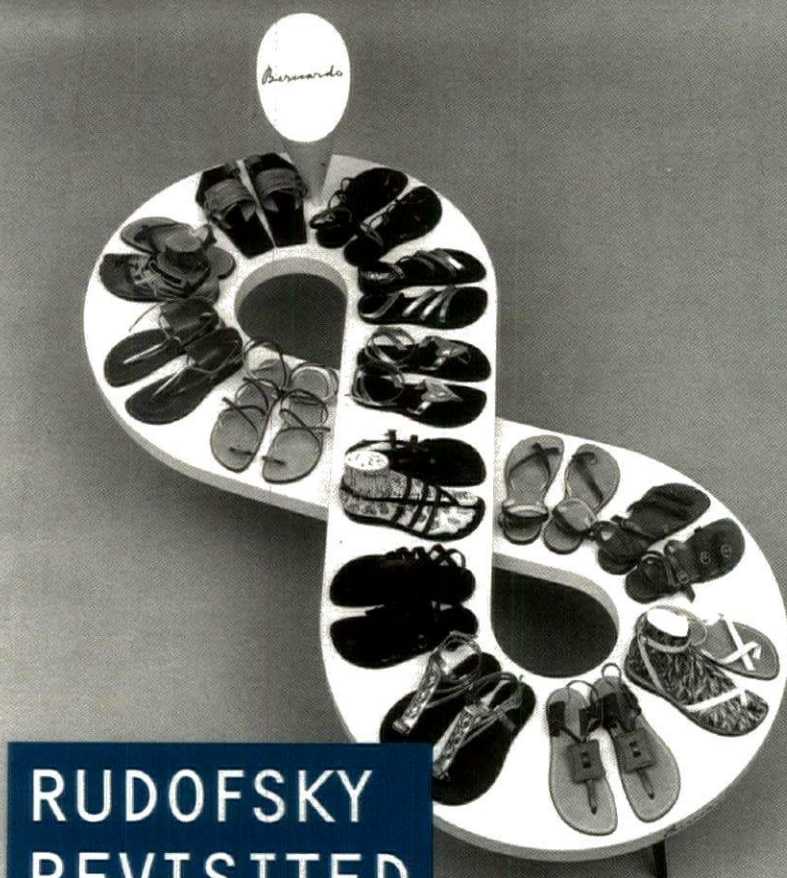
Early this spring, New Yorkers were suddenly bombarded with articles, symposia, and museum shows on Moses, and a beautifully illustrated catalogue of his work, *Robert Moses and the Modern City: The Transformation of New York*. There was an early excitement; but then it looked like these people with impressive names, such as Kenneth T. Jackson and Hilary Ballon of Columbia, had put together a series of not very impressive events. What went wrong? First of all, Moses' critics, starting with Caro, were almost wholly left out, so that it was impossible to engage in any sort of meaningful dialogue. Instead, the speeches and articles veered toward hagiography. Even smart people seemed to dumb themselves down, so that Paul Goldberger ended up saying that "Moses' surgery, while radical, may just possibly have saved New York."

The new Moses material looks beyond Caro in two important ways. The first embraces swimming pools. Moses loved swimming, made the team at Yale, and tried to swim laps every day of his long life, and built dozens of pools in New York. The book begins with Andrew Moore's delicious portfolio of large color photos, which emphasize details of modern design, interwoven with details of youthful (mostly Black and Latino) bodies. The photos are so openly seductive and voluptuous that Moses would probably have felt uneasy—though Leni Riefenstahl would surely have kvelled; but it is to Moses' credit that he could organize and highlight human sexiness even against his grain. Marta Gutman has a fine essay on Moses' pools as "grand works of civic architecture" with photos from all over the city, from every point in Moses' career, emphasizing his pools as public space.

The other great new addition to Moses scholarship here is Bob Fishman's essay, "The Revolt of the Urbs." Readers of *The Power Broker* will

continued on page 18

An advertising photo of Rudofsky's popular line of Bernardo sandals.



RUDOFSKY REVISITED

Lessons from Bernard Rudofsky
Canadian Centre for Architecture
1920, Rue Baile, Montreal, Canada
Through September 30

of an exhibition he curated at the Museum of Modern Art in 1964.

Lessons from Bernard Rudofsky, which was first mounted this spring at the Architekturzentrum in Vienna and is currently open at the Canadian Centre for Architecture in Montreal, is the first exhibition devoted to him and his work. Besides his extensive writings on architecture and cities, he wrote journalistic books about food and clothing, notably *Are Clothes Modern?* (1977); *The Unfashionable Human Body* (1971); and *Now I Lay Me Down to Eat* (1980). He designed buildings in Italy, Brazil, Spain, and New York, and a successful line of sandals called Bernardo that appeared regularly in *Vogue*.

What is clear from the exhibition and its accompanying catalog is that regionalism informed Rudofsky's every professional moment. From the moment he set foot on the islands of Capri and Santorini as a young architecture student, he was enthralled with the surviving forms of sensuality in the nooks and crannies of the non-industrial world—first the Mediterranean and then Japan, arguably the two regions where the architects possess the strongest attachment to regional identity—that he remained under their spell for the rest of his life. He came back to Vienna inveighing against Josef Hoffmann's Palais Stocklet in Brussels and Mies's Tugendhat House in Brno as "mausoleums of contemporary taste," and saw CIAM's view of architecture as inhumane.

He later moved to Capri and designed a series of neo-Mediterranean villas and hotels with Gio Ponti and Cosenza. When World War II broke out, he decamped to Brazil, where he designed two houses. He might well have remained if he had not been enticed to move to the United States after winning a prize for his "organic" architecture from MoMA. It was during the brief time when Philip Johnson was away and his replacement, Elizabeth Mock, in a short-lived palace coup, rejected International Style and encouraged regionalism. With Johnson's return in 1947, however, he, like his fellow regionalists, became persona non grata at the MoMA for the next decade or so.

In her introductory biographical essay in the catalogue, Monika Platzer, the co-curator of the exhibition with Wim de Wit, points out

that Josef Hoffman and Otto Wagner were the first Viennese architects to get interested in the Mediterranean vernacular of Capri, suggesting that this might have been what motivated the young Rudofsky to follow in his footsteps. In the same vein Maria Welzig, the leading expert on the Austrian architect Joseph Frank, draws a parallel between his and Rudofsky's architecture, as well as contextualizing it within the framework of Camillo Sitte's vision of urbanity.

Of course there is nothing new about architects spending a lot of time traveling. The grand tour was *de rigueur* for any self-respecting architect from the 17th century on. But from Wim de Wit's essay on Rudofsky's travel journals, we get an idea on his preoccupations from his minute observations of local traditions. His richly documented essay on Rudofsky's passion for travel shows how he preferred provincial backwaters where he could admire life on the periphery.

Felicity Scott, an expert on Rudofsky, analyzes the installation strategy of *Architecture without Architects*, which was planned differently from other MoMA shows. Rather than follow the orderly, rational MoMA layout, it borrowed its intricate, labyrinthine structure from the very Mediterranean village streets pictured in the exhibition itself.

Andrea Bocco Guarnieri, author of a richly illustrated book on Rudofsky (*Bernard Rudofsky: A Humane Designer*), focuses on his architectural oeuvre. The remarkable thing about his buildings is that, according to Rudofsky himself, each was designed around a "well tempered courtyard, open to the sky" derived from vernacular architecture, whether in Capri, Brazil, or Spain.

The catalog for *Lessons from Bernard Rudofsky* is stunning because the visual material Rudofsky himself assembled is unique. He never tired of defending his vision of how the world should be and how life should be and the relevance of this vision has, if anything, only become greater as the global order continues to flatten traditional cultural identity all over the world.

LIANE LEFAIVRE IS THE CO-AUTHOR OF CRITICAL REGIONALISM: ARCHITECTURE AND IDENTITY IN A GLOBALIZED WORLD (PRESTEL, 2003) AND CHAIR OF ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY AND THEORY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED ART IN VIENNA.

Austria has supplied the world with a remarkable number of the 20th century's major regionalist architects. However, in a paradox of globalization that is becoming ever more current, it was only once they had been transplanted from their native soil that these architects manifested their regionalist streak. Richard Neutra was a regionalist in Southern California and Cuba, and pushed a similar agenda in India, Guam, and Puerto Rico;

Ernst Plischke did the same in New Zealand.

Probably the most influential of these architects was also the most uprooted of all, the one who remained a nomad his entire life. Bernard Rudofsky (1905–1988) almost single-handedly unleashed a mania for the vernacular with the publication of his visual manifesto defending the local, traditional architectures of the world, *Architecture without Architects*. It was the phenomenally successful catalogue

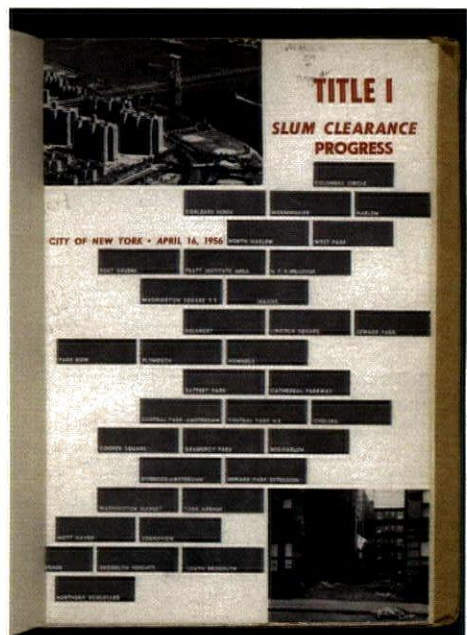
BRINGING BACK MOSES continued from page 17 remember that when Caro condemns projects like the Cross-Bronx Expressway, he uses a language that celebrates street and neighborhood life as the core of the city. This language and these values are generally identified with Jane Jacobs. Caro takes "Jacobean" language for granted, and writes as if it comes with everybody's DNA. But in fact the Jacobean dialect is quite new. Nobody knew how to speak it in the 1950s, when Moses was building the Cross-Bronx and the Brooklyn-Queens expressways. There was no intelligible way to say, "You should care about our neighborhood, even if you never go there in your whole life." That was the talk of the 1960s. In the 1950s, civic discourse was still warmed-over Le Corbusier: "The city is a machine for traffic" and "we must kill the street." Fishman tells us a back story of Moses' failed campaign to destroy Washington Square in the mid-and-late '50s. In the course of a few years, Moses' opponents grew more sophisticated, gradually grasped what they were fighting for, and found a new way to talk about city life.

Jane Jacobs plays a role in Fishman's story, but he situates her in a larger context. He excavates other people we've probably never heard of—Charles Abrams, author of a classic essay, "Washington Square and the Revolt of the Urbs"; housewife and lifelong activist Shirley Hayes; Dan Wolf, publisher of the "first-in-the-nation alternative newspaper *Village Voice*," and many more—who created the life that Jacobs idealized in her book, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*. I've taught this book for years, and so many readers imagine her city as a sort of asphalt Old Man River that just keeps rolling along. Fishman shows us how, in order to keep it rolling, rather than rolled over, many Village people had to step up, seize the day, and change their sleepy neighborhood into a new form of fighting city.

What then? Alas, rust never sleeps, as Neil Young says, and irony never stops corroding. The activism of the '60s, so creative in resisting heartless bureaucracies like the ones that Moses built, also turned out to be disastrously effective in disabling our whole welfare state. Robert Moses has been replaced, not by

bureaucrats who are more sensitive to human needs, but by billionaires who defer to the needs of the global market alone. Urban development is in the hands of the Trumps and Ratners, whose idea of the good city is not much more than a maximum accumulation of capital for themselves. Moses makes these big boys look small. He always insisted he was "working for the public," even if he couldn't stand the people in it. He deserves respect for the largeness of his horizon, even if we can't stand much of what he filled the horizon with. What we need today is a new way to talk about city life. We need to get off expressways and get close to each other, like the people on the Jacobean street, but also to keep in touch with our identity as citizens, as part of that "public" that Moses couldn't stand but wouldn't let go of. We need a new new city to be born. Where do we start? In the streets. Anybody remember "We Shall Overcome"?

MARSHALL BERMAN IS THE DISTINGUISHED PROFESSOR OF POLITICAL SCIENCE AT CITY COLLEGE, CUNY, AND AUTHOR OF BOOKS INCLUDING ALL THAT IS SOLID SELTS INTO AIR (PENGUIN, 1980) AND ADVENTURES IN MARXISM (VERSO, 1999).



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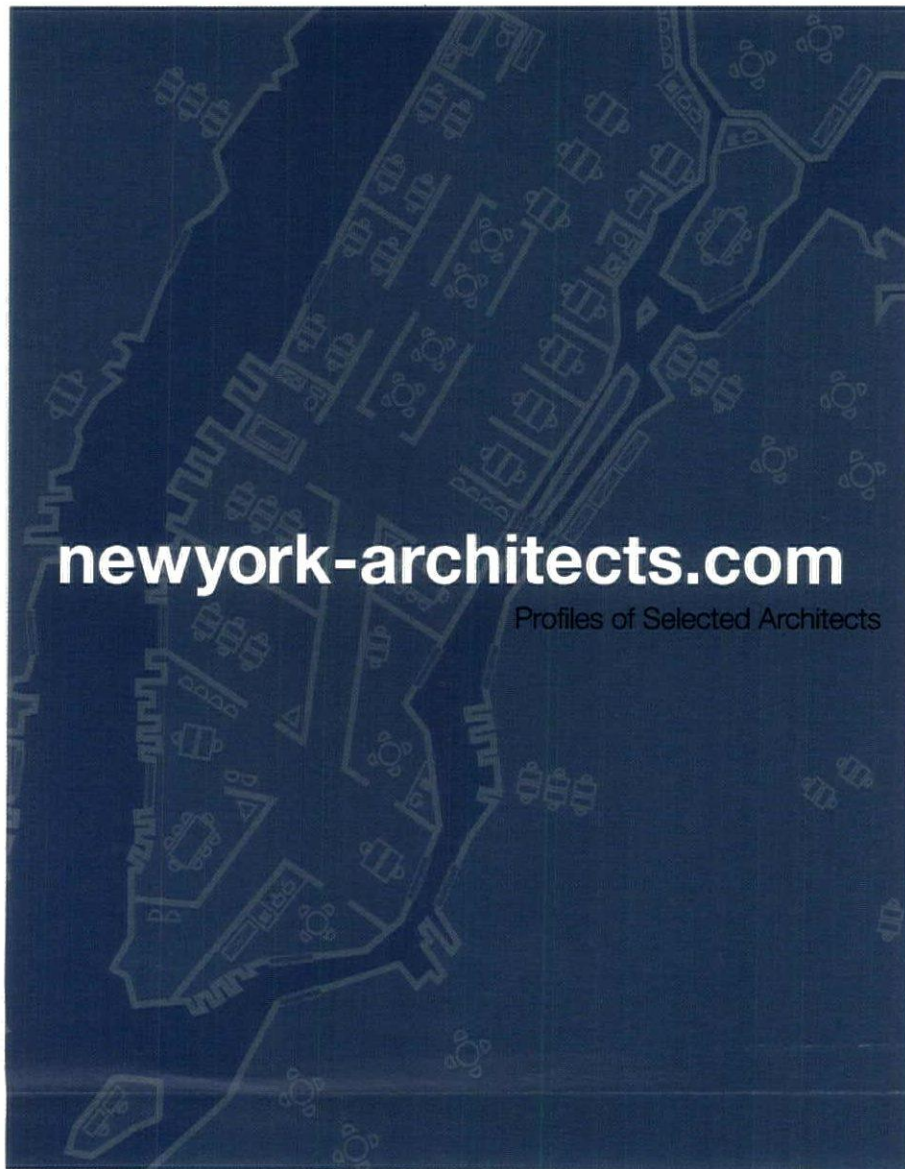


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The Morgan's spacious new lobby has scant evidence of the collections that made the institution so beloved.

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As a longtime Fellow of, sometime contributor to, and ardent fan of the Morgan, I have been getting to know the revised version for a year, and must sadly conclude that lovine was right. The reborn Morgan—now dressed up with a performance venue, a new title: "Museum," and other adornments—is almost wholly a disappointment.

It's not that I mourn the old Morgan unduly; it had its problems. The high-ceilinged entrance hall seemed pompous; the upstairs auditorium bleak; the garden court, while a pleasant place for lunch, was never a design triumph. Improvements would have been welcome.

But what we got were not improvements. Indeed, it seems as though every design choice made by architect and/or client was the wrong choice, starting with the incomprehensible decision to abandon the elegant approach on 36th Street—alongside the garden and Charles McKim's grand facade—in favor of a nondescript new entrance at a polluting bus stop on Madison Avenue.

How then, does the visitor experience the new Library and Museum? She enters, as though into a corporate lobby, through a wall of glass doors. Across the marble vastness, a distant view rises. That view, highlighted by Piano's sophisticated white metal framing, is of two ordinary apartment buildings with their air conditioners proudly bristling. To the right is a wall; to the left are rooms of indeterminate purpose; ahead is an ungainly and treacherous down staircase, and beyond that the cafe

wannabe—a scatter of small tables and a lone palm. At the new heart of this fabled cultural institution there is not a hint of book or work of art.

I am here to check out the major new exhibition, but where might it be? Only one small gallery is in evidence; that can't be it. Advice from a guard is sought. Ah hah! Through that hard-to-spot door around the corner, perhaps? Sure enough, through the door and down a narrow corridor I do arrive at a larger gallery—the very one, unchanged, that I know from the old Morgan. There is a new gallery across the way (where the coatroom used to be) and also that tiny previously noticed gallery, off the lobby—but the familiar long gallery and adjoining room where drawings used to hang are gone. So much for the increased exhibition space!

Later I discover a dark and low-ceilinged gallery wedged onto the second floor. But what a chore to get there! I wait for the elevator, which is sometime on the blink, and then find myself in a tight space edged by low railings that seem easy to topple over...

I find that the polite restaurant, which, perched as it is on the way to the gift shop, has intimations of a suburban mall. Nearby, the Morgan brownstone, once open to visitors and stocked cheerfully with books and cards and tchotchkes to buy, is now walled off and marked Staff Only—underlining the general aura of unwelcomingness. Most disheartening of all, I find, is the blank, formless acreage below. Underneath and around the staircase it floats pointlessly. Although recital hall audiences empty into it, the space offers no enveloping sense of reception, or gathering. Its amorphousness—only exag-

gerated by harsh lighting—offers only anomie.

How could this revered sanctuary have been so ill-reused? And to what end? Did Mr. Piano, an extraordinary architect, define the course of the reconstruction in accord with a personal vision? Or, instead, had the distinguished management and board of trustees already determined to adopt the current imperative for cultural institutions—that every possible space, in every possible manner, be charged with filling the coffers? As a New Yorker and habitué of architecture and the arts, I would be most interested to know. Just contemplate the manuscripts and books and scores and drawings that the dollars spent on this building might have gone for—and weep. Imagine that the Morgan eccentricity and delight—and riches so beloved all over the world—had been celebrated and not concealed, and weep some more.

Happily the historic J. P. Morgan rooms remain, though hidden. The glorious library, whose refectory tables piled with leather-bound volumes and texts on vellum once drew our fond attention, is now barren of both furniture and treasures to get close to.

But, at least it is still there. Now that a new director is on board, fresh winds may blow. Could it be that in another ten years or so the Morgan might decide again to toss out the latest renovation, and recapture some semblance of what lovine called "the beloved, ebulliently gaudy house-museum."

JOAN K. DAVIDSON HAS SERVED AS THE PRESIDENT OF THE J. M. KAPLAN FUND AND CHAIR OF THE NEW YORK STATE COUNCIL ON THE ARTS. SHE IS THE FOUNDER OF URBAN CENTER BOOKS AT THE MUNICIPAL ARTS SOCIETY, AND IS A FELLOW OF THE MORGAN LIBRARY.

THE MORGAN, ONE YEAR LATER

It was in April of 2006 that the Morgan Library unveiled its new self to wide public interest and enthusiastic applause from architecture reviewers, here and elsewhere. But earlier, AN's own Julie lovine had written an astute piece (See AN07_04.19.2006, "Destination: Morgan") expressing some doubts. While praising Renzo Piano's design in part, she wondered whether it would "incite passionate allegiance." She feared that the old library might have been too much altered, and challenged the Morgan's claim to have increased

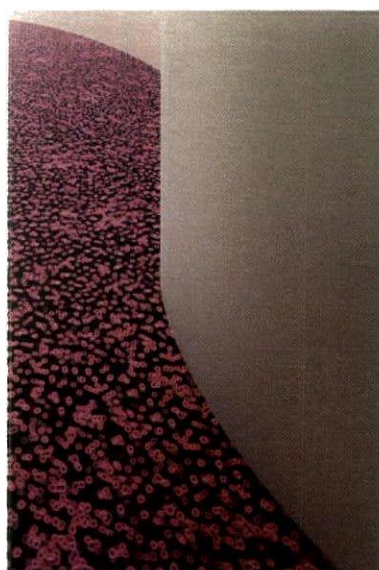


The Common Chair

Covello Reesor
www.covelloreesor.com
Early settlers in Ontario utilized every resource when building their communities. In particular, they gathered miscellaneous wood scraps to build furniture. These hybrid pieces often were painted over to give the impression of a uniform base, but Toronto-based furniture designers Cristina Covello and Andrew Reesor are revealing this 200-year-old technique for a different reason: They gather scraps of wood from local studios and manufacturers for environmental reasons. Covello Reesor's chairs celebrate the ingenuity and resourcefulness of sustainability, for the natural finish exposes the variety of woods juxtaposed against each other. Despite the name, these chairs are anything but common. They're produced in small batches, and no two are alike.

Textile Softblocks

Molo Design
www.molodesign.com
Molo Design creates Softblocks, honey-comblike building blocks that can be used alone or stacked together to create anything from tables to dividing walls. Originally available in kraft paper, the Vancouver-based studio's latest design is made of durable polyethylene. Linked via magnetic ends, Textile Softblocks are available in sizes 1 to 6 feet high and can stretch, accordionlike, up to 20 feet in length. Stacked together, they can create a 10-foot-high partition. When backlit, light seeps through the black or white blocks, revealing their waferlike structure. But these waterproof blocks are hardly fragile, and they're popular as buffet tables or bars in the catering industry. Softblocks can even serve as a type of floral display (above): Glass vases placed in the crevices hold flowers above the surface.



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Tired of the same old stripes and paisley rug patterns? Indulge your inner science geek with Bacteria, a new design by Christopher Redfern in the Sottsass Collection from NeoFloor by Lees. In Redfern's reinterpretation of Italian design partner Ettore Sottsass' Bacterio design of the 1970s, microbes dance in colors such as rose on a black background (left) and beige on a cabana-green background. Schools have shown a special interest in the fun, educational design, Redfern said. Leery of covering a floor with countless disease-causing organisms? Have no fear. These 4 foot, 11 inch-wide NeoFloor rolls are actually good for you. Composed of short nylon fibers and a fiberglass-enforced closed backing, this type of waterproof covering is resilient to mold and nasty microbial aggression.

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100, Phoenix, AZ 85014, 602-468-0505, www.teneyckla.com.
Open>Öko (p. 5): The sunflower seed panels for the fro-yo shop were fabricated by Environ Biocomposites, 221 Mohr Dr., Mankato, MN 56001, 507-388-3434, www.environbiocomposites.com. The bamboo panels were fabricated by Cali Bamboo, 9365 Waples St., Suite D, San Diego, CA 92121, 888-788-2254, www.calibamboo.com.
Bold Print (p. 13): The ceramic tubes and glass panes of the double-skinned curtain wall were fabricated and installed by Benson Industries, 192 Lexington Ave., Suite 1003, New York, NY 10016, 212-779-3230, www.besonglobal.com. The structural steel rods were fabricated by SMI-Owen Steel, P.O. Box 18, Columbia, SC 29202, 803-251-7541.

Engineered Transparency

Glass in Architecture and Structural Engineering

September 26, 27 + 28, 2007

Columbia University

After the last century's call to a radical new architecture and urban life, glass architecture is more ubiquitous today than ever. A deeply engineered product, glass has re-emerged in a new light as a seemingly more culturally accepted material in design and construction. Its current appearance, however, reveals a virtually new product replacing the glass used even twenty years ago. The innovations are observable and have direct use.

While offering new modes of visual pleasure and spatial experience to occupants—the new glass has also been the beneficiary of major advances in engineering that are decidedly less visible—advancements in the structural, optical, and thermal properties of glass, as well as limits in installation and fabrication, have quietly reconfigured the extent and reach of its application. We are so continually surrounded by such discretely functioning glass, that we don't even see it. This interdisciplinary conference aims to bring an ordinarily extraordinary material back before our eyes.

THE EXPANDING LIST OF PARTICIPATING ARCHITECTS AND ENGINEERS INCLUDES:

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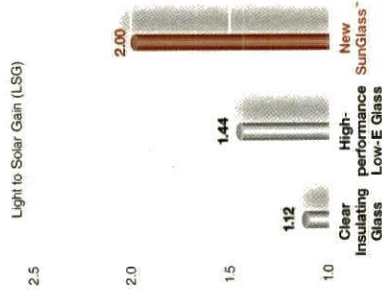
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