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**ARCHITECTS NEWSPAPER**

17 10.20.2006

**ARQUITECTÓNICA GIVES 35-YEAR-OLD INSTITUTION NEW FACADE AND 50 PERCENT MORE PUBLIC SPACE**

New and Improved Bronx Museum

The Bronx's Grand Concourse is no stranger to great architecture, though it has been nearly three-quarters of a century since the Champs-Elysées-inspired boulevard has seen the likes of Bronx Borough Hall, near Yankee Stadium, and the countless art deco and art moderne apartment buildings that make it one of New York's most impressive thoroughfares. With its centennial three years away, the Grand Concourse is undergoing a renaissance anchored by new developments targeted at revitalizing the South Bronx. One of the first and most

**COOPER-HEWITT COMBINES INAUGURAL NATIONAL DESIGN WEEK WITH NATIONAL DESIGN AWARDS**

**Death to Architecture**

Rumored to be on the auction block for several years, Architecture magazine has finally been sold. On September 29, Hanley Wood, the Washington, D.C.-based publisher of business-to-business housing and construction titles including Residential Architect, Builder, and Concrete Construction, announced its purchase of both Architecture and Architectural Lighting (AL) from VNU Business Media, which publishes Contract and Hospitality Design but began shedding its design titles when it abruptly shuttered Interiors in 2001. In a statement, VNU Business Media CEO Robert

**NEW AGENCY TO BRING GREEN STANDARDS TO CITY OPERATIONS**

**ZOE RYAN APPOINTED DESIGN CURATOR OF THE ART INSTITUTE**

The Art Institute of Chicago, one of the nation's major art museums, announced the appointment of Zoë Ryan as the Neville Bryan Curator of Design. For the last six years, Ryan, 29, has been curator at the Van Alen Institute in New York, and most recently curated The Good Life: New Public Spaces for Recreation. Joseph Rosa, who became the Art Institute's curator of architecture and design in September 2005, created Ryan's position as part of his effort to expand the museum's architecture and design department.

"Zoë was the first person who came to mind when we started discussing filling this position," said Rosa. He first worked with her in 2002, when he brought the Van Alen show Architecture + Water, curated by Paul Lewis, to the Carnegie Museum of Art. "I've always been impressed by her. She's someone

**ARCHITECTURE MAGAZINE SOLD AND MERGED WITH NEW TITLE**

Death to Architecture

The usual gala-night suspense has been lifted for this year's seventh-annual Cooper-Hewitt National Design Awards, which was held on October 18. The winners in each of the major categories were announced in a comparatively anti-climactic press release in June. But where there is less anticipation, there is more recognition: The traditional award categories of lifetime achievement, corporate achievement, architecture, fashion, product and communication design have expanded to acknowledge three new areas—design mind, landscape design, and interior design—making ten juried categories total.

**BLOOMBERG ANNOUNCES SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVE**

Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg announced on September 21 the creation of the Office of Long-Term Planning and Sustainability, the unit of his staff that will be charged with planning and implementing principles to make New York City's growth ecologically sound. As mayoral spokesman Matt Kelly described it, the office will merge three tasks to help the city absorb what demographics expect to be a million or so new residents over the next 30 years: It will chart ways to manage and dispose of underused land, encourage clean mass transit, and measure the city's emissions of the gases that

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**FORMER VAN ALEN CURATOR TO HEAD NEW DEPARTMENT AT CHICAGO INSTITUTION**

**LESS SURPRISE, MORE DESIGN**

The former Van Alen Curator Zoë Ryan is now the Design Curator of the Art Institute of Chicago. For the last six years, Ryan, 29, has been curator at the Van Alen Institute in New York, and most recently curated The Good Life: New Public Spaces for Recreation. Joseph Rosa, who became the Art Institute's curator of architecture and design in September 2005, created Ryan's position as part of his effort to expand the museum's architecture and design department.

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The news that Architecture magazine—which accounts for one half of the national monthly architecture trade publications in the U.S.—has folded is sad news for the profession. Although the magazine was founded in 1891, founded by Harry Desmond, a poet and novelist who, according to Colitch, “was an advocate of the Arts and Crafts movement and regarded the profession as something more than a bunch of engineers, something more than a profession that can be done with a degree and a diploma.”

The magazine was acquired by Progressive Architecture, which has a strong building and construction focus, and has suffered declining ad pages and circulation over the past several years (see “Architectural Record Ousted,” AN 14 9.7.2006), will be discontinued following its October issue. Its entire staff was let go.

Architectural Record will be the last of its three remaining staff members, Architecture, which has suffered declining ad pages and circulation over the past several years (see “Architectural Record Ousted,” AN 14 9.7.2006), will be discontinued following its October issue. Its entire staff was let go.

Adele Appelbaum

DEATH TO ARCHITECTURE continued from front page

Krahoff explained, “Since we have a very limited footprint in the architectural market, we have sold Architecture and Architectural Lighting to Hanley Wood, which has a strong building and construction franchise.”

While Hanley Wood will continue to publish AL, it will retain three of its current staff members, Architecture, which has suffered declining ad pages and circulation over the past several years (see “Architectural Record Ousted,” AN 14 9.7.2006), will be discontinued following its October issue. Its entire staff was let go.

Architecture’s final issue coincides with the debut of Hanley Wood’s trade title, Architect, which mails at the end of the month (see “New Magazine To Launch,” AN 15 5.24.2006). Architect editor-in-chief Ned Cramer explained that the acquisition of Architecture was “a chance [for us] to strengthen our market position.” The new magazine will fulfill Architecture’s existing subscriptions.

Architecture’s current circulation is 88,000 while AL, which is published seven times yearly, has circulation of 25,000. Before the sale was finalized, Hanley Wood had announced a target circulation for Architecture of 60,000. Issues will be mailed free to registered architects and architects working in firms with more than two employees, engaged in nonresidential work, which accounts for 90 percent of all billings in the industry, according to Hanley Wood’s research. Said spokesperson Ann Selz, “From Architecture’s circulation, we will take only those firms that match that profile; firms outside our targeted profile may receive the magazine on a paid-subscription basis.”

Architect will also preserve the venerable P/A Awards. Ironically, Architecture magazine is now facing the same fate it imposed on Progressive Architecture (PA) in January 1996: BPI Communications, the publishers of Architecture, then the official magazine of the AIA, bought PA for $1 million, and kept only its subscriber list and awards program. (PA was folded into VNU in 1998.) “The P/A Awards is an important institution in the profession and its fate shouldn’t be tied to that of a magazine that has fallen on hard times,” said Cramer. “At Architect, we will locate the resources to it and bring it back to what it was ten years ago.”

Cramer also expressed his desire to preserve other strengths of Architecture, such as “its incredible minds, including a great pool of contributors.” As of yet, none of the magazine’s staff members have been retained, nor could they comment for this article due to a clause in their severance contracts. The staff was given one week’s notice, and spent their final week of work overseeing the P/A Awards.

The awards will appear in the January issue of Architect. The news of the sale came as a surprise to the staff, who had unveiled a redesigned, reformatted magazine in June. At the time of the sale, Architect editor-in-chief Andy Bussell, and art director Casey Maher were upbeat about VNU’s support of their efforts to push Architect in a “new direction.

Maher will continue on a contract basis as art director for AL. Cramer will assume the role of editor-in-chief of AL, in addition to Architect. Designed by Pentagram’s Abbott Miller, Architect will take a different approach to covering the profession, “focusing not just on buildings but on people and their processes,” said Cramer.

CATHY LANG HO

BLOOMBERG ANNOUNCES SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVE continued from front page

Contribute to climate change

The new office will also promote a market for ecologically sound products, said Kelly, by instituting “green” purchasing in the 300,000-member city workforce. “We’re going to look at how to make the city’s operations more sustainable,” explained Kelly, “and then figure out the entire city’s carbon emissions.” The office will be overseen by Jeff Kay, who is currently the Mayor’s head of operations, and its director will be Robin Aggarwala, a part-time, former McKinsey consultant. Aggarwala has already received good marks from smart-growth advocates: He has run long-term planning for the City Planning Department, and is chair of the Metropolitan Transportation Review Board of the National Academies, which advises the federal government on transportation policy. But it’s unclear how the office will shape budgetary decisions.

“I really like that they’re linking long-term strategic land use planning and sustainability,” said Brad Lander, director of the Pratt Center for Community and Environmental Development (PCCEED).

At the same time, Lander noted, the office’s advisory board—which convened for the first time on September 27—is heavier on eco-thinkers like Cook + Fox’s Robert Fox and Natural Resources Defense Council’s Ashok Gupta than on planners like Robert Yaro, who is director of the Regional Plan Association.

What’s more, fostering a sustainable city requires financial expertise to reconceive the startup costs of buying energy-efficient building systems with the operating savings those systems can bring. Rafael Pelli, an architect who has offices in New York and Los Angeles, and is a member of the United States Green Building Council, has reserved judgment on how Bloomberg’s move can stoke sustainable development. The price of these buildings is “so important,” said Pelli, “and developers worry so much about first costs.”

Until the office produces concrete incentives for developers, Pelli added, architects should adopt a wait-and-see attitude toward its promise for encouraging good, sustainable design.

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PUSH TO PRESERVE PEARLROTH HOUSE

With a risky move underway, Andrew Geller's Pearlroth house in Westhampton, New York, faces an uncertain future and a last-ditch effort for preservation. The architect's grandson, Jake Gorst, has teamed up with David Shearer, director of Exhibitions International, to raise $175,000 to relocate and refurbish the structure, which will form the core of a new community arts center aimed at preserving the East End's role as an incubator of experimental mid-century design. New York's Center for Architecture will host a cocktail reception—with special guests 82-year-old Geller and historian Alastair Gordon, who wrote the book Beach Houses: Andrew Geller (Princeton Architectural Press, 2003)—on Friday, October 27 to help raise funds.

Gorst has been working to save the house since 2005, when current owner Jonathan Pearlroth offered to donate it to the Township of Southampton after local building codes revealed that renovation would be impossible without compromising the integrity of Geller's original design. The town has donated a new site in East Quogue but requires that restoration is completed within 15 months or risk demolition.

The move, which involves bisecting the house and driving it several miles up the road, began in late September, but $25,000 is needed immediately to secure a successful effort by early November. Restoration by spring 2007 is further contingent on donations of cedar wood planks for the interior and exterior, copper panels for the roof, and brick-sized hollow cinderblocks for reconstructing the fireplace, as well as period furnishings, which will complete the conversion to a living museum. "Visitors will be able to tour it and see what a beach house by Andrew Geller was like in the 1950s. And the township is looking to build additional buildings, including an exhibition space that Exhibitions International would be involved in curating," said Shearer.

Undeniably optimistic about the new site, Gorst said, "It's a long stretch of beach with no other houses near it. It's going to look very close to the way it did when it was first built."

LAURIE MANFRA

EAVESDROP IS ON ASSIGNMENT

Since opening the first Espasso showroom in Long Island City in 2002, Carlos Junqueira has gained a reputation as the premiere ambassador of mid-century and contemporary Brazilian furniture design in the U.S. On September 20, he moved his operation to a new location in Tribeca. Designed by Matthew Bremer's firm Architecture in Formation, the new exhibition gallery is an airy, minimalist 6,000-square-foot space on two levels of a former garment factory. Neutral in tone and expression, the interior forms an understated backdrop to contemporary and mid-century furniture alike, from the rich, tropical designs of Isay Weinfeld, to classic, elegant pieces by Lina Bo Bardi, Lucio Costa, and Oscar Niemeyer, among others. A grand staircase connects the first level to the basement level, doubling as an amphitheater with staggered platforms for display and seating. In addition to the furniture, an exhibition of contemporary Brazilian artists, curated by Ilene Kurtz-Kretzschmar, is currently on view.
If you went to Coney Island over Labor Day weekend or happened by Chelsea Piers or Central Park in recent weeks, you may have seen a bright blue or yellow shipping container doing brisk business in colorful T-shirts, hoodies, and other basics. Yes, it has LOT-EK's signature all over it: The New York firm created two mobile shopping outlets for UNIQLO—"a sort of Japanese H&M," in principal Ada Tolla's words—which is opening a flagship store on Broadway in SoHo in late October. UNIQLO didn't want to miss the chance to welcome the fall season so, with creative agency MP Creative, they hit upon the concept of a roving billboard-cum-store-sampler. LOT-EK sliced out a front door of the mobile units, with the upper-half of the cut folding up to serve as an awning and the lower-half folding down to serve as an entrance ramp. They also cut vertical windowed slits on the units' front and back, inspired by the stacks of clothing that are something of a brand trademark. "UNIQLO always stacks everything," said Tolla. "So all you see in their stores are these colored horizontal lines." Though tiny, at 20-by-8-by-8-feet, the stores are also equipped with a changing room: a clever adaptation of a standard AC duct. The duct scrunches or stretches like an accordian, via a hand-crank. "Very low-tech," said Tolla, wryly.

NEW AND IMPROVED BRONX MUSEUM

continued from front page notable additions is a $19 million expansion of the Bronx Museum of Art, designed by Bernardo Fort-Brescia and his firm Arquitectonica. Rising three towering stories above the busy street, the northern wing of the museum is the first phase of a project that will literally unfold to the corner, eventually replacing the squat former-synagogue the museum has occupied since 1982. It adds 16,700 square feet to an existing 33,000. The aluminum-clad façade resembles an abstract paper fan, comprising seven irregular masses that are broken vertically by columns of fritted glass that spill light into the galleries. The dynamism created by the folds is heightened by diagonal incisions into the aluminum. Fort-Brescia explained that the crinkled frontispiece admits the dominant western light indirectly so it will not damage the art.

"Through the innovations of this pleated façade, it is our belief that it will not only serve to heighten the positive profile of the Bronx but also establish the county as a vibrant cultural destination," Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg said during the ribbon cutting ceremony on October 3. Perhaps the greatest service the glass provides is a "storefront" atmosphere. The two-floor lobby will house a public gallery, allowing pedestrians to steal a quick peak of art and maybe even be tempted inside. "It's folding, it's gesturing, it's three dimensional," Fort-Brescia said. "We wanted people from the street to look in. Part of the point is to make the cultural building the center of the city."

Behind the lobby is one of the new large gallery spaces; designed with four flat walls, it may be closed off for projections and other installations. Above this sits the main gallery, which stretches from the jagged but functional wall out to an enclosed rear terrace that seems to float above the ground. At the very top is a new classroom and media lab. "We were in the basement before," Education Department Director Lynn Pono said. "It's such a contrast. The light is amazing."

MATT CHABAN

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The early announcement is tied to a new Cooper-Hewitt initiative called National Design Week, which takes place from October 15 to 21. Museum admission is free all week and education outreach programs aim to bring designers, teachers, and students into contact with each other. By announcing the winners in advance, the winners are able to participate in the education programs during their tenure, including studio visits, and a panel they will host at the Cooper-Hewitt the day after the gala.

There will be one surprise announcement for the crowd on October 18: the recipient of the newly inaugurated People’s Design Awards. “We’ve had a fantastic response,” said museum spokesperson Laurie Olivieri. “In just a couple of weeks, we had more than 300 nominations.” There are no restrictions on the type of object that can be nominated, and users can suggest as many entries as they want but can only vote once. The nominees represent design of every shape and size, from a temporary shelter built in New Orleans by Marianne Cusato, to Deborah Adler’s revision of the prescription bottle for Target, to classics like the Eames lounge chair, and under-recognized everyday design like contact lenses. For some of the NDA finalists, the People’s Design Awards is a second chance to win. Designs from Chip Kidd, Apple, and Peter Som have all popped up in this category.

A handful of this year’s winners have been nominated in years past. According to juror Michael Beirut, a partner at Pentagram, “Sometimes the biggest surprise as a juror was that some of the finalists had never won before.” If there’s a bonus to the awards being announced early this year, it’s that pioneering designer Bill Stumpf’s 40-year career was recognized before he passed away on August 30 at the age of 70.

Lifetime Achievement Award:
Paolo Soleri

Corporate Achievement:
Nike, Inc.

Design Patron: Craig Robins

Architecture Design:
Thom Mayne; finalists Stanley Saitowitz and Bernard Tschumi

Communications Design:
2x4; finalists Jake Barton and Chip Kidd

Fashion Design:
Maria Cornejo; finalists Thom Browne and Peter Som

Landscape Design:
Martha Schwartz; finalists Andrea Cochran and Ken Smith

Product Design:
Bill Stumpf; finalists Jonathan Ive and Antenna Design

Interior Design:
Michael Gabellini; finalists Annabelle Selldorf and Tsao and McKown

Special Jury Recommendation:
Syd Mead

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With the arrival of Peter Gelb as its new director, the Metropolitan Opera has launched a blitzkrieg effort to make opera more accessible to the public. It's had open dress rehearsals and live simulcasts of its performances, and recently opened a gallery devoted to opera-inspired art at the south corner of Wallace K. Harrison-designed building.

"Opera has had a long relationship with the visual arts," said Lindy Roy, who designed the gallery. "Think of the set designs by David Hockney and the murals that the Met commissioned from Marc Chagall. The gallery, which is free and open to the public everyday, is directed by Vogue arts editor-at-large Dodie Kazanjian; now on view is a show devoted to the theme Heroines. Though Gelb and Kazanjian were open to Roy pushing the profile of the space, the architect preferred to keep her gestures low-key, respectful of the historic building. The idiosyncrasy of her design is subtle, noticeable when one approaches the building: Roy has applied a reflective foil to the windows, which not only protects the gallery interior from heat and light, but also gives the corner of the building the appearance of a negative space. During the day, the windows reflect the scenes of the plaza; at night, it becomes a glowing lantern (much brighter than the rest of the warmly lit Met). The gallery is just off the central lobby; a large wall section pivots to open or close off the gallery as needed. The wall is made of panels of resin imbedded with a digitally printed fabric bearing a magnified image of Lincoln Plaza's unmistakable travertine.

Architecture has always been subject to shifting trends, just like that other discipline, fashion. In the realm of skyscraper design, it seems that architects are moving away from creating iconic tops for skyscrapers, and are now experimenting with ways to create an iconic body.

The first skyscraper to feature a dramatic torque is Santiago Calatrava's Turning Torso in Malmö, Sweden, completed last year. Since the tower was designed in 2000, a series of skyscrapers have emerged that give a new twist to the twist. To name a few: FXFowle's towers in Tianjin, China and Dubai; Skidmore, Owings & Merrill's Infinity Tower, also in Dubai; Herzog & de Meuron's tower for the De Young Museum in San Francisco, and their recently unveiled Roche Tower in Basel, Switzerland.

Not to forget the most publicized tower of all—the original Freedom Tower design by SOM, which has since changed drastically.

Structural engineer Guy Nordenson, who worked on the original Freedom Tower, acknowledges that Frank Gehry virtually has the patent for twisted and twisted volumes. "The first guy who started to play with this is Frank Gehry," said Nordenson, citing a silver, nine-story building with a very gentle turn in Hannover, Germany. "I am pretty sure that's the first case of an architect picking up the idea," he said. (Gehry was doubtless influenced by the work of Richard Serra, whose Torqued Ellipse sculptures are echoed in the architect's buildings.)

Nordenson traces torqued forms all the way back to the designs of Buckminster Fuller and Isamu Noguchi. "I worked for Fuller and Noguchi in 1976," said Nordenson. "At the time Noguchi was producing the Akari lights, which were torqued, and Bucky was interested in how you get a torqued form when you stack tetrahedra."

Beyond their obvious sculptural qualities, twisting towers have structural benefits like increased rigidity and reduced wind load. The twist creates aerodynamic efficiency—a determining factor when designing towers of great height. Of the Infinity Tower in Dubai, SOM partner Ross Wimer said, "We discovered that the twisted shape has benefits in terms of the way the tower behaves in the wind." Noting that wind tunnel tests are routine for towers of this height, he continued, "It doesn't present a continuous sail." They also found that the diagrid structure of the Freedom Tower reinforced the building's strength. "The geometry helped stiffen the tower," said Wimer, who worked on the original design.

One of the reasons cited by architects for twisting their towers is to maximize views. If a building's footprint or site sits flush against the street, architects might try to reorient the top of the tower in another direction, such as toward the water or scenic vistas.

FXFowle's tower in Dubai was one case where the torqued tower solution maximized views from the sky-scraper. Partner Sudhir Jambhekar said, "The building is oriented toward the street, while up above, we wanted to relate to the city at large. Once you get up there, the views are spectacular." For SOM's tower in Dubai, views also played a crucial role. "The logic of this twist came less from the sculptural form than the desire to take advantage of views," said Wimer. "We decided the best orientation for the tower would be east-west, facing the marina."

Of course, the prevailing fear is that the current fashion will go out of fashion. Nordenson has a theory on why architects have been attracted to these twisting forms: "There's a beauty to taking a simple geometry and turning it to create something more complex," he said. "When Bucky was experimenting with the four-sided tetrahedral volumes, stacking them—it looked like a DNA. That's may be why people were excited. It was like a rebirth and recovery."

And so the trend of twisting towers continues, as architects are experimenting with other forms of geometrical iteration: the diagrid, the hyperboloid, the diagrid plus. It's a design trend that is here to stay, and how it plays out in the skyscraper realm is yet to be seen.
Clockwise, from left: the Deyaar Tower in Dubai, by FXFowle; the De Young Museum in San Francisco, by Herzog & de Meuron; the Tianjin Tower in Tianjin, China, by FXFowle; Santiago Calatrava’s Turning Torso in Malmö, Sweden; the Infinity Tower in Dubai, by Skidmore Owings & Merrill.

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On October 7, the Rhode Island School of Design (RISD) dedicated a new library, known as the Fleet Library at RISD, in the soaring two-story lobby of the Rhode Island Hospital Trust Building in downtown Providence. Designed by RISD alumnus Nader Tehrani and partner Monica Ponce de Leon, principals of Boston-based firm Office dA, the 55,000-square-foot Fleet Library centralizes RISD's collections in one facility.

The space, which was donated by FleetBoston Financial Corporation, sits below ten stories currently being leased to the school for use as student housing. Design and construction of the project were funded by RISD's Future by Design capital campaign, which raised $87.7 million to foster RISD's presence in the downtown area.

Tehrani said that accommodating RISD's growing program required some versatility on their part: In addition to updating the original 1917 systems to modern standards, the design had to consolidate 130,000 volumes and 400 periodical subscriptions. They also needed to create seating for more than 200 in the main reading room, and provide dedicated viewing and reading rooms for special collections.

"The program drawn up by RISD's librarian exceeded the square footage available," said Tehrani. To fit everything in, the designers took advantage of the height of the cathedral-like Beaux-Arts lobby by inserting two structures—one a study pavilion, the other a circulation center—within the main volume.

The study pavilion, a steel structure clad with medium density fiberboard (MDF), encloses study carrels and private reading rooms. It also increases the square footage of the lobby by creating a group study area on the top of the pavilion, reached by bleacher-style seating that steps down to the lounge-like main reading room. In addition to checkout, the circulation center houses staff offices and shelving and computer work stations in a mill-worked MDF structure. Open MDF stacks surround these installations, and periodicals are located on the second-floor mezzanine.

In spite of these structural interventions, Fleet Library rests lightly within the lobby. Construction manager Shawmut Design and Construction prefabricated the study pavilion and circulation center off site. This not only made for a quick erection in the space, but also ensures that when RISD's needs change again the installation can be easily removed. In the meantime, Office dA's new library sits comfortably within the historic lobby, employing a similar color palette to make the connection between old and new.

AARON SEWAR
CURTAIN CLOSES ON WEST SIDE STORY

Bloomberg Administration and the MTA came to an agreement on the West Side Yards in the final days of September after weeks of back-and-forth over the Mayor's July proposal to buy the site's development rights for $500 million. Under the new plan, the city will rezone the 13-acre plot between 11th and 12th avenues and 30th and 33rd streets. The development rights will then be jointly auctioned by the city and the MTA, with monies from sales and leases going to the MTA to pay for an extension of the number 7 subway line. Also, developers will make payments to the MTA in lieu of taxes to the city. Uncertainty arose around Bloomberg's plan after would-be governor Eliot Spitzer criticized the plan as, "woefully inadequate."

ADRIAN SMITH LEAVES SOM

Skidmore, Owings, & Merrill is known for the work of its various partners, and the announcement that Adrian Smith is leaving the firm’s home in Chicago to begin his own practice will no doubt shake this architectural powerhouse. As influential and prolific as the firm’s New York counterpart David Childs, Smith was instrumental in the firm’s move from modernist boxes to more postmodern projects, designing such projects as Chicago’s NBC building and the Jinmao Tower in Shanghai. SOM being an institutional firm, Smith, 62, faced mandatory retirement at 65 and had been moved out of the business side of the firm three years ago. He was quoted in the Chicago Tribune on October 4 saying, "I want to work another 10 or 15 years and I feel I wouldn’t be able to work at SOM during that time frame. So I thought it would be better to start my own firm." Smith insists he is leaving on good terms, but there is speculation that he may take employees and clients with him to his new Chicago-based firm.

MOMA EXPANDS—TWICE

With the opening of the Lewis B. and Dorothy Cullman Education and Research Building, the Museum of Modern Art’s six-year expansion comes to a close. Set to open on November 28, the eight-story building, the last part of Yoshio Taniguchi’s design to be finished, abuts the western edge of the sculpture garden. The building houses three curatorial study centers, a library, the museum’s extensive archives, as well as spaces for student programs, adult workshops, symposia, and new theaters to accommodate the museum’s renowned film collection. In other news, MoMA has announced that the Film and Media Department will be spinning off into two separate departments with the creation of a new curatorial department, simply called Media. Klaus Biesenbach, a curator in the soon-to-be-divided department and chief curator of MoMA affiliate P.S. 1, will take over as chief curator for the new department, which will cover the museum’s ever-growing media holdings.

MOYNIHAN STATION STALLED?

Following a war of letters between Empire State Development Chairman Charles Gargano and State Comptroller Alan Hevesi, Governor George Pataki has withdrawn his latest plans for Moynihan Station, at least for the time being. The plan, which initially involved extending Penn Station to include the largely unused Farley Post Office next door, has become embroiled in a real estate shuffle that includes the Vornado Realty Trust, The Related Companies, and Madison Square Garden. Along with Hevesi, State Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver also demurred on the plans, with both men taking issue with Pataki’s phased approach that would have begun work on the commuter station before the entire deal was worked out. Their move has been called politically motivated in light of fellow Democrat Eliot Spitzer’s likely ascent to Albany. Because laws—particularly those governing the transfer of public property—must be meticulously worked out. Their move has been called politically motivated in light of fellow Democrat Eliot Spitzer’s likely ascent to Albany.

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ZOE RYAN APPOINTED DESIGN CURATOR OF THE DESIGN INSTITUTE continued from front page who can represent the department and is easy to be in synch with," said Rosa. "This is a great place where she can come into here, helping us to expand and make our presence."

In her position at the Van Alen, Ryan has curated several projects that shows devoted to role of architecture and urban space, the primary focus of the institution. Some of these were the first Van Alen shows to travel to other institutions, such as Open: New Designs for Public Space, which went to the National Building Museum. The Good Life: New Public Spaces for Recreation opened last month in a temporary exhibition space at the end of Pier 40 on the Hudson River.

My background is in museums and the Art Institute is in such an exciting place right now," said Ryan, who officially assumed her post on October 31. "One of the most exciting things is to see how the Art Institute will be transformed. Prior to the Van Alen, Ryan held positions at the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in New York and the Victoria and Albert Museum in London. She has written for publications, including Blueprint, Surface, and The Architect’s Newspaper.

Last year, when Rosa arrived at the Art Institute after being hired away from the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (SFMoMA), he announced his plan to hire two junior curators, to grow his architecture and design department into one comparable to that of MoMA and SFMoMA. He is still seeking a junior curator of architecture.
DEMOGRAPHERS SAY THAT NEW YORK WILL GROW BY A MILLION RESIDENTS WITHIN THE NEXT 25 YEARS, AND MAYOR MICHAEL R. BLOOMBERG WANTS TO PLAN FOR THEM. AN AS- YET UNRELEASED REPORT COMMISSIONED BY DEPUTY MAYOR DANIEL DOCTOROFF MAKES SOME INTERESTING RECOMMENDATIONS—LIKE DECKING OVER THE SUNNYSIDE YARDS AND PARTS OF THE BROOKLYN-QUEENS EXPRESSWAY—BUT DOESN'T GET INTO THE NITTY GRITTY OF WHO MIGHT ACTUALLY PAY FOR THEM. IS THE REPORT, VISIONS FOR NEW YORK CITY, REALLY THAT, OR IS IT A MAP FOR THE NEXT GENERATION OF DEVELOPERS?

BY WILLIAM MENKING AND ANNE GUINEY. PHOTOGRAPHY BY M. E. SMITH.
In his 2006 State of the City address, Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg promised to deliver a strategic land-use plan that would encompass housing, transportation, and infrastructure for all five boroughs, and would be closely tied to redevelopment initiatives already underway. For a city whose planning process has historically been decentralized, it was welcome news. Word of the report began circulating several months later, and this August, a copy appeared on the website Streetsblog.com. Visions for New York City: Housing in the Public Realm (which has not been officially released yet, and is therefore presumably still in draft form) covers much of what the mayor suggested it would, but comes from a different quarter than many expected: It was commissioned by Deputy Mayor Daniel Doctoroff and prepared by Alex Garvin & Associates for the New York City Economic Development Corporation (EDC). (The two worked very closely together on NYC2012, the bid to bring the Olympics to New York.) As it makes explicitly clear, Visions for New York City is not official policy, but when it is ultimately released, will nonetheless likely provide the framework for coming discussions about what New York will look like in 25 years, and how the city will get there.

The introduction to Visions for New York City cites a projection from the Department of City Planning (DCP) that by 2030, New York City’s “existing population of over 8 million...will exceed 9 million...if not sooner.” It makes the reasonable argument that while the city’s current economy is strong and has “a well-planned infrastructure and a high quality of life,” this cannot be ensured if growth happens in an unplanned fashion. The report thus makes a series of recommendations on where the city might house this population and how to improve its infrastructure.

Visions for New York City is divided into two sections: “Increasing the Housing Supply” and “Improving the Public Realm.” The first, and more comprehensive, section essentially looks at what developers call “soft sites” in all five boroughs, i.e., areas that are now either underutilized, such as neighborhoods zoned for industrial uses where little industry still occurs, or rail yards or highways which could be decked over and turned into blank development sites.

Some of the many sites Garvin & Associates studied are the Sunnyside Yards in Queens, portions of the Bronx and Harlem Rivers in the Bronx, Staten Island’s north shore, and the sunken section of the Brooklyn-Queens Expressway in Cobble Hill. The report further suggests that increasing mass transit into under-served areas will stimulate development. It also acknowledges the unlikelihood of securing major public investments to extend existing subway lines, and concedes that the creation of light rail or bus rapid transit systems is far more feasible.

These potential building sites would allow for the creation of between 160,000 to 325,000 new residential units “with virtually no resident displacement,” depending on how densely each site is zoned. Such a significant amount of new housing without any displacement is politically appealing, but of course there is a catch: The largest and most promising site is the Sunnyside Rail Yards in Queens, which would need to be decked over before it could be developed as housing. It is close to Manhattan, and if developed, would reconnect Astoria to Sunnyside Gardens, which, from an urban planning standpoint, would be an additional benefit. But at 166 acres, the very aspect that makes it so appealing—its size—is likely to make it politically and economically difficult to pull off. The site has been coveted for development since the Regional Plan Association’s 1929 Regional Plan of New York and Its Environs proposed it as a place for an inter-modal train station to relieve overcrowding in Manhattan. And while the Metropolitan Transit Authority owns the majority of the site, this summer, real estate attorney Michael Bailkin purchased a development option on part of it, which raises the financial stakes for anything that happens on the site. Without massive city subsidies, the cost of building such a large deck—the relatively diminutive 13-acre deck planned for Manhattan’s Hudson Yards is estimated to cost $350 million—is likely to discourage anything but extremely high-density or luxury housing. According to Vishaan Chakrabarti, a senior vice president at The Related Companies who served for two years as the Manhattan director for the DCP, making some of that new housing affordable will be difficult. “The implication of the report is that all of the housing will be market-rate, but when you are talking about building housing on platforms, there are economic drivers that make [building any of it as affordable] difficult,” Chakrabarti said. “We have not yet perfected the mechanism to harness market forces to build affordable housing, though it is not for a lack of trying.” He added, “I was hoping to see something about this in the report.”

The Sunnyside Yards are not the only familiar item on the list of suggestions: As D. Graham Shane, a professor of urban design at Columbia’s Graduate School of Architecture, Planning, and Preservation (and a contributor to AN) said, “The list of development opportunities reads like a record of every university urban design studio for the last 16 years.” That said, the report does represent an effort on the part of Mayor Bloomberg and Deputy Mayor Doctoroff to think spatially about the future of the city.
When photographer M. E. Smith noticed one day about 10 years ago that the subway station at the corner of Atlantic and Flatbush Avenues in Brooklyn had been torn down, he decided to start documenting the changes in the city around him. As the pace of development picked up and once-desolate areas fill with commerce and people, his photographs have inevitably taken on a documentary quality. A show of his work in and around New York was recently on view at Cooke Contemporary in Jersey City (see “Functional Shift,” A/V 16_10.06.2006). This is something architects and planners have long hoped would be true of city politicians. But Ronald Shiffman, a former City Planning Commissioner himself under Mayor David Dinkins and director of the Pratt Center for Community Development, nonetheless had reservations about Visions. “These same politicians are afraid to engage the public in a discussion to flesh out its finer points,” said Smith. “They have come up with a proposal but don’t discuss the social infrastructure: They don’t say how this million new people will make a living. I’m glad that they are looking at it, but they also need to engage the broader community on other levels—this whole new population won’t work in offices.”

This oversight on the part of the report has serious drawbacks, according to other observers. Laura Wolf-Powers, chair of Graduate Center for Planning and the Environment at the Pratt Institute, believes that Visions uses a “narrow and shallow definition of the public realm” since it only discusses housing and to a lesser account some transportation issues. “There are many important quality of life issues that are not acknowledged in this report, like sanitation and waste water remediation facilities. Not only that,” she added, “these uses are often located in the very manufacturing zones like those along the Bronx and Harlem Rivers that the report would give over entirely to housing.” While these sites might better used as housing, these functions must go somewhere. It’s not news that manufacturers and industrial businesses that want to remain in the city are having trouble finding affordable space. The East Williamsburg Industrial Park, for example, which is home to over 2,500 small businesses, is facing residential encroachment from gentrifying sections of Williamsburg and Bushwick. One of the areas cited in the report as worthy of future study is the Sunset Park waterfront, which is mostly industrial today and has been recently designated as an area that the city has committed to keeping that way. While Visions acknowledges the value of the area’s current character and only recommends converting 90 acres of surface parking (operated by the Department of Small Businesses) into sites for development, it still proposes 27,400 new units of housing, which would undoubtedly put pressure on the area’s industrial functions. Infrastructural capacity is a looming issue, said Chakrabarti, and one that cannot be ignored. Nor should it preclude the kinds of conversation that Visions will surely raise: “Energy capacity and wastewater treatment are real problems. We have capacity now, but not for another million people. Still, I don’t think you can say, ‘We don’t have the infrastructure, so we can’t fulfill the demand for housing.’ It just means that housing will get more expensive.” The very fact that the report was commissioned from a private planning firm and did not come out of DCP is telling about the nature of its recommendations. There is an underlying assumption that public investment will allow for private sector development; the ultimate feasibility of finding these public monies is skated over. In the past, the city’s planning reports have come out of the DCP, or people engaged with the Planning Commission—like Robert Wagner, Jr.’s 1984 New York Ascendant under Mayor Ed Koch—but Visions rarely mentions the DCP and any role it might play in planning for the future. (Doctoroff’s office and the DCP both declined to comment for this article.) In fact, the report details a list of govs agencies that must coordinate to make such far-reaching new policies work, like the EDC, the Department of Housing, Preservation and Development (HPD), the Department of Transportation, but goes on to suggest, “The Mayor’s Office must delegate management for these projects, as doing so is integral to their execution and ultimate success.” While some might see this as a cession of public authority, Chakrabarti points out that sometimes, outsiders can say things that City Hall cannot.

“There are often conflicting goals in terms of what is good for the city as a whole and what an individual neighborhood may want, especially in regards to density,” he said. “An outside consultant can make important suggestions that are politically difficult.” One wonders if the secretive nature of the process, and its stress on the primacy of the private sector, is a product of Doctoroff’s recent trouble with getting the West Side Stadium built, which was the aina qua non for bringing the Olympics to New York City. Several of the larger sites mentioned in Visions for New York City are on land that at least partially owned by the state, not the city, which means that they are exempt from the Universal Land Review Process (ULURP) and thus due much less public review. But the controversy and public acrimony surrounding Forest City Ratner’s Atlantic Yards proposal—which also involves decking over infrastructure, public subsidy, and no ULURP—the now-defunct West Side Stadium project, and the World Trade Center site should suggest that proposals with only a nominal amount of involvement are no less immune to trouble than those which involve public input. When Visions is released, no doubt in a modified form, we hope that it is treated not as an identification of development sites across the city, but the starting point for a comprehensive and very public conversation about New York City’s long-term needs.

WILLIAM MENKING AND ANNE GUINEY ARE EDITORS AT AR.
A couple of weeks ago, several hundred well-wishers, including San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom and 2007 AIA national president R. K. Stewen, poured into the sixth floor of San Francisco’s historic Hallidie Building to inaugurate the local AIA chapter’s newly renovated home. More than improved digs, the renovation also inaugurates the Center for Architecture + Design, a gallery, lecture, and multipurpose space. This is the first West Coast forum for professional dialogue about and public appreciation for architecture as well as design.

A week and a half earlier, members of the Portland, Oregon, component were looking forward to their own celebration: Participants selected to design its new center in a 5,000-square-foot former horse stable gathered on site to check out office furniture and systems. The test drive was part of a two-day-long charrette to devise big-idea concepts that would define the large-scale redo to come. And throughout the fall, four Texas chapters of the AIA will be opening their own centers.

Beyond these six snapshots, centers for architecture are sprouting up across the country. The phenomenon reflects architecture’s popularization as much as it responds to current events. Sally Ann Fly, executive director of AIA Austin, said, “You can’t avoid TV programming on everything from Austin, said, “You can’t avoid TV programming on everything from urban programming on everything from urban

Hurricanes Katrina and Rita last year. The more basic issues of urban planning have become cocktail-party conversation.”

AIA New York executive director Rick Bell traces the impetus further back, noting, “After 9/11, people were increasingly aware that good design impacts the livability of a community. Public interest in architecture was probably mounting even before that, as a result of greater awareness of branding and the rise of star architects.” Portland AIA president Nancy Merryman also acknowledged, “We’ve been a victim of our own success. Combine our growing internship and continuing education programs with our aspiration to attract the public to our gallery, and we’ve outgrown our current office.”

AIA-shepherded centers for architecture date to 1991, when the Seattle chapter renovated its 2,000-square-foot downtown office to face the street and, correspondingly, launched the Resource Center for Architecture. According to Marga Rose Hancock, interim executive vice president of the Seattle AIA, the storefront reorientation “immediately transformed the operation. Not only did it pique people’s curiosity but they could actually walk in and put their hands on architects’ stuff. We started seminars about how to select an architect, which we’ve been giving once a month basically ever since. We’ve educated thousands of people.”

The Seattle chapter renovated its space again, in 2004. This time, AIA Seattle Young Architects Forum radically transformed the interior, but the mission remained the same. Most centers in this current crop, though, are taking programmatic cues from the Center for Architecture in New York. Hancock described the different approaches: “I very much admire the New York Center for Architecture; their general credo is ‘Architecture as Public Policy,’ which dovetails well with how they operate their space. It’s also the official theme of this year’s AIA president Mark Strauss.) The philosophy that has guided us since 1991 was ‘Architect as Resource,’ which tries to convey a sense of accessibility. It’s a different dialogue from that promulgated by the New York center, and I think they’re complementary.”

Indeed, Fly remembers attending a conference in which Bell described the development of the Center for Architecture, and thinking, “By golly, it was just what we had imagined!” Bell later visited the Austin strategic planning committee, and Fly said the component is actively emulating many elements of the New York predecessor. The center, which will operate under a five-year lease in an Art Deco service station, will take occupancy in late November with an official grand opening shortly thereafter.

AIA national president Kate Quezada, Jr., is aiming for a mini-mum LEED-Silver rating. (The New York center for Architecture, located in a restored John Russell Pope mansion in Richmond, functions more like a museum, other centers are choosing a path somewhere in the middle. “I think we’re a hybrid,” said Margie O’Driscoll, executive director of the San Francisco chapter of the AIA. “We are a very active chapter in terms of public outreach, but we’re also about our members having the most up-to-date information about products, services, and techniques.”

Echoes of New York will resonate to visitors of the San Francisco center, who will immediately notice that the AIA is sharing its space with another related association, including the California chapter of the U.S. Green Building Council and local chapter of the AIGA. While O’Driscoll noted that many Bay Area designers cross disciplines, the move is similar to Bell’s signing on what he called “partner organizations” in New York—groups he has invited to use the space for events ranging from book launches to continuing education classes to public lectures. He reasoned that such a strategy is “effective in public policy and engaging civic life—you don’t isolate yourself.” O’Driscoll further hopes to link exhibitions with those that appear in centers like New York’s.

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O’Driscoll, like many other AIA leaders, also see the new centers as a chance to lead by example. As in Seattle, the San Francisco center, designed by local architect Alfred Quezada, Jrs., is aiming for a minimum LEED-Silver rating. (The New York center employed many sustainable features, notably, a geothermal heating system, and is considering getting a LEED rating retroactively.) “Clients say green costs too much money, but they question the look. They don’t understand the rich variety of products and services available that meet a very high aesthetic as well as most sustainable criteria,” said O’Driscoll. “Here our members can take potential clients and clients into the space and say, ‘Look, this is the best of modern design and it’s highly sustainable.’”

Bell emphasized that while New York’s Center for Architecture established a precedent, other chapters are forging their own paths. He also acknowledged that New York’s isn’t perfect. Given their heavy exhibition load, the building has become tight for the New York chapter’s growing staff. Bell added that a bookstore and bar/cafe would be nice.

Despite any latent faults, New York’s and other cities’ new AIA centers are reflecting a sea change not only for a public curious about architecture but for the AIA itself. “The AIA has stopped looking so fat and gray,” Bell said. “An organization that wants to be self-perpetuating after 148 years has to bring in young people.”

Ironically, O’Driscoll’s project couldn’t have been inspired without a center for architecture. “During the 2004 remodel, we relocated for eight or nine months while the construction was going on. We lived with our local architecture firm Arai Jackson Ellison Murakami, and it was wonderful. We’ve all been around, but we hadn’t really spent all that much time directly in architects’ offices. We really got insights into how what we do and what they do are so complementary.”

David Sokol is a New York-based writer and teacher at the Rhode Island School of Design.
**WEDNESDAY 25 LECTURE**
Sean Griffiths
Ad Hoc Urbanism
6:30 p.m.
Columbia GSAPP
Wood Auditorium
113 Avery Hall
www.arch.columbia.edu

**SYMPOSIUM**
Some Assembly Required: Contemporary Prefabricated Houses
New School of Architecture
180 York St., New Haven
www.architecture.yale.edu

**SATURDAY 28 LECTURES**
John M. Johansen
The New Species of Architecture
6:00 p.m.
City College
Shepard Hall
Convent Ave. and 128th St.
www.ccbc.com

**THURSDAY 26 LECTURES**
Lars Danielsson
Ecological Building in Sweden
6:00 p.m.
Center for Architecture
536 LaGuardia Pl.
www.aliony.com

**FRIDAY 27 LECTURES**
Christian Patterson: Sound Affects
Yancey Richardson Gallery
535 West 22nd St.
www.yanceyrichardson.com

**SUNDAY 29 LECTURE**
Katrin Sigurdardottir: High Plane V
P.S. 1 Contemporary Art Center
22-25 Jackson Ave., Queens
www.psl.org

**MONDAY 30 LECTURES**
Renzo Piano
Architecture and the Environment
6:00 p.m.
Cooper Union
The Great Hall
7 East 7th St.
www.archleague.org

**WEDNESDAY 1 LECTURE**
Kazuyo Sejima, Ryue Nishizawa
Recent Work
6:30 p.m.
Columbia GSAPP
Wood Auditorium
113 Avery Hall
www.arch.columbia.edu

**David Rockwell, Bruce Mau, Chee Pearlman**
Architecture and Books: Spectacle
6:30 p.m.
Baruch Performing Arts Center
56 Lexington Ave.
www.archleague.org

**EXHIBITION OPENING**
Shin Banhakkoo:
A Cultural Memory
Noguchi Museum
9-11 31st Rd., Queens
www.noguchi.org

**THURSDAY 2 LECTURES**
G. Philip Smith
An Aerial Perspective
6:00 p.m.
City College
Shepard Hall
Convent Ave. and 138th St.
www.ccbc.com

**Walter Hood**
Ephemeral Community Space
6:30 p.m.
Center for Architecture
536 LaGuardia Pl.
www.aliony.com

**EXHIBITION OPENINGS**
Josef Hoffmann: Internos,
1902–1913
Neue Galerie New York
1048 5th Ave.
www.neuegalerie.org

**Josef Albers, László Moholy-Nagy**
From the Bauhaus to the New World
Whitney Museum of American Art
945 Madison Ave.
www.whitney.org

**Robert Longo**
Outward Signs of Invisible Space
Metro Pictures
519 West 24th St.
www.metropictures.com

**EVENT**
Color Inversion
7:00 p.m.
Puck Building
295 Lafayette St.
www.aliony.com

**Friday 3 Film**
Clarity Through Crisis: Designing for the Gulf Coast
5:30 p.m.
Institute of Classical Architecture
20 West 44th St.
www.classicist.org

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**EXHIBITION OPENING**
The Drawing, The Writing, The Abstraction
Lombard-Freid Projects
531 West 26th St.
532 West 20th St.
www.lombardfreid.com

**Carlos Garaicoa**
Anton Kern Gallery
531 West 26th St.
www.antonkern.com

**Mit Schisslaveng**
Christian Jankowski
Sikkema Jenkins & Co.
512 West 19th St.
www.sikkema-jenkins.com

**Us and Them**
Max Protetch Gallery
511 West 22nd St.
www.maxprotetch.com

**Inigo Manglano-Ovalle**
www.gladstonegallery.com

**P.A.N, [progressive architecture network]**
Frederick Taylor Gallery
535 West 22nd Street, 6th Floor
www.aliony.com

**Winka Dubbeldam, architect and curator of P.A.N, [progressive architecture network],**
"We're not promoting any new styles," said Winka Dubbeldam, architect and curator of P.A.N. (progressive architecture network), of a show of five young international architecture firms co-curated by Helene Furjan. "This show intends to throw open the idea of what a network is, how it can work, and what it can be." The five firms that form P.A.N. and whose work will be on display at Fredericks Taylor Gallery—Sadar Vuga Architektt from Slovenia, R&BSein from France, Jürgen Mayer H. Architects from Germany, Ilya, and Dubbeldam's New York firm Architektt—met originally at the Archibis conferences in Orléans, France. (A model of Mayer H.'s project Egram is pictured above.) They do not work together on specific projects, per se, but share an evolving approach and attitude toward architecture. The installation was inspired by the Hermitage in St. Petersburg, where art is hung on every available surface to show as much of the collection as possible. "It's a whole other idea of intensity," said Dubbeldam. Cash all five firms in conversation with Frédéric Myciaru, curator of architecture and design at the Georges Pompidou Center in Paris, at Columbia University on October 25.

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**JOSEF HOFFMANN: INTERIORS, 1902–1913**
Neue Galerie New York
1048 Fifth Avenue
November 2 to February 26, 2007

An original member of the Vienna Secession and later founder of the Wiener Werkstatte, Josef Hoffmann's rigorously abstracted forms epitomize early 20th-century Viennese design. His work, which encompassed architecture, furniture, textiles, and more, remains little-known in the United States, however. Thankfully, the Neue Galerie is providing the first opportunity to view his work state-side by completely rebuilding four of his interiors in New York. Curated by Christian Witt-Dorring, the exhibition will feature two Viennese bedrooms, one for a young girl from the Bela Schlach residence (1902), the other from the Hans Salzer residence (1902), both in Vienna, and two dining rooms, one from Berlin (1905) and the other from Genoa (1913). The faithfully reproduced rooms will feature original furniture, such as the card table designed for Karl Wittgenstein in 1907 (above right), wall and floor coverings, textiles (1906 work, above left), lighting, ceramics, and metalwork. The Neue Galerie's recent prize acquisition, Adele Bloch-Bauer I acquisition, Hoffsman's contemporary Gustav Klimt and framed in an original Hoffmann design, will also remain on view.
It's always alarming when you realize that something once so vigorous and ahead of its time now belongs to the past. Simply Droog, a traveling show currently being hosted by the Museum of Arts & Design, made me feel its age. One of the byproducts of this retrospective of the experimental Dutch design collective is that it offers a window on 1990s design. Laid out for the intrepid design time traveler are all the theoretical concerns of that period, such as hybridization, the use of recycled materials, ironical detachment, and commentary on the nature of products themselves. Contributing to this distancing effect is the exhibition's design. The 120 exhibits, selected by Droog's founders to represent their 13 years of existence, are kept at arm's length by plastic red-and-white-striped warning tape. Droog, a movement that fed from the detritus of the everyday, is now out of reach.

My previous experience of Droog products consists of owning some of its smaller, cheaper pieces—such as NL Architects' brightly colored silicon rubber straps with which you can pinion belongings to the wall—and playing with others at the Dutch collective's showroom in Amsterdam. Here you can slide up and down the length of Nina Farkache's bench of rolling marbles and caress the enticingly textured surfaces of a knitted coffeepot cozy or the perforated pattern of a tablecloth. Whether pinging the straps, squeezing Hella Jongerius' soft polyurethane vase, or bumping into your neighbor on the marble bench, the experience was always physical.

Designing an exhibition structure to contain Droog's unruly output must have been a daunting challenge for Studio Jurgen Bey. So much of Droog's culture is about people and how they interact with the objects in their environment as well as with one another. How to show such a quality in the context of a don't-touch-the-objects-let-alone-one-another museum? The designers' solution was to map the exhibition's nine main themes onto a range of room settings, each of which has implied fictional inhabitants. The theme of "Simplicity" finds its correspondence in a "Student Residence," for example. And the objects that use recycled parts, grouped in "Use It Again," are arranged in a setting titled "Garage and Pantry in a Semi-detached House." The room settings are indicated through tape on the floor, a bit like the set design in Lars von Trier's film Dogville. Here, things are taken several steps further: The outlines of potted plants, toilets, fruit bowls, and a dog, as seen from above, are all used to further populate the room settings.

Droog design is also about the deliberate exposure of the process of making. Who wouldn't want to know more about the making of a Wallpaper by Rats, for example—a scenario orchestrated by Front in which rats gnaw a roll of wallpaper and thus create its unique pattern? It's really interesting to know the back stories of such thoughtful and witty products as Droog's: the tests that were carried out, the mistakes that were made (and perhaps incorporated), and the discussions that took place with bemused manufacturers. Hella Jongerius, for example, had a hard time convincing the producer of her polyurethane rubber vases that she didn't want the gas bubbles to be removed from the translucent material because they provided a lively look. This illuminating anecdote in the excellent catalogue that accompanies the show, but such insights are not available to take some time to consider how differently we now see milk bottles, rags, light switches, and chairs with wobbly legs.

ALICE TWEMLOW IS A NEW YORK-BASED WRITER AND CURATOR.
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This collaboration between Ron Arad and Issey Miyake takes its inspiration from the first thing most people do after walking in the door: They take off a layer of clothing and lay it on a chair. The covering uses Dai Fujwara and Miyake's patented A-POC (A Piece of Cloth) technology, which generates a knit or woven fabric and a garment from it in a single process. They've developed two clothing/cover designs: the Trampoline, a knitted top, and the Gemini (picted above), a woven vest. If you're not drawn to the life-jacket orange and lavender color scheme, both also come in grey-black. Fans of Ron Arad's 1998 Tom Vac design for Moroso, The Ripple Chair, this new chair takes an embracing, figure-eight shape and is available in a variety of colors, including red, yellow, and white.

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Convertable Study Carrel www.milderoffice.com

This clean, functional workstation design from Brooklyn-based Milder Office changes easily from a flat table to private study carrels. Tables come with one or two foldable carrels, and can be grouped together in any combination. They are made of pre-finished birch plywood, but can be ordered in a variety of transparent film or opaque finishes. A double carrel is 74 inches wide, 30 inches deep, and 29 inches high, though sizes can be adjusted to client specifications.

Wallpaper LAB www.wallpaperlab.com

Douglas Gordon, Fred Tomaselli, and Phoebe Washburn are among the dozen artists behind the first series of limited-edition wallpapers from Wallpaper LAB. Approached as mural-size works of art that tweak the often-staid norms of wall coverings, the papers are generated from huge digital files and printed on 40-inch rolls of high-quality stock. Douglas Gordon's Two Minutes: Playing Dead reproduces each frame of his video Play Dead: Real Time, while Genetic Engineering by Oliver Helden replaces the ribbon in traditional decorative patterns with a DNA strand. Wallpaper LAB will also work to order on size, prices and availability vary from artist to artist.
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The suggestion of Ecotopia, the title of the International Center of Photography's second photography triennial, is the chance to imagine an environmental ideal, whatever that might look like. But if the opening series in this international survey—Robert Adams' black-and-white, documentary-style shots of clear cut forests in Oregon—tells you anything about what the show proposes, it's that such idyllic possibilities might look like. Not every inclusion is so grim, but even these few pieces seemed to be a function of the curators' effort to satisfy a demand for something new and different.

In this post-Inconvenient Truth moment, it's no surprise that the exhibition's premise of showing "perspectives on humanity's relation to nature" would yield responses more skeptical than credulous, more foreboding than inspired. The book argues that while our understand­
ing of such innovative thinking to architec­
ture into a force for disciplining (rather than expanding) our horizons, Ingraham ultimately contemplates the possibility that humanity's greatest contradiction—that man is both a subset within and the dominating class of all living, animate beings—may, thanks to digital technology, be yielding a parallel, equally paradoxical logic through which architecture could be reengineered, so to speak, "outside the box."

The author's keen precision provides a new perspective on the subjects she visits, espe­cially in the more leisurely, descriptive first two-thirds of the book, which gives way suddenly to the speculative, virtuosic last third. It is clear walking through the show that the curators attempted a balanced presentation of an important topic, a medium, and a world view, but trying to do so much in 100 or so works amounts to a show with a low sound-to-noise ratio—short original installations, and stays with you. If these images say something collectively about ecotopia, it is that we're nowhere near it.

Samantha Topol is an assistant editor at AN.
LESS IS MORE? NOT IN INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

As a consultancy that specializes in outsourced information technology for architecture, engineering, and design practices, my firm Control Group is often approached by new clients after a technical catastrophe or as they prepare to move offices. One of the first questions they typically ask is, "Are we spending too much or too little on IT?" My response is always the same: definitely too little. If I don't get a masonry sample thrown at me, then try to explain why productivity returns on IT rarely seem cost effective. For firms hoping to develop a long-term technology plan and spending profile, I believe that it helps to understand where architecture stands in relation to the developing world of technology.

In the late 1980s, the economist Robert Solow said, "You can see the computer age everywhere but in the world of productivity statistics." Better known as the Productivity Paradox, the idea was that technology has made great gains for the manufactured world of manufacturing, but had yet to pay off in the service sectors. For example, in the late 1980s, the technology industry was growing at a rate of 10 percent per year. At around $125,000 per year. At around $35,000, the insurance industry has the next highest expenditure per person. In these measures, architecture and engineering are included in the "professional services" category, which usually ranges between $5,000 and $10,000 per employee per year. In my view, these numbers put a sharp point on the challenge for design-oriented firms: They must perform complex computing tasks such as CAD, graphics, and collaboration, while using technology products and resources designed for bigger-budget but similarly litigious industries.

A good illustration of this can be found in file storage expenses. An average 50- to 100-person architecture firm might have 1,000 gigabytes of large file storage—i.e., one terabyte, though it is common to discover as many as five more tucked into individual nooks and crannies—whereas a comparably sized law firm might only have 100 or 200 gigabytes for smaller types of files. To say that the architecture firm will incur five to ten times the cost would be incorrect. The additional costs are not merely the purchase of additional storage, but also the cost of managing it. The architecture firm might need to hire additional IT staff to handle backup and recovery, support, and distribution of larger file storage.

For many design firms I've met are somewhat aware of this problem, but many still ask: "How much should I spend, and on what?" The strategy any good consultant will give is to first contain tactical costs, and then implement strategic investments. It starts with a long-term view—as few as five or ten years—but requires tiny steps. One good approach is to subscribe to software licenses, and pay an annual fee for software rather than purchase a new package every three years or so. But this can take several years to show a financial benefit. A phone system based on Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP) can save money, but it usually isn't practical until you outgrow your existing system.

For some clients, all of this is nice information to keep in mind for less busy times. For others, it can help them frame their IT problem so that they can attack the elephant one bite at a time. While its still a big challenge, at least architects know that it's an elephant that they are eating.