AIA GOLD MEDAL TO EDWARD LARRABEE BARNES

The American Institute of Architects has announced that Edward Larrabee Barnes, the classic modernist architect who passed away in 2004 at the age of 89, was awarded the organization's highest honor, the Gold Medal. Past gold medalists include Frank Lloyd Wright, Frank Gehry, and Santiago Calatrava. Barnes is one of several AIA gold medalist to be honored posthumously in the award's 100-year history: Thomas Jefferson received it in 1993 and Samuel Mockbee in 2004, among others. The gold medal recognizes the influence of a body of work on the field of architecture. Candidates, who may be from anywhere in the world, are nominated by their peers, and a jury of architects makes confidential recommendations to the board of the AIA, which makes the final selection.

The role of 421-a has shifted over the years: The program was established in 1971 by the Lindsay Administration to spur development at a time when many residents and
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New Yorkers flipping through any of the local papers on the weekend of December 17 may have noticed an insert that was not hawking holiday gifts but instead a new program spearheaded by City Hall called PlaNYC. If readers paused over the glossy pages of the well-produced brochure, they might have been jolted from their Sunday morning quiet by some startling statistics: By 2030, most of the city’s already creaky infrastructure will be over one hundred years old, and we will have one million more neighbors than we do today. The cover of the brochure asks, in large, bold-faced type, “By 2030, will you still love New York?” The pamphlet is one of the first salvos in Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg’s campaign to start a citywide discussion about making New York City’s growth both economically and environmentally sustainable. PlaNYC is the public face of a process that started in his 2006 State of the City address, in which he announced an initiative to lay the groundwork for the city’s future growth. Deputy Mayor Daniel Doctoroff subsequently hired Alex Garvin & Associates to study the city’s growth from a number of angles, including housing, infrastructure, and economic development. The result, Visions for New York City, was leaked to the online journal Streetsblog.com—and reported on extensively—in “Nine Million Stories in the Naked City” (AN 10.20.2006)—but was never formally presented to the public. At the time, many observers, both online and those to whom we spoke for the article, expressed some concern about the hush-hush nature of the process. Soon after the report was leaked and our story was published, Mayor Bloomberg announced the formation of the Office of Long-Term Planning and Sustainability and the creation of a Sustainability Advisory Board, both of which would work to develop a plan dealing with the very issues (and more) addressed by Visions for New York City. Careful readers of the Sunday insert will have quickly realized that it raised a lot of questions but didn’t provide any answers. At this stage of the process, this makes sense. The document did, however, present ten goals for the next 25 years which will frame the discussions to take place in a series of town hall meetings and public forums over the next three months. The goals include improving access to housing, transit, roads, and power grid; and cleaning up the city’s air, water, and brownfields, while reducing carbon emissions by 30 percent. These goals are worthy and achievable. With the launch of PlaNYC, City Hall has shown an admirable desire to make the debate about the city’s future public and inclusive.
I was advised to find a pseudonym before writing Eavesdrop, and looked to the example of Charles Eduard Jeanneret’s fabulously successful Le Corbusier or even Maria Louise Ciccone’s Madonna as the paragon of simplicity. Alas, my own name will have to suffice. With that said, let’s hope the real world of architectural gossip, perhaps interest of a few, even in our own community, serves the purpose not only to bind our group together but also to humanize the increasingly faceless world of global architecture.

Now, down to business: To recap Art Basel, the international art fair held in Miami Beach in early December, a number of New York architects were found jet blueing south, including Robert Stern, Walter Chatham, Gisue Najarian and Moshan Hariri, Liz Diller and Ric Scofidio, Peter Marino, Lee Mindel and Joseph Giovannini. Also seen were the Rizzoli honchos, the legendary editor David Morton and publisher Charles Miers, to lead the charge against their nemesis, Taschen, omnipresent at the art fair. Zaha Hadid was ensconced at the Setai Hotel, in town to unveil a new furniture design for Established & Sons. Greg Lynn was on the same mission, and was seen during the weekend partying solo (sans wife Sylvia Lavin) at the Raleigh and the Surface magazine party on the rooftop of the Townhouse on the Beach.

Heard at the fair that Ole Bouman, formerly editor of the Dutch magazine Archis, was taking the position that Aaron Betsky, new director of the Cincinnati Art Museum, abdicated at the Netherlands Architecture Institute (NAI). Betsky appeared at the glamorous party sponsored by the Dutch Consulate, hosted by Robert Kloo and Jeanne Wikler, in honor of Di Eidelkoort, head of the famous Eindhoven Design Academy. The party was held at the apartment of yours truly, at Aqua, High above Indian Creek on the Beach.

Among the many exhibitions during the Art Fair, one of the most smashing was French Modern Sources, an exhibition organized by the Georges Pompidou Art & Culture Foundation. Magnificent examples of original furniture by Charles E. Jean Prouve, Robert Mallet-Stevens, and Le Corbusier as well as the original model of Rem Koolhaas’ house in Bordeaux were displayed. Incidentally, Robert Rubin, who last year bought the extraordinary Maison de Verre by Pierre Chareau and Bertrand Bijvoet, has revived the foundation, which was founded by Dominique de Menil but languished after her death. He donated to the foundation the prefabricated Maison Tropicale by Prouve, which he rescued from Brazzaville, Congo, in 1997. The structure will be installed on the fifth-floor terrace of the Pompidou last this month.

Also in Miami, albeit weeks after the fair was over, I had dinner with Michael Graves and Andres Duany and Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk at Yuca, a Cubanesque restaurant. Michael was zipping along Collins Avenue in his motorized wheelchair and can be happily reported to be in good spirits, clearly using his hands without problem.

Closer to home (well, at least this writer’s home) is the cacophonous, daily, insistence pile-driving of Donald Trump’s 45-story SoHo project—despised by all, except perhaps its architect Gary Handel. Both of our offices overlook the site. For Gary the noise must be music to his ears. Meanwhile, we have powerful telescopes trained on the excavation, hoping to discover Native American bones to shut down the site permanently. Unfortunately, the discovery of remains of Episcopalians only delayed construction for a few days.

Send observations, tips, suggestions (no matter how banal), etcetera, to eavesdrop@archpaper.com.

OLE BOUMAN TO LEAD NAI

Wide published author and prolific curator Ole Bouman was appointed director of the Netherlands Architecture Institute (NAI) in Rotterdam on December 6. Aaron Betsky, who held the position from 2001 to October 2006, left the organization to become director of the Cincinnati Art Museum (see “Aaron Betsky Named Director of Cincinnati Art Museum,” AN 15, 9.22.06). Under Betsky’s direction, the NAI, which is the world’s largest museum devoted to architecture, expanded its overall budget by 20 percent, broadened its traveling exhibition program, and opened a satellite location in Maastricht.

Bouman will leave his current position, director of the Architects Foundation, a cultural think tank and publisher specializing in architecture, politics, and culture. Under Bouman’s leadership, the foundation launched the quarterly publication Volume, in collaboration with Columbia University GSAPP’s C-Lab, Rem Koolhaas’ AMO, and the NAI. About Volume, Bouman said, “My move to the NAI means more opportunities to add fresh talent to the team; the next step could be to consider overlaps between Volume and the NAI program.”

Bouman brings to the NAI an imperative to connect architecture to the political trials of our times. “The NAI is a public and cultural institution, a place where people can envision new roles for architecture beyond a service of design or real estate,” he said. “It is also a place where people can explore the arguments needed to convince the powers that be to take responsibility for our buildings, our cities, and our landscapes, by asking architects to help them.”

Samantha Topol
Shrinking Cities

While international urban discourse focuses exclusively on the growing megapolis, zones of shrinkage have been forming and are generally ignored. Shrinking Cities, a four-year initiative project of the German Federal Cultural Foundation, has investigated the worldwide phenomenon of urban shrinkage by focusing on four regions—Detroit, Michigan; Halle/Leipzig, Germany; Manchester/Liverpool, U.K.; and Ivanovo, Russia—and developed ideas for action. Shrinking Cities has been presented in two major exhibitions, several books, digital publications, and at numerous public events. The 2006/2007 New York exhibition is the first leg of an international tour.

VAN ALLEN INSTITUTE

Shrinking Cities International Research
30 W. 20th Street, 6th Floor
New York, New York 10010
December 8, 2006—January 21, 2007

PRATT MANHATTAN GALLERY

Shrinking Cities Interventions
144 W. 14th Street, 2nd Floor
New York, New York 10011
December 8, 2006—February 17, 2007

A series of film screenings and public talks will take place at multiple venues in New York City. Please visit www.pratt.edu/exhibitions for details.
In the third and final city of the History Channel's City of the Future competition, Eric Owen Moss Architects won top honors (and $10,000) with a scheme that envisions a Los Angeles in the year 2106 where buildings and infrastructure are constructed "over, under, around, and through the freeways, rivers, power grids, and tracks." (The other two segments of the competition, which invited architects to produce visions of New York and Chicago, took place in November and December; see "Waterworlds," AN 20.12.11.2006). The project team, led by Moss, based its proposal on issues facing the city today, and focused on a downtown site on the L.A. River, where many of the infrastructure elements that divide the city converge. A series of dams would rehabilitate the river, as well as connect a large agriculture grid overlaid on an adjacent decaying industrial railroad to a revitalized manufacturing section nearby. Water is pumped up into towers that line the river by solar energy during the day, and generates electrical energy by turbine power at night as the water descends. Moss' plan will compete with New York winner ARO and Chicago champ UrbanLab in an online competition (www.history.com/designchallenge), beginning January 3; don't miss Daniel Libeskind's ongoing commentary as host. Voting closes February 3. A winner will be announced in mid-February, and will be awarded $10,000. ST
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Peter Blake, 1920—2006

I became aware of Peter Blake’s work in 1984 when I was preparing an exhibition and catalogue on the forgotten modernism of Long Island (Long Island Modern: The First Generation of Modernist Architecture on Long Island, Guild Hall Museum, East Hampton). Combining through old magazines of the 1950s and 1960s, I kept coming across these wonderful little gems: simple boxes on stilts with floor-to-ceiling glass that were designed by someone named Peter Blake.

His beach houses were the perfect antidote to urban stress, little escape pods that were at once casual, open, inexpensive, low maintenance, and defined a certain moment in the history of American leisure. There was the Pinwheel House (Water Mill, 1954), a 24-by-24-foot square box with walls that slid out on steel tracks. The slab-like Russell House (Bridgehampton, 1956) was cantilevered on steel pilotis to gain water views, while the Kent House (Water Mill, 1956) was propped on telephone poles to lift it safely above hurricane floods. The second Blake House (Bridgehampton, 1956) expanded on the concept of the Pinwheel House (by way of Mies), and was essentially two 24-by-24-foot boxes connected by an open-air breezeway. I used it on the cover of my book Weekend Utopia.

Blake, as much as anyone, understood the unique, sea-flecked light of eastern Long Island and the beauty of its low-lying landscape, the same qualities that had attracted so many of the abstract expressionist painters. His houses reflected this passion in the way they were sited on the dunes or potato fields, how their modular plans sacrificed everything for light and intimate connection to the outdoors. "All of my buildings were an interpretation of that landscape," said Blake.

Around 1948, Blake was introduced to Jackson Pollock through mutual friends. When he first visited Pollock’s studio in Springs, it was a revelation: "The sun was shining when I walked into his studio, shining in and into the paintings," recalled Blake. "It was like walking into the Hall of Mirrors at Versailles—all dazzling, incredible!" Blake took this as a calling: Young architects were obliged to escape the past and push their work to new levels. "What I and others saw in the new painting in the Hamptons was only the beginning," he said. "We were sure that a similar architectural energy would soon manifest itself all around us. And we felt we were ready." In 1949 Blake designed the "Ideal Museum" project in collaboration with the painter. Pollock’s drip paintings were to hover within an all-glass pavilion and merge with the surrounding landscape. He developed a plan that was the basis for his later Pinwheel House. The Ideal Museum was 24-by-24 feet square, with four barnlike walls that could be slid out on metal tracks so that the house dweller could experience total oneness with the surrounding landscape. There was no glass to interfere with the sensation. When the walls were open, the house was literally open to nature. Peter had wanted Pollock to paint the inside surfaces so that when the walls were closed you would be sitting inside an all-around Pollock. Or conversely, when the walls were open, four Pollocks would be floating in the landscape. Unfortunately, by 1954 Pollock was too busy and too successful to accept Blake’s proposal. "You can’t afford me," he said.

Peter possessed a sharp, often caustic wit, and never held back his opinions. He never, to my knowledge, subscribed to any form of political correctness. But while he could be a harsh critic of other people’s work, one gets the sense that he was even tougher on himself. He remained a free-spirited outsider—a loose cannon to some—an independent observer of the built environment and the individuals who shaped it. He wrote elegant, effortless prose. His memoir, No Place Like Utopia (1982), reads like a picassesque novel. Among his 17 books were superb monographs on Marcel Breuer, Frank Lloyd Wright, Le Corbusier, Mies van der Rohe, Philip Johnson, Ulrich Franzen, Edward Larrabee Barnes, and Harry Seidler.

He admired the epic works of the modern movement but was wary of the "heroic architect" role, the sweeping masterplans, and the "monumental arrogance" that some of its masters displayed. The best of his prose had the ring of a voice in the wilderness. In God’s Own Junkyard (1969), Blake decried corporate modernism and its commercial desecration of the American landscape. The book was filled with photos of tract housing, suburban subdivisions, billboards, power lines, strip mining, and all things that Blake found offensive. "This book is not written in anger," he wrote. "It is written in fury." He lashed out against pretension and phoniness. He was one of the first to cry that the emperor had no clothes when confronting the superficial pastiche of postmodernism and the bogus theory of deconstruction.

While very much a part of the architectural establishment—as curator at MoMA, editor of Architectural Forum, architecture dean at Catholic University—there was a sense that Blake never really wanted to fit in too comfortably, as if he had built the proverbial box but was too busy and too successful to accept Blake’s proposal. "You can’t afford me," he said. "That’s enough, enough..." as if to belittle his
Whenever I asked for a good image to use taken in the early 1960s of his son Casey and sadness about him that didn't quite match three children, Peter, Jeffery, cousin Elizabeth sitting in the breezeway of the Blake beach house in Bridgehampton, during a period that was, difficult times and it could mean some real sacrifices for their family. Did they agree with his decision? Nine-year-old Mindy sheepishly said, "Okay." The same conversation was happening with Gene's family and my own. The three of us had very little in savings and if we didn't make it in six months we would have to abandon the effort.

I have often compared the nature of our partnership to the primary components of a sailboat: the keel, the hull, and the sails. While one might debate the semantics of who played the roles of hull or sails, no one would ever question who took on the role of keel—it was Shelly. We always looked to Shelly to do what was right and what was fair. He was our moral and ethical guide. So he was more than a keel; he was also a compass. The craft of carpentry is closely related to architecture. Carpenters say, "Measure twice, cut once." Shelly measured three times! And he had to, as Gene and I are inclined to forego measuring altogether. Often, those who are given to exactness are deeply frustrated with those who are not, Shelly, however, was also patient. He could always wait for a storm to pass. Somehow, our collaboration worked. So well, in fact, that I am reminded of one of Helen Keller's sayings, "Alone one can do so little. Together, we can do so much." Just before Thanksgiving, Bill Louie, Bob Cioppa (partners in the firm), and I went to visit Shelly at his home in Fairfield, Connecticut. He had been retired nine years and the last time we had seen him before he started. As much as Shelly loved architecture and as much as he loved cooking, there was never a doubt that he loved his family more. They were his center. We always knew this. But we also knew Shelly loved us. We hope he knew we loved him.

A close friend of mine told me of the Mourner's Kaddish said by those of the Jewish faith. It is not about death but rather expresses a gratitude to God for bringing a person into one's life. Our family at Kohn Pedersen Fox is grateful to God for bringing Shelly into our life. Without him, there would have been no life.

In September 2006, Shelly was unable to attend the 30th Anniversary celebration of Kohn Pedersen Fox. He was in the late stages of brain cancer. At the event, his daughter, Mindy Pritchard, spoke of her father's failing condition. She also talked about several of her memories of the earliest days of our partnership. We started during a period that was, for architects, the deepest recession any of us can remember. It was not a promising time to begin. Mindy remembered one morning in the summer of 1976 when Shelly and his wife, Judy, gathered their three children, Peter, Jeffery, and herself, around the breakfast table. Shelly said he had decided to start a new office with Gene Kohn and myself. These were very difficult times and it could mean some real sacrifices for their family. Did they agree with his decision? Nine-year-old Mindy sheepishly said, "Okay." The same conversation was happening with Gene's family and my own. The three of us had very little in savings and if we didn't make it in six months we would have to abandon the effort.

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DOUG AITKEN TRANSFORMS MOMA INTO AN OUTDOOR CINEMA

Every evening from January 16 to February 12, the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) will become an exploded cinema, its facades transformed into gigantic multiplex featuring five parallel films by Doug Aitken. The $1 million project, a collaboration of MoMA and Creative Time, is the most ambitious project of the Venice, California–based artist’s career and one of the largest public art installations undertaken in New York.

Called sleepwalkers, the five 13-minute, 35-mm films will be projected simultaneously on MoMA’s facades, offering “a kaleidoscopic view of urban living,” in Aitken’s words. “The idea for the piece came to me when I was in Midtown late one night and I found myself feeling an incredible displacement and emptiness,” he said. “After 5:00 p.m. everyone leaves work and you’re left with these massive catacombs with clean, clear facades. I wondered if there was some way that buildings could communicate some emotion and life.” He conceived of an installation that could investigate the private moments and psychological spaces enveloped by the city’s endless facades. “The piece is an experiment in making architecture fluid,” said Aitken, “where information and meaning run across facades like a river.”

He had an encouraging partner in Anne Pasternak, director of Creative Time, which had produced one of his multimedia installations in 1996 at the Brooklyn Anchorage. They scoured Midtown sites from river to river and MoMA leapt out as an ideal site and partner. Last summer, Aitken filmed in dozens of locations throughout the five boroughs. To convey the personality of each character, the dialogue-free films rely heavily on the locations in which the actors appear. For example, Donald Sutherland’s businessman is one who experiences the city from a distance, from behind the mirrored windows of a Lincoln Town Car or from highrises—one scene shows him on the abandoned heliport on the MetLife building’s rooftop. Seu Jorge’s electrician is shown wrangling with webs of wires in hidden spaces—some scenes were shot inside Times Square’s neon signs—conveying his character’s raw and earthy nature. And Tilda Swinton’s buttoned-up office worker always appears in tidy, spare, fluorescent-lit spaces. “I was trying to fuse the locations and the personalities together, getting at the idea of the city being an extension of the human body,” Aitken said. He is reluctant to label his characters by vocation or demographic, seeing them more as signifiers who each move through a different, personalized city, but whose lives unfold in a parallel manner.

“I think that the borders we see between our interior and exterior worlds are much weaker than we think,” said Aitken. In projecting these solitary profiles at such a large scale on such a high-profile building, the artist has begun to chip away at the divide between inside and out, private and public.

CATHY LANG HO

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At the beginning of December, the Storefront for Art and Architecture announced Joseph Grima as its new director. Born in England and raised in Italy, Grima assumed his new post at the beginning of January and replaces Sarah Herda, who was named the director of the Chicago-based Graham Foundation last spring. He worked most recently as an editor with Stefano Boeri at the Milan-based magazine Domus. AN's Samantha Topol caught up with him recently to hear what he has in store for Storefront.

You trained in architecture at the Architectural Association and have worked editorially at Domus, in addition to curating exhibitions. What are you bringing from your background to Storefront?

I'm interested in architecture as a way of "reading" space, as a point of entry into broader and more complex social and political issues. This is something we worked on a lot over the last three years at Domus architecture, urbanism, artistic production, and photography as a point of departure, rather than ends in themselves. Working in an editorial environment was unbelievably useful in learning about communicating ideas and interacting with a broad network of people around the world. It's like being in the eye of an information cyclone, and I really hope to bring some of this intensity and energy to Storefront.

One of the interesting things about architectural training is that it teaches you to explore all the possibilities and to see constraints as opportunities for creativity. What kind of programming do you envision for Storefront?

The thing I've always admired about Storefront is its interdisciplinary approach. I'd like our programming to continue the exploration of the borders between art, architecture, design, urbanism, photography, landscape, geopolitics, and spatial practice. I actually think it's good to leave these categorizations aside because each discipline has a lot to say about all the others. I'd like Storefront to be more than just a gallery; I want it to be a generator of ideas.

The exhibition program should become a core structure to latch other activities onto, such as debates, publications, events, film series, and hopefully a strengthened online presence. One idea I'm really interested in is starting a small but intensely focused research program to produce content (internally, such as exhibitions, publications, et cetera), through collaborations with architects, artists, and researchers. Continued on page 12.
STREET WISE continued from front page

The new shelter includes a sloping roof with panels to filter sunlight, a stainless steel frame with transparent walls, and benches. At the prototype unveiling in Queens, Bloomberg called the shelter's transparency a "key design consideration." The glass, he said, will let the shelters "blend seamlessly into every neighborhood and reflect the diversity of our street life."

The contract, meanwhile, reflects Bloomberg's pragmatic drive to provide visitors and residents with an accommodating public realm. Cemusa will pay New York $999 million in cash and $398 million in services, mainly free advertising on Cemusa-built shelters around the world, over the next 20 years. Bloomberg appreciates the ad space so much that he began his remarks citing it. "Imagine you're a tourist in Rome or Guadalajara at a bus shelter and you see a compelling ad for New York City," he enthused. Grimshaw's design offers visitors both a protective, comforting place to wait and a clear view of the streetscape.

Just the day before the design's unveiling, State Supreme Court judge William Wetzel dismissed a lawsuit filed against the city in August by failed bidders NBC Decaux (French street furniture manufacturer JC Decaux teamed with NBC Universal) and Clear Channel Communications, which claimed the city cheated them. Clear Channel accused Deputy Mayor Daniel Doctoroff of favoring Cemusa in order to obtain free advertising space on Cemusa's structures in 10 South American cities to promote the city's bid to host the 2012 Olympics. Judge Wetzel calling the claimed collusion "a tale worthy of the New Yorker [that] does not meet the standard of proof." He noted that three civic groups, four architects, and an unaffiliated landscape architect joined "an in-depth, intensive analysis and review by innumerable public servants." Since the shelters serve aesthetic as well as functional ends, he said, this process justified the city's choice even if other bidders promised seemingly higher payments.

The design has an unobjectionable sleekness, emphasizing stillness and calm which will be a counterpoint to the city's frenetic streets. At the December 20 press event, Cemusa North America CEO Toulla Constantinou declared, "Buying a newspaper or waiting for a bus should not be a cause for anxiety." Bloomberg also stressed how the new structures would bring comfort to transit users. "Anyone who wants to take a load off will no longer have to stand and wait," he said. One implication is that bus service can gain popularity if it becomes less wearisome.

Promoting mass transit would coincide with the Mayor's efforts to make New York more sustainable. Other aspects of the Cemusa contract serve this goal. Some of the new shelters will use solar panels, and Cemusa has promised to recycle "the majority" of materials from old shelters.

The city says Cemusa will hire nearly 100 New Yorkers in their offices in Manhattan and manufacturing facility in Queens. More shelters and toilets will begin appearing throughout the city this year.

ALEC APPELBAUM

NEW DIRECTION FOR STOREFRONT continued from page 11

Storefront's board chair Belmont Freeman said that it was important to the organization to find a director who could bring the place to "the next level." What do you interpret that to mean, and how do you see it taking shape?

Storefront is 25 this year, and thanks to the incredible dedication of all the people who have worked there in these years it has become an internationally recognized point of reference well beyond New York City. I think it could reach out to a wider audience still. I'd like to see Storefront become the epicenter of a global network of institutions with overlapping interests, like galleries, research groups, publications, and schools of art and architecture. These alliances could benefit Storefront through a reciprocal flow of ideas and content, and over time serve to increase its visibility and further consolidate its reputation.

In the immediate future, I'll be working to expand our sources of funding to allow us to gradually fulfill our potential and operate on all these different levels. One of the great things about working for Storefront is that so many people feel genuine affection towards it—it's a very generous institution and has given a lot to a lot of people, even when it meant taking risks. That's a quality it should never lose.

Alec Appelbaum
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Deadline February 9, 2007 (no fee or limit for entries)
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PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP continued from front page But news of a new neighboring tower made residents fear for their views from their 4-foot windows. "That's a big change for a building that was marketed for being flooded with light," said Ro, adding that the developer had assured buyers that the new construction to the south wouldn't be an issue. But according to Lee Compton, chairman of Community Board 4 (CB4), city plans for a tower on Elliott-Chelsea's parking lot predate the Heywood conversion. CB4 mediated discussions with HPD and neighborhood interests before the RFP was issued. "We are all in this mix, and we respect everyone's rights," said Compton. Officials say the design consultation will help the winning developer optimize outcomes for the new tower's tenants and neighbors. "The RFP aims to outline a number of qualifications to give direction to developers," said HPD spokesperson Amanda Pitman. And the design criteria seem attentive to qualifications to give direction to developers.

The GEA has also been radically expanded to encompass many of the hot neighborhoods throughout the city. In Manhattan, it will stretch south and north to absorb Lower Manhattan and much of Harlem. Across the river, the zone will mushroom beyond the GEA established by the city in 2005 in Williamsburg/Greenpoint to deal with the area's feverish development. The new law adopts the recommendations of the Mayor's task force to extend the waterfront zoning south to Red Hook and north to Astoria, Queens, and goes even further, including Bushwick to the east and downtown Brooklyn and the surrounding neighborhoods such as Clinton Hill and Prospect Heights to the south. To further counter criticism that 421-a had evolved over the years into a benefit for luxury residential developers who need no financial incentive to build, the new law caps the tax break at $65,000 on the average assessed value per unit of a building. The overhaul of 421-a was a challenge because the law was amended so infrequently in its long history and New York's real estate market has become so volatile. To address this, a commission of council and mayoral representatives will reassess the GEA every two years, expanding or contracting the zone as the market warrants, though the latter would be more difficult because it will require state approval.

These revisions will go into effect on December 28, 2007, to give developers time to prepare for the changes. According Steven Spinola, president of the Real Estate Board of New York and a task force member, developers were never against revisions, but they maintain the city has gone too far, especially in light of the recent downturn in the real estate market. "They threw out the car, instead of changing the oil," he said. As Deputy Mayor Daniel Doctoroff implied in a December 11 public hearing about 421-a, that the law should no longer be seen as a development program but an affordable housing program.
Salone Internazionale del Mobile opens its doors on 18 April

Salone Internazionale del Mobile
Euroluce, International Lighting Exhibition
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New Milan Fairgrounds, Rho, 18/23.04.07
In a ghastly twist, bones were uncovered on December 12 during excavation at the Trump SoHo Hotel Condominium site at the corner of Spring and Varick Streets, which led to an immediate stop work order. Community groups who have been battling the project for months (see “Donald Does Downtown,” AN 20_12.11.2006) were quick to point out that an abolitionist church once stood on the site, and that some accounts date the church to 1811. The Office of the Chief Medical Examiner told AN more than one set of bones was unearthed at the site and that they are over a century old, but would say no more. The incident recalls the General Services Administration’s discovery of an African burial ground while constructing a new federal building on Duane and Elk streets 15 years ago, which stopped construction for several years. But Jennifer Givner, spokesperson for the Department of Buildings, acknowledged the city does not have the power to intervene in private developments. On December 20, work resumed with a promise from Trump’s partner, Bayrock/Sapir Group, to carefully excavate the site and respectfully deal with any remains found.

AIA-NY “INSIDE/OUT” UNDER NEW PRESIDENT

Joan Blumenfeld was sworn in as the new president of the New York Chapter of the American Institute of Architects (AIA-NY) at the Center for Architecture on December 5. Each year’s president chooses a theme and direction for the chapter during his or her term; Blumenfeld, a principal at Perkins + Will and the first interior architect to serve as the chapter’s president, chose Architecture Inside/Out: Creating humane and beautiful environments in which to live, work, and play as her tenure’s theme. At the inauguration, Blumenfeld stated, “I believe that Architecture Inside/Out will present a compelling new way for us to examine how the design and construction of the spaces where we spend most of our lives impact us as individuals and as a society, and how we can work together to make them more functional, sustainable, and uplifting.”

CABS CLEAN UP ACT AND IMPROVE ACCESSIBILITY

On December 6, the City Council voted unanimously on a measure meant to increase the number of clean-air and wheelchair accessible taxis in the city. This legislation builds on a law passed in 2003 that created special medallions for clean-air or accessible vehicles; the first batch of these medallions—254 for alternative-fuel and 54 accessible—were issued last May. The new legislation will extend the operational life of these special taxis to three years (currently, vehicles are allowed to serve as taxis for only two years). Furthermore, the law requires the New York City Taxi and Limousine Commission (TLC) to devise an action plan to increase these taxis and produce a website to educate taxi owners on the economic benefits they hold. Finally, these special taxis will be labeled as either clean-air or accessible vehicles, which the council believes would entice riders. In concert with this legislation, the TLC has released an additional 150 accessible medallions.

NEW HEADQUARTERS LEEDS THE CHARGE

Combining two of its greatest concerns—security and sustainability—the city officially opened the new headquarters for the Office of Emergency Management on December 5. Located in Downtown Brooklyn, the four-story, 65,000-square-foot building houses state-of-the-art emergency coordination and response technology inside a gut-renovated structure designed with green features by Swanke Hayden Cornell Architects of New York. The building, which is seeking a LEED Silver rating, is the first green government building in New York City, though it is far from the last. This month, Local Law 86 goes into effect, which will require any future projects funded with city money to achieve a LEED Certified or Silver rating.

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Joel Sanders Architect
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www.shawmut.com

“Cory Ward at CW Contractors did an amazing job on the renovation of the Paul Rudolph condo. He and Greg Horgan, who trained as an architect, figured out the staging, and built things in their shop, only to disassemble them, get them up in the elevator, which is only 2.5 by 3.5 feet, and then install them. They are very agile, and we’re all happy with the result.”
Andrew Benheimer
Della Valle + Bernheimer

“I think that V. J. Murray is one of the best modern or traditional builders on Long Island. They built our Long Island house like a ship. He was trained as an architect and understands the spatial and constructional aspects of the job.”
Matthew Bremer
Architecture in Formation

“Sure, any great building is more than the sum of its parts, but it certainly helps if the parts themselves are exceptional. For our second annual Favorite Sources issue, we asked you to let us know who and what makes your work stronger. And like last year, you came through with some amazing recommendations, which range from environmental engineers and electroluminescent film to woodworkers with an exquisite touch and lawyers who keep your contracts in order. We collected your responses and chose more than 200 of the most interesting ones. What follows is a directory of people, products, and services that you and your colleagues feel are worth sharing.”
David Grider
Platt Byard Dovell White

“Shawmut came in extremely prepared with ideas about design/build, budgeting, and restoration for the RISD Library. They were real advocates for design features that would have gone unnoticed, and made the relationships among everyone involved fluid and not adversarial.”
Nader Tehrani
Office dA

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**Curtain Wall**

_Frener & Reifer is an Italian company that is very good with stainless steel. The panels we are using on the North Carolina Museum of Art are 6.6-by-21 feet and bead blasted. There are hairline joints but no expansion joints, so the whole wall moves as one._

_Thomas Phifer_  
_Tomcat & Partners_

_Frener & Reifer are working on the Blue condominium in New York. We are working with them because the structure is an extraordinary facade. They don't just give you specs—their specs are developed from personal experience. Their services range from facade engineering, fabrication research, and anodization techniques to coordination for shipping and transport. They basically did whatever it took to ensure the new facade will be extraordinary._

_Thomas Phifer_  
_Tomcat & Partners_

_During the design process for the Blue condominium, our collaborators at Israel Berger & Associates were utterly professional and charming at the same time._

_Bernard Tschumi_  
_Tschumi Achenbach Architects_

_Frener & Reifer is very creative and they can solve any of the wacky problems that we present to them. They do a lot of atypical things, like the structure for the large Frank Gehry sculptures and Jeff Koons' Puppy._

_James Slade_  
_Slate Architecture_
"I think Composite Fabrications is a very interesting company. I told them what I wanted to do, and they worked with me to develop a composite aluminum that would be strong and durable enough for the Vertebra couch."  
David Winston, Cleanroom Studio

"We couldn't do our project in Bridgeport without Manjit Chagar of Accu-Machining. He uses the same software [SolidWorks] that we do, so we've been able to design for his equipment. He has also been in the business long enough that he understands material properties, and he does the research to figure out what he can do."  
Stephen Lynch, Caliper Design Studio

"MSP Hillside is willing to make the impossible possible. They never looked at us like we were crazy; instead they just rolled up their sleeves and tried to figure out how to build the staircase at Longchamp."  
Louis Loria, Atmosphere Design Group

"Norbert Kimmel can do anything, but he is especially great at fabricating curves."  
Gita Nandan, Thread Collective

"Baker was excellent beyond excellent. 40 Mercer was a very difficult project with an incredible amount of detailing and challenging aspects like enormous panes of glass, some of which are motorized to slide open and shut. We were confident they could do the job."  
Gloria Glas, SLCE Architects

"Avi Kendi at Metal Fabrications is really an artist, he understood just what we were looking for when we had him construct the metal screenwall at STK Restaurant. He knows how to get things done quicker, better, and cheaper—and he's not afraid to give input."  
Leah Mondelson, iCrave

"One of our favorite fabricators right now is Ryan Iron Works. They did a steel stair for the ICA in Boston, among other things, and did a great job maintaining the design. There was a lot of back-and-forth, and we built a really positive relationship."  
Jesse Saylor, Diller Scofidio + Renfro

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Deborah Berke & Partners Architects

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Marc Konyk
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—Dan Del Prado, Dattner Architects.

“In a jack-of-all-trades. He refurbished all of the acrylic panels, slabs, and desktops in the Paul Rudolph condo, which was a big part of the project, and it all looks just great.”
—Andrew Bernheimer, Delta Vale + Bernheimer Design.

“The fact that Beaufort Composite Technologies mold composites into forms, like the coffers at North Carolina Museum of Art, with a 26-foot span that only weighs 250 pounds is amazing. The finish is like that of an automobile, smooth and accurate. There are people who mold fiberglass, like the panels you see on the side of the city buses, but Beaufort is more oriented towards things like sailboat technology, which is more sophisticated because of the attention that must be paid to weight.”
—Thomas Phifer, Phifer, Phifer & Partners.

“KalWall has a translucent insulated panel product that uses one of the lightest yet highest insulating substances known to man, called aerogel, which allows for R-values equivalent to solid walls.”
—Craig Konyk, Konyk Architecture.

“If you’re moving into a rough industrial space, the floors are often uneven and stained. For our office floor, Vincent Zito of Industrial Floorworks took seven passes and got it to a point where the concrete reflects like glass.”
—Gordon Kipping, GTests.
"Molteni & C/Dada manufactured the Jean Nouvel-designed kitchen at 40 Mercer with remarkable precision. Their kitchens are sculptural and go beyond standard cabinetry and plug-in appliances." Glorit Gask SLCE Architects

"We love TOTO—They are trying to be environmentally friendly, and make the most beautiful dual-flush toilets I've ever seen." Tobias Holter Cook + Fox

"Company K's craftsmanship is superior. They produce Carlo Scarpa-like details." Todd Hether Weiss Manfredi

"Designing low-energy, high-output, low-maintenance lighting schemes for affordable housing is quite a challenge for a lighting consultant; Abhay Wadhwa at AWA Lighting Designers produced a great scheme for the Pitt Street Residence, tuned to the very last watt."

Colin Cathcart Kisa + Cathcart Architects

"Nulux is one of the few companies I'll go to when I'm developing a new project. When you establish a good working relationship with them, it doesn't matter if it's a few fixtures you need or a few hundred. There's a lot coming out in LED now, and you'll be the first one on the block with the new, minimal light source. This company is going to stand behind you."

Matthew Tanteri Tanteri Associates

"Marianne Maloney at Filament 33 was trained as a designer so she understands how to spec a product. She speaks the language of the architect, is a good collaborator, and is tuned into what is going on product-wise."

Matthew Bremer Architecture in Formation

"Kugler Associates was an extremely valuable team member. Considering that we had a small budget for the WTC Tribute Center, they created a sensitive, lovely design. They were also very collaborative, and did a great job in a record time."

Joan Krevlin BKSK Architects

"Sandra Liotus is a designer who also has developed a proprietary technology for extremely exacting fiberoptic fixtures, all handmade. They are great for applications where the fittings need to be almost invisible."

David Hatson David Hatson Architecture

"Working with Linnea Tilledt was wonderful. She has an ability to work with architectural concepts and contribute from a serious functional perspective while exercising unlimited good spirit, creativity, and a sense of wonder in her lighting explorations."

Jennifer Lee OBRA Architects

"When you establish a relationship with ABC Lighting Designers you know they're going to give you a wonderful job in a record time."

Jennifer Lee OBRA Architects

"A great scheme for a lighting consultant; Abhay Wadhwa at AWA Lighting Designers produced a great scheme for the Pitt Street Residence, tuned to the very last watt."

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Jennifer Lee OBRA Architects
“Our expediter, Callahan, is another set of eyes on the project; he pulls out things we never would have seen.” Lucas Cascardo Lewis, Tsurumaki, Lewis.

“A good expediter is like a good dentist—when you find one, you never let them go! We always use Lois Rosenberg.” Marc Clemenceau Bailey Gage/Clemenceau

“The environment in architecture is set up not to take risks, stuck between the threat of lawsuits, nasty clients, and incompetent contractors. I appreciated finding someone like Joe Howard [who cut the cardboard and consulted on the structure for the Nomadic Museum and made the furniture/wall units in the Sagaponac House] who is willing to try something new and satisfy the end result.” Dean Maltz, Dean Maltz Architects.

“It’s not about lawsuits, it’s about advice. You’ve got to have seen someone looking over your contracts—and David Kosakoff is great at it—because even though most architects aren’t happy about every single thing in a contract, at least they’ll know what is it.” Claire Weisz, Weisz + Yes.
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JANUARY
WEDNESDAY 17
LECTURES
Michael Hennes, Howard Mastroianni, Ann Reo
LEDucation
6:30 p.m.
Center for Architecture
536 LaGuardia Pl.
www.aiany.org
Stefano Boeri
Rogue Cities
6:30 p.m.
Columbia GSAPP
Woold Auditorium
113 Avery Hall
www.arch.columbia.edu

SYMPOSIUM
New York’s Next Great Place: Governor’s Island Park Design Forum
Leslie Koch, Jane Thompson, Ray Gastil, Robert Yaro, et al.
5:30 p.m.
Center for Architecture
536 LaGuardia Pl.
www.aiany.org

Reclaiming a Resource: The Threatened East River
6:30 p.m.
Urban Center
457 Madison Ave.
www.msa.org

EXHIBITION OPENING
Waterfront in Transition: Developing Brooklyn’s Green Crescent
Urban Center
457 Madison Ave.
www.msa.org

THURSDAY 18
LECTURES
Peter Cavaliere, LeAnne Shelton
DCC Talks: Dreams Worlds, Lessons from Contemporary Los Angeles, Las Vegas, and Orlando
10:00 a.m.
LaGuardia Community College
The Little Theatre
31–10 Thomson Ave., Long Island City
www.aiany.org
Ali Rahim
6:30 p.m.
Yale School of Architecture
180 York St., New Haven
www.arch.yale.edu

EXHIBITION OPENINGS
Robert Greene
Robert Miller Gallery
526 West 22nd St.
www.robertmillergallery.com

THURSDAY 19
SYMPOSIUM
Sad sucker
Henry Urbach, Peter Eisenman, et al.
Yale School of Architecture
180 York St., New Haven
www.architecture.yale.edu

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TUESDAY 30
LECTURE
Denise Hoffman Brandt
Eleanor Heartney, Mary Miss
Re-envisioning Sites
6:00 p.m.
Bard Graduate Center
18 West 89th St.
www.bgc.bard.edu

SYMPOSIUM
Is New Orleans a Shrinking City? A Confrontation Between Ecology and Politics
Phillip Olsaw, James Dart, Deborah Gans, Frederic Schwartz
Pratt Institute Manhattan
144 West 14th St.
Room 213
www.pratt.edu

EXHIBITION OPENING
Robert Moses and the Modern City: Slum Clearance and the Superblock Solution
Columbia GSAPP
Miraim and Ira D. Wallach Art Gallery
Columbia GSAPP, 108th floor
www.arch.columbia.edu/buall

WEDNESDAY 31
LECTURE
Hiroshi Sugimoto
6:30 p.m.
Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum
1071 5th Ave.
www.guggenheim.org

FEBRUARY
THURSDAY 1
LECTURE
Peter Eisenman, Rafael Moneo
6:30 p.m.
Endeavor School of Architecture
180 York St., New Haven
www.architecture.yale.edu

EXHIBITION OPENINGS
Robert Moses and the Modern City: Slum Clearance and the Superblock Solution
Columbia GSAPP
Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Art Gallery
Columbia GSAPP, 108th floor
www.arch.columbia.edu/buall

THE ROAD TO RECREATION
Queens Museum of Art
Flushing Meadow, Corona Park, Queens
January 27 to May 28

SLUM CLEARANCE AND THE SUPERBLOCK
Columbia GSAPP
Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Art Gallery
Schermerhorn Hall, 8th floor
www.arch.columbia.edu/buall

January 30 to April 14

Twenty-five years after Robert Moses' death, this look at the built and unbuilt projects of New York City's most powerful planner is as expansive as the man himself. Curated by Hillary Ballon with Jacques Barzin, both professors at Columbia University, the exhibition is divided into three sections that will be shown simultaneously at three locations. The first, Remaking the Metropolis at the Museum of the City of New York, focuses on Moses' vision to make New York accessible, monumental, and livable through improving parks and roadways, and developing major institutions like Lincoln Center and the United Nations. The show features Moses' failed effort to create a bridge linking downtown Manhattan to Brooklyn (pictures above), one of the biggest battles of Moses' career. The Road to Recreation at the Queens Museum of Art—a building that sits in the Moses-created Flushing Meadow Park—considers the arterial links into recreational sites such as Astoria Pool in Queens, McKearn Park Pool in Brooklyn, and the Bronx's Orchard Beach. Slum Clearance and the Superblock at Columbia reviews the full scope of Moses' urban renewal strategy. Along with many never-before-seen models, archival files, and period newspaper clippings, each exhibition will include large-scale photographs taken by Andrew Moore that contextualizes Moses ambitions works as they exist today.

SUBJECT DIRECTORY

PUBLIC ART

LIGHT SHOWERS
Lucas Sammarco Gallery
509 West 26th St.
January 25 to February 24

The exhibition designs of architects Michael Morris and Yoshiko Sato of Morris Sato Studio have won numerous awards, thanks to their studied approach to lighting and space. With Light Showers, their recent installation for the Delaware Center for the Contemporary Arts, opening this month at Lucas Sammarco Gallery, they create a meditative environment inspired by the meeting of Eastern and Western traditions. In a dark room, orbs of hospital white DuPont Corian seat, providing soothing a view to a seated chair by collaborator Paul Ryan, projected on the ground from above. The video is an abstract view of flood lights, and illuminates the space as the waters ebb and flow, while creating an atmosphere that encourages quiet contemplation. Flashing LEDs activate motion sensors, and the led boulderlike seat, experiment with viewer participation in the environment.

SUBJECT DIRECTORY

PUBLIC ART
ARCHITECTURAL MESH SYSTEMS

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Design Life Now, the third design triennial at the Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum offers many gems, though visitors may have to dig deeper for diamonds. In introductory wall texts, Cooper-Hewitt curators Barbara Bloemink and Matilda McQuaid, along with independent curator and graphic designer Ellen Lupton and Brooke Hodge, architecture and design curator of the Los Angeles Museum of Contemporary Art, make a soft case about what guided their choices, classifying design in the past three years has come to incorporate qualities typically seen as opposites: craft and technology, regional and global, natural and artificial, to name a few. Design, they continue, now has an increasing reach, and the broadened definition of what is considered design is reflected in the 87 items they chose. These are interesting enough propositions; however, only traces of their ideas are apparent, overwhelmed by the rambling arrangement of their vast selection, which includes everything from fashion to websites, furniture, magazines, buildings, medical equipment, toys, materials, robots, blogs, and beyond.

It is difficult to show such a miscellany with visual continuity, and the progression of the show suffers from what is at times a jarring disconnection among neighboring entries. How do you look at Chip Kidd’s book covers next to Alison Berger’s glass lamps? It becomes a challenge to grasp what is distinctive about the selection. At the show’s stronger moments, the curators hint at the relationships—cross-pollination, even among distinct areas of design. One room houses the NASA Hyper-X unmanned scramjet, Hoebenberg Associates’ Rapidly Deployable Structure (RDS) or foldable shelter, and SHoP Architects’ Camera Obscura, a digitally designed and fabricated building that also has one of the smartest displays in the exhibition. William and Chris Sharples of SHoP even commented on the fortune of their placement next to the NASA project, whose engineering they admire. Conversely, the subtleties of Yoshiko Mori Architect’s design for the Syracuse Center of Excellence in Environmental and Energy Systems is lost in a room where Tobias Wong’s gorgeous diva of a chandelier above a mirrored table takes the spotlight. What comes across as all over the map in the exhibition falls into more coherent form in the catalogue, designed by COMA, a Dutch-American design firm whose work is also included in the show. In the book, which arranges selections alphabetically by designer (albeit an arrangement that’s arbitrary in a different way), the curators’ intent is held together, even if just by a paperback cover. Still, it offers a deeper look at the designs, highlighting the exhibition’s primary drawback: With such a visual smorgasbord, it’s easy to overlook some of the show’s truly stellar inclusions, such as the Clear Blue Hawaii, a collapsible, translucent kayak, and Energy Systems is lost if just by a paperback cover. Still, it offers a deeper look at the designs, highlighting the exhibition’s primary drawback: With such a visual smorgasbord, it’s easy to overlook some of the show’s truly stellar inclusions, such as the Clear Blue Hawaii, a collapsible, translucent kayak, and Energy Systems is lost.

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Floors
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À LA MODE continued from page 28 Artistic statement that may be only marginally relevant to everyday dressing. For architects, experimentation is tempered by the constraints of costs and codes and scale. Yet, as you view the swirling steel planes of Frank Gehry's Watt Disney Concert Hall and the pleated ceiling vaults of Foreign Office Architects' Yokohama International Port Terminal, you sense the same exuberance and kinetic energy found on the runways. The exhibition designers have achieved an easy flow among the show's disparate objects and images that makes you forget the physical limitations of Arata Isozaki's still and compartmentalized museum. Moving images (however trivial) tend to upstage the most significant still exhibits, but here the two are deftly balanced. Videos upstage the most significant still exhibits, stiff and compartmentalized museum. Objects and images that makes you forget an easy flow among the show's disparate and kinetic energy found on the runways.

Terminal, you sense the same exuberance Architects' Yokohama International Port

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In the past year, books about Japanese architects, architecture (especially houses), landscape, and urbanism have proliferated. However, Arata Isozaki's new book, Japan-ness in Architecture, derives beyond trends and appearances to explore the kernel of Western perceptions of Japanese architecture. This 369-page history features an all-star lineup: The author is a distinguished Japanese architect, theoretician, and historian, and popular arts. This era was a crucible for the debate between old and new, indigenous and import, and high and popular arts. During the height of this debate in 1933, Bruno Taut drew new attention to the Ise Shrine in Ise and Katsura Villa in Kyoto by identifying them as prime examples of Japanese architecture. Isozaki scrutinizes the two to balance their Western perception and constructed realities. Ise Shrine, which dates to 690 AD, is dismantled and rebuilt every 20 years, and "has been significantly redesigned at crucial junctures" in response to ruling ideology and artistic practices, thereby keeping a timeless piece of architecture paradoxically new. The 17th-century Katsura Villa, an assembly of styles, reinforces cultural conceits and spatial dynamism. Both demand a layered "reading" that is ambiguous and temporal—characteristics of Japan-ness that contrast with Taut's emphasis on origin and material. Another example Isozaki cites is the reconstruction of the Great South Gate at Todai-ji, a gargoyle building whose pure geometric form attempted "to break with all familiar cultural tradition." Isozaki compares this structure, which dates to 1203, to other revolutionary designs by Piranesi, Ledoux, and Brunelleschi to show themes and processes inherent to architecture, not solely nationality. By revisiting works that span over a dozen centuries, Isozaki interrogates ideas of origin, authenticity, authorship, identity, evolution, and evaluation in Japanese architecture. His preface gives an excellent overview, but the lack of an epilogue relating to contemporary practice leaves one wondering how it all adds up today. Although some sections of the book are long-winded and mired in detail, the collection should appeal to those with any interest in identity in architecture.

James Way is a New York-based Architect and Writer.
EVERYTHING IS
ARCHITECTURE

Mauricio Guillen photographed guard houses in Mexico City, which occupy public streets in affluent neighborhoods, causing fragmentation in the city.

of our physical world and question the changes that have altered the traditional practice of architecture.

Several of the authors are fellow professors at the Centre for Research Architecture at Goldsmiths College, including Weizman, who in this collection presents architecture "as a political issue, and furthermore as the material product of politics itself." His piece discusses the role that Israeli architecture has played in the Middle East conflict.

Similarly, Mauricio Guillen addresses, in a photo essay, the wealthy districts of Mexico City where fear causes surveillance to spread illegally into the public realm in the form of private security booths. Other participants discuss global issues like the growing practice of outsourcing, in an essay that has been constructed entirely from texts found on the Internet (Joseph Grima); and the shifting meaning of urban symbols, for example the new life of the Volkspalast in East Berlin, the former city hall (Francesca Ferguson). The design of the book itself also contributes to the collective work: Designed by London graphic design partnership Abake, the cover displays the world as disjointed island-states, and the endpaper is a somewhat worrisome collection of nationalistic symbols, which the designers have labeled "A War Alphabet."

While all the contributors concentrate on their own areas of study, the book represents both an openness towards diversity and a coherence in opposition to the fragmentation and disjunctions of today's social and political reality.

MASHA PANTELEYEVA IS AN EDITORIAL INTERN AT AN

"Alles ist Architektur"—"Everything is architecture," Hans Hollein said in 1968. It seems that his manifesto, intended to reshape architectural thinking, is back.

Did Someone Say Participate? An Atlas of Spatial Practice is not just an anthology of essays but a manifesto in its own way, a call for action: It encourages a generation of "spatial practitioners"—a term that the book's editors, Markus Miessen and Shumon Basar, use to allow amateurs, professionals, and "professional amateurs" representing a variety of fields—to trespass the borders of their disciplines and participate in the making of space, once the exclusive terrain of architects.

Miessen and Basar are young professors at the newly established Centre for Research Architecture at Goldsmiths College in London, which is directed by Eyal Weizman, an Israeli architect whose work is featured in Civilian Occupation: The Politics of Israeli Architecture (Verso, 2003). The goal of the center, to bring together "cultural practitioners from around the world to work on expanded notions of architecture," explains something of the origins and objectives of Did Someone Say Participate? Miessen and Basar have culled contributions from architects, journalists, artists, curators, and photographers who posit new understandings of architectural praxis, and present a manifesto for emerging fields.

"The project is a call to architects to participate in a range of new fields, from planning to media, from art to urbanism.

"The idea is to create a space for spatial practitioners to trespass the borders of their disciplines and participate in the making of space, once the exclusive terrain of architects."
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OPEN PLAY

When asked about our favorite childhood outdoor games, all sorts of memories might come to mind but it's unlikely that many will involve a specific playground. The "best playgrounds are those where kids are allowed to manipulate spaces and materials to create their own play opportunities," explained Roger Hart, co-director of the Children's Environments Research Group at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York. In other words, kids like flexible and stimulating environments. This seems obvious, but when you look at all the identical, unexciting playgrounds of New York City, it feels like playgrounds have been declared off-limits for designers.

In Chinatown, there is still one that was designed in the mode of the open-ended "adventure playgrounds," a design type that emerged in postwar Europe to reclaim derelict or abandoned urban spaces. Taking their cues from tai chi to Chinese chess to community gardening, according to Kori-Ann Taylor, the LMDC's director of communications. With this project on the horizon, last summer Manhattan Borough Commissioner William Castro organized a series of monthly meetings with a coalition of local community groups that came together in the 1980s to give voice to residents about changes in their neighborhood. The SDN Coalition, as the members call it, includes the Hester Street Collaborative, MFInida Kalunga, Chinatown BRC Senior Center, and the Chinese American Planning Council. "The aim of the meetings was to bring the community together with the Parks and Police departments to discuss improvements we need to make to the park's recreation programming, landscape, and infrastructure, and the quality of community life," said Castro.

The park is clearly in need of improvements. The space is visibly deteriorating and poorly maintained; the ground is full of holes and most of the playground equipment is broken. A persistent problem for the Department of Parks and Recreation is a lack of funding for maintenance. Michael Gotkin, a landscape architect who has been active in modernist preservation and recently participated in Landmarks West's effort to preserve the Ancient Playground in Central Park, an adventure playground designed by Richard Dattner in 1972, thinks that the park could be creatively restored. "The Hester Street playground is a work of environmental design, not just equipment in a landscape," he said. "Once the architectural features are demolished, they could never be recreated because of the Parks Department's ridiculous playground guidelines."

As of yet, the Parks Department has not revealed much about its plans for the Hester Street Playground, aside from the fact that it has assigned in-house designer, Allan Scholl, to oversee its renovation. Two of their major goals are enhancing safety and easing maintenance, but these should not preclude more progressively designed playgrounds. One of the reasons for uninspiring playground designs is that most cities don't think of them as a complex design project, and routinely opt to acquire liability-proof playground equipment.

To its credit, the Parks Department has actively reached out to the community, for example, supporting a charrette process last October organized by the Hester Street Collaborative, a local design/build nonprofit, and attended by neighborhood residents of all ages. Predictably, participants expressed their desire for a clean and safe environment with more green space. One story in particular captured my attention: One child told enthusiastically about a park-specific game called "wood tag," where the goal is for players to move about the park without touching the ground. The game reminded me of Hart's and Gotkin's words. The Hester Street playground is a case that should be carefully considered before being forced into a standardized mold. I would not advocate mumifying the entire existing playground; without question, improvements must be made. But creativity should not be banned in the name of safety, or preservation, for that matter.

In light of the city's newly launched Design Excellence Initiative, why is there no design competition? In the case of this park, an open competition or Department of Design and Construction-sponsored process makes even more sense given that its renovation is assured a healthy budget and the park has an active community coalition.

As Anne Frederick, director of the Hester Street Collaborative put it, "You cannot think of improving conditions of public space without thinking about who the public space is for. As for the Hester Street playground, you have to think about how renovations will affect the community. For example, will it be one stage of a process that will ultimately price locals out of the neighborhood?" The playground is a tiny sliver of public space but its importance for the shaping of the future citizen is crucial.

OLYMPIA KAZI IS CURRENTLY AN ARCHITECTURE AND URBAN STUDIES FELLOW IN THE INDEPENDENT STUDY PROGRAM OF WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART.

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The College’s mission is underpinned by certain guiding values: design excellence, technical expertise, advanced professional practice, and respect for design’s contributions to society and the world around us. More information on the College’s mission and faculty can be found at www.arch.iit.edu.

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College of Architecture

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The College’s mission is underpinned by certain guiding values: design excellence, technical expertise, advanced professional practice, and respect for design’s contributions to society and the world around us.

Candidates should have an international perspective and a commitment to teaching and research. The College maintains traditionally strong connections to the community of national and global professionals and their practices. The curriculum is delivered largely by active practitioners in the Chicago region, thus these appointments support an active practice in Architecture or Landscape Architecture.

Additionally candidates are expected to participate in scholarly and professional activities, provide services to the College and University, and collaborate in program development. There are significant and extensive ways that the Architecture and Landscape Architecture curricula share courses and instructors. Thus, we are particularly interested in candidates holding both degrees.

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TEACH OUR CHILDREN WELL

David Sokol’s excellent story, “Centers for Architecture Multiply” (AN 11_13, 2006) addresses the trend toward architecture storefronts that welcome the public and bring design to the streets. After decades of self-serving, old-guy architectural clubhouse, this is just the kind of approach that’s needed to invigorate the entire building community while enhancing the public’s understanding of the power of design.

The centers for architecture that Sokol describes as “spouting up across the country” bring another great opportunity: to expose the next generation to the powerful role that design plays in our lives. If you have children, then you already know that a school curriculum including architecture and design is a rare thing. The Center for Architecture Foundation is hoping to fill that void. This nonprofit organization promotes an appreciation for architecture, design, and planning through education and scholarships. I suspect that many designers are not aware that the Center for Architecture in New York is a joint venture between the AIA-NY chapter (the majority holder) and the Center for Architecture Foundation. Within the framework that the Center for Architecture evolves, it’s my hope that the role of the foundation will grow and its educational programs will expand.

Integrating design into education is important for many reasons, most of which we all already know. But here are what might be the top three:

First, teaching design and architecture raises children’s awareness of the building and community in which they live. This insight will ultimately help tomorrow’s citizens make good decisions about our communities. For instance, they’ll know what buildings are worth preserving. And they’ll understand the impact that buildings have on the environment.

Second, design is a problem-solving exercise. Teaching it exercises critical thought. It’s also a tangible way for children to understand math, science, history, and other “core” subjects, as well as art.

Third, bringing design programs to the public schools and families across the city engages a rich and diverse group of future designers.

Presumably, the Center for Architecture Foundation's educational programming includes “Learning By Design: NY,” a program that takes design into the city’s public schools. Each year Learning By Design reaches more than 3,000 students in 25 different schools. Activities include site visits, neighborhood walks, and design workshops that pose real challenges to students.

The foundation also offers professional development workshops that teach teachers about architecture. Curricula include sessions on how buildings work, New York City architecture and history, and strategies on how to help students better understand their neighborhoods and surrounding architecture.

The foundation also organizes the annual Career Day at the Center, which brings middle and high school students the chance to learn about career options available in the built environment. Studio@theCenter is an after-school program in which students work with professionals to learn about design through site visits. Perhaps best of all is Children’s Day. One Saturday each month, children of all ages and their parents gather to learn about various subjects—skyscrapers, bridges, urban design. Then they get to participate in various hands-on activities, like building models or drawing their own buildings. Working with children in these ways requires talented individuals. Most of those involved in these programs are volunteers.

If you’re a New York City architect, you’re lucky. There’s an incredible wealth of talent and resources here, more than any other place. The city gives us a lot; the Center for Architecture is a way for us to give back, to become an organization focused on the public, on buildings, on our extraordinary urban fabric, on our children. If indeed the new centers for architecture cropping up across the country are taking some of their cues from New York, as Sokol has written, then let’s give them this cue as well: Educate the designers, the policy-makers, and citizens of future generations.


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Date: Thursday, January 18
Speaker: Rafael Vives, Architect
Topic: Think New York: A Ground Zero Diary
Location: 7 World Trade Center, 22nd Floor

Date: Thursday, February 15
Speaker: Mark Kurlansky, Author; food historian
Topic: The Big Oyster: History on the Half Shell
Location: India House, Marine Room

Date: Thursday, March 15
Speaker: Russell Shorto, Author; contributing editor, The New York Times Magazine
Topic: Greetings from New Amsterdam: How Manhattan Became the Island at the Center of the World
Location: Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian, Diker Pavilion

Date: Thursday, April 19
Speaker: Mary Schirra, Architectural preservationist; author
Topic: Forgotten Splendor: Restoring Downtown’s Historic Architecture
Location: Federal Hall National Memorial

Date: Thursday, May 17
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Topic: Cass Gilbert and History: The Past as Present
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