No corner in the city is heating up faster than 19th Street between 10th and 11th Avenues. With Frank Gehry’s IAC headquarters and Jean Nouvel’s 100 Eleventh standing sentinel across the rather narrow 19th Street and Annabelle Selldorf’s 11-story 520 W. 19th climbing high behind the IAC, who knew there was even room for one more?

One determined developer, that’s who. Or, in this case, the partnership of Spiritos Properties and Klemens Gasser, the gallery owner who maintains space in the warehouse currently on the site. On a lot abutting the Selldorf building and joining a backyard court and short alley with the Gehry, the latest newcomer is an 11-story condominium designed by the Japanese architect Shigeru Ban. continued on page 5

On September 6, architects previewed how three towers on the World Trade Center plaza will relate to the site’s central memorial. Client Larry Silverstein presented an air of collegiality among Foster & Partners, Maki and Associates and Rogers Stirk Harbour + Partners as a parable for guiding the coordination he will apply to the construction process. From the start, Silverstein has hastened to develop the commercial towers amid slower

Congress rejects the pros; AIA fights back

Architects not welcome

Were Thomas Ustick Walter, fourth Architect of the Capitol, asked today to make the same expansions to the Capitol he completed 144 years ago, Washington might be without one of its most recognizable landmarks. “When he added the north and south wings, he realized the proportions were off with [Charles] Bulfinch’s rotunda and so added the cast-iron dome everyone now knows so well,” said Alan Hantman, the tenth Architect of the Capitol who retired in February. Though the cost of the dome skyrocketed from $100,000 to $1.47 million, and the nation was on the verge of civil war, Congress supported Walter’s vision. If only Hantman had it so good.

For the last decade, Hantman was in charge of the daily operation and preservation of the Capitol Complex, including the management of 2,200 employees who oversee 15 million square feet. He was also tasked with directing the construction of the Capitol Visitor Center on page 6.
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Photographer: Adrian Wilson
New York’s pedestrians who appreciate the richness and diversity of the city’s public spaces are perhaps only rivaled in their enthusiasm by another fanatical group: foodies. A love of food and of the city’s streets is intimately related, of course, since there is some very fine eating to be done in ethnic enclaves like Jackson Heights, Manhattan’s Chinatown, Greenpoint, and Arthur Avenue in the Bronx. These neighborhoods can also give the average New Yorker the sense that she has stepped into another world, and the variety of the city.

One of the more interesting intersections of fantastic food and a vibrant public realm is the area around the ball fields in Red Hook. For the average New Yorker the sense that she has stepped into another world, and the variety of the city.

The future of the vendors is in doubt: First the Department of Parks and Recreation and now the Department of Health (DOH) have made noises about revoking their permits and shutting the stands down. The issue for park-goers is that the permits were artificially low in prices, a problem that has since been resolved, but that led the DOH to take notice and start looking around. While there were no specific complaints about the quality or safety of the food, the DOH declared that the vendors weren’t in compliance with regulations, for reasons including a lack of running water on-site and that the food is typically not prepared in commercial kitchens but in homes. The reaction from the food community has been near hysteria, and well-known chefs made pilgrimages to publicize the vendors’ plight, while Senator Charles Schumer weighed in with his hopes for a compromise. There appears to have been some progress in that most vendors agreed to take the two-day food safety course from the DOH, which in turn is considering other ways to bring the ball field vendors into compliance. They will be allowed to finish out the season through October 21.

The loss of the ball field vendors would not just be a loss for fans of cheap and delicious tacos, it would be a loss for people who love the richness and variety of the public realm in New York City. While the DOH is absolutely correct in working to monitor the quality of the food we eat, it seems to be missing the forest for the trees. Hundreds and hundreds of people come out to the Red Hook ball fields each weekend, and so perhaps it is in the city’s interest to develop some kind of infrastructure to support this entrepreneurial activity, which in turn has created a beloved local institution—and a great public space—open to everyone.
THE ARCHITECT’S NEWSPAPER & AFNY INVITE YOU TO PARTICIPATE IN AN INTERACTIVE DESIGN DISCUSSION GROUP ON HOSPITALITY TRENDS TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 2007 NYC, 7:00 PM RSVP BY SEPTEMBER 18TH 2007 EMAIL TO COURTNEY@GOTHAMPR.COM OR CALL AT 212.352.2147 DISCUSSING NEW COLORS, MATERIALS, FINISHES & INSTALLATIONS VIA NEW HOSPITALITY PRODUCTS IN DEVELOPMENT BY NEO-METRO® SPONSORED BY NEO-METRO & AF NEW YORK

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the RFQ. The selection committee, which was chaired by Laura Bush, included critic
a reversal, as Stern is one of the country's
tended to favor high profile architects such
Pelli, HOK, Beck Architecture, Lake/Flato, and
other sources have reported that Pelli Clarke
studio of Page Southerland Page, though
most prominent architects," he said.
In that sense the selection is something of
less well-known local or regional firms.
“In that sense the selection is something of
art historian Benjamin Hufbauer, author
final site for the library has not been selected
Stern called the Library a "career
The Library has generated controversy on
donaldation. "We wanted to create an open program that would be as available and
accessible as possible," said architect Jan Lotz of the PARA design team when describing the recently opened 24-hour bar and coffee shop, Macri Park. The design "creates a loop of public circulation through a private space," according to the architects, by directing you from the preexisting public space, Macri Park, to a designed private landscape at the rear of the bar. Large, open glass doors recessed into the walls entice you to enter this loop. Once inside the private domain of the bar, your path is seamlessly manipulated in the open layout. The backyard beckons via one entrance as your path then loops into exiting the yard via another. The pathway between the open glass doors at the bar's front and rear is connected by an intricate, undulating ceiling of wooden beams that add to the fluidity of the room's circulation. This unique openness cleverly allows the public to simultaneously experience both its interior and exterior environments.

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On August 28, Governor Spitzer vetoed a bill that would have increased building inspections on sites with potentially dangerous violations of the building code. Assemblyman James F. Brennan of Brooklyn introduced the bill, which would add a new section to the administrative code defining exactly which violations qualified as hazardous and would also require the Department of Buildings to inspect sites every 60 days until the dangerous conditions were resolved. As the law now stands, the DOB only inspects every three or four months.

Brennan introduced bill A07800 in April based on hearings in which community boards and citizens testified on unsafe situations. While the assembly had passed the bill on June 22, it was not until a fire in the Deutsche Bank building on August 18 killed two firefighters that many questions were raised in the local press about how the city enforces the code. The proposed bill stated that the DOB does not use the tools at its disposal to monitor sites and ensure corrections, and that “construction companies are aware that they can get away with ignoring stop work orders, fines, court dates.”

Mayor Bloomberg, opposed to the measure, had written to Spitzer on August 23, urging the veto. According to an August 29 article in the New York Times, Bloomberg claimed that the new law would have required an extra $4 million to pay for the inspections, would impose a burden on the DOB, and would interfere with owners’ rights to fix problems within a reasonable time frame.

In an interview with Brennan, he claimed that he had not yet seen the letter Bloomberg had written. However, he states that the bill does address the concerns raised since exemptions would be granted if the violator appeared before the Environmental Control Board. Brennan also responded to the city’s claim that the law would interfere with the new code, which adopts much of the International Building Code and becomes effective on July 1, 2008. He suggests that, though the new code will change the classification of violations, the Building Commissioner would have the ability to define what is and isn’t hazardous, avoiding conflicts. Brennan says his bill was “an effort to change the culture of inspections to an aggressive process” that doesn’t allow problems to fester and calls the suggestion that the cost is too high “ridiculous.

Four million a year is a worthwhile expense.”

SARAH F. COX
A poll once found that more Americans can name all five family members of the Simpsons than the five freedoms guaranteed by the First Amendment. D’oh! Thanks to a prominent new Syracuse University building by Polshek Partnership Architects, though, students there are getting a crash course on the foundational text.

Appearing six feet high in the glass facade of the new building for the S. I. Newhouse School of Public Communications—known on campus as Newhouse III—at the university’s entrance are the words: “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.”

Dean David Rubin teaches First Amendment law at the journalism and communications school, and it was his idea to highlight the amendment in the school’s new building. When the architects came up with the concept of placing the text on the glass facade, the idea of “wrapping the building in the First Amendment took my breath away,” he said. Accompanying the architectural flourish, the school has proclaimed the new academic year the Year of the First Amendment, with talks and screenings on the theme.

Wanting its new Weill Greenberg Center to reflect a non-institutional identity, Cornell University’s Weill Medical College challenged Polshek Partnership, who envisioned a curtain wall system folded and creased into elegant facets. To transform this design into reality, they relied on Permasteelisa Cladding Technologies, who helped make a complicated feat of engineering look organic and simple.

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Reflected on the glass facade of a new building (above) at Syracuse University. A three-story atrium (below) will serve as the social heart of the school.
As a home for the newly-created Institute for the Study of the Ancient World, 15 East 84th Street—an early 20th-century townhouse—had just about everything you’d want: a stately facade, wood-paneled chambers, proximity to the Met. The thing it lacked, however, was the one amenity that the Institute’s co-founders, the Leon Levy Foundation and New York University, could not do without: an impressive library. As a degree-granting center for graduate research, Ancient World needed not only a book repository to store its world famous collection, but an inspiring space that would also serve as a symbol of its scholarly mission.

Enter Selldorf Architects, who were hired to transform the antiquated residence into a living, breathing center for the study of antiquity. “This being a turn-of-the-century structure, it didn’t really have one room that totally made sense [as] a library,” said Annabelle Selldorf. Undaunted, the architects scoured together a few schemes on how to remedy this flaw.

Surprisingly, their clients at Leon Levy and NYU opted for the most ambitious, and expensive, of them all. That scheme went in a direction that would also serve as a symbol of its scholarship, but an inspiring space that would also serve as a symbol of its scholarly mission.

Selldorf Architects did much more than build a new library. They lowered a portion of the first floor to make the space ADA compliant; extended a grand spiral staircase up one floor while maintaining its historic character; built a new egress stair tower topped by a water tank; and upgraded the building’s systems. But the library is the most surprising feature, if for no other reason than that it shows that, when it really matters, clients will sometimes reach deeper into their pockets. “I was really impressed that the client was able to make that leap and opt for something that makes it a better and more interesting space,” said Selldorf. “It showed that architecture can transform activity in a meaningful way.”
WITH AN EYE ON THE WEATHER, MTA WEIGHS A FARE HIKE

TRYING TO STAY AFLOAT

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority's board will meet on September 26 amid controversy over plans to raise fares and tolls that executive director Elliot (Lee) Sander disclosed at the agency's last board meeting. Since that meeting, an August 8 downpour shut the subways for most of a workday and the city and state comptroller issued reports urging the state to spare the agency from a politically costly fare hike.

The proposed fare and toll hikes, which Sander has declined to break down, comes at a confusing time when the MTA's operations appear frail but its finances seem hearty. On August 9, a day after the downpour and a freak tornado stalled Metro-North railroad service affecting every subway line, Sander told reporters that he would create a task force to recommend enduring future nasty weather. "Our sense is that there is a rapidity of storms with ferocity we did not encounter until the last several years," he said, citing climate change as a cause. But the MTA's cash position has also grown immensely in recent years, which Sander does not expect to continue. Taxes from Wall Street profits and real estate helped the agency to a record-high $960 million cash balance this year. Yet Sander said at the July 25 board meeting that looming debt service will force it to hike combined fares and tolls by six-and-a-half percent next year unless these receipts remain implausibly hale.

Nonetheless, leading fiscal politicians hastened to denounce a fare-hike strategy. On August 10, city Comptroller William C. Thompson proposed $728 million in savings that he said would obviate a fare hike. His prescription hinges on persuading the state to apply a downstate transit fund, similar to the one recently put in place upstate. State Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli followed on August 27 with a report questioning Sander's cost controls. (Sander's preliminary cash plan devotes $648 million for debt payoffs, energy contracts, and pensions.) DiNapoli asks the MTA to delay a decision until Governor Eliot Spitzer releases his budget in January and the statewide panel reviewing Mayor Michael Bloomberg's proposed congestion charge issues funding recommendations in March.

Sander, who has a reputation for knowing his boss' intentions, declines to assume new subsidies. Instead, he seems to be preparing for new grumbling. The day he announced the potential hikes, he proposed funding a competition among staff to design upgrades in subway stations. The day after the storm, he promised the next storm would bring smoother service. "I have the authority to ask staff to do things they don't normally do," he said.

GIO PONTI: INIMITABLE MODERNIST

Post-war Italian design has a verve that's hard to resist, and Gio Ponti—poet, painter, industrial designer, and founding editor of Domus magazine, was a master at crafting rigorous but sensuously appealing designs. Through October 16, Sebastian + Barquet Gallery at 544 West 24th Street is holding a sale exhibition of over 20 pieces, including the burled walnut secretaire (right) from the 1930s. "Gio Ponti is once again valuable in the market," said gallery owner Ramis Barquet, "not only for his designs but also because he was one of the last post-war designers to hand-craft his designs as opposed to mass producing them."

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The General Theological Seminary (GTS) in Chelsea is set to receive the largest geothermal heat pump system in the New York City area. This fall, with the opening of the Desmond Tutu Education Center, located in three renovated neo-gothic buildings along 10th Avenue, the first phase comprising eight wells will go online, heating and cooling the buildings without the need for fossil fuels.

The standing column wells had to be carefully positioned to avoid NYC Water Tunnel No. 3. Beyer Blinder Belle added a flourish to the manhole covers that will cap the wells along the sidewalk below.

In all, GTS will install 22 such wells—drilled into the sidewalk and linked to mechanical rooms throughout the city-block-wide Chelsea Square campus—as part of a general restoration and modernization of the 196-year-old seminary being completed by Beyer Blinder Belle (BBB).

Geothermal heat pumps work on a heat exchange system by harnessing the constant temperature deep beneath the earth's surface, which is about 55 degrees Fahrenheit. In the winter, when the air above ground is cooler than that below, the system transfers heat into the buildings. The inverse occurs during the summer.

Many geothermal systems exist, but the one being installed at GTS is a standing column system, which circulates actual ground water from a 1,500-foot-deep well through an electrical heating and cooling system. GTS decided to go geothermal for economic, environmental, and aesthetic reasons. The geothermal system, which exists entirely underground and in basement rooms, avoids the need for unsightly cooling towers that would mar the historic aspect of the seminary's landmark buildings. GTS also wants to reduce its carbon footprint. A study conducted four years ago by BBB and engineers Edwards & Zuck estimated that within the first ten years of the geothermal system's operation the seminary would reduce its carbon dioxide emissions by more than 14,000 tons.

The system also makes economic sense, in the long view. Geothermal systems are much more expensive to install than conventional heating and cooling systems, but they are more efficient and thus cheaper to operate over time and require little maintenance. While the original feasibility study predicted that it would take nine years to recoup upfront costs, that estimate is now in the 18-year range due mainly to a high level of monitoring that has been imposed by the seminary's neighbors, who fear the wells will leak into their property, and the city, whose new Water Tunnel Number 3 runs beneath the site. "But the institution plans to be there for ever," said Frederick Bland, BBB's managing partner. "If they can't justify the cost we're in bad shape."
This tower, which is adjacent to a planned symphony hall by Santiago Calatrava, features a curtain wall that extends approximately nine stories above the building, curving inward to create a dramatic presence on the Atlanta skyline and establish a dialogue with Philip Johnson’s One Atlantic Center. The firm also tapered one side of the building in deference to the site lines of the symphony hall. The ground floor features an indoor public garden, while the offices sit atop a 1200-space parking garage that is integrated into the base of the building.

Chilton refers to the 1.1-million-square-foot headquarters for the California state pension fund, or CalPERS, as a “breakout project.” Built across the street from an existing headquarters building, Pickard Chilton created an urban campus that balances the need for more space with the community’s desire for an active, permeable streetscape. A through street was preserved through the building, with catwalks connecting the upper floors. A glass entrance pavilion creates a focal point uniting the two buildings. The lantern-like tower requires no air conditioning due to natural ventilation and the building is topped with photovoltaic panels.

Decidedly more contemporary than its neighbor upstream, 200 North Riverside reminded this writer of Pei Cobb Freed's elliptical tower at La Defense in Paris. At 50 stories, this tower is shorter than 300 North LaSalle, but its design is more distinctive, notably its eyelet crown, which will include a sky terrace. Built over existing railroad tracks, 200 North Riverside will also include ground floor retail, restaurants, and underground parking. A conference room above the main lobby includes a generous balcony overlooking the river and downtown.

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There is always a name behind the levers of FSB.
SEEKING PROPOSALS FOR DEVELOPMENT

New York City Economic Development Corporation is seeking proposals for a planning study and conceptual design for the renovation of Fordham Plaza, a thriving public space in the Bronx.

RESPONSES ARE DUE NO LATER THAN 4:00 p.m. on Wednesday, October 10, 2007. Submission guidelines and requirements are outlined in the RFP, which can be downloaded at www.nycedc.com/rfp, or pick up at NYCEDC, 110 William Street, 6th floor, New York, NY, Monday - Friday between 9:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m.


depth affection for landmarks such as the Rainberg, she remarked. “These rocks, to them, are almost like our monuments and our towers here” in New York, she said. To give townspeople access to the cliff, the firm designed a public path and adjoining canal between the rock face and the development. This stroke of inspiration was key to winning the competition last year, she says. The new buildings will be no more than eight stories high to allow visual access between them so as not to obstruct the view of the Rainberg from other parts of town. Once a quarry site, the cliff’s irregular shapes served as inspiration for the apartment buildings’ striking angular forms.

“Conceptually, the shapes and the forms of these building blocks become almost like chunks of rock that we chiseled right from the mountain,” she explained. Next she hopes to work with other sorts of sheer monuments: the manmade kind. “The firm is exploring possibilities for building a tower in New York City,” she said. L0

NO REPS FROM STATEN ISLAND OR BRONX ON CONGESTION COMMISSION

Amid all the other controversies surrounding Mayor Bloomberg’s congestion pricing plan, the biggest—or at least the one with the most potential for political fallout—may still be looming. On August 14, the federal government pledged $354 million to the project, triggering the start of the planning process and the appointment of a 17-member advisory commission. The following week, appointees were announced. According to critics, not only are almost all of them already on record as being in favor of the plan, there are no representatives from two boroughs likely to experience dramatic side effects—Staten Island and the Bronx. A spokesperson for Councilmember Michael McMahon of Staten Island said, “The council member had asked the Mayor to appoint someone from Staten Island. The fact that he didn’t makes it more difficult for him to support the plan.”

According to census figures cited by Bruce Schaller, a transportation policy expert at New York University, only 28 percent of Manhattan-bound commuters from Queens, Brooklyn, and Staten Island (no figures for the Bronx were available) will be affected by the proposed $8 fee for cars, which would be imposed below 86th Street from Monday to Friday, 6am to 6pm. Staten Island has been singled out as having the weakest public transit service in the city, and its community leaders want to make sure the city follows through on the possible implementation of improved bus service, among other measures to ease concerns. Staten Island lawmakers agreed that the lack of representation on the 17-member commission was an especially regrettable oversight in this regard.

Mayor Bloomberg, Governor Eliot Spitzer, City Council speaker Christine Quinn, State Senate majority leader Joseph Bruno, and Assembly speaker Sheldon Silver each had three appoint­ments. The commission has the authority to interrogate the proposal and either recommend the plan’s implementation in its current form, or suggest amendments or even alternatives. Critics see congestion pricing as a punitive tax and undeserved burden on middle-class com­muters, and have recommended alternatives to the city’s traffic problems. Councilmember Lewis Fidler of Brooklyn has suggested revisiting the long talked-about freight tunnel between New Jersey and Brooklyn, which, he says, would take up to a million trucks off city streets annually. Others argue that already established laws against double-parking and “blocking the box” would provide dramatic improvement if actually enforced. According to a telephone poll taken by the Gotham Gazette, 20 Council members are already either in support of or at least leaning toward supporting the Mayor’s plan; 11 are against or leaning against it; 16 are still undecided. Councilmember McMahon is on record as backing the Mayor’s approach, but if the political process begins to look like it’s rigged he—and perhaps others—may feel compelled to change their minds.

DAVID GILES
SCARY GEHRY
As though Atlantic Yards were not enough of a headache, Gehry Partners have undertaken another massive mixed-use, arena-anchored project. On August 28, city officials in Lehi, Utah, 30 miles south of Salt Lake City, approved plans for an 85-acre residential and entertainment complex. Though controversy free, the Lehi project has some similarities to its Brooklyn sibling: there is a basketball team—the expansion Utah Flash—and a tallest building—a 450-foot hotel that will tower over the state. And, naturally, the buildings will be shiny and curvaceous.

GOING MAD
Two months after Barbara Bloemink quit the Museum of Art and Design (MAD) as its director (“New Director Departs MAD,” 14_09.05.2007), the venerable craft museum has scored a major curatorial coup. Lowery Stokes Sims, the former Studio Museum director and former MoMA curator renowned for her expertise in contemporary African, Latino, Native and Asian-American art, will join MAD’s curatorial staff this fall.

RUSSIAN IN
RMJM’s planned 1,300-foot Gazprom headquarters has drawn ire in St. Petersburg because of its obtrusive place on an otherwise vacant low-rise skyline. Now, the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has threatened to revoke the city’s World Heritage status, awarded in 1990. “If the situation does not change we will seriously be considering putting the site on a list of sites that are in danger,” UNESCO deputy director Marcio Barbosa said at a press conference on August 31. In June, the World Monuments Fund included the St. Petersburg skyline on its “Watch List of 100 Most Endangered Sites.”

G’BYE, MATE
Peggy Deamer’s trip down under came to an abrupt end when she resigned as dean of the Auckland School of Architecture on August 17, less than a year after assuming the position. The former assistant dean at Yale reportedly left over a dispute with Sharman Pretty, head of the Department of Creative Arts at Auckland University, concerning the architecture school’s autonomy. Students rallied in her defense in no small part because terminals are coming.
RadioShack was looking for an innovative design that would reflect their transition from a "traditional" office environment to a new corporate culture of connectivity and collaboration.

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In the realm of architectural photography two figures stand alone in terms of their impact on how we view, consider, and consume images of modern design and architecture. Ezra Stoller on the East Coast and Julius Shulman on the West Coast are the acknowledged masters of their discipline, influencing a generation of younger photographers, including myself. Shulman, who will turn 97 in October, continues to produce and occasionally still accepts the odd commission. Architectural photography, often brilliant in technique, can be staid in concept. Most architects who commission photographs are not looking for individual expression, but rather a well-crafted document of the subject building. Julius Shulman's images defy this formula and although he will forever be identified with West Coast pioneers in architecture such as Richard Neutra, John Lautner, and the architects of the Case Study Houses in Los Angeles, his iconic photographs have burned themselves into the popular imagination, transcending their subject to become objects in themselves, independent of the buildings they depict.

Richard Barnes
Richard Barnes:
How did you get started on a career in architectural photography, at a time when there was really no established field of work in photographing architecture?

Julius Shulman:
My architectural work began when I met Richard Neutra by chance in March 1936. I had been going to UCLA for five years and spent two more years up in Berkeley when I realized this wasn’t what I wanted to do. Here, I had spent several years walking through the campus and going to lectures without any direction in my life. I was living with a friend in a two-bedroom apartment—$25 a month, by the way—when one morning I woke up at 3:00 a.m. and the thought entered my mind, 'Julius, you better go home.' It was a signal. But I did have a little Vest Pocket Kodak from my parents. Then by chance this young man, an apprentice in Neutra’s office, said he wanted to show me a house that had just been completed by Neutra. I said, 'Who’s Neutra?' I had never met an architect before but I went to the house—it was the Kun House—and took six snapshots with my little Kodak, made some 8x10 prints, and gave them to him. Immediately after that, this fellow called me up and said, 'Mr. Neutra loved the photographs and he’d like to meet you this coming Saturday.'

I went down to the studio in Silver Lake. I met Neutra who said he’d never seen such photographs and he wanted extra copies. He asked who I was and was I studying architecture or photography? When I told him I was at the university doing nothing, he said, 'Would you like to take more photographs for me?' Boom! So on March 5, 1936, I became a photographer.

Were there other architects you met and worked with at the time?
Well, that same day Neutra told me about another apprentice, named [Raphael] Soriano, who’d just done his first house up in the hills above Silver Lake. So I drove up there and met him the same day. We hit it off beautifully; he was sitting on the floor eating a sandwich. He gave me a sandwich; I sat down on the rug and we talked for about two hours. ‘Now that you’ve met Neutra,’ he said, ‘would you like to take more photographs for me?’ Boom! So on March 5, 1936, I became a photographer.

Above: Weston, Byles & Rudolph’s Roberts Residence, Malibu, California, 1953.
Right: Herb Greene’s Cunningham Residence, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, 1964.
acres up in the Hollywood Hills, I hired Soriano who was a good friend by then.

Why would you hire Soriano, and not Neutra?

Soriano was so wonderfully friendly and warm. Neutra was fine, but he wasn’t my kind of person. I did work with him from 1936 until he died and it was through Neutra that I was destined to become a ‘world famous’ photographer. No question about that.

Do you think your images also helped to make him a ‘world famous’ architect?

(Laugh) It takes two, I guess. But I think it was just destiny that I became an architectural photographer. Before I met Neutra, I had no idea, no indication, no inkling of what I was going to do with my life. But at the time there was no such thing as an architectural photographer. Maybe there were photographers who did commercial work, but you really carved out a whole new field.

Maybe. But in the course of my work I started seeing work published in magazines. Ezra Stoller came a little later, true, in the late 1930s to early 1940s, but up in San Francisco there was Roger Sturtevant—we became good friends—and Ulrich Meisei in Dallas. Then, of course, there was Hedrich Blessing in Chicago; and then, Maynard Parker who was a commercial photographer in Los Angeles. In those days, magazines called commercial photographers. Elizabeth Gordon of House Beautiful called Parker to do her house and he was really good. But, really, there was just a handful of us.

Did you have a sense as you took them that some of your images transcended the documents you were producing for the architects—the view of the two women at Pierre Koenig’s Case Study House #22 comes instantly to mind? Or was it something about LA the city itself that shaped your approach?
No, I'll tell you what happened. From that very first photograph that I took of the Kun House, I found I could just catch things on film that we—the architect and myself—didn't see ourselves or didn't even realize existed. Benedikt Taschen [publisher of the new book] says I extract the essence of a place.

What about Los Angeles? What was it like when you arrived?

It was a really particular moment. LA had become a mecca for people from all over the world. Everyone wanted to come. Even my father who had a small clothing business and a 75-acre orange grove wrote to his friend, 'Max! You've got to come. The streets are paved in gold'—he meant the orange grove. But back then in 1920 when we came to California from New York, the population in Los Angeles was about 576,000. It was a small town. If you had stayed out East and, instead of working for Neutra, Ain, Koenig, and the rest, you worked for Saarinen, Gropius, and Mies (although they were later, after the war). But let's say you'd lived on the East Coast, how would your work have been different?

I wouldn't have become a photographer! I wouldn't have been taking those snapshots while I was wandering around Berkeley. I did have a friend who was a writer and he had a nice little office in Rockefeller Center in the 1940s. He said I should open an office in New York. Without any hesitation, I said, 'I love New York!' You see, I was born in Brooklyn. But I was already established in Los Angeles and all the architects jumped at me because there was no other photographer who did architecture. At any level.

How did you get along with the individual architects? Did you consider them friends. Did you learn anything from them?

I established close friendships with them all. I seemed to speak their language, not only with my camera. With Gregory Ain, there was something about his architecture that I liked, and my liking the work made me respect it, and as a result I was able to create these great compositions. I could transcend or transfigure or translate what the architect saw in his own work. Something just came through. They didn't know how I did it; they'd just shake their heads. Even Frank Lloyd Wright wrote me a letter about my photographs of Taliesin West: 'How did you ever achieve such beautiful photographs?' Doesn't matter: the point is, it's a gift. I was raised close to nature, maybe that's part of it. My spirit is close to nature.

Regarding your technique, you have a great facility with lighting and also for using people in your photographs. You used color film early on and your images have this
naturalness to them which is also, and I realize this is contradictory, strangely theatrical, without seeming forced or over the top. Can you talk about that?

As a matter of fact, it came home to me just recently when Paul Goldberger wrote in the New Yorker that if I hadn’t become a photographer, I might have been a good lighting expert. And it’s true that one of my innate qualities is knowing how to use lighting. I don’t use it to dramatize but to express what the architect wants. When I line up something, you never see the source of the light, but you do know it’s there.

Most photographers today rely on Polaroids, or computers, to test for composition and lighting before committing the scene to film. You couldn’t do that all and yet you still achieved these amazing results. Most photographers I knew did not use flash bulbs before the days of strobe lighting. I would use flood lights then put flash lights in to balance the indoor and outdoor lighting intensity. As a result my lighting appeared very natural and balanced. And then I used people—not abundantly but more than most—to occupy the space, not posing, but doing something the space was designed for. Neutra didn’t like it when I started putting in people. He didn’t want them. He didn’t want anything to attract attention away from his architecture.

I read somewhere that in one of your most iconic and famous images of all—the Kaufman House in Palm Springs—you used people and Neutra wasn’t happy about it. But what makes that photograph really work for me is the figure in the foreground. Were you using her as a “gobo” (go between) to block the light?

Yes. That’s Mrs. Kaufman. And what happened is this: It was a very complex composition and that one photograph took me 45 minutes. I was supposed to be doing the interiors. But when I went out there I saw how beautiful the twilight was, and I knew it wouldn’t last long. Mr. Neutra grabbed my elbow and said we had a lot more interiors to do, but I stood away from his grasp and ran outside to set up the camera. I knew exactly where I wanted to stand. Inside, the floor lamps and the table lamps were all burning. Outside the sky was beautiful and I asked Mr. Kaufman who was standing there with Mrs. Kaufman and Neutra, to turn on the pool light. But the light was too intense and it was facing in the direction of the camera so I laid down a mat and asked Mrs. Kaufman to please lie down a moment so her head blocked the pool light. She asked me not to take too long because it was hard propping herself up on her elbow. I counted the three seconds. One. Two. Three. Did Neutra know what you were trying to do?

Not yet later.

In 2006, Richard Barnes was a recipient of the Rome Prize from the American Academy in Rome. Murmur, an exhibition comprising his photographs from Rome, is currently on view at the Center for the Arts in San Francisco and Nodelt Gallery in New York through October.

Photographs by Julius Shulman from the forthcoming 2-volume Julius Shulman: Modernism Rediscovered (Taschen).
A 512-page survey of contemporary interiors, spanning 25 years and encompassing more than 450 projects scattered across a spectrum of countries, loaded with more than 300 drawings and triple that number of color photographs certainly represents a hefty enterprise. And Contemporary World Interiors, Susan Yelavich's monumental new compendium of sublime homes, audacious offices, radical museums, groundbreaking schools, novel hotels, and outrageous boutiques weighs in at six pounds. Yet, in many ways, it is from Yelavich's own powers of perception that the book draws its real substance.

Interiors, as the author implies, have long suffered a reputation for being the bubbly airhead clinging to architecture's arm. Stemming from biases engrained by both history and convention, it is an image now unrelentingly reinforced by those (including design journalists like myself) who would champion the interiors industry. "Popular media coverage of the interior as a leaky vessel of trends has reduced a deeply significant aspect of human behavior to little more than shopping lists," Yelavich rightly argues in her introduction. Within this familiar milieu—flooded as it is by mawkish home makeover shows and fawning fixations on consumer goods—Yelavich's treatment of her subject offers a timely riposte.

That's not to say that the book is short on eye candy; to the contrary, it overflows with it. But, by exploring 11 interior typologies, Yelavich traces an expansive narrative emerges. In running text, she tackles one project after another, fleshing out a postideological landscape liberated by the "breezes of iconoclasm and eclecticism," she writes, while sparing the reader tedium with her sharp prose and adroit insights. Indeed, while the book is not an academic study—nor is it meant to be—it is shaped by flashes of analytical brilliance. For Yelavich, consumers are "no longer awed by the seductions of the retail..." and encompassing more than triple that number of color photographs and more than 300 drawings and a hefty enterprise. And Contemporary World Interiors, Susan Yelavich's monumental new compendium of sublime homes, audacious offices, radical museums, groundbreaking schools, novel hotels, and outrageous boutiques weighs in at six pounds. Yet, in many ways, it is from Yelavich's own powers of perception that the book draws its real substance.

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and social well-being. In another equally distributed level of economic diate context, in order to ensure an instance, she insists that architecture integration with the project's imme­ identities, and that ensures a close interests and regional particularities, architect to negotiate commercial example, we are told, "It is up to the experience economy that readers may soon feel exhausted. For architect so many responsibilities in go there. Kiingmann assigns the entitled "Beyond Bilbao" does not really Bilbao, of course, but a chapter enti­ elite cultural cachet. There is always anything more public-minded than built brands for the purpose of commercial and visionary impulses. Through branding, a some of the architects she accuses might coexist is already occupied by the excitement of an uninterrupted by a section on "residential brand­ deep, but Kiingmann intersperses a "residential brand­" that reads like an ad in an upscale shelter magazine: "Santiago Calatrava's 80 South Street tower, composed of an offset stack of 45-foot glass cubes...combines the utopian ideal of suburban living with the view, have more or less gone along. According to Davis and Monk, the imperatives of hypercapitalist frenzy have dictated an "unprecedented spontaneous architectural gestures: walled enclaves, giant supermalls, theme park "downtowns." The architecture and planning professions, in this view, have more or less gone along. The weakness of Evil Paradises, as with so much writing in the "neoliberalism as scourge" vein, is its silence on the question of how, short of fomenting political revolt, an urbanist or architect sympathetic to its arguments might actually respond. If Klingmann's Brandscapes over­ hymes architects, claiming larger-than-life roles for them on the societal stage, this book so diminishes them as to create a sense of futility. As a result, Evil Paradises, for its prose virtuosity, will likely inspire only pangs of conscience, while Brandscapes has the better chance of spurring architects to view their profession differently.

Laura Wolf-Powers Joins the City and Regional Planning Faculty at the University of Pennsylvania in January.

In Inner Workings continued from page 21 "duration period," architects are in a position to unite commercial impulses with visionary and even healing ones. Through branding, a new architectural avant garde may find itself with room to maneuver. In the end, Klingmann's central argument is unconvincing, partly because the space in which com­ mercial and visionary impulses might coexist is already occupied by some of the architects she accuses of excessive detachment, such as Rem Koolhaas, she marshals few if any examples of architects who have built brands for the purpose of anything more public-minded than elite cultural cachet. There is always Bialos, of course, but a chapter enti­ tled "Beyond Bilbao" does not really go there. Klingmann assigns the architect so many responsibilities in the experience economy that readers may soon feel exhausted. For example, we are told, "It is up to the architect to negotiate commercial interests and regional particularities, capitalistic appropriation, and cultural interests in a way that is responsive to public concerns, that reflects rather than displaces urban identities, and that ensures a close integration with the project's imma­ diate context, in order to ensure an equally distributed level of economic and social well-being."

In another instance, she insists that architecture ought to be going beyond representa­ tional images to provide clients with "new organizational structures." Urbanists may find themselves more than exhausted. The sociology and planning literatures on urban branding and place-making runs deep, but Klingmann intensifies a few references to the work of Sharon Zukin and Leonie Sandercock with mindless cheerleading and asser­ tions that architects can rescue cities from corporate banality. It is especially galling to see the chapter section on urban branding followed by a section on "residential brand­" that reads like an ad in an upscale shelter magazine: "Santiago Calatrava's 80 South Street tower, composed of an offset stack of 45-foot glass cubes...combines the utopian ideal of suburban living with the view, have more or less gone along. The weakness of Evil Paradises, as with so much writing in the "neoliberalism as scourge" vein, is its silence on the question of how, short of fomenting political revolt, an urbanist or architect sympathetic to its arguments might actually respond. If Klingmann's Brandscapes over­ hymes architects, claiming larger-than-life roles for them on the societal stage, this book so diminishes them as to create a sense of futility. As a result, Evil Paradises, for its prose virtuosity, will likely inspire only pangs of conscience, while Brandscapes has the better chance of spurring architects to view their profession differently.

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The late Japanese designer Isamu Kenmochi was famed for his chairs, especially the Round Rattan Chair. Designed in the 1960s, the chair (measuring 28-by-32-by-28 inches) and accompanying Rattan Settee (28-by-51-by-31 inches) combine Japanese handcraftsmanship with Western technological innovations in industrial design and production. Their rounded designs include curvaceous indentations, providing space for wool cushions. The pieces were reproduced for the Design: Isamu Noguchi and Isamu Kenmochi exhibit launching September 20 at the Noguchi Museum, and at the museum store the reproduced chair (above) and settee are also available for sale for the first time in the United States.

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