Fore!

Moshulu Golf Course in the Bronx is one of a dozen run by the city’s Department of Parks and Recreation. Its compact layout is typical of New York’s urban courses—nine holes, tree-lined fairways, the odd sand bunker—save for one highly unusual obstacle: the $2.1 billion drinking water treatment facility under construction on what used to be the driving range.

When this heavily secured compound is completed in 2012, it’s due to be topped by far more than just new turf. Grimshaw and landscape architect Ken Smith have designed one of the largest and most intensive green roofs to date, which is also a fully functioning driving range. And an irrigation system for the golf course. And an integrated security program for the facility below. Think Pebble Beach meets the Biosphere meets Rikers.

“The distinction here is it’s not just a green roof, but a performative green roof that needs to provide all these functions,” Smith said in an interview. “I think we’re pushing both the design of the green roof and the design of the golf course in new directions. We’re working to see how far we can push the diversity of the ecology and still adhere to the constraints of the golf course.”

This quietly radical project is the result of a decade of debate over whether or not water from the Croton Reservoir, the smallest of the city’s three, needed treatment after more than a century of going without. That was followed by

FED STIMULUS FUNDS SIDESTEP ARCHITECTURE IN NEW YORK

MONEY FOR NOTHING

The ink is barely dry on the economic-recovery legislation that President Obama signed into law on February 17, but it’s already clear that the $787 billion American Recovery and Reinvestment Act is no prelude to a new New Deal.

During a February 12 conference call with reporters, Senator Charles Schumer and Governor David Paterson confirmed that New York’s share of the spending—an estimated $24.6 billion over the next two years—offers relatively little in the way of grand public projects that many architects envisioned. Rather than funding fresh parks, bridge upgrades, and government-office

FUTURE UNCLEAR FOR OMA’S FIRE-DAMAGED TVCC

Still Standing

Following the spectacular fire that consumed Beijing’s TVCC Building on February 8, questions immediately surfaced about the famed structure’s fate. Would the 141-room Mandarin Oriental hotel be rebuilt? Given the portentous nature of the fire, which was ignited during New Year’s celebrations, would anyone stay if it were? What about the insurance money?

But above all else, the question was not would Rem Koolhaas and Ole Scheeren’s 522-foot tower be rebuilt, but could it even be done? The Office for Metropolitan Architecture and Mandarin Oriental declined to comment, pending a full investigation. Meanwhile, the project’s engineer, Arup, released the following statement: “Until the full facts emerge, we can’t speculate on the causes of the fire or the extent of damage.”

Fortunately, engineers not involved in the project were willing to shed some light on the science and history of fires in highrise structural steel buildings.

First off, the taller the building and the higher the fire, the

HALF IS ENOUGH

MGM Mirage, developer of the $9 billion CityCenter project in Las Vegas (AN 12_07.09.2008), has decided to reduce The Harmon, the Foster + Partners-designed hotel and condo in the all-star complex, from 49 stories to 28. The decision came after Clark County inspectors reported flaws in the installation of rebar once the concrete structure had reached 23 floors, but the recessionary climate also played a role in the scaling back. While the tower could have been repaired and completed as originally planned, Vegas’ dismal housing market led MGM executives to cut The Harmon’s 207 condominium units out of the project altogether, leaving only the 400-room hotel and spa components.

An employee of continued on page 4
Unique solutions call for creativity.
THAT SINKING FEELING

For nearly two decades now, America has responded to the nightmare of global warming with numbing predictability. A report emanates from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change charting an ever-wetter future for the world’s coastal cities. Dire predictions are made, color-coded maps are branded, appalled scientists quoted, and polar bears are invoked. Then, Al Gore’s flip charts notwithstanding, the whole matter is rounded ignored for another few years. And so, on February 17, there stood Mayor Bloomberg at a Rockaway water treatment plant, delivering the grim news once again. The data set this time was a newly released report from the New York City Panel on Climate Change that details a familiar litany of heat waves, rainstorms, sun-drenched inundations, and the onslaught of a 1,000-year flood as often as every seven years. Sobering stuff, indeed. But the Climate Risk Information Workbook mostly confirms what we already knew, that New York should be bracing for summer blackouts, sewer backups, worsening water quality, and snorkelers bobbing in the surf on Water Street. We’ve heard it here before.

Granted, the mayor gets credit for making good on a key PlanNYC promise to actually do something about climate change. Funded by a $350 million Rockefeller Foundation grant, the city’s panel includes respected researchers like Cynthia Rosenzweig of the Goddard Institute for Space Studies and Columbia University’s outspoken geophysicist Klaus Jacob. Its findings will now be taken up by yet another task force of three dozen government agencies, public authorities, and private companies that run the city’s infrastructure and must now figure out how to floodproof New York City.

The report does put a fresh set of numbers to this threat, and the upshot is alarming. By the end of this century, the city’s mean annual temperature will rise as much as 7.5 degrees. Precipitation will increase to 30 percent, and sea levels will rise by 12 to 21 inches. (If Greenland and Antarctic ice continues to heat up, the “rapid ice-melt” scenario could mean a jump of more than four feet. Toss in a storm surge, and you’ve got large chunks of Red Hook, Mill Basin, and the city’s two major airports under water.)

What to be done? To date, we’ve only modest efforts like those at the plant where Bloomberg’s announcement was staged. Mere feet from the ocean, the facility is girding for wave and salt-water damage by hoisting pump motors, circuit breakers, and controls to higher elevations. Elsewhere, the Department of Environmental Protection is reinforcing tide gates and buttressing down floodwalls to protect low-lying infrastructure. These are laudable efforts. But they’ll be cold comfort to the Rockaway Peninsula’s fantastically vulnerable Arverne residents, who’re going to need a dinghy just to make it to the A train.

If New York is getting wetter, architecture ought to be part of the solution, not the problem. Other cities have turned climate change into design opportunities. Holland’s floating houses, flexibly tethered to the mainland, are the stuff of eco-shelter porn. Hamburg’s HafenCity sensibly raises buildings some 24 feet above sea level, turning waterside quays into public promenades. And London’s Thames Barrier—first used defensively more than a quarter-century ago—remains a symbol of future forward thinking.

Whether it’s renaturalizing portions of the Brooklyn waterfront or designing apartment towers that can sustain a routine soaking, New York needs its own sea-level rise. Beyond that, the city must now figure out how to floodproof New York City. The report does put a fresh set of numbers to this threat, and the upshot is alarming. By the end of this century, the city’s mean annual temperature will rise as much as 7.5 degrees. Precipitation will increase to 30 percent, and sea levels will rise by 12 to 21 inches. (If Greenland and Antarctic ice continues to heat up, the “rapid ice-melt” scenario could mean a jump of more than four feet. Toss in a storm surge, and you’ve got large chunks of Red Hook, Mill Basin, and the city’s two major airports under water.)

What to be done? To date, we’ve only modest efforts like those at the plant where Bloomberg’s announcement was staged. Mere feet from the ocean, the facility is girding for wave and salt-water damage by hoisting pump motors, circuit breakers, and controls to higher elevations. Elsewhere, the Department of Environmental Protection is reinforcing tide gates and buttressing down floodwalls to protect low-lying infrastructure. These are laudable efforts. But they’ll be cold comfort to the Rockaway Peninsula’s fantastically vulnerable Arverne residents, who’re going to need a dinghy just to make it to the A train.

If New York is getting wetter, architecture ought to be part of the solution, not the problem. Other cities have turned climate change into design opportunities. Holland’s floating houses, flexibly tethered to the mainland, are the stuff of eco-shelter porn. Hamburg’s HafenCity sensibly raises buildings some 24 feet above sea level, turning waterside quays into public promenades. And London’s Thames Barrier—first used defensively more than a quarter-century ago—remains a symbol of future forward thinking.

Whether it’s renaturalizing portions of the Brooklyn waterfront or designing apartment towers that can sustain a routine soaking, New York needs its own sea-level rise. Beyond that, the city must now figure out how to floodproof New York City. The report does put a fresh set of numbers to this threat, and the upshot is alarming. By the end of this century, the city’s mean annual temperature will rise as much as 7.5 degrees. Precipitation will increase to 30 percent, and sea levels will rise by 12 to 21 inches. (If Greenland and Antarctic ice continues to heat up, the “rapid ice-melt” scenario could mean a jump of more than four feet. Toss in a storm surge, and you’ve got large chunks of Red Hook, Mill Basin, and the city’s two major airports under water.)

What to be done? To date, we’ve only modest efforts like those at the plant where Bloomberg’s announcement was staged. Mere feet from the ocean, the facility is girding for wave and salt-water damage by hoisting pump motors, circuit breakers, and controls to higher elevations. Elsewhere, the Department of Environmental Protection is reinforcing tide gates and buttressing down floodwalls to protect low-lying infrastructure. These are laudable efforts. But they’ll be cold comfort to the Rockaway Peninsula’s fantastically vulnerable Arverne residents, who’re going to need a dinghy just to make it to the A train.

If New York is getting wetter, architecture ought to be part of the solution, not the problem. Other cities have turned climate change into design opportunities. Holland’s floating houses, flexibly tethered to the mainland, are the stuff of eco-shelter porn. Hamburg’s HafenCity sensibly raises buildings some 24 feet above sea level, turning waterside quays into public promenades. And London’s Thames Barrier—first used defensively more than a quarter-century ago—remains a symbol of future forward thinking.
Designer Vera Wang and Gabellini Sheppard Associates have updated a cast-iron building in Soho. Concealing the 2,000-square-foot space’s rough edges, columns are hidden beneath matte plaster and beams tucked within stainless-steel enclosures. Throughout, designers took cues from the couture. “There is a performance aspect to her clothes, which became touchstones for the space’s aesthetic of CityCenter, and change affect the overall rise to an interesting design problem,” said Michael Gabellini. Wang’s chromatoly layers influenced the lighting, created with Tillotson Design Associates, which creates theatrical color planes of lavender, straw, and moonlight. 

———

HALF IS ENOUGH continued
from front page: Halcrow Yolles, the project’s engineer of record, first discovered the construction flaws this summer during a tour of the site. The engineer tipped off Clark County, whose inspectors quickly descended on the development. Their August 8 report named several deficiencies in the reinforcing of link beams between floors six and 20. These included unauthorized torch cuts to the rebar, as well as misaligned and missing cover ties. The country’s report also led to emergency inspections throughout CityCenter, but these revealed no endemic reinforcement failure, and the major- ity of the project remains on track for a December 2009 opening. The opening of The Harmon has been moved back into 2010. Scrutiny for the failures fell upon the project’s general contractor, Perini Building Co., who in turn attempted to shed blame in a litany of recriminations. In a February 6 statement, company presi- dient Craig Shaw pointed an accusatory finger at the designers: “Portions of the structural drawings, as designed and permitted, contained elements of rein- forcing steel that could not be installed as drawn,” he said. He also implicated the rebar contractor, Pacific Coast Steel, as well as the third-party quality control inspector, Converse Consultants, claiming they attempted to smooth over these design conflicts by “modifying the placement of the reinforcing steel.” Regardless of who’s to blame, MGM’s decision gives rise to an interesting design question: How will the height change affect the overall aesthetic of CityCenter, and what can be done to address proportional issues in the tower itself? While neither Foster + Partners nor archi- tect of record Adamson Associates responded to AN’s request for comment, Ehrenkrantz Eckstut & Kuhn Architects (EE&KA), who drafted CityCenter’s master plan, saw the shortening as largely irrelevant to the project as a whole. “The most important aspect was to create build- ings and activity right at the Strip, which to a large extent is new for Las Vegas, where everything in the past had pulled back and you had a big lake or a volcano in front of the hotel,” EE&KA’s Peter Cavalluzi told The Las Vegas Sun. “What we tried to do was bring a level of urbanity into public space. That’s experienced in the first three to five floors, and it doesn’t rely on whether or not you go up another 20 floors.”
POLICY, THE MAKING OF

Days before President Obama unveiled his $275 billion fix for America’s foreclosure crisis, Shaun Donovan, the new Secretary of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), ticked off the grim statistics: 2.3 million foreclosures last year; entire metropolitan areas—Stockton, Las Vegas—with ten percent of their housing stock foreclosed; distressed sales accounting for 45 percent of all homes sold in December.

And yet as Donovan delivered a sneak preview of the administration’s housing agenda at a New York University conference on February 13, he cheerfully admitted that the herculean task before him—restoring the federal government’s tattered credibility on housing issues—remains something of a work in progress. “It’s early for me to be out speaking,” Donovan said with a laugh. “No speech writer, no secretaries—it’s a little bit of a risk.”

Departing from the script was precisely the point at the two-day conference, called A Crisis Is a Terrible Thing to Waste: Transforming America’s Housing Policy and packed with policy heavies like former HUD secretary Henry Cisneros and Rockefeller Foundation president Judith Rodin. While acknowledging the gravity of the crisis, Donovan laid out broadly ambitious goals that should please longtime HUD critics and advance Obama’s campaign pledge of a tightly orchestrated urban policy.

Most importantly, Donovan has landed a seat at the table with top advisors Lawrence Summers, Timothy Geithner, and Christina Romer as they’ve grappled with the nation’s economic collapse. The recovery bill, Donovan said, contains $13.6 billion that will flow through HUD—equivalent to nearly one-third of the agency’s annual budget—and could underwrite solar installations or energy-saving retrofits. More ambitiously, he said, “HUD must be the leader within the administration on thinking about the locational choices that our cities and our metropolitan and rural areas are making, and the impacts they have on climate change.” To that end, Donovan is launching a HUD office of sustainability to be headed by deputy secretary Ron Sims, the Seattle-based county executive who has pioneered the use of coordinated housing, zoning, and transportation policies to attack rampant sprawl.

Elsewhere at the conference, Bruce Katz, the Brookings Institution evangelist who led Obama’s HUD transition team, said that the still-nebulous White House Office of Urban Affairs, to be led by Bronx Borough President Adolfo Carrión, would play a key role in uniting balkanized agencies. Katz blasted the Transportation Department, for instance, calling it “the most unreconstructed agency in the federal government today” as it subsidizes the flight of jobs from urban centers. “DOT and HUD should be joined at the hip,” he said. “(Transit-oriented development) should become the norm rather than a heroic act.” Katz, who will continue advising the administration on urban strategy, sees the White House office as both bully pulpit and think tank, driving innovation across agencies that have been all too friendly toward the status quo. “If this office ends up being a concierge for bankers, then this is a failure,” he warned. It remains to be seen how much headway the team can make in crafting what Katz called “a radically different approach to federalism.” But with the fate of American neighborhoods hanging in the balance, the crisis may indeed be a now-or-never chance to act, as Donovan soberly noted in his remarks. “We have an enormous opportunity, but it will not come again,” he said. “If we waste it, we will have no one to blame but ourselves.”

JEFF BYLES

Look closer at your creative agency.

Does your creative agency challenge you with strategic thinking that goes way beyond the project at hand? Do they feel as comfortable looking at the big picture as they do the tiniest of pixels? If not, take a look at IOMEDIA.

You’ll see something different.

SEQUOIA AT SINAI

A redwood has sprung up on 102nd Street between Madison and Fifth—but don’t blame global warming. The tree is the subject of a photographic mural by Victor Gagliardi in the atrium of Mount Sinai Medical Center’s new Center for Advanced Medicine. Perkins Eastman’s adaptive reuse of a 140,000-square-foot parking garage, originally designed by Emery Roth in 1926, slips a six-story glass curtain wall into the original brick facade. “When you’re waiting for your doctor, you’re waiting in the sunlight,” said Duncan Reid, the project’s lead designer. “We chose the redwood as the image because as a conifer, its strength is year-round, and they grow so old and tall.”

JENNIFER KIRCHELS
These are hard times for the New York City Housing Authority, and its future looks even bleaker. In order to close a looming $195 million deficit in its operating budget, the authority is proposing raising rents on its 406,000 tenants (in 2,600 buildings) and closing dozens of community centers all over the city. But with an authority as large and complex as NYCHA, nothing is ever simple. At the same time as these cuts are being proposed, the authority has just opened an extraordinary new community center in Bedford-Stuyvesant.

The Saratoga Street Community Center is a building of a type not seen in New York since the heyday of postmodernism in the 1980s. It was designed by George Ranalli, Architect and is the firm’s first ground-up building in New York, although Ranalli has completed many interior renovations and has also been an important teacher—and is now dean—at the City College of New York. In a new monograph, Michael Sorkin points to Ranalli’s presence on the design scene: “We know Ranalli’s work so well, in part [as] a byproduct of its easy dissemination over the ether. And because his work is exceptionally widely published and exceptionally well regarded in a representational culture that simply elides the conceptual and the literal and grow(s) gracefully from the long rich line of his sensibility—and is simply there.”

The project comprises the complete renovation of a community center within an 18-story housing tower, plus a 3,500-square-foot addition to hold a new meeting and recreational room (a rental party space on weekends), kitchen, bathrooms, and a new director’s office. It was completed on a shoestring for about $300 per square foot—fairly typical for a NYCHA project—but also manages to achieve a level of thoughtfulness in its detailing and execution that would be impressive for any project, let alone one that is an addition to a public housing complex. What is so unusual, at least within today’s design environment, is its unabashed use of historical references, to Frank Lloyd Wright, Carlo Scarpa, and Raimund Abraham. It’s no pastiche, though. The design shows a sensitivity to composition that makes it feel fresh and autonomous as a work of architecture.

The building not only provides a dignified new community center for an undistinguished NYCHA tower, but anchors its midblock site, creates two usable outdoor spaces (where once there were none), and brings a streetwall to an amorphous urban landscape. The process of constructing such a building can be excruciatingly demanding when value engineers and bureaucrats get their hands on it, and so it’s a feat that this beautifully crafted center actually got built. The materials suggest a far richer patronage, and do the housing authority proud. Credit also goes to Ranalli, who must have fought hard to get (and keep) such a rich palette: Warm limestone, buff-colored ironspot brick, cast stone, and harvested mahogany doors all add up to a compelling composition bringing dignity to its adjacent public housing project and its surrounding urban landscape. “It is an excellent demonstration of how much can be achieved on a very limited budget,” said David Burney, who was design director of NYCHA when Ranalli was commissioned in 2002. And we hope it’s not a never-to-be-repeated accident. WILLIAM MENKING
Havana in the 1950s was a scene of extraordinary architectural creativity, as a postwar surge in the sugar and tourism industries, along with ambitious civic leaders and a cosmopolitan elite, transformed the city into a showcase of progressive architecture. The generation of architects who advanced the modern movement in Cuba with exuberant, avant-garde designs lost one of its finest on January 18, when Max Borges Recio died at age 90 at his home in Falls Church, Virginia. Borges built a remarkable body of work in Cuba during the late 1940s and 1950s, but he will undoubtedly be remembered for the Cabaret Tropicana, the legendary nightclub that came to symbolize the glamour of pre-Revolutionary Havana.

Max Enrique Borges Recio was born into an affluent Havana family in 1918. He studied architecture as an undergraduate at Harvard’s Graduate School of Design. He then returned to Havana and joined the architectural firm of his father, Max Borges del Junco. The senior Borges was a prominent architect, producing important civic, commercial, and residential buildings. (The firm of Max Borges and Sons, incidentally, designed my great aunt’s house in the Vedado section of Havana. Max Sr. and Jr. were friends of my mother’s family in Cuba and, after the Revolution, in northern Virginia.) As a consequence of his social connections, Max Jr., or “Maxito,” as he was known, got an early start with prestigious commissions. His design for the Center for Medicine and Surgery in El Vedado won the Cuban National Architecture Award in 1948, when Borges was only 30.

Major fame arrived in 1951, with the construction of the Tropicana in Havana’s leafy Marianao suburb. Borges had worked with the Spanish-Mexican engineer Félix Candela, whose investigations into thin-shell concrete structures and, in particular, his signature hyperbolic paraboloids were influential throughout Latin America. Borges’ composition of overlapping slices of concrete vaults joined by delicate glass diaphragms in the Tropicana’s “Arcos de Cristal” creates a seemingly weightless enclosure over the 1,700-seat main theater, a sophisticated adult fantasyland without equal.

Borges continued his exploration of thin-shell concrete in the 1953 design for the Club Náutico, a beach club in the Playa district west of Havana. Here the staggered vaults provide shelter from the sun and are heavy enough to withstand hurricanes that routinely batter the shore. Working during the 1950s with his brother Enrique Borges Recio, also an architect, Borges created several celebrated buildings that still stand in Havana, including the Banco Núñez (1957), a minimalist glass box roofed by a series of inverted pyramidal vaults, also designed with Candela. Borges’ own house of 1948 is a refined Corbusian box perched on pilings in Miramar.

After the triumph of Fidel Castro’s revolution in 1959, Borges—by then married with two sons—left the island and settled in Virginia. As a consequence of his social connections, Max Jr., or “Maxito,” as he was known, got an early start with prestigious commissions. His design for the Center for Medicine and Surgery in El Vedado won the Cuban National Architecture Award in 1948, when Borges was only 30.

Major fame arrived in 1951, with the construction of the Tropicana in Havana’s leafy Marianao suburb. Borges had worked with the Spanish-Mexican engineer Félix Candela, whose investigations into thin-shell concrete structures and, in particular, his signature hyperbolic paraboloids were influential throughout Latin America. Borges’ composition of overlapping slices of concrete vaults joined by delicate glass diaphragms in the Tropicana’s “Arcos de Cristal” creates a seemingly weightless enclosure over the 1,700-seat main theater, a sophisticated adult fantasyland without equal.

Borges continued his exploration of thin-shell concrete in the 1953 design for the Club Náutico, a beach club in the Playa district west of Havana. Here the staggered vaults provide shelter from the sun and are heavy enough to withstand hurricanes that routinely batter the shore. Working during the 1950s with his brother Enrique Borges Recio, also an architect, Borges created several celebrated buildings that still stand in Havana, including the Banco Núñez (1957), a minimalist glass box roofed by a series of inverted pyramidal vaults, also designed with Candela. Borges’ own house of 1948 is a refined Corbusian box perched on pilings in Miramar.

After the triumph of Fidel Castro’s revolution in 1959, Borges—by then married with two sons—left the island and settled in Virginia, producing a respectable portfolio of buildings around Washington, D.C. Yet nothing he built in America approaches the genius of his work in Havana. In this sense, Borges’ career is sadly typical of most of the great modernists who exiled themselves from Cuba. Nicolas Quintana, Frank Martinez, Manuel Gutierrez, and the great Mario Románach all had Havana careers equal to that of Borges, but could never fully transplant their talents. (The exception is perhaps Ricardo Porro, who has had a thriving practice in Paris since 1964.)

Borges is survived by his sons Max Borges Olmo, an architect, and Philip Borges Olmo, both of Fairfax County, Virginia, and by his brother Enrique, of Key Biscayne, Florida. Borges also leaves behind the beautiful house that he built for himself and his family in the Lake Barcroft section of Falls Church in 1962. Meticulously detailed in stone, wood, and glass, and filled with plants, it would not be out of place in Marianaq or Playa. It is the only work of true Cuban architecture that he built in the United States.

BELMONT FREEMAN IS AN ARCHITECT IN NEW YORK CITY.
Taubman College thanks you
(for hosting a spring break intern)


TAUBMAN COLLEGE at the University of Michigan

taubmancollege.umich.edu
tirous, and systemized—that is, more like Rowe's modern architecture. To be reductive, their system develops around three continuities of method: the curve-and-cut, the prop-and-strut, and the Bowery-and-Canal. In the first instance, dramatic balconies and canopies slice through fluidly continuous floor-into-wall-into-ceiling surfaces, as with a ballet studio and donor's balcony at Alice Tully. In the second, drawing on the material culture of exhibition and display, as much visual attention is directed toward the devices that support something as to whatever they happen to support (usually a screen): At Alice Tully, this tendency reaches a climax in the artful pair of big columns in the lobby, one vertical, one orthogonal to the 16-degree tilt of the ceiling. In the third continuity, the mechanical vernaculars of a bygone, do-it-yourself downtown (steel plates, Plexiglas panels, cathode-tubes, loft-heaters) are crossbred and perfected. At Alice Tully you can see this behind the lobby bar, where standard restaurant kitchen fittings are tailored into deliciously bespoke stainless steel. These three continuities add up to a bulletproof system. The work is sensitive and ruthless, beautiful and efficient—and, at Alice Tully Hall, evocative of the ardor and labor of its making. But with repetition, such a system can become as insular as Lincoln Center itself. It may be that DS+R will have to eventually subvert the readymade object that is their own system of design if their body of work is to accumulate to an architecture not merely artful but fully art.

THOMAS DE MONCHAUX

The clubhouse and range will seamlessly extend Van Cortlandt Park.
Since the Commodore shut down in 2002, Williamsburg, Brooklyn, has been without a proper movie theater. This deficit will soon end with the opening of The Cassandra, a cinema/café/cabaret on Metropolitan Avenue. More than filling a gap, this new film venue will embody the spirit of the neighborhood’s more recent demographic, catering to a “cinephile audience” with repertory and first-run fare as well as “salacious, fun-loving, late-night programming,” according to the theater’s website.

Caliper Studio has lovingly rendered this erudite yet hedonistic zeitgeist in the theater that is sited in an existing two-story warehouse. The developers—husband-wife team Cassandra Lozano and Mason Rader—are funding the project by adding three floors of for-sale apartments to the roof. The architects took the opportunity to make the facade of this addition more than just cladding for a cash cow, turning it into a glowing, abstracted marquee that calls attention to the theater on this somewhat desolate stretch of Metropolitan Ave. They accomplished this with zinc panels that are studded with backlit cast glass disks, arranged in a pattern that functions both as beacon and allusion.

Both Lozano and Rader had a close relationship with pop artist Roy Lichtenstein, for whom Lozano acted as studio manager from 1990 until Lichtenstein’s death in 1997, and she is now the managing director of the artist’s foundation. The glowing glass disks of the facade were in part inspired by the dots of Lichtenstein’s artwork. In fact, Lozano gave the architects actual templates that the artist used in the creation of his paintings—basically, pieces of paper with holes cut out of them. Caliper used these templates as a starting point, creating drawings based on them in RhinoScript. These drawings came out as undulating planes that the architects then cut to create a pattern of lines that became the layout for the dots. The architects then massaged the patterns in an iterative process that was guided by three criteria: The first was to create a greater density of dots on the left side of the building over the theater entrance as a sort of way-finding device. The second was to create an abstract pattern with an underlying logic, which was supplied by the Lichtenstein templates. The third was purely practical: The glass disks are backlit by LEDs, which come on pre-wired strips with diodes spaced at regular intervals, meaning that the distance between dots had to be carefully planned to match this spacing. Once a layout was created, the architects laid it over the facade and adjusted the lines to fit snugly with the placement of the apartment windows.

Caliper, which is a metalworking studio in addition to a design studio, fabricated and installed the facade itself. Maloya Laser in Long Island cut the actual holes in the zinc panels, but Caliper did all of the detailing and assembled the units in their shop. The zinc panels themselves are 16-gauge and measure two by three feet on average. The architects chose a pre-welded zinc, a patinated surface that requires no paint and is low maintenance—if it gets scratched or dinged, in a matter of time oxidation will return it to its “original” color. The glass disks more or less resemble hockey pucks. They were cast in the Czech Republic with a flange used for a connecting surface. The portion that shows through is approximately two and a half inches in diameter and sticks out from the plane of the wall by about one half of an inch. The disks were structurally adhered to the zinc with VHB tape from 3M, and an adhesion promoter was applied to the glass to strengthen the bond. Caliper mounted the LEDs in threes at the top of each disk, the back-sides of the disks having been sandblasted. These techniques helped to create an even diffusion of light throughout each piece of glass and avoided visible hotspots. It also tamps down light pollution by casting light onto the sidewalk rather than across the street at the neighbors. Set on dimmers to adjust the intensity, the LEDs are wired to 16 transformers embedded behind the facade. With just under 2,000 glass disks, the project only uses about 800 watts altogether. The owners plan to install photovoltaic panels on the roof to match this energy usage.

All assembled, each panel weighs between 10 and 15 pounds. Installing them was a simple process involving scaffolding and drills: The metal facade screws to galvanized steel Z-girts that create an air barrier over exterior sheathing on metal studs. Out of architectural deference, the new addition sits back about a foot from the existing warehouse’s brick, which was maintained to link the project to Williamsburg’s past, even though the entirety of the building was gutted and replaced by a new steel structure. The one exception to this gesture of preservation is at the theater entrance, also set back from the brick, where the shining conglomeration of glowing glass disks descend to a somewhat sober marquee, beckoning the ‘Burg’s hoards of pleasure-seekers to a night of fun and cinematic salacity.
BRIDGE TO ANYWHERE ELSE
The partners at City Desk Studio in Minneapolis do a fair bit of work for the University of Minnesota, so they subscribe to the school's RFQ newsletter. Back in 2006, when they saw that an old skyway was being auctioned off, Bob Ganser, one of three partners at the firm, said they knew they had to check it out. After placing the one and only bid, the skyway was theirs.
The firm has a lot of plans for the 1960s-built skyway, designed by Ed "The Father of Skyways" Baker. The most promising transformation idea would be to turn it into a lake house, Minnesota being the Land of 10,000 Lakes, after all. Ganser said the partners tried briefly to round up support from family and friends, offering 12 timeshares at $100,000 each. Failing that, they turned to Craigslist, where they have been trying to sell it for the past year:
"Skyway for sale—THAT'S RIGHT—AN ACTUAL SKYWAY!—$79,500."
For whatever reason, the listing went viral in January (including a post on the A/N Blog). "There was one small story in a weekly financial paper here," Ganser said. "And then it just caught fire within a week." Since then, the office has been flooded with inquiries, about half of them serious. They range from artist studios to home additions to architects actually in need of skyways.
There has also been interest in moving the thing out of the region, but City Desk is hesitant to do so, and not only because of logistics. Ganser explained that Minneapolis is the birthplace and, arguably, capital of these architectural appendages. "In a way, it's a special object," he said. "It has a special character. It's not just being reused. Especially in this area, it's place defining. It's almost mythical." MC

FALSE BOTTOM
As the recession continues to deepen, so too does the American Institute of Architects' Architecture Billings Index, which reached its lowest level ever in January: 33.3. With the exception of a brief uptick in December, the index has been in decline since September, and has not been above 50—the threshold for rising billings—since January 2008. The one bright spot in an otherwise abysmal month, where every regional and sector reading languished in the 30s or high 20s, was a five-point jump in inquiries, to 43.5, possibly indicative of hopes pegged to the stimulus package.

FULL SPEED AHEAD
Amid all the horse-trading for stimulus dollars, the Obama administration managed to work in an $8 billion provision to jumpstart the nation's high-speed rail network—along with weatherizing houses, one of the president's pet projects. There will also be an annual $1 billion commitment to high-speed rail in the president's standard budget for the next five years, a nearly eight-fold increase from the $1.5 billion President George W. Bush committed last year through 2013. And this could be just the beginning: Obama's chief of staff, Rahm Emanuel, has called high-speed rail the president's "signature issue in the bill."

SOM-E GOOD NEWS
A board member since 1986 and booster for even longer, David Childs was named chairman of the Municipal Art Society on February 23. The Skidmore, Owings & Merrill consulting partner has left his mark across the city and the world, most notably at Ground Zero and at one of the MAS' biggest campaigns, Moynihan Station. He replaces Philip Howard, an attorney and author, who has served for the past decade, and joins Vin Cipolla, the new president taking over for Kent Barwick. Also on the upside, SOM is hiring, part of an expansion of its Health + Science practice at the New York office. Finally, the firm as a whole has been in decline since September, and has not been above 50—the threshold in January: 33.3. With the exception of a brief uptick in December, the index has been in decline since September, and has not been above 50—the threshold for rising billings—since January 2008. The one bright spot in an otherwise abysmal month, where every regional and sector reading languished in the 30s or high 20s, was a five-point jump in inquiries, to 43.5, possibly indicative of hopes pegged to the stimulus package.

LONDON CALLING
Having redefined the Bowery with the New Museum and Toledo with the Glass Pavilion, Tokyo-based SANAA is now set to storm London, if ever so lightly, as designers of this year’s Serpentine Gallery Pavilion. The ninth team and second from Japan (after Toyo Ito), SANAA will follow Frank Gehry's well-received work from last summer.

LANDMARKS AFTER THE FACT
The Landmarks Preservation Commission named its two newest landmarks on February 10: a pair of skyscrapers so celebrated that some commissioners even thought they were already designated. The Con Edison Headquarters at 4 Irving Place and One Chase Manhattan Plaza, two of the city’s defining towers, were designated, as well as a tiny historic district in Bed-Stuy, the Alice and Agate Courts Historic District, two adjacent cur-de-sacs off Atlantic Avenue.
IN BANKRUPT ICELAND, ARCHITECTS CONTEND WITH YEARS OF UNCHECKED DEVELOPMENT

AFTER THE GOLD RUSH

When banks in Iceland filed for bankruptcy in October and credit lines dried up, Iceland's building industry went into a tailspin. Contractors halted construction, developers cancelled new projects, and thousands of foreign construction workers left the country almost immediately. Next to fall victim were architects. As construction ceased, architecture firms saw an almost complete drop-off in new projects, and thousands of for-
Robert W. Ferris, AIA, REFP, LEED AP

CEO and Co-Founder of SFL+a Architects, Co-Founder Firstfloor, Inc., providing turnkey development solutions to educational institutions.

Sculpture: Gyre, Thomas H. Sayre, N.C. Museum of Art

Choose InsulStar®
high performance spray foam insulation for buildings that save on energy costs everyday!

*To hear more from Robbie Ferris visit www.insulstar.com/rferrisAN

"Truly effective design drives energy performance."

"When I'm designing a building I begin at the nexus of design assumptions and real-world building performance: the envelope.

I specify InsulStar® high performance spray foam insulation because I know and trust it. InsulStar® gives me great flexibility in my designs, can be used with poured concrete, primed steel, wood, CMU, and most other construction materials.

InsulStar® adds solid LEED points, is safe, and can save up to 40% in energy costs.

If you want energy efficient, comfortable, sustainable, and healthy buildings you have to design and build them with great materials. InsulStar® by NCFI is the ideal place to start."

Robert W. Ferris, AIA, REFP, LEED AP

Still Standing continued from front page
better: taller structures have more steel to dissipate damaging heat, and a higher fire means less load to destabilize steel columns. “Think of it as a ten-pound steel box versus a one-pound steel box,” said Borys Hayda, managing principal at DeSimone. “The more massive element needs ten times as much heat put into it to reach the same temperature as the smaller one.”

And while it might seem that OMA’s gravity-defying structures could render them prone to collapse, Hayda said that in the case of fire, complexity helps, because it typically means more structural members are available to provide redundancy. It also helps that the building is a hotel, which means shorter spans—more rooms—and thus more columns and heat dispersion. Another factor in keeping the temperature below the critical 400-500 degree threshold is “blow out.” “If windows start breaking, there’s a way for the heat to get out, and it can be fine,” said Andrew Mueller-Lust, principal at Severud Associates. Photos of TVCC showed most every window blown out.

As to historical precedents for reuse, Mueller-Lust and others pointed to One Meridian Plaza, a Philadelphia office tower stricken by a fire on the 22nd floor in 1991. The fire raged for 18 hours, burning out one floor before moving on to the next, until it ran out of fuel at the 38th floor. Testing showed that the building could have been restored, but no one was willing to reoccupy it. It stood for years before finally being razed.

The same fate may await TVCC. “As I read the Chinese newspapers, according to the official statements, the main structure is very little damaged,” said Tian-Fang Jing, principal at Weidlinger Associates. While that might be the case, the greater issue remains whether anyone would willingly go into a repaired TVCC.

And if the building is structurally sound, reinforcement may be warranted. “If you’re forced to add so many columns that the space becomes economically unfeasible, that’s no good,” Hayda said. “And if you need to reinforce the elevator core, and the elevators won’t fit, or the stairs are no longer wide enough, that just can’t be done.” He added that TVCC could turn out to be cheaper to repair than replace. But before that is even an option, those doing the number-crunching are going to be engineers—and not accountants—to make the most important call. MC

A street sign and premonition, in Beijing.

Click 203

MC
GET A HANDLE ON OUR LATEST HARDWARE PICKS

SMOOTH OPERATORS

1 MARLI CLOTHES HOOK
Alessi

The Marli (“butterfly” in Aboriginal dialect) hook reflects designer Steven Blaess’ goal of expressing the unseen self through objects. Here, he created a family of aerodynamic forms that perch lightly on the surface of a wall or countertop.

www.alessi.com

2 H 5015 SERIE K2
VALLI & VALLI

Designed by Italian architect Antonio Citterio, the Fusital Collection H 5015 Serie K2 is a satin stainless-steel lever made luxurious with a knurled leather grip. Available in orange and black, the lever’s combination of materials provides both visual and tactile contrast.

www.vallievalli.com

3 AUTOMATICS ED400-1G
DORMA

For glass doors in all-glass storefronts and for irregular or historically sensitive configurations, DORMA has designed a floor-installed automatic door operator unit. The weatherproof, sealed compartment (32 inches by 6 inches by 7 inches) is ADA-compliant and accommodates doors up to 800 pounds. Extended hubs for special flooring requirements are available.

www.dorma-usa.com

4 DOORBELL
DESIGN WITHIN REACH

Designed by Atelier 522, DWR’s modern doorbell eschews the glowing orange dot in favor of brushed stainless steel. At 1.4 by 5 inches, the smaller model can be installed vertically or horizontally, while the 3-inch square version (above) can be placed with the button in any corner. Most existing bells are compatible with the Doorbell and its installation hardware.

www.dwr.com

5 #12036
OMNIA INDUSTRIES, INC.

Part of a contemporary line of levers and back-plates that can be engraved, Omnia’s new #12036 is streamlined for use in modern apartment and hotel projects.

www.omniaindustries.com

6 CUTLER LEVER
REVEAL DESIGNS

From Reveal Designs’ partnership with Cutter Anderson Architects comes an ADA-compliant lever with an offset spindle that creates the look of a knob. Made of sustainably harvested wood and stainless steel, the lever functions with tubular latches, mortise, and multipoint locks.

www.reveal-designs.com
The Architect’s Newspaper introduces

PRODUCT FINDER

Now available at www.archpaper.com

A new on-line tool that will lead you straight to the latest products, services and advertisers announced in our pages—and more.

Free to our valued advertisers. Questions?
Contact info@archpaper.com

Look for the RED button
Now in its 26th year, the Architectural League’s Emerging Voices program is an important rung on the ladder of American architectural prestige. In contrast with the League’s Young Architects program, which emphasizes design promise and research, Emerging Voices focuses on building, according to Anne Rieselbach, program director at the League. “That can be building from the scale of installation to architecture and urban design,” Rieselbach said. “We look for a strong voice, for a point of view in the work, as well as an interest in community work or teaching.”

Chosen by a committee comprised of previous winners and League board members that includes Calvin Tsao, Joel Sanders, Leslie Gill, Jared Della Valle, Lyn Rice, Jonathan Marvel, and the League’s executive director Rosalie Genevro, the 2009 group is geographically diverse, with varied aesthetic concerns and approaches to practice. All, however, share an interest in place-making, whether a reconsideration of suburban landscapes (Shane Coen), urban design elements that also mitigate severe climate conditions (Darren Petrucci), or the blending of American and Mexican vernacular (at103).

With the downturn in the economy, Rieselbach predicts that next year’s submissions will bring an emphasis on research or speculative projects, though she does not foresee an immediate return to theory or paper architecture. “The way architecture is made today is so different from earlier downturns,” she said. “There are so many ways to be directly involved with fabrication, construction, or with non-traditional clients.”
For Stella Betts and David Leven, prior experience in construction and fabrication has helped to refine their interest in materials and detailing, always with an eye toward clarity and lightness. “We’re very interested in a distillation process, in focusing,” Leven said. Though they will, on occasion, install elements themselves, as in the CCO1 house in upstate New York where they hung metal cladding, they do not consider themselves a design/build firm. “Our goal is to keep the material and details very simple. We always want the diagram to be legible in the built work,” Betts said. “We’re interested in fabricating components or details, but we don’t want to do all the construction ourselves.” Leven added. “We are fascinated by our design/build friends and our architect/developer friends, but we’re not interested in that kind of practice.” For the husband-and-wife principals, their involvement in construction is a means to an end, not an end in itself. “Design/build can be limiting, in terms of scale, in terms of the time devoted to design,” Betts said.

While much of LevenBetts’ work thus far has been relatively small-scale—houses, a gallery, retail spaces, a small office and printing facility—they are increasingly turning their attention to urban-scale projects. Many of these projects are competition entries or research-based. Their 2003 Chicago Filter Parking—a garage, bike path, pedestrian bridge, and hanging garden in one—stands out as a milestone for the firm and one that they hope to eventually see built. “We worked through the program and started to think about how you could turn it into an amenity for the city,” Betts said. The delicacy and polished quality of their work might seem run counter to the tough programmatic concerns and size of a 1,000-car parking garage, but they see their approach as a way to rethink one of the most utilitarian and ubiquitous elements of the contemporary urban landscape. “We want to graft something onto the city so that it becomes this very light sort of machine,” Betts said.

ALAN S. BRAKE

While much of LevenBetts’ work thus far has been relatively small-scale—houses, a gallery, retail spaces, a small office and printing facility—they are increasingly turning their attention to urban-scale projects. Many of these projects are competition entries or research-based. Their 2003 Chicago Filter Parking—a garage, bike path, pedestrian bridge, and hanging garden in one—stands out as a milestone for the firm and one that they hope to eventually see built. “We worked through the program and started to think about how you could turn it into an amenity for the city,” Betts said. The delicacy and polished quality of their work might seem run counter to the tough programmatic concerns and size of a 1,000-car parking garage, but they see their approach as a way to rethink one of the most utilitarian and ubiquitous elements of the contemporary urban landscape. “We want to graft something onto the city so that it becomes this very light sort of machine,” Betts said.

ALAN S. BRAKE

Like most Mexican architects of their generation and just about all North American architects that have started their practice in the last ten years, Dellekamp architects have made housing a cornerstone of their work. What sets the firm apart is a fervent dedication to improving social housing in a country overrun by rapacious developers in collusion with corrupt government officials. Founded in Mexico City in 1999, the studio’s most important project currently on the boards is a project in Tlacolula, Oaxaca, which just began construction. “Most social housing is money-driven,” said principal Derek Dellekamp, “but we were convinced you could make it a business and achieve a high sustainability point.” Noting that the site rested on the outskirts of town, the architects programmed basic services into the project, such as a school and market. They also studied the local historical architecture, some of the most celebrated in Mexico, and emulated its vernacular in their designs.

This careful consideration of context runs through all of Dellekamp’s work. The firm’s CV spells it out nicely: “We deliberately allow for outside influences to shape the design.” This can be hard work in Mexico City, which changes so rapidly it makes New York City look like the Roman forum. One exception is Polanco, a neighborhood north of Chapultepec Park that enjoys greater stability thanks to its mansions and luxury apartments built in the 1950s. Dellekamp designed two apartment buildings across the street from each other for different clients, cb29 and cb30. Both respond to the neighborhood’s midcentury modern architecture with their clean lines and copious use of glass. What separated them in terms of the architects’ approach was the character of the clients. The developers of cb29 were in their 60s, and that building has a conservative, cloistered feel. But for the thirtysomethings who commissioned cb30, Dellekamp boldly faced the building front and back with unbroken planes of transparent glass. Without spandrel units, this facade not only reveals what the apartments’ occupants might be up to, it also gives passersby a peek-a-boo view of the building’s structure itself.
Darren Petrucci’s designs find strength in numbers. Petrucci is the director of Arizona State University’s School of Architecture and Landscape Architecture, and founder of Architecture-Infrastructure-Research (A-I-R). And with the trademarked name Amenity Infrastructure, the architect hopes to capitalize on his designs’ potential to be multiplied throughout public spaces and communities.

For example, at the Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport, Petrucci’s Comfort Zone project is a series of shading and cooling canopies for airport vehicles. His Stripscape design includes a collection of evaporative-cooling units that are also seats, transforming a scorching bookstore courtyard into usable space. Nearby, shades-cum-signs (“lampshades”) let merchants exploit with an artful sensibility. The two replicated the Vineyard with structural insulated panels (SIPs). Composed of a rigid foam plastic core sandwiched between two structural skins, SIPs are strong, cost-effective, and energy-efficient. “The house uses existing technology, but it’s smart in the way it’s deployed,” he said. Like his Phoenix lampshades, the design of the so-called “VR-10 gHouse” was determined in part by local zoning. The home couldn’t exceed 600 square feet. But the ultimate goal was a solution to a community problem—lack of affordable housing—especially for the high-priced resort’s seasonal service sector. Petrucci hopes that in the future, the gHouse will provide affordable housing within walking distance of Vineyard hotels, restaurants, and other businesses.

Petrucci emphasizes that a transdisciplinary approach is key to working with communities to develop better infrastructure. With a team that includes a psychologist, graphic designers, construction workers, and architecture students, he is currently working on designs for a wellness clinic suitable for remote, arid parts of the world. “I feel very fortunate to be able to practice and to teach and do research,” he said. “I think that really helps me to try to position what I’m doing as having some significance, even though many things I do are not large projects.”

Jennifer Kirschel

The tiny, Seattle-based firm Hutchinson & Maul Architecture has kept a low profile, especially considering their prolific output. The principals have been more preoccupied with their projects than with self-promotion. “What’s our marketing plan? We don’t have one,” said Robert Hutchinson, one of the plain-spoken principals of the eponymous firm, along with Thomas Maul. The firm, currently just the two and never more than five, has built a remarkable number of projects, ranging from installations to houses to what they call “background public buildings.”

Both principals have undergraduate experience in engineering, but their work doesn’t necessarily put structure front and center. Through careful site and program analysis, they often uncover unexpected design opportunities, which they exploit with an artful sensibility. One such opportunity came in the form of a hundred-year-old frame house slated for demolition on the site of one of their projects. In one day, Hutchinson and Maul, with the help of friends and associates, pierced the structure with thousands of holes, turning the house into an eerie lantern. That night, they threw a party in the transformed space, giving the house a last act before the wrecking ball the next day. “Hole House 1 was about exploring light and structure, and a way to celebrate the life of the building,” Hutchinson said. The two replicated the experiment with a more humble structure, not surprisingly called Hole House 2, and inserted colored acrylic rods to heighten the beautiful and haunting effect.

For a below-grade metal shop, the architects took a code-required parking screen and turned it into a thin, saw-tooth skylight clad in Cor-Ten. In profile, it looks like sculpture. Inside, light washes the concrete walls, elevating the quality of the space, while meeting its programmatic requirements. “We don’t just grab the latest, coolest thing. We try and have self-control,” Maul said. “We like what is tested, what is tried-and-true.” This sense of finding unexpected possibilities in the pragmatic spaces of everyday life will be put to the test in their largest project to date, a 16,000-square-foot public works operations center in Bothell, Washington, clad in wooden planks with a broad entrance overhang projecting into the tree-dotted site. The center will break ground in the next few months. AGB
When Shane Coen began Coen + Partners 17 years ago, “landscape architecture had a lost identity,” he said, and to become a landscape designer was “taking a back door to architecture.” From its start, the firm began to reconcile that lost identity with another: suburban. “No one has taken on suburbia with the integration of modern architecture. When we took it on, we tried to apply conservation principles. There were some new principles among those, the most powerful one was that architecture matters, and it matters in a really large way.”

The firm’s inclusion in the traveling exhibition Worlds Away: New Suburban Landscapes demonstrates its commitment to shaping landscape architecture’s future. The show is a collaboration between architects, artists, landscape architects, and others who have done significant work in the suburban realm. Coen emphasized that his own interest is not in exposing suburban communities as inherently bad, but in focusing on their future. “What are we possibly going to do about this endless amount of suburbia we’ve built that’s not going to last? These are structures,” he added, “that aren’t possibly going to stand the test of time.”

The firm’s ideas on planning could be both remedy and revolution for urban and suburban communities. Like many of his contemporaries, Coen’s firm strives to work only on projects that engage them from the beginning in order to have an overall influence on the structure and how it relates to its environment. As lead site designer for the Minnesota cul-de-sac development Jackson Meadow, the firm dedicated 75 percent of the site to open space by positioning homes on only 40 acres. A loop road connects the development’s neighborhoods, and pedestrian corridors surround a central public green. The firm also provides custom site design for each new home in the community.

Through teamwork—the firm collaborated with Salmela Architect on Jackson Meadow, and with Salmela and Altus Architecture on the new Hudson River Valley community Depot Hill—they address “the trend of landscape architecture to overdesign,” said Coen. “Our goal is to create a single statement with the architecture. Everything in the landscape is talking to the architecture.”

As a landscape architect and citizen (not to mention father of two), Coen ultimately bases his firm’s success on its ability to educate others about conscious residential development. He is disheartened by the lack of architectural education in our public schools, but encouraged by the trend of smaller cities hiring powerhouse architects to design public buildings. “I think we’re in an aesthetic revolution, finally,” he said. “It’s a big battle, but one that more and more people are taking on.”

The husband-and-wife team behind Gray Organschi Architecture aims to instill the robust traditions of design-build with a lighter but no less hands-on approach. Using expressions such as “pre-staged,” “lightly pinned,” and “on the site as little as possible,” Elizabeth Gray explained the firm’s philosophy of developing low-impact building practices in tandem with innovative technologies in the service of an architecture of elegant simplicity. A near statewide of the-art fabrication shop at their New Haven studio has helped them undertake ambitious pre-fabrication efforts, from a 75-foot footbridge in a hilly forest to the glue-laminated arches for an acoustical plywood shed within a brick firehouse turned recording space and auditorium. Gray and her husband Alan met at the Yale School of Architecture (where the barn-raising approach to design-build has a long history), graduating in 1984. Following a grand tour of stents with stints in Indonesia, London, and Berlin, they returned to New Haven in 2000 and set up their practice in the Ninth Square, a notoriously seedy quarter but also home to many sturdy 19th-century brick warehouses ideal for an innovative approach to design practice with a need for heavy machinery. More than half of the firm’s built work so far has been residential, including a guest cottage in Guilford completed in 2008 for a couple with expanding space needs but a desire not to disturb their gardens. Gray Organschi responded with a discrete structure (it had to pass zoning as an “accessory building”)1 that combines the camouflage effects of a sedum green roof with the bursting energy of dematerialized glass seams and bamboo-clad folding planes. A storage barn for a landscape contractor turns a simple shed into a thing of beauty by simply stacking materials—with dimensions derived from the size of a pallet—around a void determined by the turnaround space needed for a loading tractor. Ground-source heat pumps and electricity are powered by rooftop photovoltaic panels, with surplus energy to spare.

Moving on to a larger scale, the architects are now working on a residence and chapel for a community of Jesuits at Fairfield University. The 20,000-square-foot center, which includes an administrative wing and student dining room, needs to be both publicly active as well as a serene place of meditation and privacy. The architects tucked the building into the shoulder of a sloping hill, with a garden green roof and a public porch facing west and the Jesuits’ own rooms gathered around a courtyard facing south. “Our goal is to first analyze the program as honestly and as in-depth as possible, and then honor it,” said Gray.
Julio Amezcua and Francisco Pardo attribute their methodology to a cross-pollination of American and Mexican ways of producing architecture. Educated at Columbia University, the duo founded their practice in Mexico City in 2001. “We’re always jumping from computers to physical models,” said Amezcua, “and we do a lot of diagrams, which in Mexico is not very common.” But their firm’s name, at103, roots it solidly to its locale: “a” stands for azotea, the office’s street; and 103 is the street number. While this ego-effacing moniker was chosen to characterize the studio as a place where decision-making is shared equally and no individual has sole control, it also speaks to a studied engagement with the distinct urbanism of Mexico City.

Emblematic of this engagement is their Ozuluama project, a rooftop addition to an existing apartment building. “In Mexico City, there’s a lack of space,” said Amezcua, “so a lot of the roofs are used for extensions, but they’re not done in a proper way.” Drawn out of an analysis of the existing structure and circulation, the architects decided to create an addition appearing to resemble a nomad’s tent clad in large sheets of Corian. The project also exemplified another trait common to working in Mexico—it took four years to complete. “The other thing you always find in Mexico is you have to deal with the government and licenses, and there’s a lot of corruption,” said Amezcua. “If you want to make your project work quickly, you pay money, or you do a slow process.”

The firm’s first big break-through came in 2005, when the studio won a competition to design a fire station on Avenida Fenix in Mexico City’s 16th District. After scrutinizing the neighborhood, the architects decided to open the studio up to the public, turning the inside into a sort of public plaza where children can come to watch the firemen at work. They also conducted an analysis of the neighborhood and changed some of the traffic lights on the busy thoroughfare to create a more fluid circulation strategy for the district. This amount of care for the urban fabric sets at103 aside from most of its contemporaries, in any country.

Since he founded his namesake firm in 1995, Andrew Berman hasn’t had a lot of time for reflection. He’s undertaken dozens of projects, moving upward through a trajectory of lofts, apartments, houses, galleries, and small commercial spaces, on to larger civic work, including a library expansion and a series of small renovations and interventions at the PS.1 Contemporary Art Center in Queens.

“The act of building, of making architecture, is a social act,” Berman said. “We’re not didactic. The considerations that go into our work are very grounded. Berman often works with existing buildings, and his designs, while not meek or severely minimalist, are never flashy. One of his most formally striking works, a recently completed private study and writing studio, is programatically, not stylistically, driven. The copper-clad studio houses a small potting shed on the ground level. The client enters through the door, the only element of the public facade, up a narrow staircase to enter the studio, which is illuminated from above with a thin, slotted skylight. The writing table faces a large picture window inserted into the surrounding trees (see photographs on page 1). “We wanted to create a space that was vibrant, but not distracting,” Berman said.

As the designer of the Center for Architecture, Berman’s work is well known to most New York architects. “I always say that the Center for Architecture got me no clients,” he said dryly. “But what it did do was give us credibility to go after other public and cultural projects.” He is currently finishing a firehouse renovation for the city’s Department of Design and Construction, and about to break ground on an addition to a Carrera and Hastings–designed library on Staten Island. At PS.1, Berman is adding a new ticketing booth to the exterior of the courtyard wall, bringing all of the admissions functions outside the old school building. He has been asked back to discreetly renovate some of the galleries as well. “Thinking about the Emerging Voices lecture and looking back, it’s nice to know that our work has been used and appreciated,” he said. “We know that, because our clients return with new projects.”
MARCH 2009

WEDNESDAY 4
Lecture
Thom Mayne
Overlapping Realities (Both This and That)
6:30 p.m.
Columbia GSAPP
Wood Auditorium
13 Avery Hall
www.arch.columbia.edu

EVENT
SCOPE Art Fair
Through March 2
Lincoln Center
damrosch Park
62nd St. and Amsterdam Ave.
www.scope-art.com

THURSDAY 5
LECTURES
Inga Saffron and Kenneth Greenberg
Urban Design and the Remaking of Cities
6:00 p.m.
University of Pennsylvania School of Design
81 Meyerson Hall,
Philadelphia
www.design.upenn.edu/
arch/index.htm

Lauretta Vinciarelli
Not Architecture But Evidence
That It Exists 6:00 p.m.
City College of New York
Sherman Hall
Convent Ave. and 138th St.
www.ccny.cuny.edu

Shane Cohen and Derek Delillo
Emerging Voices: Co- + Partners;
Delillokemp arkitectos 7:00 p.m.
Urban Center
457 Madison Ave.
www.architects.org

SYMPOSIUM
Keeping It Real: Literature and the Dearth for Reality
Through March 6
New York University
Deutsches Haus
42 Washington Mews
www.nyu.edu/deutscheshaus

EXHIBITION OPENINGS
Andrew Gelker
Supervisions
Hasted Hunt
529 West 20th St.
www.hastedhunt.com

Intersections: The Grand Concourse at 100
Bronx Museum of the Arts
1040 Grand Concourse, Bronx
www.bronxmuseum.org

VISIT OUR RED DOT PRODUCT FINDER AT WWW.ARCHPAPER.COM

MARCH 2009

WEDNESDAY 6
LECTURE
Thom Mayne
U.S. Federal Office Building, San Francisco
(Tom Piper, Charles Gansa, 2008) 35 min.
6:30 p.m.
Center for Architecture
536 LaGuardia Pl.
www.iai.org

EVENT
Assesion Variations: Meradith Monk 6:30 p.m.
Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum
1071 5th Ave.
www.guggenheim.org

FRIDAY 6
SYMPOSIUM
Daniel Liebskind, Sam Goodman, William Menking, et al.
Intersections: The Grand Concourse at 100
Through March 7
Bronx Museum of the Arts
1040 Grand Concourse, Bronx
www.iai.org

EXHIBITION OPENINGS
Fashioning Faith
Copper-Hewitt, National Design Museum
2 East 92nd St.
www.copperhewitt.org

Trevor Paglen
Bellevue gallery
134 10th Ave.
www.bellevuegallery.com

EVENT
Discover Classical New York: Carnegie Hall 2:30 p.m.
Carnegie Hall
57th St. and 7th Ave.
www.classictic.org

SATURDAY 7
EXHIBITION OPENING
Janneke Laker and Julika Rudolfs
Elastic Truth
The Dumbo Arts Center (DAC)
30 Washington St., Brooklyn
www.dumboartscenter.org

SUNDAY 8
CONFERENCE
The 2009 International Conference
on Climate Control
Through May 10
Marriott New York Marquis
Times Square Hotel
1535 Broadway
www.viridianartists.com

With the Kids
Materials and Decorations 11:00 a.m.
Brooklyn Museum of Art
200 Eastern Parkway, Brooklyn
www.brooklynmuseum.org

MAYDAY 9
EVENT
Morphoses Choreography and Design 7:30 p.m.
Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum
1071 5th Ave.
www.guggenheim.org

TUESDAY 10
LECTURE
Nader Tehrani
Pedagogical Practices, Practical Pedagogies 5:15 p.m.
Cornell University School of Architecture
Sibley Hall, Ithaca
www.architecture.cornell.edu

EXHIBITION OPENING
Robert Smith
A Child’s Garden of Photographs
530 West 25th St.
www.vrdianartists.com

WEDNESDAY 11
LECTURE
Mitchell Owens
Revise, Recycle, Recover: Billy Baldwin and Villa Florentina 6:00 p.m.
New York School of Interior Design
170 East 70th St.
www.nysid.edu

THURSDAY 12
LECTURE
Tom Thompson, Dave Buckner, Greg Kisz, et al.
Solar in the City: The Future of Solar in an Urban Setting 6:00 p.m.
CuNY Graduate Center
365 5th Ave., 9th Fl.
www.cuny.edu

EXHIBITION OPENINGS
James Paterson
Harvest
bitforms gallery
529 West 20th St.
www.bitforms.com

Jenny Holzer
Protect Protect
Whitney Museum of American Art
945 Madison Ave.
www.whitney.org

Myoung Ho Lee
Yosis Milly Gallery
525 West 26th St.
www.yoomillicom

FRIDAY 13
EXHIBITION OPENING
KRAZY!
The Delicious World of Anime + Manga + Video Games 5:30 p.m.
Japan Society
33 East 47th St.
www.japansociety.org

TRADE SHOW
Go Green Expo
Through March 15
The Pennsylvania Convention Center
1100 Arch St., Philadelphia
www.gogreenexpo.com

SATURDAY 14
EXHIBITION OPENINGS
Burak Arikan, Margot Lovejoy, et al.
New Media: Why? Neuberger Museum of Art
Purchase College, State University of New York
735 Anderson Hill Rd., Purchase
www.neuberger.org

The Danube Exodus: The Rippling Currents of the River By Peter Forgacs and the Labyrinth Project
Jewish Museum
1109 5th Ave.
www.jewishmuseum.org

TUESDAY 17
EXHIBITION OPENING
Art of the Korean Renaissance, 1400-1600
Metropolitan Museum of Art
1000 5th Ave.
www.metmuseum.org

WITH THE KIDS
Art After School 4:00 p.m.
Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum
1071 5th Ave.
www.guggenheim.org

THURSDAY 19
LECTURE
Michael Webb
All About Drawing 6:00 p.m.
City College of New York
Sheppard Hall
Convent Ave. and 138th St.
www.ccny.cuny.edu

EXHIBITION OPENINGS
Jane Alexander
Survey
Jack Shainman Gallery
513 West 22nd St.
www.jackshainman.com

Patti Smith
Voil
Robert Miller Gallery
524 West 26th St.
www.robertmillergallery.com

FRIDAY 20
EXHIBITION OPENINGS
Dirk Westphal
Super Uber
Mixed Greens
531 West 26th St.
www.mixedgreens.com

Matthew Barney
Ancient Evenings:
Liberto
Gladding Stone Gallery
515 West 24th St.
www.gladdingstonegallery.com

Matthew Meyer
Danesse
536 West 24th St.
www.danesse.com

SATURDAY 21
LECTURE
Kristin Poor
Fred Sandback
100 p.m.
DiaBeacon
3 Beekman St., Beacon
www.diart.org

EXHIBITION OPENINGS
David Musgrave
Luhring Augustine
531 West 24th St.
www.luhringaugustine.com

SUNDAY 22
WITH THE KIDS
What is Climate Change? 1100 a.m.
American Museum of Natural History
Central Park West and 79th St.
www.amnh.org

IN THE OPEN: POSITIONING PRACTICE
Parsons the New School for Design
Sheila C. Johnson Design Center
66 5th Avenue
Through May 1

Charting the rise in civic engagement among American architects and designers, Into the Open: Positioning Practice, the U.S. pavilion’s provocative Venice Biennale, has been shown in New York. Co-curated by AN editor William Menking, the show includes 16 architectural groups in the U.S. that are actively engaged in their respective communities, among them Edouard Cruz, Gana Studio, the Center for Land Use Interpretation, the Center for Urban Pedagogy, the Heidelberg Project, Project Row Houses, and many others. All of the featured groups creatively confront social challenges such as shifting demographics, changing geopolitical boundaries, uneven economic development, and the explosion of urban migration. In the International Center for Urban Ecology’s research project New Silk Roads (2008, above), for example, designer Kyong Kyong Pong journeys through Central Asia and explores new urban landscapes, seeing globalization’s havoc through a street-level lens. In another highlight, the Detroit Collaborative Design Center’s Firebreak shows Detroit’s burned-out houses transformed into a new kind of public space. On Friday, April 24, participants including Teddy Cruz, Deborah Gans, Laura Kurgan, and Rick Lowe will take part in a symposium on public-spirited practice at the Sheila C. Johnson Design Center.

The Drawing Center’s latest exhibition presents the work of nine artists selected from the center’s Viewing Program, a longstanding effort to seek greater exposure for emerging artists. The works on view make use of diverse aesthetic strategies, ranging from Mariette Hoffer’s abstract compositional works with pencil and paper to transparent tape such as Untitled (air) (2008, detail above), to Chris Nau’s site-specific installations that begin with hand-drawn lines on sheetrock, which are then intricately cut with a jigsaw into terrain-like topographical layers. All of the artists use traces of the drawn line as the basis for formal explorations, and many of the resulting works have an architectural flavor. Elana Herzog uses ordinary fabrics to create large-scale wall reliefs that seem to depict the ruins of some ancient civilization. Playfully distorting the domed landscape, Sarah Kabot’s three-dimensional installation in the Center’s bathroom retraces every linear feature of the space—tile lines, floors, walls—in vinyl tape, but cunningly sets each line off by a half-inch. Accompanying the show is a book titled Drawing Papers 84: Selections Spring 2009 that features an essay by exhibition curator Nina Katchadourian, Joanna Kleinberg, and Rachel Liebowitz, as well as 32 black-and-white images from the exhibition.
It's no joke. This “language of ornament,” inspired by what appears to be a random exploration, has led to some of the most intriguing formal designs in the world. Clients in Europe have embraced the conceptual practice of his firm, J. Mayer H., and built or are building over 35 of his projects, which move the already point that by tenuous line between fine art and architecture that much closer to the side of art. At first look, the presentation of his work seems equally ridiculous. Three huge, white, abstract plaster sculptures that slightly resemble dogs sit among a crisscross of floor and ceiling graphics, projected images of Mayer’s work, and video clips of these protection patterns, all accompanied by buzzing, race-car-like noises. As you linger, the impact of the work seems to grow in significance.

The most obvious connection comes from the videos of the work itself, beamed from openings in the sculptural installations that, it turns out, are themselves giant versions of the data patterns. The slideshows capture missshapen architectural forms such as the fractured, off-kilter Court of Justice in Hasselt, Belgium; the mushroom-like Metro Parcosal in Seville, Spain; and the web-like Mensa Moltke, a student canteen at the Karlsruhe University in Karlsruhe, Germany. Images of some of his sculptures, like his wavy green blob called beat.wave for the Pulse art show in Miami, are difficult to distinguish from the architecture. Shots of the buildings and sculptures are mingled with images of the data protection patterns, also projected and warped, on small TVs built into the sculptures and drawn on the floor and ceiling. If you listen carefully, the abstract patterns inform the hectic sounds around you. Every part of the show is made up of these patterns, which infuse and overwhelm the senses. They also make the point that this formal investigation, while perhaps random, has the capacity to create and warp just about anything. Mayer is a master at studying and manipulating pure form and pattern, and the potential outgrowths of this investigation seem endless. He produces designs made possible with today’s sophisticated building and computer technologies. With the help of engineers like Arup, which contributed to several of his structures, they also showcase the fantastic structures that this combination can create. In Mayer’s architecture, this investigation of data patterns epitomizes a desire for new, integrated ornament and crystallizes in built form the chaos of our times.

The show, like most architecture exhibitions, is hemmed in by the limitations of trying to capture an art best experienced in person. But it’s array of media provides ample inspiration to begin thinking about the possibilities of Mayer’s work. If this degree of thought can go into a building’s envelope, imagine how Mayer’s talent could transform buildings as integrated systems or conceive of whole urban environments.
The Italian cityscape photographer Gabriele Basilico has long haunted Europe's outskirts, a kind of drifter among access roads, factories, byways, and wharves. The current show at Cohen Amador serves as both a concise introduction to his immense body of work and a taut selection of lesser-known images that explore, under the rubric Intercity, the hubris of our attempts to manage globalized cities. Born in Milan, Basilico was trained as an architect, but, influenced by the work of Walker Evans and Bernd and Hilla Becher, began photographing the densely layered industrial vistas of his hometown in the 1970s. He rose to prominence over the following decade as the sole Italian hired for the now-famous DATAR photographic mission, which documented urban landscapes for the French regional planning authority. From this project he emerged as the Italian master of postindustrial landscape documentary, as his photographs took him through ports and sub-urbs of factory towns like Antwerp and Trieste, and, later, through war-torn Beirut. While Basilico often explores formal taxonomies like the Bechers before him, his core interest lies in the city's liminal areas—what theorist Ignazio de Solà-Morales called terrain vague. The 12 elegantly toned, monochrome digital pigment prints shown here draw from across the photographer's recent work. Some of them are classic Basilico. In Napoli Vesuvio 044 19-96, a high vantage point takes in the city's complex juxtapositions: housing developments set amid light industry and empty lots; transport networks carving arbitrary shapes through urban fabric; the minutiae of urban development beneath a vast, smoking Vesuvius. Three other images each show a monolith in Moscow. The solemn Ministry of Foreign Affairs dominates the streets around it, while the Kotelnicheskaya building sits like an outmoded aristocrat, and the exaggerated vertical perspective administered to the thick-set Hotel Leningradskaya slights the structure's skyward aspirations.

Images like these, which transcend factual observation to reveal the poetry of the city, can often evoke the work of Eugène Atget. Although the comparison is instructive, Basilico sees himself as post-Walkerian and perhaps contemporary rather than more nostalgic world like Atget's, which portrayed a Paris that even then had been lost to 19th-century urban development. In fact, Basilico's modernist impulses, seen in the dynamic compositional experiments in this exhibition, show more of an allegiance to the Russian modernist Aleksandr Rodchenko than to his more obvious French predecessor.

The comparison to the Russian artist might seem peculiar, but several images here practically follow Rodchenko's dictum that objects be shown “with totally unexpected perspectives and in unexpected situations.” In two notable arrangements—a triptych of a white highrise in Monaco, and a hypotonic dipthong of downtown San Francisco—a vertigo-inducing perspective and subtle shifts in scale strongly contrast with the distant composition typically associated with urban photography. However, even among these new images with their less familiar views, the photographs continue to explore the city through its transitional zones. The Monaco triptych's Rodchenko-esque perspective, for instance, also serves Basilico's interest in shifting architectural styles, in the effects of time, and in urban density: a micro-history of the few blocks shown. The San Francisco dipthong follows a similar formal logic, with complexly twisty but actually minor shifts in perspective that subtly telescope space and time.

What is most intriguing about this modest exhibition is how Basilico weaves a complex study of urban space, not from an exhaustive exploration of place—his well-known modus operandi—but through a disorienting, modernist mode of representation. He suggests that hidden within our experience of even the center of cities is a kind of existential terrain vague, a void we call home.

Andrew Atkinson is an Assistant Professor of Digital Photography at Montclair State University.

**ARCHITECT SHRUGGED**

Collecting over 30 short essays by William J. Mitchell, *World’s Greatest Architect: Making, Meaning, and Network Culture* continues his ongoing investigations into the influence of technology on urban space, architecture, and design. As the former dean of the MIT School of Architecture and the current head of the Smart Cities research group in the school’s well-known Media Lab, Mitchell is situated in an ideal position for such academic analysis. These essays, which originally appeared in the British publications *Building Design* and RIBA Journal (and were admittedly written at air-ports and other non-places during the travels of a global nomad), indicate a predilection for highly accessible writing that is as thought provoking as it is varied.

Locating itself as a record of the middle of the decade now coming to a close, Mitchell’s book touches on timely subjects both obvious (the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, Wal-Mart, the Iraq War) and unexpected (plastic water bottles, Whole Foods, potato chips as analogies for architectural form). His personal take on such topics and his search for meaning in artifacts beyond functionality makes the reading worthwhile, such as when he links the technology of international transportation and security networks to the retention and prosecution of prisoners at Guantánamo Bay.

Many of the essays are structured as miniature histories. Discussing the Gtimo controversy, Mitchell moves from the 18th-century Tower of London to the present day, stopping in Australia, Nazi Germany, and the Gulag Archipelago on the way. These histories point to an evolutionary treatment of today’s digital culture, denying the break with history that some critics envision. Like the paradigm-breaking shifts theorized in Thomas Kuhn’s *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, Mitchell’s brief forays into technologies like digital cameras and computer-aided-drafting are smoother, more continuous. Amazon’s Kindle e-book, as discussed by Mitchell, is linked to previous artifacts (books) via intention (reading text on a page) and design (book-sized and with a cover), before the new device is allowed to exploit its new technology and carry itself in a direction that may have people in the future asking, “Whatever happened to books?” (The device’s name boldly implies a burning, a destruction of the book as an artifact.) It happened with cars and horses drawn buggies, so why not with Kindle and books? Or so Mitchell would have us believe. Mitchell’s technocratic views are countered, or complicated, by an embrace of traditional public space, numerous references to popular culture, and a cynical attitude toward many of his subjects. The first is most overt in his essay on the “Wal-Martians” attacking American small towns, destroying their downtowns and small businesses in the name of “always low prices.” His common-sense criticism of the alliance between commerce and public space is appealing, if hard to align with the technological means by which Wal-Mart expands its retail empire (just about everywhere but New York City, it should be noted). Mitchell’s embrace of technology is not value-free, particularly when something as commendable as the corporation’s “brilliant organization of its global supply network” is accompanied by low wages, poor to nonexistent health benefits, and dead downtowns. The author begins numerous essays with references to songs, movies, and other bits of popular culture, and these and other essays often conclude with cynical remarks veiled in ironic humor. These two characteristics of Mitchell’s writing diminish his text, appealing but not纯净 in doing his ideas any service.

Two of the book’s 32 essays exceed the typical four pages. They focus on surveillance and security, obviously important considerations in the decade that started with the events of 9/11, but also highly contested ones affecting public space. Not surprisingly, he embraces the careful use of these technologies in the urban realm, like a latter-day Oscar Newman. Calling for civil liberties while simultaneously developing urban defense strategies, Mitchell shows little of the ire he levies against Wal-Mart. While less biting, these essays are stand-outs in the collection and in Mitchell’s ongoing investigations, much more than the essay that lends the book its intriguing title.

**JOHN HILL WRITES THE BLOG A DAILY DOSE OF ARCHITECTURE.**
PROVIDE SOLUTIONS, AND IT DOESN’T. RETROFITTING DOES PRESENT A USEFUL SURVEY OF URBAN PLANNING LITERATURE, COVERING EVERYTHING FROM LEVITOWN TO RICHARD FLORIDA’S “CREATIVE CLASS” THEORY. IT ALSO DISCUSSES EXAMPLES OF OLDER, SUBURBAN AREAS THAT ARE BEING UPDATED TO EMphasize PUBLIC SPACES, WALKABILITY, AND THE LIKE. THE BOOKLISTS CASE STUDIES FOR VARIOUS TYPES OF SUBURBAN DEVELOPMENTS: STRIP MALLS, INDOOR MALLS, RESIDENTIAL COMMUNITIES, EDGE CITIES, AND OFFICE AND INDUSTRIAL PARKS. THE BOOK ORGANIZES THE CASE STUDIES BY MORPHOLOGY, A TERM THAT IN ITSELF REDUCES COMMUNITIES TO NOTHING BUT SHAPES. I WOULD ARGUE THAT ORGANIZATION OF THE CASE STUDIES BY OTHER CHARACTERISTICS MIGHT MAKE MORE SENSE. FOR INSTANCE, AN OFFICE PARK AND AN INDOOR MALL MIGHT BE MUCH MORE SIMILAR IN TERMS OF THE POLITICS AND FINANCING THAT ENABLED THEM THAN EITHER WOULD BE TO THEIR MORPHOLOGICAL SISTERS. WHY NOT DISCUSS THREE OR FOUR TYPES OF ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL CONDITIONS THAT CAN LEAD TO RETROFITS, RATHER THAN FOCUSING ON THEIR DESIGN CHARACTERISTICS?

ELSEWHERE, THE AUTHORS INCLUDE A FEW WINNERS OF DESIGN COMPETITIONS. THEY DEVOTE ONE PAGE TO A GEORGIA TECH TEAM’S WINNING ENTRY IN AN ATLANTA FUTURE 2008 COMPETITION. THE PAGE DISPLAYS TWO MAPS OF THE ATLANTA REGION. THE FIRST SHOWS THE REGION TODAY, AND THE SECOND SHOWS THE TEAM’S VISION FOR ATLANTA IN ONE HUNDRED YEARS. THE VISION IS LOVELY—THERE’S A LOT OF GREEN IN IT—but the maps lack even a key to explain the red, pink, white, and green areas, let alone an explanation that appreciates the complexities of the proposal. ALL we learn from the caption is that the team (which included Dunham-Jones) apparently proposed urban agriculture, biofuel farm/power plants, and several other components. ALL of these ideas sound good, but how realistic are they? WHAT about the politics inherent in them? HOW much would their implementation cost? AND who did the team propose to implement its vision?

THE CASE STUDIES THEMSELVES ARE SO PRE- DOMINANTLY SINGLE-OWNER DEVELOPMENTS THAT THE READER LEARNS LITTLE ABOUT THE IMPACTS—much slower, yes, but also much more powerful—OF PUBLIC-SECTOR INVESTMENTS, ESPECIALLY IN TRANSIT. THE AUTHORS RECOGNIZE THE POWER OF SUCH INVESTMENTS, AT ONE POINT NOTING THAT “TRANSIT IN SUBURBS IS WHAT MAKES DENSIFICATION FEASIBLE,” RATHER THAN THE OTHER WAY AROUND, AND THEY DISCUSS THE IMPACTS, FOR EXAMPLE, OF THE BOULEVARDIZATION OF ARTERIALS. BUT THEY SPEND COMPARATIVELY LITTLE TIME ON PUBLIC INTERVENTIONS, AND NEVER FULLY EXPLORE THE LEVERAGE THESE STRATEGIES CAN PROVIDE, NOR THE CHALLENGES THEY PRESENT.

THIS BOOK IS IMPORTANT AND WELL-INTENTIONED, AND ITS SUBJECT IS CERTAINLY DESERVING. I WOULD LOVE TO SEE A REVISED EDITION OF RETROFITTING SUBURBIA (A WONDERFUL TITLE, BY THE WAY) THAT IS SHORTER, MORE COHERENTLY ORGANIZED, AND LESS TEXTBOOKISH, WITH FEWER, MORE IN-DEPTH CASE STUDIES. BUT THE LARGER PROBLEM REMAINS. THE NOTION THAT URBANIZATION IS MERELY A DESIGN PROPOSITION IS FUNDAMENTALLY FLAWED. THE CHANGES THAT ARE OCCURRING ACROSS AMERICA RESULT FROM DEVELOPMENT PRESSURES AND POLITICS. WITHOUT THESE FORCES, DESIGNERS AREN’T EVEN CALLED INTO THE ROOM—they would therefore do well to understand them better.

NICK PETERSON IS VICE-PRESIDENT AT ALEX GARVIN & ASSOCIATES, AN URBAN PLANNING AND CONSULTING FIRM IN NEW YORK CITY.
Sustainability through innovation.

Smith & Fong's Plyboo® bamboo plywood and flooring is the answer for design-rich sustainable commercial and custom residential environments. Qualifying for multiple LEED points, Smith & Fong offers the world’s first and only FSC-certified bamboo and is also available urea-formaldehyde free.
The Architect’s Newspaper’s Marketplace showcases products and services. Ads are available formatted 1/8 page or 1/4 page, as shown.

CONTACT:
Pamela Piork
21 Murray St., 5th Floor New York NY 10007
TEL 212-966-0630 / FAX 212-966-0633 / ppiork@archpaper.com

MARKETPLACE

SITU STUDIO

CNC FABRICATION and CONSULTANCY

Your vision becomes reality, with precise believable 3D imagery - stills and animation.

For any inquiries, please email us at info@spline.com or call us at 212-693-0718

THE ARCHITECT’S NEWSPAPER
NEW YORK ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN
WWW.ARCHPAPER.COM

SUBSCRIBE TODAY! $69.95 FOR 2 YEARS

THE ARCHITECT’S NEWSPAPER, NEW YORK’S ONLY ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN TABLOID, IS PUBLISHED 20 TIMES PER YEAR.

Registered architects in Northeast area (NY, NJ, CT, PA, MA, DE and DC) FREE.

Fill out the following information. *Must provide RA number **Must provide valid student I.D.

Tri-state RA
FREE* $39 $69.95

Institutional Student International
$149 $25** $160

Mail this form with a check payable to: The Architect’s Newspaper, LLC.
The Architect’s Newspaper, 21 Murray St., 5th Floor New York, NY 10007
ref. 03.04.2009

Name
Date
Company
Address
City/State/Zip Code
Email
Phone
RA License Number
Credit Card Number
Exp. Date

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

INDUSTRY
Academic
Architecture
Construction
Design
Engineering
Government
Planning/Urban Design
Real Estate/Developer
Other

JOB FUNCTION
Academic
Architect
Design
Developer
Government
Manager/Project Director
Technical Staff
Student
Other

FIRM INCOME
Under $100,000
$100,000 to 1 million
$1 to 5 million
$5 million+

EMPLOYEES
1-4
5-9
10-19
20-49
50-99
100-249
250-499

HOW IT WORKS

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

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

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

Click 240

Click 230

Click 123

Click 175

[ comprehensive hardware solutions ]
Service Point

- On-Site Services
  - Managed plotters/printers for your office with online tracking and reporting
- Digital Printing Services
  - Secure, online file submission

Autodesk
Authorized Value Added Reseller

11 E. 26th St., 10th Fl. | New York, NY | 212-213-5105
Service Centers in the Northeast, Mid-Atlantic, Orlando & Las Vegas | On-Site Services Nationwide
800-448-4002 | www.servicepointusa.com

Creative Technical Solutions Since 1981

Audio & Video Teleconferencing Specialist

242 West 30th Street | New York, NY 10001 | Tel. 212-945-1860
Contact: mark@videosonic.com | www.videosonic.com

The Architect’s Resource for Building Accessibility

HANDLT
ACCESSIBILITY WITH DIGNITY, Est. 1975
Vertical & Inclined Platform Lifts, LULA Elevators, & Home Elevators

For Architects: Design and Code Assistance, and On-site Lunch & Learns (CE)

Serving NY, NJ and CT
CT Lic. # 425002

1-800-432-LIFT (5438)
sales@handi-lift.com
www.handi-lift.com

Featuring World-Class
Garaventa Lift Products

Helping small businesses strategically grow their revenues

Specializing in the architectural building products market

Communications  ♦  Brand Development  ♦  Strategic Initiatives

Donovan & Associates will analyze your current business initiatives and provide cost effective strategies to help create opportunities in these challenging times. Call Shawn Donovan at 813-220-0039 to discuss our services and how we can support your marketing efforts. For more information please visit our web site: www.donovan-assoc.com

DONOVAN & ASSOCIATES
a marketing services company
"Remarkable Presentation!"

Let us hand over a designed presentation that exudes sophistication.

- PowerPoint Presentations
- Project Analysis books
- Project Presentations
- RFQ’s • RFP’s
- Design Guidelines
- Marketing Materials
- Title Block Designs
- Posters
- Newsletters

GUIDING GRAPHICS (.COM)

201• 895 • 1244

Bulson Management, LLC
High-end Residential and Commercial Construction

www.bulsongmt.com info@bulsonmgmt.com
P 212-460-0003 F 212-937-2147
636 Broadway, Suite 1110 New York, NY 10012

PK-30 system
Sliding Door System
Folding Walls
Corporate Partitions

www.pk30.com

Bulson Management, LLC
High-end Residential and Commercial Construction

www.bulsongmt.com info@bulsonmgmt.com
P 212-460-0003 F 212-937-2147
636 Broadway, Suite 1110 New York, NY 10012

PK-30 system
Sliding Door System
Folding Walls
Corporate Partitions

www.pk30.com

www.vermontstructuralslate.com
800 343 1900 • 802 265 4933
Ruth Hirsch Associates Inc.

As the most recognized Architectural Search Firm in New York City, we represent a broad cross-section of Architectural, Design and Institutional firms in the tri-state area.

Listed here is a sampling of current positions:

SENIOR CORPORATE INTERIOR DESIGNER: for a fast growing design firm with high-end corporate design projects.

PROJECT MANAGER, LEED AP, experienced in building systems, energy efficiency and environmental sciences as they relate to high-rise projects.

SENIOR INTERIOR HEALTH CARE DESIGNER: a strong conceptualizer with CAD knowledge and able to lead a team.

Phone: 212-396-0200
Fax: 212-396-0879
info@ruthhirshassociates.com

For more information, contact Jeff @ X204 or Ruth Hirsch Associates Inc.

www.rmandpartners.com

To initiate a dialogue, please contact Belle Galaly bgalaly@micsolresources.com

Microsol Resources Corporation
214 West 29th St., New York, NY 10001
tel. 212.465.8734    fax. 212.967.0910

21 Murray St., 5th Floor New York NY 10007
CONTACT: Pamela Piork

CLASSIFIED LISTINGS

Place your classifieds with The Architect’s Newspaper
$60.00 to post on-line, $200.00 to post on-line with 60 words classified listing in the newspaper.

CONTACT: Pamela Piork
Advertising Sales
21 Murray St., 5th Floor New York NY 10007
TEL 212-966-0630 / FAX 212-966-0633
classifieds@archpaper.com

CLASSIFIEDS

RECRUITMENT AGENCIES

Design your career

talent acquisition + career management for the built environment professionals

Are you interested in learning about career opportunities or curious about the marketplace for Architecture + Design professionals and want to explore confidentially? The following is a select list of positions:

REAL ESTATE

MANHATTAN DISPLAY SPACE NEEDED for Exhibition of quintessential LEICA Collection.
Collection includes nearly every Leica camera and accessory, original packaging and graphics from 1914 - 1989. CREATE A MUSEUM ATTRACTION FOR YOUR SPACE, with one of the greatest Leica, Nikon, and Zeiss Camera and Graphic collections in the world. Please direct inquiries to David dafoe@pharos.com

LOFT SPACE WORKSHOPS FOR RENT
Workstations available in convenient Penn Station Area (30th & 7th Ave.)
Perfect for individuals, or small firms (eight workstations available). Large open office environ-
moment in sunny, high-ceilinged loft space. Share 20x20 and 10x10 conference rooms, kitchen, copier, fax, materials library, TI high-speed internet, phone hook-up, and receptionist. Convenient to all trains. Competitively priced. For more information, contact Jeff @ X204 or Larry @ X203 @ 212-273-9888 or jeff@oxarch.com or larry@oxarch.com.
On February 4, eight hundred AIA chapter presidents, vice-presidents, executive directors, and board members arrived on the National Mall in Washington, D.C. to urge their Congressional representatives and Senators to direct stimulus funding toward well-planned, sustainable construction and development, and not merely "shovel-ready" projects. Throughout the four-day AIA Grassroots event, the attendees were trained by professional lobbyists and political leaders about the importance of concerted and enduring lobbying efforts in effecting change, how a proposal moves from an idea to proposed legislation, and how one "makes the ask" of an elected official.

Most delegates of the AIA New York chapter arrived on Wednesday afternoon, in time to assemble in the subterranean conference center at the Grand Hyatt Hotel to hear the AIA National leadership detail advocacy positions that AIA members would take to Congress. In short, the positions were aimed at creating more work in the construction industry and, by extension, in the architecture industry, and on improving existing legislation affecting architects. In addition to encouraging Congress to approve funding for projects that would have a more enduring impact on the quality of life in our communities and provide longer-term opportunity for employment in the construction industry, the AIA platform also recommended an increase in the federal tax deduction already available to incentivize investment in energy-efficient commercial buildings, an increase in funding to public transportation planning initiatives, and the elimination of fee-rentalgate rules as applied to architects for federally-funded projects.

A host of motivational speakers offered pointers on what we should expect at our meetings with Congress. In particular, they explained that we were unlikely to meet with officials directly, as House Democrats had been called unexpectedly to attend an emergency "retreat." It was presumably to discuss the stalled stimulus package. Instead, and perhaps to greater benefit, we would meet with the aides and chiefs-of-staff of the elected, who were likely to be well-informed about the areas we would be discussing with them, would take copious notes, ask intelligent questions, make useful suggestions, and report all that they had learned from us to their Congresspersons. We were especially cautioned not to be surprised to find that most of the people with whom we would speak, indeed, possibly the entire staff in the Congressperson's office, would be eager, intellectually advanced, recent college graduates.

Finally, we were educated on the method of "the ask": on the importance of precisely articulating, after a short explanation and background, what specifically we were requesting of the Congressperson (sponsor a bill, change a rule, make a revision to a bill already under consideration on the floor), and how such action would benefit the officials' constituency. A few role-playing practice efforts by Grassroots attendees revealed plenty of work to be done before most of us would be convinced in "the ask" portion of our presentations.

Futurist David Zack encouraged us not to "think outside of the box," which would leave us weak and alone, but to "get inside of someone else's box" as a way of linking and communicating seemingly disparate and divergent ideas. Over the course of the event, we were scolded often about the profession's inability to convey its broad knowledge and understanding to anyone beyond the cognoscenti.

To be effective advocates, we would have to sharpen our new communication skills.

The New York chapter delegation, which included current chapter president Sherida Paulsen, Tony Schirripa, Rick Bell, Laura Manville, Margaret Castillo, Venesa Alicea, Mary Burke, Terrence O'Neal, Burt Roslyn, and myself, debated separately how our presentations to elected officials might be modified to appeal more specifically to each official's particular interests and Congressional committee foci.

At breakfast on Thursday morning, speakers from the AIA Advocacy Federal Relations team (who knew they existed!) brought us up to date on the status of the construction-spending aspects of the stimulus package that had been debated on the Senate floor the night before. Occasionally, "calls to action" were announced, advising AIA advocates to call and send emails to their Senators urging them to ensure that construction-related funding remained in the package. News was shared that green initiatives and education spending, in particular, were at risk and that it was our job to do something about it. Throughout that day and the days that followed, similar announcements were made.

After breakfast, nearly eight hundred of us headed to the Capitol to begin the day's pre-scheduled appointments with our regional representatives. Passing other AIA delegations with similar missions along the corridors of the Rayburn House Office Building, the New York Chapter's 12 delegates assembled for their first meeting at Representative Nydia Velazquez's office. Velazquez, Democrat from New York's 12th Congressional District (Lower Manhattan, portions of Brooklyn and Queens) is chair of the House Small Business Committee and senior member of the Financial Services Committee, which concerns itself with housing and community development. Our presentation to Velazquez's extremely able and attentive aide covered as many points as possible, with nearly everyone contributing a few words to reinforce our message and responding to her many questions: Construction of well-planned, well-conceived projects will create jobs over the long term for more New Yorkers and more small business owners; funding should be directed toward affordable housing development, school construction, and sustainable development; tax incentives should be increased significantly to ensure that existing office buildings to meet sustainability standards; existing AmeriCorps programs should be expanded to include a DesignCorps to employ architects and engineers to assess and plan the retrofitting of federal buildings. Since small business development and affordable housing are of particular interest in Velazquez's district, most of our points resonated with her aide. She encouraged us to invite Velazquez to upcoming events at the Center for Architecture located only a few blocks outside of her district.

When we spoke with the aides to Anthony Weiner (Democrat from the 9th District, parts of Queens and Brooklyn; health and the environment) and Eliot Engel (Democrat from the 17th District, Bronx and parts of Westchester; particularly interested in energy issues), we delivered similar messages, though admittedly found ourselves losing steam toward the end of the day. Our discussions about the DesignCorps were of particular interest to Weiner's and Engel's aides, who both asked us to provide them with more detailed information on the program.

We were extremely fortunate, however, to meet with Representative Carolyn Maloney here (Democrat from the 14th District, East Side Manhattan and Queens; chair, Joint Economic Committee). Despite a flustered start as a result of this unexpected audience, our delegation focused its message on its belief that our proposed initiatives would create the greatest number of jobs, not just in New York, but throughout the country. Maloney was sympathetic and already well-acquainted with the number of construction-related jobs that have been and will be produced by the Second Avenue subway and the East Side Access "megaprojects." She encouraged us to provide her with more specific data on the DesignCorps, sustainable retrofit incentives, and federal retainer issues.

At the end of this long day at beginners' advocacy, we dispersed for tours of the Capitol and to take in some new architecture, including Polishes Partnership's Newseum and the new Capitol Visitor's Center (exhibit by Farah Appelbaum). Although the stimulus bill that Congress eventually approved did not fund the scope of construction projects we had rallied for, we remained hopeful that our continued efforts will result in different legislative proposals in the future.
While at Pier 94, be sure to experience a spectacle of dining environments at DIFFA's DINING BY DESIGN NY 2009. For more information, visit www.diffa.org.
Duravit NYC
... now open!

Living bathrooms | nyc.duravit.com