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15 09.23.2009

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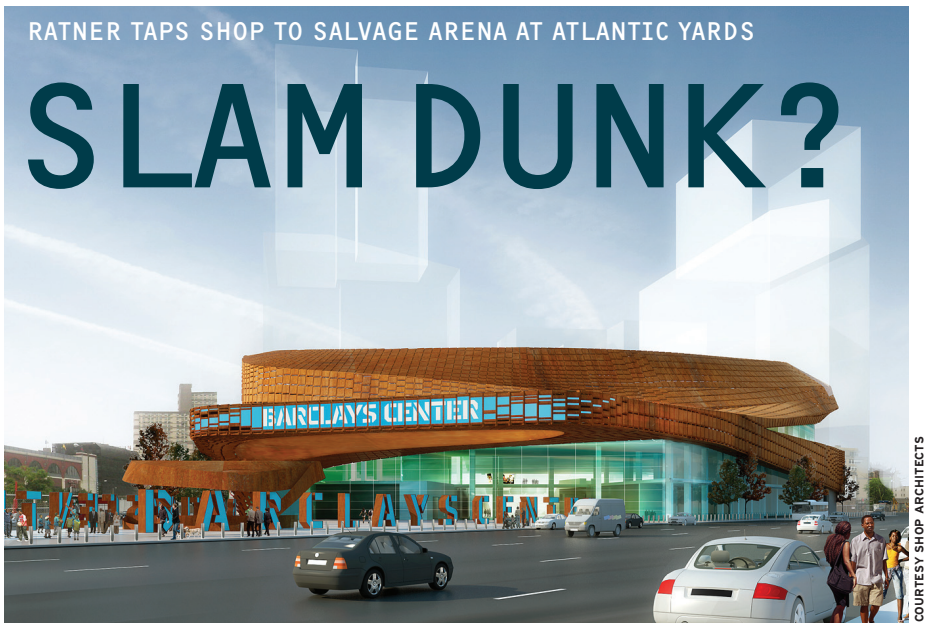
RATNER TAPS SHOP TO SALVAGE ARENA AT ATLANTIC YARDS

SLAM DUNK?



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continued on page 4

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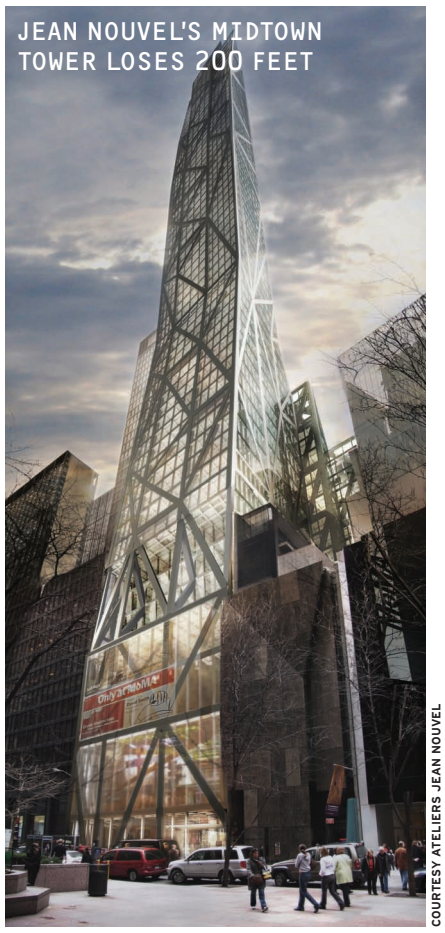

COURTESY ATELIERS JEAN NOUVEL

LOPPED OFF

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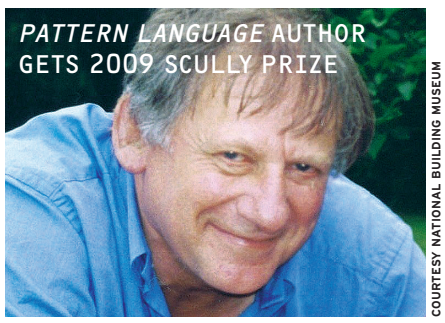
continued on page 9

PATTERN LANGUAGE AUTHOR GETS 2009 SCULLY PRIZE



COURTESY NATIONAL BUILDING MUSEUM

ALEXANDER THE GREAT

After decades at the edge of the architectural establishment—with much of that time spent sniping at it—Christopher Alexander can at last rest on his laurels as recipient of the

continued on page 8

SPECIAL PRODUCTS SECTION

ON THE SLIDE

A NEW GENERATION OF OPERABLE WALLS MAKES SPACE MORE FLEXIBLE THAN EVER

PAGES 23–30

CONTENTS

R & C Apparel

ALEX HALL

MAYOR SUPPORTS PLAN TO REZONE GARMENT DISTRICT

Shrink-to-Fit

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continued on page 11

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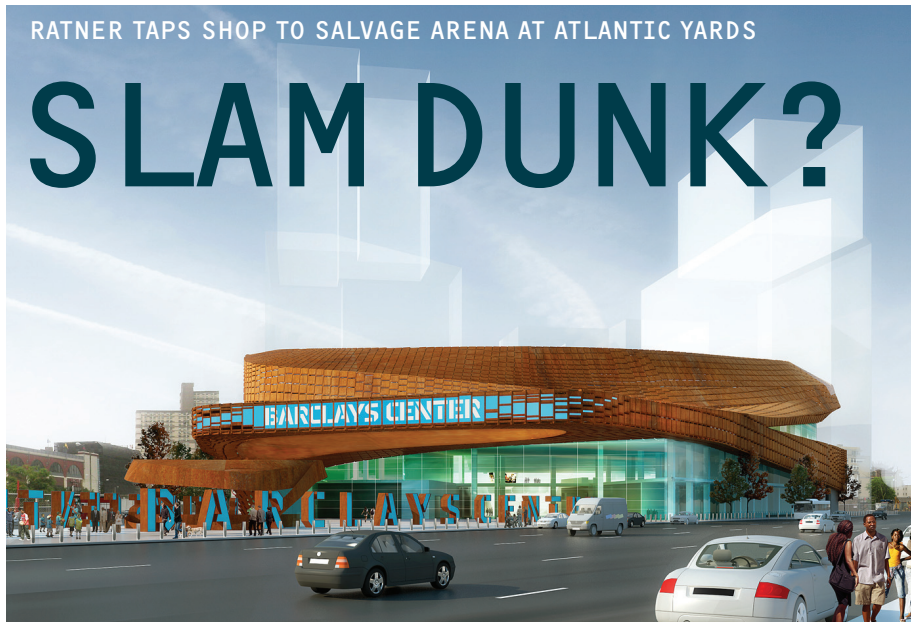

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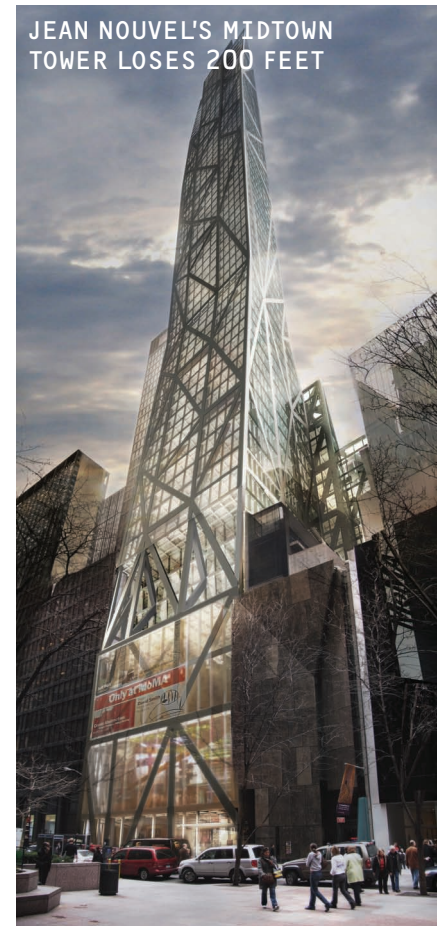

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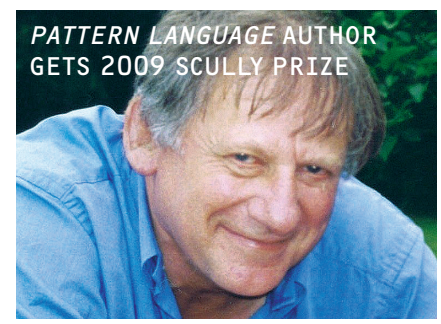

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BAIT & BALANCE

In spite of all the acreage they have to offer, the biggest building sites in New York have cultivated more cynicism than anything else. And when the developer Forest City Ratner swapped an ambitious Frank Gehry basketball arena at Atlantic Yards for a pedestrian design by Ellerbe Becket, even the most jaded cried foul. And so it seemed almost poetically appropriate that Bruce Ratner's next step would be to try and re-insinuate himself into the public's graces by mesmerizing us with a sinuous, snake-like wrap by SHoP Architects, the architectural equivalent of indie film stars.

Critics have charged Ratner with a classic case of bait-and-switch, but even under the new lineup, the arena's prospects look dim. Ellerbe Becket is still on board, leaving many to wonder how meaningfully SHoP can reshape the design. And recently the city's Independent Budget Office reported that the basketball arena stood to be a $40 million net loss to the city over 30 years, even as city subsidies to the project have ballooned to more than $772 million. Somewhere in the shuffle the original idea of a carefully orchestrated ensemble of great buildings well-knit into the community has been sidelined. Together with the cringe-making face-off between developer Larry Silverstein and the Port Authority at ground zero, it is all too clear that ambitious public/private partnerships are currently beyond this generation's skill set: Developers mistrust government's staying power to see a project through to the finish; the public wants its voice heard, values mirrored, and vanities appeased; and officials just want to pose for the cameras at the groundbreaking and ribbon-cutting. It's a recipe for dwindling expectations.

And from up close, it is downright painful to watch architects jerked around like some Manchurian Candidate's puppets. Would more regulation help ease along the process and prevent eleventh-hour surprises? Is mandated accountability in order? Developer, architect, planner, and now professor Vishaan Chakrabarti, formerly of the Related Companies and recently named director of an expanded real estate development program at Columbia University, thinks not. In a telephone interview, he said, "New York is a tricky place. It's not a beauty-contest city like San Francisco. We don't regulate design. And the reason has to do with our attitude about art. Most New Yorkers understand that along with some good art comes lots of bad art." He also noted that in New York you can't get away with bait-and-switch tactics more than once, or you'll get a reputation. "People have long memories in this town," he told me.

Chakrabarti's very long view, so accepting of the mediocre and confident that the truly artful will rise above and endure, sounds more wise than cynical. Goethe described architecture as frozen music, an expression that suggests not only majesty and inevitability, but also motion so slow as to be invisible. Perhaps rather than try to force these gigantic projects into instant being, we should allow them to evolve more glacially like great performance pieces, with equally lasting consequences. **JULIE V. IOVINE**

SLAM DUNK? continued from front page

fabric, helping quell concerns that outsize scale and dull street frontage would deaden the neighborhood. "The design of an arena in an urban context requires a critical balance between an iconic form and the street," Pasquarelli said. "It must be legible at multiple scales—on the skyline, from five blocks away, from the plaza, and while touching the door." This sounds similar to the strategy Pasquarelli professed for a tower at South Street Seaport, another project that locals deemed out-of-scale, and one that has since stalled in the troubled economy. SHoP's work designing that project and Manhattan's East River esplanade has given the firm credibility with public officials and a fluency with the city's public review process, though the Seaport designs drew fire from preservationists and never cleared the city's Landmarks Preservation Commission.

The arena design itself shows a box within a weathered-steel wrapper, swooping out over a public plaza on Atlantic Avenue. The new designs are sleeker than Kansas City–based Ellerbe Becket's earlier versions, using the steel bands and voids to allow for visual transparency. "Views and physical access both into and out of the arena will be plentiful, easy, and accommodating, and thus ensure a strong connection to the surrounding urban environment," Pasquarelli said, adding that spaces are deployed to provide activities each day of the year, regardless of whether a major event takes place.

Without financing for the overall development, though, it remains to be seen whether even the diplomatic SHoP can rescue Atlantic Yards. "The project is still a phantom, with no plans whatsoever for anything besides the money-losing arena," said Daniel Goldstein, a spokesman for Develop Don't Destroy Brooklyn and a party in a lawsuit to block Atlantic Yards. Good neighbor or no, Ratner still insists it will open the arena for the NBA's Nets by the 2011–2012 season.

ALEC APPELBAUM

The weathered-steel wrapper would terminate in a 30-foot-high canopy, while creating backlit patterns on the arena's street frontage.

COURTESY SHOP

LETTERS

IT'S NOT ABOUT THE ARENA

For the last six years, architects and planners have sat idly as our craft has been reduced to window-dressing for Forest City Ratner's (FCR) Atlantic Yards urban renewal scheme. We have watched silently as design has been used as bait by Mr. Ratner, who has wrought physical destruction and sown false social divisions among the great neighborhoods of Brooklyn.

For the last half-decade, most of us have confused cynicism with realpolitik as we have accepted FCR's collusion with certain public officials. We sat still as they circumvented the city's Uniform Land Use Review Procedure, thus effectively disenfranchising every New Yorker. And our continued silence equals complicity in their ongoing attempt to abuse eminent domain laws for their undeniably private benefit.

For the last week, we have spent too much time debating aesthetics, when the important Atlantic Yards issues have always been questions of urbanism. There is real tragedy in the fact that some of our best design talent, first Frank Gehry and now SHoP Architects, have been enlisted by FCR in its efforts to run roughshod over the people of New York. At a time when so many architects are already struggling to survive, we can barely afford to sacrifice our standing as a profession on the altars of shortsightedness and narrow ambitions. While SHoP is best known for pursuing a "third way" in architecture, sadly, with this commission the firm has chosen the wrong way.

Our time is up. Those on all sides of the debate agree that the rail yards should be developed, but our challenge as architects and planners is to work for smart growth that benefits the city physically, environmentally, and socially. On this Brooklyn site, it is possible for our profession to play a strong role in shaping a better urban future. We should be leaders in the complex negotiations between developers and communities, rather than hiding behind simplistic claims of realism that create a false choice between resistance to and engagement with the market.

These challenges go beyond ethics to questions of our collective ambition—the ambition to be stewards of, and advocates for, the built environment. In the case of the Atlantic Yards, there is still time, but architects, planners, and critics must collectively commit to redirecting and reopening this debate toward the big issues of urbanism, the environment, politics, and civic life. (See more about our plan at www.unityplan.org.)

For architects, Atlantic Yards is about leadership, accountability, responsibility, and societal obligations.

Atlantic Yards is not, and has never been, about the arena.

MARSHALL BROWN
DIRECTOR OF THE YARDS DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP

RONALD SHIFFMAN
PROFESSOR
PRATT GRADUATE CENTER FOR PLANNING AND THE ENVIRONMENT

EAVESDROP> SARA HART

CHINS UP FOR CHARLIE

The Metropolitan Museum of Art's Grace Rainey Rogers auditorium (cap. 708) was overflowing with New Yorkers wishing to bid farewell to Charles Gwathmey, who died on August 3. And as impressive as the spoken tributes were by son **Eric Steel**, director **Steven Spielberg**, fashion designer **Ralph Lauren**, and anchor **Brian Williams**, not to mention by **Peter Eisenman** and **Robert A.M. Stern**, the real jaw-dropping detail was that Charlie could do 1,300 sit-ups in 10 minutes. We all knew he was dedicated to ideal proportions, but only suspected he was made of steel. He didn't need to be made of such solid stuff to earn a permanent place in our admiration.

A CASE OF TURRETS SYNDROME

There is no more bizarre history of residential hubris than the multi-generational tale of overreaching at the 10-acre oceanfront parcel variously known as Chestertown, Dragon's Head, Elysium, and now Calvin's place, in the dunes of Southampton. In 1929 renowned antiques collector, horticulturist, and decorator Henry Francis du Pont completed the dignified, whitewashed brick, Colonial Revival manse designed by the equally dignified New York firm of Cross and Cross. It might have been preserved for posterity like a Newport "cottage," but instead it passed through a few benignly neglectful hands before financier-turned-scofflaw-turned-tax-evading-felon **Barry Trupin** snatched it up in 1979 for $330,000. With Southampton architect **Vello Kampman** playing Dr. Frankenstein, the owner changed the name to Dragon's Head, stripped the remaining original details, and enlarged the house (without benefit of permit) to 55,000 square feet, complete with 50-foot turrets, 16th-century Norman pub, and a shark tank. When Trupin went bankrupt in 1992, he sold the bloated castle to WorldCom's **Francesco Galesi** for $2.3 million, who felled the turrets, renamed the white elephant Elysium, and put it back on the market for $45 million. Enter fashion mogul **Calvin Klein**, who snapped it up in 2003 for $30 million. This year, Klein performed a community service by razing du Pont's ravaged remains. After working with British architect **John Pawson** for a while with no visible results, he turned to New York architect **Michael Haverland**, who has designed a much smaller replacement out of stucco and steel, but thoroughly Kleinian in sleekness. Smaller it may be in size, but it is no less imperious than the others in ambition. For at the moment, there's a full-scale, plywood mock-up on the site with life-size plywood furniture, apparently built to provide a virtual-reality experience for Klein prior to building for keeps. If he's looking for a new name for the joint, perhaps he'll consider Fata Morgana.

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COURTESY STEVEN HOLL ARCHITECTS

GLASGOW SCHOOL OF ART TO BE FIRM'S FIRST U.K. COMMISSION

HOLL ON THE HIGH ROAD

Steven Holl is on a winning streak, with both the Knut Hamsum Center in Norway and Denmark's Herning Museum of Contemporary Art recently opened—and topping it all off, on September 8, Holl's firm was named winner of the competition to design the $82 million home for the Glasgow School of Art.

The competition attracted 153 entries, but Holl was unanimously selected by eight jurors, including David Mackay of Barcelona-based MBM Arquitectes and Christine Hawley, dean of the Bartlett at University College London, who cited Holl's "poetic use of light" and "scale of ambitions," among other winning qualities.

The site is across from a building designed by Charles Rennie Mackintosh that, in a national survey, was recently voted the U.K.'s favorite building of the past 175 years. The program includes work on a masterplan for the Garnethill campus, plus a 121,000-square-foot teaching and research facility where students can present work to the public. Holl will collaborate with local firm JM Architects, and while the team presented models and sketches, the concepts are not intended as the design for the future building, which is set to open in 2013.

Steven Holl Architects have designed two architecture schools and one art school, according to senior partner Christopher McVoy, who will be leading the design team. "It's always a joy to make spaces for inspiring and making art," McVoy said by telephone. The most salient challenge in creating a new design, he added, is the Mackintosh Building across the street. "It is one of the greatest buildings of the 20th century, an essay in light and volume in section. Mackintosh invented a new language for buildings that's still fresh today."

With more than seven competition entries under their belt this year, this is the firm's first win, and their first project in the U.K. They were the only American firm in a final roster that included Glasgow-based Elder & Cannon, Spanish architect Francisco Mangado Architects, and the Irish firm Grafton.

JULIE V. IOVINE

OPEN> BOATHOUSE

> HARRY PARKER BOATHOUSE

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Designer: Anmahian Winton Architects

PETER VANDERWARKER

Commissioned by the nonprofit Community Rowing, the $11.45 million Harry Parker Boathouse in Boston, designed by Alex Anmahian and Nick Winton of Cambridge-based Anmahian Winton Architects, had its first run this past season. Inspired in part by the region's barns and covered bridges, the boathouse consists of two main components: 14,000 square feet of naturally conditioned boat storage and a repair shop, and 16,000 square feet of training and locker rooms, administrative spaces, and meeting rooms. A glass-shingled sculling pavilion (above) sits adjacent to the main structure, housing smaller boats. The design explores common points between rowing and architecture, the "order, discipline, and changeability," said Anmahian. "We were trying to develop a system that would change how you move around according to the proximity of the building, with the middle-scale detail being most interesting to us." Wave-like louvers cool the main structure and shade locker-room windows; the other side of the building, which the architect compared to shark gills, features 40-foot-wide hangar doors. The exterior skin is kinetic, expanding according to ventilation needs. Consisting of a composite Bakelite panel with a thin wood veneer, it should retain its carefully chosen color, which mimics the fall foliage of nearby trees. **VICTORIA MONJO**

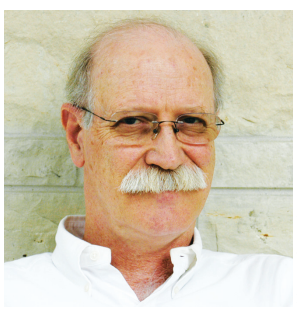
COURTESY LMCC

BLOCK PARTY

Vacant parcels of Manhattan real estate are usually occupied by "taxpayer" parking lots, but Trinity Real Estate has remade a bare downtown block as a temporary public space. Bounded by Canal, Grand, Sullivan, and Varick streets, the block was intended for a rental building, but when the project was put on hold, Trinity donated the site as a pop-up platform for contemporary art. Dubbed *LentSpace*, the project will be programmed over the year by the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council (LMCC), which commissioned architects Interboro Partners to design it, with a graphic identity by Brooklyn group Thumb.

Interboro subdivided the site into interlocking spaces, using plywood boxes filled with trees. A 215-foot-long, operable plywood fence doubles as both graphic display and bench, and the first exhibit, *Points and Lines*, features sculptural pieces made from common building materials. Together, the art and urban design invigorate a part of the city that is short on public open space. The developer should be applauded for donating the land—as should F.J. Sciame Construction, which donated the labor. The space is open from 7:00 a.m. to dusk, and *Points of Light* runs through January.

WILLIAM MENKING



COURTESY U. OF M.

THOMAS L. SCHUMACHER, 1941–2009

For Tom—expert on Italian architecture of the 1930s, professor at the University of Maryland's School of Architecture, and longtime fellow of the American Academy in Rome—architecture and the pleasures of life were never experienced independently.

Fifteen years ago, Michael Manfredi and I were in Rome while Tom was leading a summer architecture program in Italy. We looked forward to catching up with him and expected a tour of the overlooked modernist masterworks in Rome. Instead, a theoretical battle took shape over which café served the superior espresso: Sant'Eustachio or Tazza D'oro? At Sant'Eustachio, we critiqued the authenticity of the flavor, the design of the espresso machines, the volume and proportion of the room, and the espresso, which was indeed perfection. A hike over to Tazza D'oro yielded a similar debate and again, while the setting was more predictable and the service more expedient, we enjoyed another perfect espresso. Tom pressed us to choose: Which had the better espresso? The answer wasn't clear. Both espressos were exceptional, but somehow the flavor of the experience at Sant'Eustachio's lingered. Tom smiled enigmatically. "Exactly," he said. "Like architecture, its ritual and form are inseparable."

With a passion and knowledge of Italian modern architecture, Tom Schumacher, a registered architect, began teaching at Princeton and the University of Virginia, then moved to a professorship at the University of Maryland in 1984 and lived in Washington, D.C. with his wife, the artist Patricia Sachs.

Following his studies under Colin Rowe at Cornell University, where he initiated a theoretical correction of the era's anti-modernist sentiments, Schumacher went on to revive critical appreciation of Giuseppe Terragni's unbuilt work, first in his publication on Terragni's Danteum project, then in his definitive book on the architect, *Surface and Symbol: Giuseppe Terragni and the Architecture of Italian Rationalism* (Princeton Architectural Press, 1991).

I met Tom when I was in Europe on a fellowship, and the joy of traveling independently for half a year was wearing thin. A lucky meeting led to my sitting in on his summer graduate studio for two remarkable weeks. Tom's knowledge and love of history, form, theory, and all things Italian was conveyed in a manner so contagious that alumni of his summer programs in Rome consider themselves his students forever.

Tom was, in fact, a teacher to all he encountered. While distinctions such as ACSA's Distinguished Professor award in 1992–93 acknowledged this, it was in more informal settings that his particular brand of conspiratorial conversation, anecdote, and analysis of architecture gave those around him the impression they were included in an inner circle of inquiry where intelligence, architectural insight, passion for history, love of Rome, and the generosity of friendship were all on equal footing.

MARION WEISS IS A PARTNER AT WEISS/MANFREDI.

RECESSION TALES> DAVID ADJAYE

STEVEN HELLER

British architect David Adjaye has been a rising star for a long time, ratcheting up his resume from artist collaborations (with Chris Ofili at the Venice Biennale of 2003) and expensive homes to more public projects such as the Idea Store libraries (Whitechapel and Chrisp Street, London) and the Denver Museum of Contemporary Art. So it was hardly surprising this spring when he won the coveted commission with the Freelon Group to design the National Museum for African American History and Culture in Washington, D.C. The news in July that his practice was on the brink of bankruptcy was therefore all the more shocking. Adjaye spoke frankly with *AN* about how architects prepare, or don't, for the inevitable ups and downs of a working practice.

What was your business plan when you went on your own in 1994?
When I finished my MA in '93, there was a recession. It was a difficult time, with no work in the U.K. People had to go abroad. In fact it was probably the last time when you could go abroad to escape recession. Sadly, that's not a choice people have now.

I was teaching part-time at South Bank University, an inner-city London university, and so was available to do odds and sods and anything to pep up my income. My sense of setting up a practice was about working, not business, and about expediting projects, basically out of my bedroom, that came my way, and the opportunities born out of a series of private commissions in the domestic realm.

You were briefly in a partnership at that time. Was it set up with one person as designer and the other in business development?
No, it was much more naive than that. Basically, it was an extraordinarily willful arrangement, not fiscal at all, just an acknowledgment that we were both working a lot. And to be honest, that's why it disintegrated, because it was more of a school partnership that got a lot of notoriety but didn't have a systemic relationship, so it collapsed.

Schools are woefully unconnected to the idea of the profession being entrepreneurial. We were all graduating and trying to get into employment right away. This generation is very different, because they're paying off their debts. In my day in London, it was still very much in the grant system. Your education wasn't a noose around your neck in terms of repayment. It was almost like free, and you were very ready to take on the world and come into the world. There was more risk-taking.

You've chosen cultural and public projects as your focus. Is the work always steady?
Two years ago, it became clear to me—after winning a large body of work and then completing it all—that I was in a business that had cycles, and unless I could manage to preempt those troughs in the cycle, I would be in trouble. Up to that point, I hadn't had the time to ponder this in any meaningful way.

And I realized that it required a lot of time and that I wasn't working in a sector with a lot of repeat clients. The [public and cultural] sector I had chosen to work in and love had a certain speed to it that I hadn't anticipated. So I started to look at commercial clients in order to deal with the trough I saw over the hill.

When did you notice the economy starting to slip?
Once I decided to keep up the momentum with commercial projects, it took some time to develop but we got it up to about 30 to 40 percent of the workload. Then last summer, it was very clear that the economy was rocking and the first to show it was the commercial work we'd just taken on board. By October, we'd lost all the commercial work because we'd started late and they were the easiest to stop. We really felt it: It was a huge systemic drain and a very complicated situation. I had to respond in a way that I wasn't used or trained to do. I had to refinance and learn about downscaling, a horrible thing. It's much more difficult here than in America—there are incredible employee rights. It took about six months to reduce the workforce by ten because we can't fire people here. You have to go through consultation periods, etc. Now we're at about 35.

How do you feel about your current situation?
We're nearly out of it now. All the nurturing that we'd been working on for the past two and a half years has finally paid dividends. We've got four projects on an entirely new scale: Apart from the African American Museum, there's a cultural center for the city of Lisbon, a college campus in Ghana, and in Qatar we won a competition to rebuild the old city of Doha with three other architects.

I feel more nimble and responsive about sustaining our studio. We've been asked to do commercial feasibility studies in India, as they seem to be recovering faster than other places. But I wonder, "Oh, God, here we go again; should we bother?" It took a year to get back to a sustainable practice. It's been a hell of a lesson.


House at Lake Berryessa, CA.

ALEXANDER THE GREAT

continued from front page

prestigious Vincent Scully Prize. With his notions of sustainability, scale, construction, and placemaking more in vogue than ever, the National Building Museum has made Alexander the 11th recipient of the annual prize for his contributions to practice, theory, and scholarship in architecture.

"I think Christopher has been recognized by everyone who has come into contact with his work, from students to readers of his books, but not necessarily in the field," said Scott Kratz, vice-president for education at the museum. "It's nice to recognize him in this official way in front of his peers."

For Alexander, it is yet another opportunity to teach—and tweak—a profession with which he has had his share of disagreements.

"It's very gratifying, because I've struggled for fifty-some years to take really a completely different view of what it is to be an architect, and what it means to make buildings and the environment," Alexander said in a telephone interview from London, where he keeps an office for his Berkeley-based firm. "People gave me a very hard time, so I am delighted now that people are espousing what I've been arguing since the 1950s."

Though he has built more than 200 buildings during his decades of work, Alexander is primarily known for his teaching at Berkeley, where he started in his late 20s before retiring in 2001, and above all for his books, including *A Pattern Language*, where he attempted to show readers how to create their own buildings through 253 elemental patterns without the aid of an architect. To some it was empowering, while others derided its inglenooks and crooked stairs as regressively traditional.

Still, Alexander's books were popular in the 1960s and '70s, earning him a cult following that extended beyond architects to popular audiences as well. His generative design language was especially influential in early technology circles, with the creators of SimCity and Wikipedia among the many who credit Alexander for his inspiration.

"This is someone who was preaching a universal truth of sustainable environments long before most of us were using that language," said Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk, principal at Duany Plater-Zyberk and a Scully Prize juror. "Because he has kept a low profile recently, he may not have been the first person to come to mind, but he was a natural choice."

Some critics have found Alexander perhaps excessively offbeat. Kenneth Frampton was dismissive of the choice, but declined to comment "because I really haven't thought about him very much lately." He also said Alexander's ideas were too diffuse to have had much of an impact.

But whereas Alexander might eschew modernists like Frampton and vice versa, Ned Kramer, the *Architect* editor and a Scully juror, sees him as embodying both worlds. "He bridges that gap between the most progressive strains of architecture and the most *retardataire*," he said. "He finds the common ground in traditional and progressive modes, which are often at odds in the profession."

Alexander said that it's nice to finally be recognized for his work, and he hopes to spead his message as a result. "That's where I get my jollies, seeing architecture improve and hopefully create a paradise on Earth," he said. "Though we're certainly not close to that paradise."

MATT CHABAN


Model for concrete arch hall.

COURTESY CHRISTOPHER ALEXANDER

COURTESY OCL

SYRACUSE STUDIES FATE OF AGING ELEVATED INTERSTATE

HIGHWAY TAKEDOWN?

Interstate 81 runs from Tennessee to Canada, passing through a roughly 1.5-mile elevated segment in downtown Syracuse, New York. This 50-year-old viaduct includes 124 bridge spans, many of which, though safe, are considered structurally deficient, and will eventually need to be replaced. To that end, the Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council (SMTC) has begun a study process to determine options for the corridor, and some in downtown are making it clear that they want the structure replaced with a surface boulevard or tunnel.

Leading the fight, the Onondaga Citizens League (OCL), an advocacy group, has published a study calling for the elevated portion of the highway to be razed and remade as a street-level boulevard. They advocate for traffic to be rerouted along the I-481 ring road. The viaduct separates downtown from Syracuse University and the Upstate University Hospital, and the OCL believes a boulevard will allow downtown access while improving the pedestrian experience and boosting economic activity.

An even more ambitious plan under discussion calls for a tunnel with parks built on top. "The relative merits of a tunnel versus a surface condition need to be studied further," said Mark Robbins, dean of the Syracuse School of Architecture. Robbins and the university have been highly active in recent years in downtown redevelopment efforts. "One could live with an on-grade solution if it was dealt with properly in terms of crossings and landscape," he said.

In August, SMTC launched a technical study as well as a public process to determine the viaduct's fate. Called the "I-81 Challenge," the study has "no predetermined outcome," according to SMTC director James D'Agostino. Through a series of focus groups and public meetings over the next year, the organization plans to identify a range of options that will be correlated with technical data on traffic levels and road capacity, and from that the options will be further narrowed by 2011. After design development, environmental review, and further public involvement, a solution should be selected by 2013.

While elevated highways have been removed in larger cities, it is unusual for a city the size of Syracuse to consider such a plan. "Small cities are ripe for this kind of innovation," Robbins said. "The transformation would be more legible here than it would be in a large city."

ALAN G. BRAKE

LOPPED OFF continued from front page

was worthy of such a privileged position on the skyline.

Despite being the work of a Pritzker Prize winner, the answer is apparently not, as the commission voted on September 9 to knock 200 feet off the top of the building.

"While the proposed design of the building is exemplary," said commission chairwoman Amanda Burden, "the applicant has not made a convincing argument that the building's top 200 feet be worthy of the zone in which it would rise." The commission approved the building at a modified height of 1,050 feet by a vote of 9-0 with two abstentions.

Both Hines and MoMA—which would occupy the second through fifth floors of the tower as part of a 2007 deal that sold the parcel to Hines for $125,000—were disappointed by the decision, though they said they would continue to work on the design.

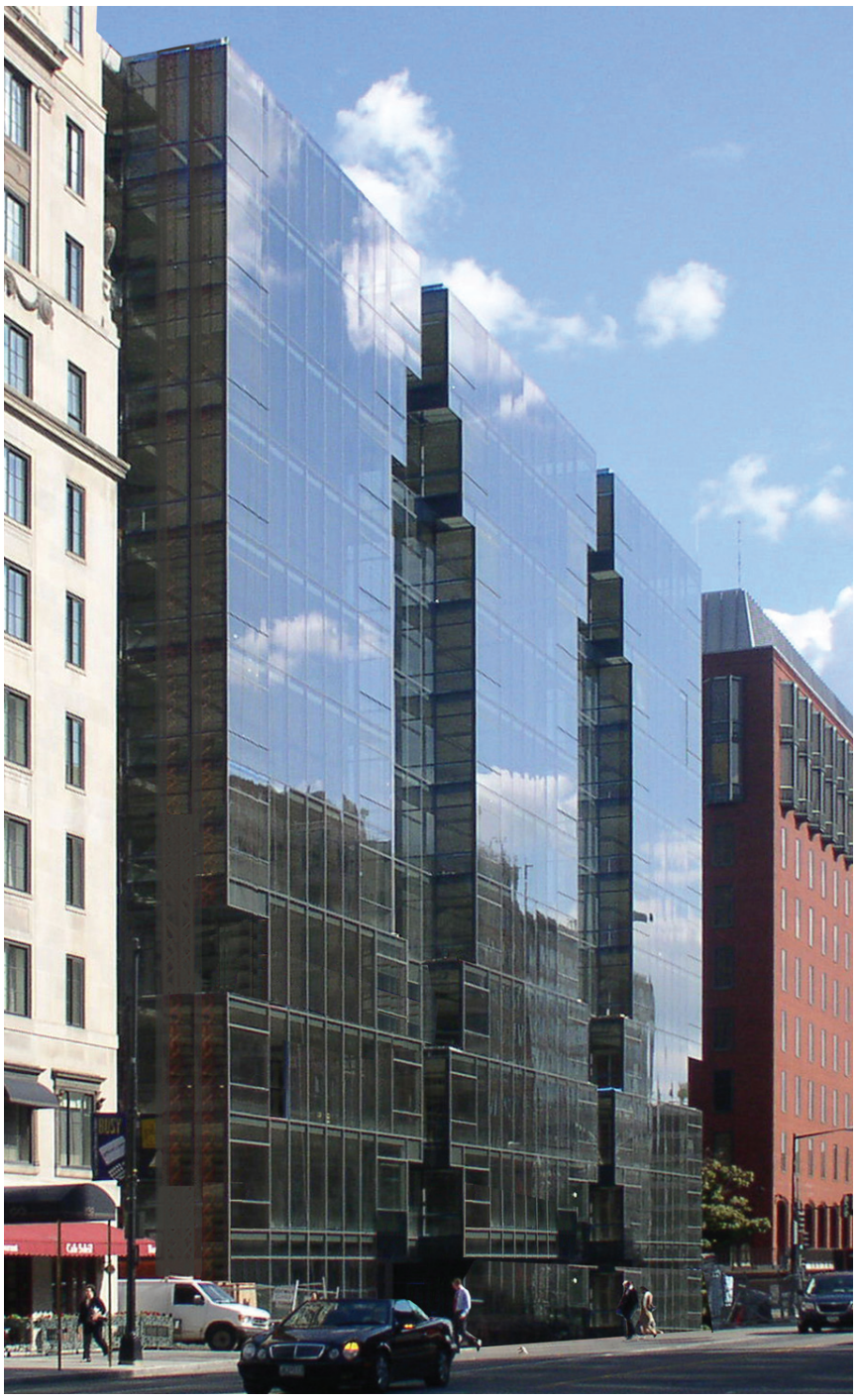
George Lancaster, a spokesperson for Hines, declined to say what direction the developer would be taking, but made it clear that Hines was not giving up. "We will soldier on," Lancaster wrote in an email. "It is not scrapped!"

During a July public hearing, Hines had noted that it could build as high as 1,050 feet as of right, and given Nouvel's notable design, an additional 200 feet would make little difference in terms of impacts on the neighborhood. Burden, however, thought that the building could be just as good, if not better, at the lower height. "The new building as modified can be a strong addition to Midtown and the city," she said.

While the commission's report outlined concerns such as "highly visible mechanical equipment" atop Nouvel's tower, it does not appear that the architect would be entitled to improve the crown of his building and receive approval at the originally proposed height. The other zoning waivers the developer sought—allowing for the building's distinctive shape and the transfer of air rights from the University Club and St. Thomas Church down the street—are still in place, with the potential for the building to remain at 650,000 square feet, though the reduced height and parameters of the zoning envelope make that unlikely. Any new designs by Nouvel must return to the commission for approval.

Hines and MoMA are not the only ones irked by the decision. In an interview, Justin Peyser, director of the Coalition for Responsible Midtown Development, a group of neighbors and local businesses opposed to the tower, said the commission had not gone far enough.

"A Chrysler-sized building is still too tall for the middle of this block," he said. **MC**



KEVIN ROCHE JOHN DINKELOO AND ASSOCIATES

Washington, D.C.'s Golden Triangle central business district just got a new piece of platinum. In April, the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) awarded Lafayette Tower, a speculative office project on the corner of 17th and H streets NW, its highest LEED designation, making it the first building in the nation's capital to earn the Platinum distinction for core and shell design. Developed by the Louis Dreyfus Property Group with architectural services from Connecticut-based Kevin Roche John Dinkeloo and Associates, the design discards flashy green gestures in favor of an elegant contextual approach. While it features contemporary all-glass cladding that distinguishes it from its more staid, stone-clad neighbors, in massing and articulation the structure stays within their precedent. This as much as anything is a sign that the highest level of sustainable design has indeed entered the mainstream.

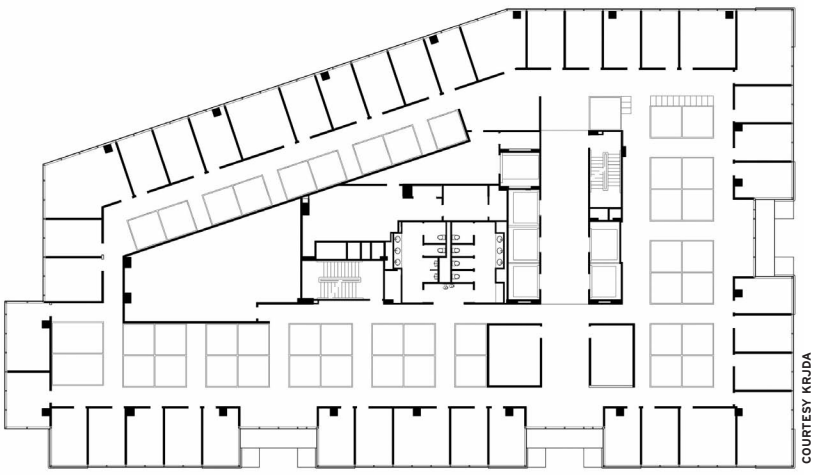
Lafayette Tower's road to Platinum began before the first pour of the cast-in-place concrete structure, even before the first mouse click in a CAD program, with the securing of a preexisting urban location. The building sits downtown on a lot once occupied by the headquarters of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, putting it in the midst of a pedestrian-oriented environment and making the project eligible for Site Selection, Development Density, and Community Connectivity LEED credits. Its proximity to multiple forms of mass transportation (as well as incorporation of bike storage, showering facilities, and designated parking spaces for fuel-efficient vehicles) earned the project all four of the available Alternative Transportation credits. Initially, the architects considered re-cladding the existing structure, but its layout and congested column grid made it unsuitable to modern office uses. Nonetheless, the team managed to divert 92 percent of demolition waste from the landfill, recycling concrete, rebar, and scrap metal, and reusing the existing structure's foundation walls. They also were able to recycle 88 percent of scrap materials from the construction process, such as drywall, metal, plastic, wood, and cardboard.

The architects made their contribution to the overall LEED effort while satisfying aesthetic goals and the client's demands. To make the building more amenable to the current real-estate market, the design includes only 11 stories in its 130-foot-height (the maximum allowable in most of central D.C.) instead of the usual 12 stories. This made way for 11-foot-6-inch floor-to-floor heights. The higher ceilings, 8 foot 10 inches on most floors and 9 foot 6 inches on the top three floors, create the perfect aperture to allow natural daylight to flood the interior. Maximum light penetration was ensured by the floor-to-ceiling curtain wall, composed entirely of clear-water white, low-e coated, structurally glazed, five-foot-wide Viracon glass panels. By carving indentations into the face of the building, the architects took full advantage of this transparent envelope, creating 102 corner offices. Access to daylight and views (and LEED credits) was also improved by the post-tensioned, flat-slab concrete structure designed by structural engineering firm Tadjer-Cohen-Edelson Associates. The system's tensioning cables create 20-foot bays and 15-foot cantilevers off the perimeter columns, which makes way for uninterrupted expanses of glass. To combat heat gain and maintain thermal comfort and control, the team also included an automated motorized shading system that interacts with sun tracking software, and a ventilation system that moves hot air generated at the exterior wall up above the ceiling.

Another contributor to the LEED tally is the tower's green roof, which exceeds the rating system's Open Space and Development Footprint minimum requirements. Designed in collaboration with landscape architect Wiles Mensch Corporation, the roof features a 1,500-square-foot ipe wood deck, covered by a 60-by-70-foot trellis and surrounded by lightweight synthetic soil planted with desert varietals. In addition to providing insulation and reducing the heat-island effect, the green roof also serves as a storm water runoff management system, soaking up the wet stuff and keeping it from overloading the city's sewers. An electronic system installed in the roof monitors for any leakage.

The building incorporates many other green features typical of current construction standards, such as an HVAC system that infuses the interior with filtered air, an extremely efficient chilling system, and low-VOC emitting and locally sourced materials. The developer issued guidelines for tenant design and construction that strongly encourage adherence to LEED standards. USGBC also gave the project special recognition for instituting green maintenance and housekeeping standards. And in a magnanimous gesture, a portion of the savings created by the building's efficient systems is being used to purchase 35 percent of the base building's electricity needs from renewable sources. Now imagine what the world might look like if 100 percent of our building stock operated the same way.

AARON SEWARD



COURTESY KRJDA

AT DEADLINE

PROFESSOR GWATHMEY

Ralph Lauren and Charles Gwathmey were longtime buddies, though the latter never designed a house for the former. Still, Lauren was deeply touched by their relationship, as Robert A.M. Stern announced at Gwathmey's memorial service on September 10 that Lauren and his wife Ricky were endowing a professorship in the architect's honor and name at the Yale School of Architecture. It will be the first chaired professorship at the school not dedicated to a visiting architect or scholar, such as the Kahn or Davenport chairs, but reserved for one of the school's permanent faculty members.

YOUR 9/11 MEMORIAL

Each anniversary for September 11 brings a new announcement, and this year was no exception, as new renderings of Davis Brody Bond Aedas' below-grade museum were unveiled (full details at archpaper.com). But of even greater interest was the announcement of 911history.org, where anyone can upload their own pictures related to that tragic day, tagged with a date and location. They will then be coded onto a Google Map for anyone to search by date, location, or theme. This allows people to see the events before, during, and after, how and where they affected people, and what those places look like today.

DEMOLITION BEGETS PRESERVATION

At the end of August, the Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation turned up photos of construction work at 133-139 MacDougal Street, for a new building at NYU Law School, that triggered alarms all over the neighborhood. Part of the building contains the old Provincetown Playhouse, and though efforts to preserve the building failed, NYU promised to protect the shell of the old theater. The photos, however, showed huge holes in the northern wall, and later photos show much of it missing. Morris Adjmi, architect of the new building, told *AN* that foundation issues had to be addressed, and that all the bricks would be reused in the new building. While the structure will be preserved after all, NYU's community outreach continues to deteriorate.

FILLING HER CUP

Having spent time helping low-income victims of Hurricane Katrina rebuild along the Gulf Coast, Christine Cerqueira Gaspar will take a more pedagogical approach to her work as the new executive director of the Center for Urban Pedagogy. Gaspar, formerly the assistant director of the Gulf Coast Community Design Studio and a teacher in planning and architecture at MIT, began at CUP on September 1, and, according to a release, hopes to further the center's community education and planning work, in part by investigating urban ecology.

SHRINK-TO-FIT continued from front page

New York's manufacturing base, stifle creativity, and ghettoize skilled workers, already besieged by outsourced manufacturing and the recession.

According to the Garment Industry Development Corporation (GIDC), there are currently about five million square feet of space zoned for all related garment businesses in the area, but actual production is concentrated in about 14 buildings, with 60 percent of the space devoted to apparel-related business. Two hundred small factories and businesses of fabric, button, zipper, machine suppliers, showrooms, and the like comprise a substantial 9,000 jobs. Currently, landlords can convert from industrial to commercial use only if they set aside an equivalent amount of production space elsewhere in the district, but numerous illegal commercial operations exist. Already as a result of the January 2005 Hudson Yards rezoning, residential use has been permitted on more side blocks where cheap hotels are now under construction.

For some, such as Deborah Brand of the 90-year-old M & S Schmalberg Custom Flower Fabrics, the idea of consolidation is seen as a safeguard that "will keep our rent down, and increase business by having all the domestic suppliers together." For other designers like Francoise Olivas, who often uses R & C Apparel for custom work, "It points to the lack of interest in the city, which would rather invest in new bio-tech start-ups than in New York's garment industry heritage."

The garment building proposal is similar to one-stop shopping at the D&D Building in Midtown or the failed IDCNY in Long Island City, as well as an unrealized post–September 11 GIDC proposal for a manufacturing building in Chinatown. But there is no mention of whether and how the building now under discussion at 270 West 38th Street would be retrofitted, how it would be decided who located there, and if there will be enough space for future expansion.

Couture production at work.

ALEX HALL

Alternatively, the Garment Center could be upgraded as a networked series of sustainable and productive factories integrated throughout the area, a vital place comprising part of the everyday urban experience. (Such alternatives may be getting a fuller airing, as the Design Trust for Public Space launched a new initiative on September 8, called "Made in Midtown," to study the fashion industry's place in New York's creative economy.) At any rate, as Olivas said, "Fashion is both art and commerce. The single-building idea would prohibit a growth in the economy where the fashion industry could once again burst at the seams." **NINA RAPPAPORT**

CRIT> MUSEUM OF CHINESE IN AMERICA

Raw details: exposed original masonry and (at right) unfinished wood cabinetry.

COURTESY MOCA

A buried treasure in the otherwise abundantly publicized oeuvre of Maya Lin was her 1993 design for the Museum for African Art, at its former location on lower Broadway. That design featured a brilliant organizational device: a bright ochre cube that accommodated circulation from ground-level bookstore and lobby to basement galleries, framing views through openings and unfoldings in its periphery. Low lighting elsewhere brought a sense of depth to a small-scaled space, and the graphic and geometric punch of the unfolding cube, along with a theatrical use of modest materials, recalled the best work of Frank Gehry. A blast of LA-style pop brought unexpected urbanity to a dire stretch of downtown storefronts.

These same spatial and material strategies have been revived in Lin's new design for the Museum of Chinese in America (MoCA), in the ground and basement floors of the century-old Grand Machinery Exchange, a landmark manufacturing building between Lafayette and Centre streets. Quadrupling to 12,000 square feet the size of its former home on Mulberry Street, the museum has expanded its institutional mission from a local Chinatown focus to some 500 years of Chinese history in the Americas. That bright ochre cube has become a moody skylit atrium at the base of the Exchange's height light well along Lafayette Street are reused as the treads of the central atrium stair. Abundant glazing along both Lafayette and Centre streets brings daylight and city views surprisingly deep into the plan.

There are two hazards to the design, both of which may pass. The first is that the tastefully low-key, even gloomy palette and overall chiaroscuro—inevitably invoking Lin's earlier work as a memorial specialist—lend a somber air to an institution that aims to celebrate the clamorous vitality of a living community. But with the planned permanent installation of vivid visual and material artifacts, from pop signage to New Years' dragons, and with whatever random improvisations arise from what will be a densely-used space, the final result will be more balanced. The second hazard is that this particular material and tonal vocabulary (of caramel-colored raw wood and brick along with abraded Plexiglas, patinated bronze, twinkling glass tiles, and wine-dark paneling) suffers from happening to be acutely fashionable—right down to the exposed Edison-filament bulbs over the ticket desk.

For a glassy storefront location poised between Soho, Nolita, and Chinatown proper, the immediate mood is of a dining or retail environment of the late high aughts. And yet within this context, that's not without meaning: The permanent galleries acknowledge, and in one case literally reconstruct, the storefront restaurant, laundry, and neighborhood apothecary and tea shop as sites of cultural encounter and social integration for the Chinese-American community. Meanwhile, nothing stays cool forever, and details as simple as the limestone-gray render on the exterior Centre Street facade suggest a lasting civic gravitas resonant with the adjacent former Police Headquarters and the municipal buildings on the nearby downtown skyline.

Sometimes it seems that what New York architecture really needs is more heroic buildings on that skyline, the kind that you can grok from a freeway. But this city, in its profound density and complexity, and its intimate encounter between old and new, survival and arrival, has its own ideas, requiring interstitial finesse at multiple scales—and especially on Manhattan Island, where the ground plane is a notional convention more than a geographic fact, requiring a deep ingenuity in cross-section. Lin's MoCA is a minor masterwork in this vein. It unearths the hidden virtues of the banal burrow, yielding something with the seemingly contradictory properties of transparency and revelation. Any real treasure stays a little bit buried.

THOMAS DE MONCHAUX

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ONLY CONNECT

At St. Albans preparatory school in Washington, D.C., stairs and terraces link campus buildings on several levels, a contemporary interpretation of Olmsted's "pilgrim paths" conceived for the site in 1907.

COURTESY SOM

There is a psychological importance to the design of educational spaces that outstrips the practical requirements of class size, locker provisions, and common rooms. And while many program needs may be more logistical than visionary, there is a higher obligation to design experiences that excite minds and encourage inquiry that is entirely up to the architect. *AN* looks at six newly completed education projects, from schools in upstate New York and Los Angeles for children with special needs to new campus buildings at Barnard and City College in New York, where circulation not only connects spaces but also takes the learning experience well beyond the classroom.

CENTER FOR DISCOVERY AUTISM CAMPUS HARRIS, NEW YORK

The constellation of buildings at the Autism Campus at the Center for Discovery in Harris, New York, is highly attuned to the haptic experience of space—the way we encounter the world with all of our senses at once. Designed by New Haven–based Turner Brooks Architect, the school is tailored for students with autism spectrum disorders, in which an elevated haptic sense can spur often traumatic responses to color, sharp angles, or transitions from one space to another.

This unusual design brief offered a chance to explore what firm principal Turner Brooks said was a fundamental quality of architecture: "The idea that the space changes as you go through it, and funnels you and turns you." Within the campus' single-story residences—which consist of nine five-bed homes—sunlit spaces gently expand and contract into one another. Right angles are completely avoided until the final turn into the bedroom. Small satellite living areas that look like large bay windows are arranged along corridors, allowing residents to be ensconced in a snug space while still observing the world around them.

The ten-acre campus, which also includes three classroom buildings for 120 students aged five to 21, is separated by a pasture from other special-needs facilities. Because walking is a common autism therapy, the sprawling, three-building residential clusters are connected by pathways to each other and to their adjacent classroom building, as well as to the other two clusters and a nearby library, art, cafeteria, and gym to be designed by Peter Gluck. Winding through rolling deciduous woodland, the pathways gently guide residents' bodies and eyes to their destination. All paths from the residential buildings lead to the cluster's homeroom, a large, open space around which classrooms, an exercise room, dining area, sensory room, and staff and conference rooms are centered.

"The site plan may seem to some totally random," said Brooks, "but the alignments are like a slalom course that presents the doors to each building." Like beacons along the course, buildings are painted in solid colors slightly brighter than those that autistic author Temple Grandin describes as having therapeutic effects.

Patrick Dollard, the Center for Discovery's president and CEO, embraces such bold moves even when they may strike some as unorthodox approaches to autism. "We have a lot of tools in our toolbox to help kids," said Dollard. "We'd be the last people to push designs that are our ideas without some evidence that they're going to work." As it opens to residents for the first time this fall, Dollard and Brooks don't yet know if their campus will become a model for other facilities of its kind. As with the careful treatment of autism, only time will tell what is possible.

JENNIFER KRICHELS

COURTESY TURNER BROOKS ARCHITECT

Campus buildings follow the contours of the land, with paths leading residents from one structure to the next, and indoors, without abrupt angles or spatial transitions.

The ten-acre campus is arranged in three four-building clusters, allowing the homes to exist as a community but also maintain their own distinct identities.

THE BERNARD AND ANNE SPITZER SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE NEW YORK

More than a decade of planning, bidding, and construction finally concludes this month with the dedication of the $52 million, 135,000-square-foot Architecture, Urban Design, and Landscape Architecture school at the City College of New York, designed by Rafael Viñoly Architects around the bones of one of CCNY's former libraries.

That late-1950s structure—known as the Y Building—had presented a largely windowless face to the street, with a main entrance at grade that was little more than an elevator lobby. Now a stairway orients the building toward one of the campus' central arteries, leading up from the corner of 135th Street and Convent Avenue to a new main entrance above grade that opens onto the school's gallery, library, and classrooms.

Of the original structure, Viñoly preserved only the skeleton of concrete columns and floor slabs, and hollowed out its core to create a five-story atrium. Metal bridges and stairs crisscross the atrium, connecting alternating floors and stretching into surrounding studios. Two mezzanines offer views down the wide hallways below, which are open to the atrium on one side and lined with homasote on the other, making them a popular place for classes to pin up work for critiques.

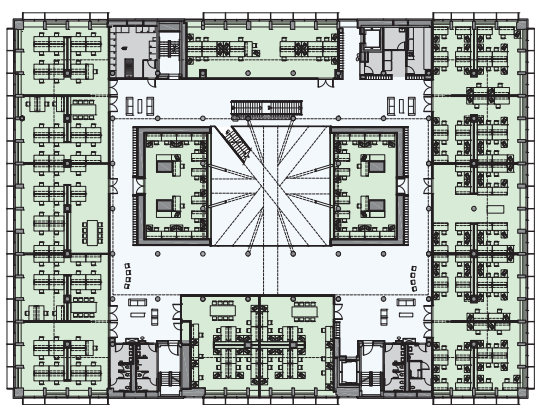
The exhibition space—"the soul of the building," said project director Fred Wilmers—lies at the bottom of the atrium, keeping it continually animated by people crossing the bridges overhead. Doors at opposite corners of the gallery ensure a steady stream of foot traffic. "We anticipated that people would cut diagonally through the gallery, and they do," said Wilmers. The gallery's exterior walls are lined with the same recycled rubber as its interior, doubling the amount of pin-up space and extending exhibitions into adjacent hallways.

A saffron-yellow clerestory at the top of the atrium directs and controls the flow of natural light, one of the pillars of Viñoly's design strategy. Its underside is angled inward to refract incoming rays so that they diffuse throughout the building. Extended edges around exterior windows also help block sun without hampering views. By next year, said Wilmers, those window boxes will become the frame for perforated aluminum louvers with vertical slats on the east and west walls, and horizontal slats on the south wall. (Though originally part of the design, the louvers had been shelved during the bidding process to cut costs, but were reintroduced after a large donation from Bernard and Anne Spitzer.)

On the open-air roof, the clerestory segues into one of the building's most popular features, a luminous yellow amphitheater that was not part of the project's mandated program but has become such a crowded gathering place that the school has had to start rationing usage. From the vantage of its south-facing bleachers, the amphitheater's frame turns the Midtown skyline into a suitably inspiring backdrop.

JULIA GALEF

ALBERT VECERKA/ESTO

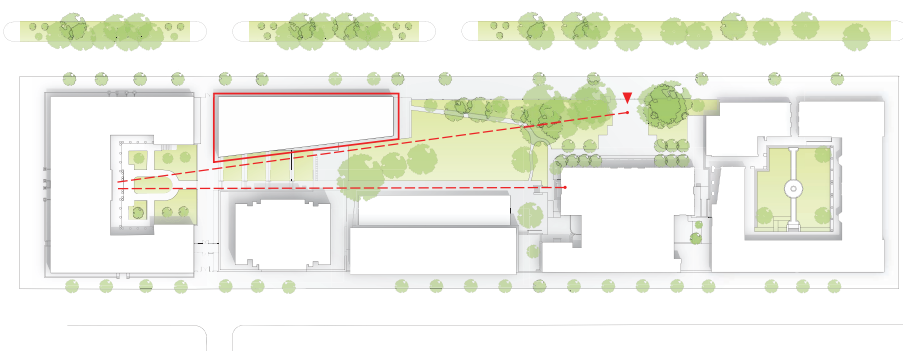


Rafael Viñoly Architects pushed the CCNY building's exterior wall outward by two-and-a-half feet, adding columns to support the weight of a new curtain wall (top). The old building's former core was hollowed out to create an atrium (above) in which a criss-crossing network of bridges and stairs now serves as a dynamic circulation system.

BARNARD COLLEGE NEXUS NEW YORK

Stairs clad in transparent glass (above) cantilever from the terra-cotta colored facade, offering "slipped vistas" of the campus and the city. The double-height cafe space (right) is connected visually to the dining areas above through fritted glass walls, which help to break up the floor plates of this vertical building.

COURTESY WEISS/MANFREDI



Fitted into a compact, wedge-shaped envelope, the 96,000-square-foot Barnard College Nexus will be a hive of activity, enfolding spaces for art, architecture, theater, art history, and student government, as well as faculty offices, a dining hall, and a cafe. With an accompanying green roof and open terrace, plus numerous informal lounge and gallery spaces, the project improves upon the intimate Morningside Heights campus while presenting a new face for the 120-year-old liberal arts college for women.

Designed by Weiss/Manfredi, the Nexus is built on the site of a former student center—a heavy concrete structure by Vincent Kling completed in 1969—and shares belowground mechanicals and other facilities with the adjacent Altschul Hall, a tower also designed by Kling. The architects removed most of a raised plaza between the site and Altschul, which had effectively split the campus in two. They replaced it with a sloping strip of lawn connecting the main campus green with the garden in front of Milbank Hall, the school's original building. Skylights embedded in the lawn bring light into the belowground levels, which include classrooms and a 500-seat auditorium, along with a 100-seat black box theater to the south of the building.

Barnard asked for a glass structure, but the architects noted that all the college's other buildings were masonry, so they opted to clad the Nexus in glass with terra-cotta-colored bands that create varying degrees of opacity. Some portions are more transparent, making many of the collective spaces legible from Broadway. Inside, a series of interlocking double-height spaces draw the eye up and through the building, including the cafe, dining hall, a reading room, and the crit space, and on toward the rooftop, where the Environmental Science department will maintain a series of small terraced gardens.

With stairs, elevators, hallways, and interconnecting spaces, circulation is dynamic throughout, including a pair of cantilevered stairs that puncture the campus-facing facade. These switchback stairs, clad in entirely transparent glass, offer enticing views of the Barnard and Columbia University campuses, and give a distinct sense of release from the programmatically dense interior. "One of the things that's very challenging about a vertical building is that each floor tends to have its own geography," said principal Marion Weiss. "The slipped vistas offer views out, and the views within encourage movement and communication across the departments. So the sum becomes greater than the parts."

ALAN G. BRAKE

PARK CENTURY SCHOOL LOS ANGELES

A light-filled new campus for the Park Century School gives little hint of its earlier incarnation as a concrete tilt-up warehouse before remodeling last year by Los Angeles–based architect Christopher V. Ward.

Set on a cul-de-sac in the still-industrial but rapidly gentrifying Culver City neighborhood, Park Century serves 90 students with learning disabilities, grades 2 through 8. To help soften the structure's hard edges, Ward built his design around a series of welcoming moves. Most strikingly, the former warehouse's principal concrete facade is now covered in wood, with a loggia separating it from an outer glass wall. Green glass trees affixed to the wall seem to float in front of the school, glowing when the loggia behind them is lit at night.

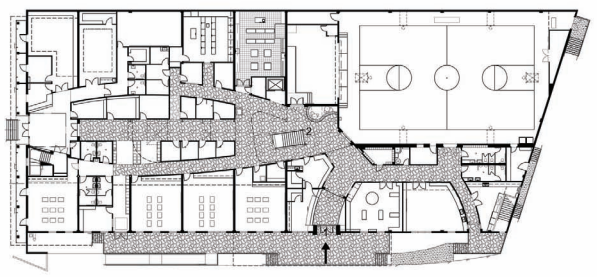
To illuminate the building's two-story interior, Ward first made the most of existing skylights, painting the surfaces beneath them white to reflect light into the hallways. He also installed windows and a large round skylight in the school's central atrium. Inset with yellow and green glass, it casts a pattern of colorful shapes in a shifting arc on the floor as the sun moves across the sky.

Although Ward gutted the warehouse's interior, a few of its features proved adaptable to the purposes of a school. Its front loading dock now receives students at the beginning of the school day, and is outfitted with picnic tables for lunch hour. Since the 47,000-square-foot property was too small to accommodate an outdoor playground, Ward extended the dock's natural stone paving into the first-floor hallways, creating an indoor "Main Street" lined with plantings, park benches, and columns that taper in tree-like fashion. The street also sports one relic preserved from the old warehouse: industrial scales that now serves as a favorite plaything for the students.

The particularities of the Park Century curriculum called for specialized design solutions, Ward said. Unlike a conventional school built around classes of 20 to 30 students, Park Century children, most of whom have attention deficit disorder or dyslexia, have more varied daily schedules that required 12 large classrooms, six small-group rooms, and 12 individual tutoring rooms. The design also had to be sensitive to the psychological needs of the student body. "The kids respond better in a more stable environment," said Ward, explaining that he kept the layout as simple as possible, with a minimum of curves and angles. To keep noise in the hallway from disrupting classes, he carpeted segments of the first floor. And to discourage parents from meddling too frequently in students' daily routines, Ward built a stylish parents' lounge situated well off the school's main thoroughfare.

JG

DOUG OLSEN



A new facade creates an illusion of glass trees floating against a backlit loggia (top), establishing a sense of place on this Culver City cul-de-sac. The former warehouse's reconstructed loading dock (above) serves as a dropoff area, leading students into an atrium (left) crowned by a multicolored skylight.

WATTS LEARNING CENTER LOS ANGELES

RAÚL OTERO

The bright colors and contrasting patterns of the $5.5 million campus (top) are inspired by African Kente cloth. Extending the motif, nine classrooms, clad in wood and dark cementitious panels, sit within a landscape of native African plants. The elevator tower (above), topped by programmable LEDs, is envisioned as a neighborhood beacon.

Apart from Simon Rodia's folly of steel and ceramic tile, the Watts Towers, there are few architectural landmarks in the neighborhood. But the Cuningham Group has aimed to create one in its expansion of the Watts Learning Center, a charter school of about 240 elementary school students, 99 percent of them African American.

Before the revamp, the barely ten-year-old school occupied a collection of ramshackle old church buildings and temporary trailers sitting on an asphalt parking lot, not an ideal learning environment.

Charged with expressing both vigor and seriousness of purpose, the firm built an airy new two-story classroom building, fixed up several of the older buildings, removed the trailers, and arranged the campus around new landscaping, including desert vegetation from Africa. The new project opened a year ago, and the school is now raising funds for a second phase that will include another new building and more renovations.

According to the architects, the design was inspired in part by an African Kente cloth. From afar, the main building's most visible elements are its light wood and dark cementitious panels. But a closer look reveals the bright colors woven through the complex, such as bright green steel framing, bright yellow stair railings, purple stair stringers, and each classroom door in its own shade.

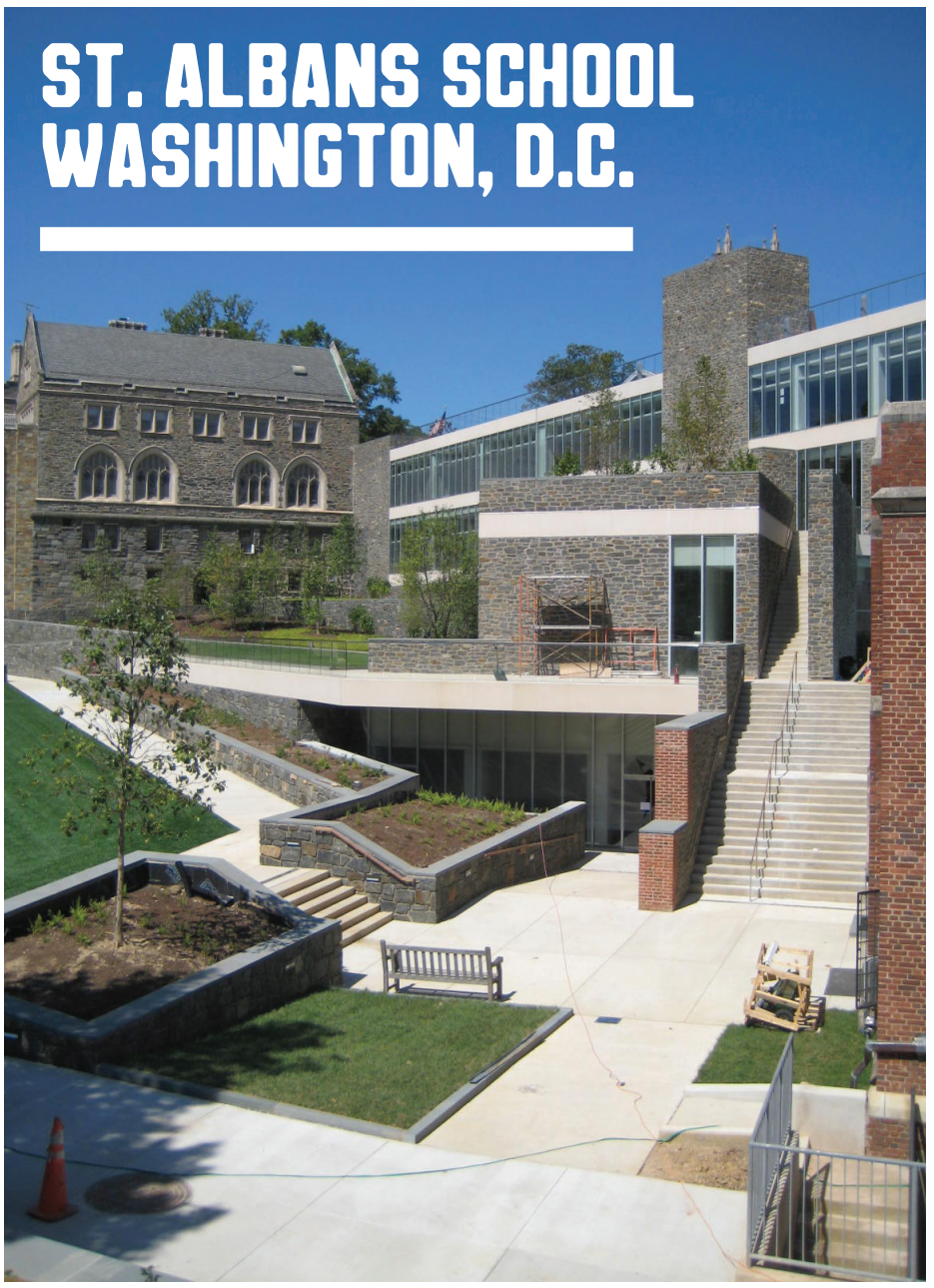
Featured in the design is the element that the firm calls the "beacon," a two-story elevator tower fitted with large LED lights that can be programmed to project any color. For instance, said Cuningham Group principal John Quiter, if the Lakers win, they can turn on the team's purple and gold, or they can project a rainbow. "It's up to them and their creativity," said Quiter. The tower has been planted with ivy for a touch of more traditional academic gravitas.

Under a very tight budget, the firm packed the building with several sustainable elements, many of them fairly low-tech but effective. This includes north-south orientation, a white roof to minimize heat gain, operable windows for cross-ventilation, low-emitting materials, and a solar water-heating system obtained through a government grant.

The community has quickly taken to the project, said Quiter, who notes that the project both reflects and influences the local culture. The school was already one of the best-performing schools in the city academically, and now it has a campus worthy of all the hard work.

SAM LUBELL

ST. ALBANS SCHOOL WASHINGTON, D.C.



COURTESY SOM

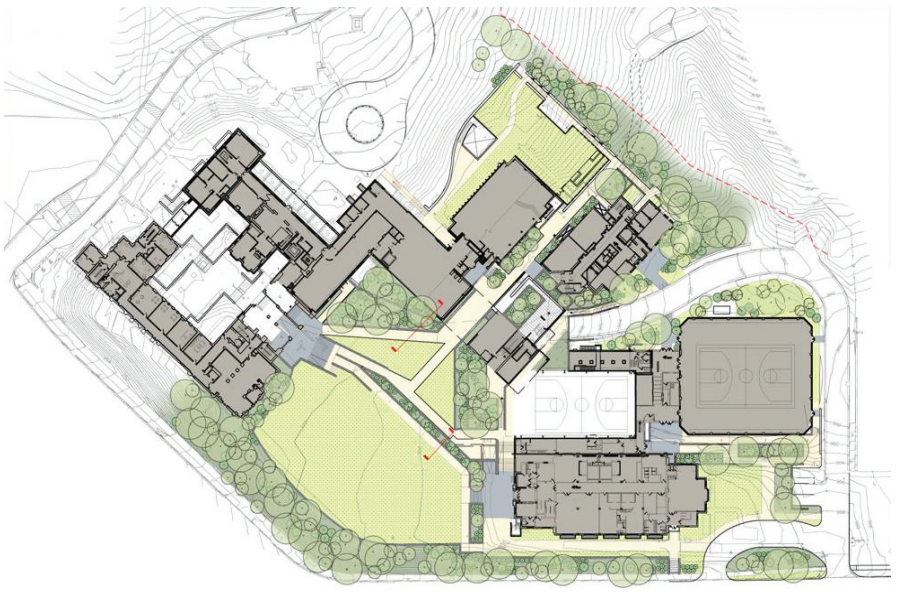
To celebrate its centennial, St. Albans School, a private boys' school founded in 1909, embarked on its first new construction project in nearly 30 years. The institution hired Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM) to complete a 25,000-square-foot renovation and a 30,000-square-foot expansion that would house a student center, classrooms, and faculty offices. The school, which had developed slowly over the years and did not follow a rational plan, also hoped that the architects could create a cohesive linkage between four of its existing buildings that were somewhat haphazardly arranged.

SOM looked to St. Albans' context for inspiration. The school is located on Mount St. Albans, the highest elevation in the D.C. area as well as the grounds of the National Cathedral, which were designed by Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. The landscape architect conceived of the cathedral's surrounds as a cathedral close, outlining a network of garden walkways that he called "pilgrim paths." These paths guide visitors slowly up the forested hill, revealing framed views of important D.C. landmarks along the way before terminating at the cathedral.

SOM developed an architectural language around the idea of Olmsted's paths, creating a series of interior and exterior passages that rise 60 feet, joining St. Albans' lower campus with its main entrance above. Along this route, just as Olmsted intended, there are gathering areas, whether within enclosed, cantilevered volumes or upon open-air terraces, offering views of the surroundings. The design shuns the typical campus architecture of enclosed quads in favor of interconnectivity with the landscape.

The new building itself, known as Marriott Hall, is an uncompromising modernist slab that also attempts a familial relationship to the neo-Gothic architecture of the existing campus. SOM accomplished this by cladding much of the exterior and terraced walkways with a blue stone that closely resembles the Potomac stone used in the original 1909 buildings. "The stone is imprecise," said Roger Duffy, design partner at SOM. "We did a lot of mockups with the mason to ensure a textural match with the existing architecture."

The classrooms themselves are clad in floor-to-ceiling glass. The architects carefully controlled the daylight in the interior by installing a light shelf eight feet up the glass wall. Below that point, the glass is outfitted with a ceramic frit at 30 percent density; above, the glass is clear. This mitigates glare and heat gain, while allowing full sunlight to bounce off the shelf and turn the ceiling into an indirect reflector. Fluorescent lamps atop the shelf ensure that day or night classrooms receive the same degree of illumination. **AARON SEWARD**



Stone-clad terraced walkways of the addition (above, left) provide places for students to gather and interact on campus, an important part of the institution's educational philosophy. They also provide direct egress from the building at multiple levels, allowing SOM to forgo fire doors and stairs. The classrooms are enclosed in modernist glass (above, right).

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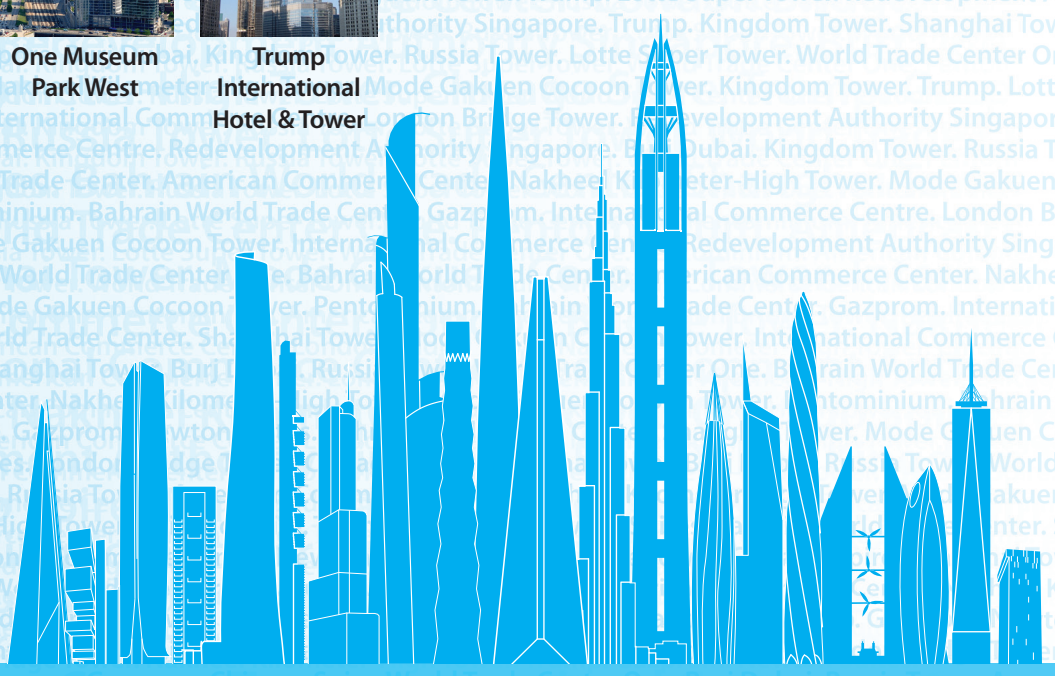

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SUPPLEMENT 04

moveable Walls

Published by The Architect's Newspaper

www.archpaper.com

TRENDS: Sliding doors have grown up into versatile, operable walls
HARDWARE: The latest, sleekest mechanisms arrive with a whisper, not a crash
GREEN: High-impact doors for stormy weather offer good insulation, too

1

IMAGES COURTESY RESPECTIVE MANUFACTURERS EXCEPT AS NOTED; LEFT: PAUL+O ARCHITECTS

2

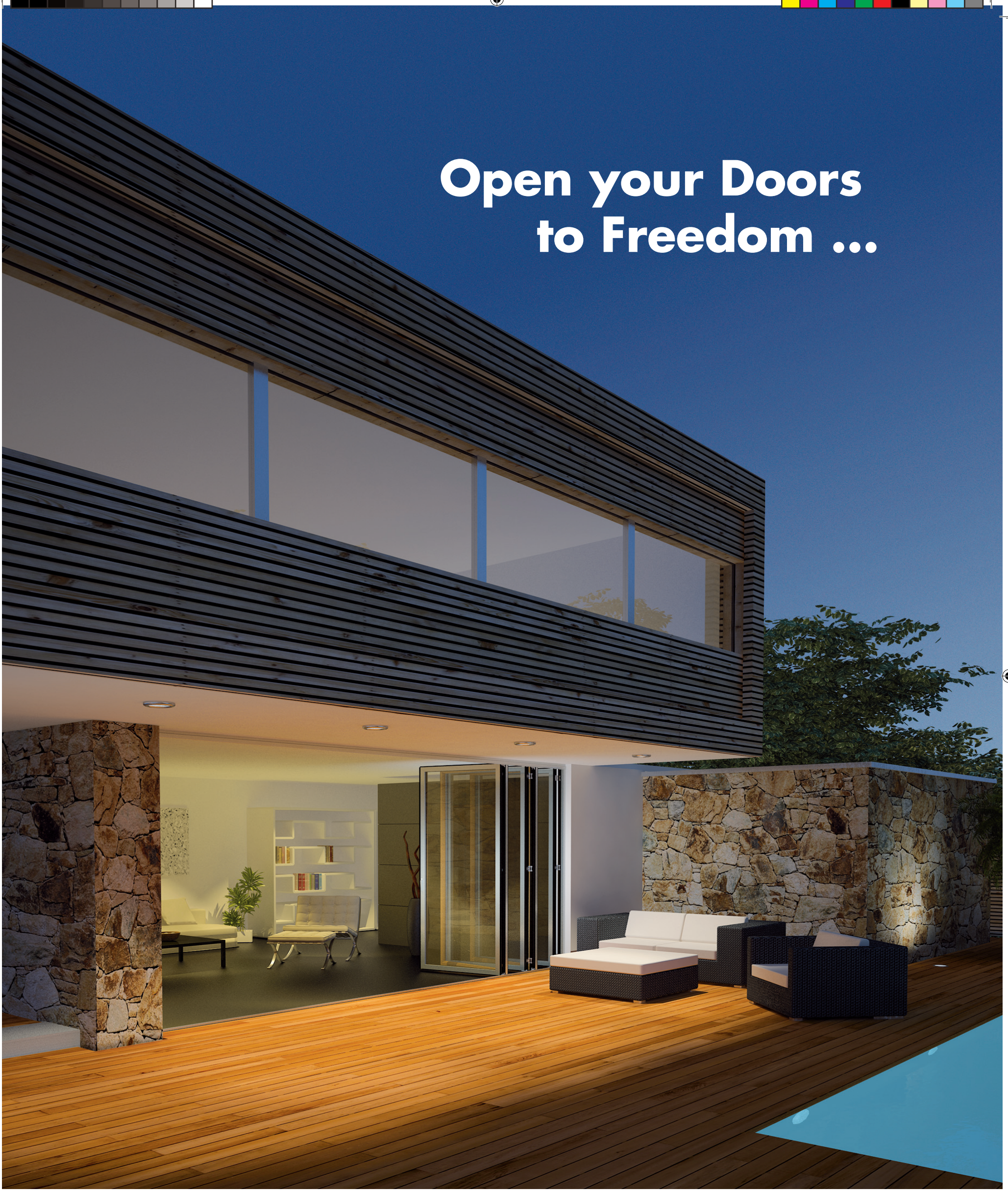
TRENDS

PARTING WAYS

Born of the demand to minimize barriers without forgoing all privacy, a new breed of partition is emerging. Whether three feet wide or 300, sliding doors provide the impact and sophistication of moveable walls, with designs that fold, glide, or hide away. These new models allow for more flexible space—creating two conference rooms out of one, or turning a cozy kitchen into an alfresco dining area—and blur the line between indoors and out.

For homes, restaurants, hotels, and offices, there have never been so many choices available from both domestic and European designers. High-tech systems are redefining what the world expects from a door. JENNIFER KRICHELS unlocks some of the newest designs making a grand entrance.

Open your Doors to Freedom ...



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1 GUILLOTINE WINDOW
VITROSCA

Vitrosca uses glazing as a structural element to support the window, allowing for a minimal frame. The guillotine design, available in aluminum or stove-enameled colors, has stainless-steel bearings and a precise pulley mechanism. The 18-mm profile accommodates all types of insulated glass, with a maximum glazing surface of 65 square feet per panel. Handles and press-button or cylindrical locks are integrated into the frame.

www.goldbrecht-systems.com

2 COMMERCIAL SYSTEM
PK-30 SYSTEM

PK-30 panels are cushioned by a proprietary clear silicone gasket, ensuring easy operation and long life in commercial applications. Doors include sliding, hinged, pocket, and folding configurations, and major components are extruded from a high-grade recyclable aluminum alloy that creates a rigid yet lightweight panel. The satin anodized finish resists corrosion and is easy to clean.

www.pk30system.com

3 MODEL 175 TWIN FRAME
RAYDOOR

A lighter, thinner version of Raydoor's patented twin-frame design, the Model 175 is a new 1¾-inch twin frame that allows for the use of one or more multiple panels in a narrower opening. The system, manufactured in Brooklyn, is available with folding, bypassing, telescoping, pocket, and stacking tracks that do not require a floor track.

www.sunflexwall.com

4 RESIDENTIAL PANEL SYSTEM
RAUMPLUS NORTH AMERICA

Manufactured in British Columbia and North Carolina, Raumplus North America's German-designed sliding door systems can be installed as replacements within existing openings and on top-hung, double-hung, and barn-door tracks. Though panels are available in 18 styles, system hardware is sold separately should a design require a unique panel material.

www.raumplusna.com

5 LIFT/ROLL DOOR
DURATHERM WINDOW CORPORATION

With an extruded-silicone flap gasket weather strip that is compressed as a multi-latchpoint lever handle lowers the door, Maine-based Duratherm's doors are designed for a range of weather. Wood frames in teak, mahogany, redwood, and jarrah produce no condensation, making them ideal for high-humidity environments.

www.duratherm window.com

6 MOVEO GLASS
DORMA

MOVEO Glass operable partitions combine transparent, flexible designs with noise-reduction indexes of up to 50 decibels, making them ideal for office, hotel, and educational applications. Double-skinned safety glazing can incorporate electrical blinds and customized patterns on panels controlled by a ComforTronic actuator, which brings together mating aluminum profiles equipped with sealing strips.

www.dorma.com

7 HORIZONTAL SLIDING WALL
SUNFLEX

Horizontal sliding wall panels from German manufacturer Sunflex can be stored in any position when open. The turning panels can be locked in place and are available in frameless, aluminum, and insulated wood and aluminum styles.

www.sunflexwall.com

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8 SERIES 2000 HINGEWAY DOOR
RENLITA OVERHEAD DOORS

The Renlita Series 2000 includes counterweight-balanced doors for industrial/commercial and residential applications up to approximately 33 by 20 feet. The door suits locations with little headroom where minimum internal projection is desired, and accepts a range of cladding and glazing materials.

www.renlitadoors.com

9 LIFTSLIDE DOOR
WEILAND SLIDING DOORS

Working with European hardware manufacturers, Weiland has developed a range of oversized liftslide door systems available up to 16 feet tall (and up to 10 feet tall for hurricane-rated models). All systems are custom-built in Oceanside, California, and are available in wood and aluminum with or without interior wood cladding.

www.weilandsliding doors.com

10 WAY COOL SERIES
PORTAL DOORS & PARTITIONS

Available in a range of wood and molding options, Portal's Way Cool design can be customized in hanging or fixed configurations for closets, hallways, and partitions. Frosted, opaque, or satin-etched glass is paired with melamine or wood veneers; aluminum extrusions and hardware systems are imported from Europe, and wood-and-glass panels are manufactured in Southern California.

www.portaldoors.com

11 WINDOW-DOOR COMBO WALL
NANAWALL SYSTEMS

NanaWall's window-door combination system, available in FSC-certified wood and recyclable aluminum, creates a weather-resistant folding glass wall. The company's systems are available from eight to 320 feet, and are certified for energy efficiency by Energy Star and the National Fenestration Rating Council. Each is tested to exceed air infiltration, water penetration, structural performance, and forced-entry standards.

www.nanawall.com

12 WALL SLIDE DOOR LINE 204
SLIDING DOOR COMPANY

The Sliding Door Company's sliding door system allows glass panels to be customized with wood or aluminum divider strips that can be removed or reconfigured without marking the doors. A patented panel-safety mechanism ensures that doors will not leave their tracks, which are 3/8-inch high and meet ADA requirements.

www.slidingdoorco.com

13 STAINLESS STEEL SLIDING DOOR
MODERNUS

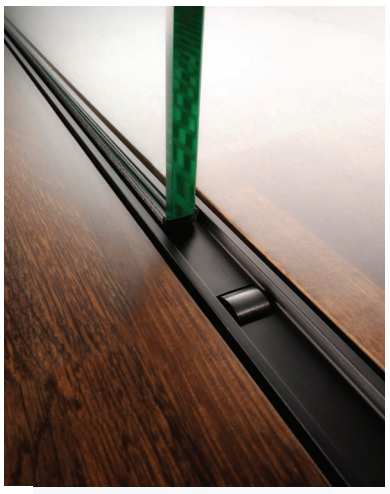
Modernus sliding doors have a stainless-steel frame with an inset ceiling track, making the door a good solution for low-profile room divisions in which a floor track is undesirable (as shown on page 23). Glass panels can be customized with any finish or pattern, and framing is also available in aluminum.

www.modernus.com

14 ROLMATIC CORNER
KLEIN

A manually operated mechanism simultaneously opens Rolmatic Corner doors, creating a 67-inch frameless glass opening. The top-hung, clear anodized aluminum clamping system eliminates both glass drilling and floor tracks, moving 3/8- or 1/2-inch panels of up to 198 pounds along a ball-bearing system specified for commercial and residential applications.

www.klein-usa.com



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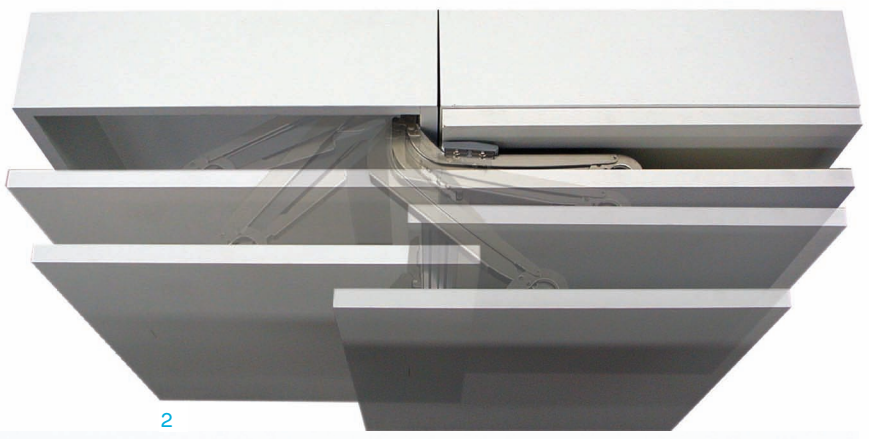

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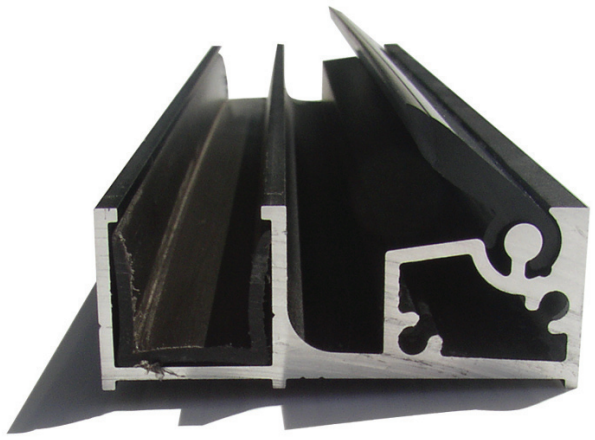

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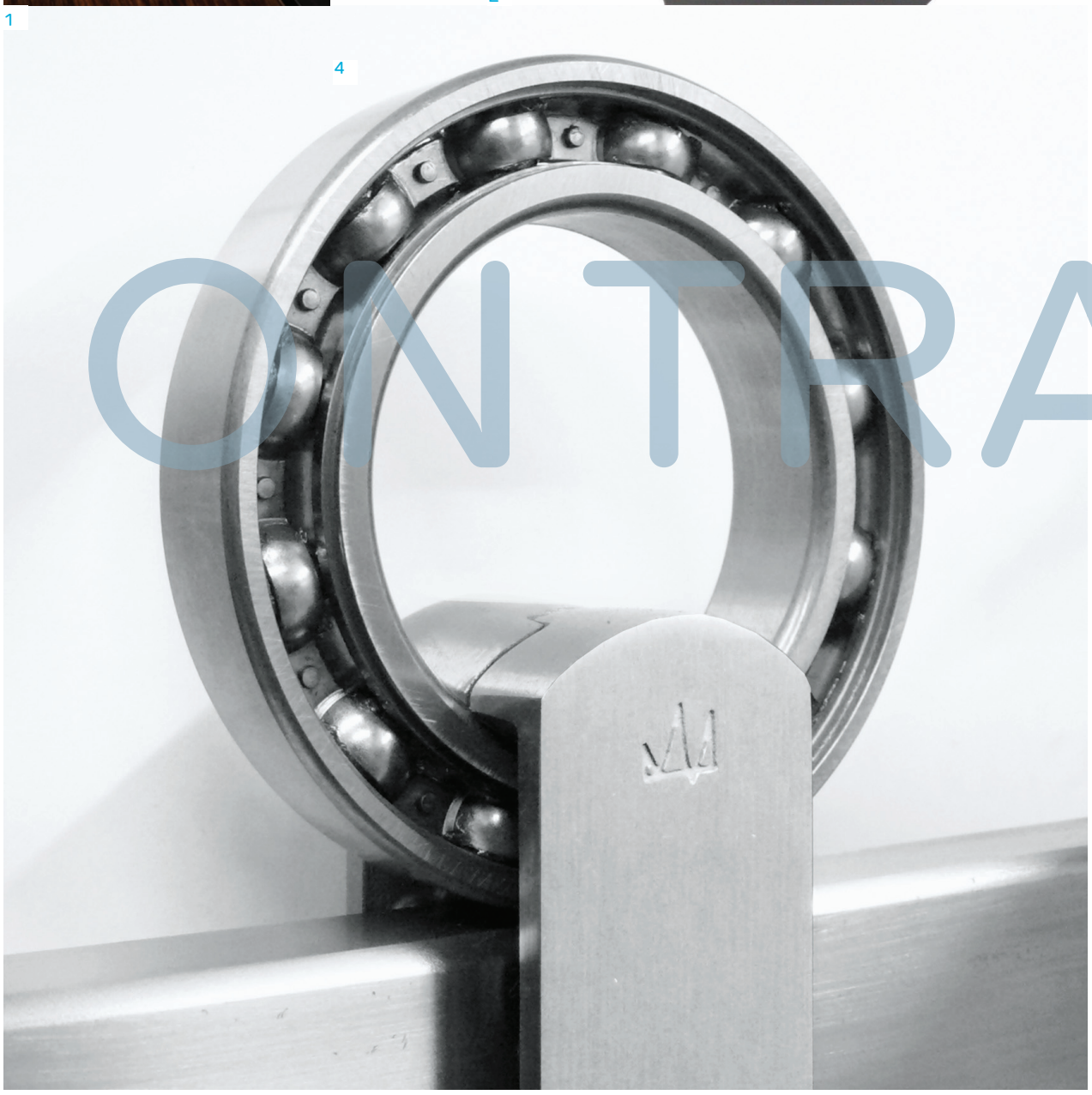

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ON TRACK

HARDWARE

Precisely crafted door hardware feels—and works—as smooth as it looks

1 B.1000 FITTING
ASTEC

Designed for Astec b.1000 10-mm and 12-mm glass panels, the flush-fitted, U-profile tracks in the ceiling help to guide the panel, but eliminate the need for ceiling supports because weight is distributed along sealed needle roller bearings in the floor. A plastic U-profile edge guard affixed to the glass guides the panel along its floor track, creating a frameless sliding glass wall system.

www.astec-design.de

2 FAD SERIES
SUGATSUNE AMERICA

Sugatsune's lateral opening door hinges allow doors to swing outward within only half the space required by a conventional door, making them ideal for closets and cabinets in tight spaces. No bottom or top rail is required, allowing the door to close flush against the adjacent wall in overlay or inset configurations.

www.sugatsune.com

3 ZERO-STEP SILL
LA CANTINA DOORS

The proprietary Zero-Step Sill creates a level transition between interior and exterior floors. Though not recommended for areas exposed to precipitation, the sill integrates a sound-attenuating DraftGuard seal with a DP35 rating for air, water, and structural performance. The seal is flush with the floor when doors are open, but a patent-pending lifter puts it in place as doors are closed.

www.lacantinadoors.com

4 BALDUR
KROWN LAB

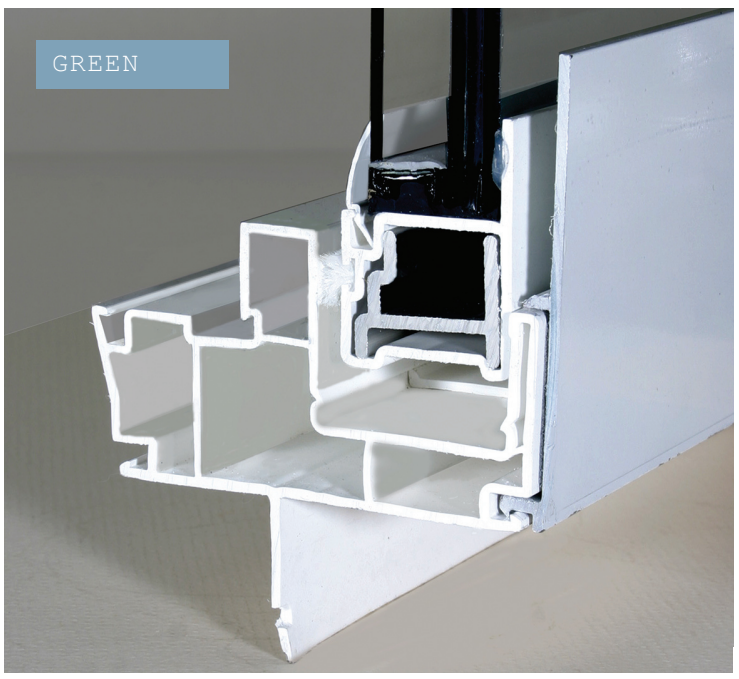
Baldur sliding door hardware is custom-made for door panels of up to 400 pounds on tracks up to 20 feet long. Patent-pending hubless hardware on 4-inch exposed industrial bearings is made of precise, machine-finished stainless steel that resists rust or corrosion in humid environments.

www.krownlab.com

5 TERRA H
MWE

Designed for installations in which the ceiling cannot support the weight of a sliding door, the Terra H system is installed underneath the door leaf. The visible stainless-steel roller and runner rail leave very little static mass to be supported by the ceiling track.

www.mwe.de



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GALE FORCE

Sustainably sealed, these impact-resistant systems can stand up to a hurricane

1 SAFEHARBOR SERIES 352
ATRIUM COMPANIES

Impact-resistant sliding glass doors from Atrium have laminated, tempered glass that reduces sound transmission and solar heat gain while meeting design pressure ratings for coastal wind and hurricane debris codes.

www.atrium.com

2 WINGUARD IMPACT-RESISTANT 770
PGT INDUSTRIES

The recently released WinGuard sliding glass door is available in one- to eight-panel configurations with impact-resistant insulating and laminated monolithic glass that reduces noise and filters out 99 percent of outdoor UV light. WinGuard Vinyl Casement doors qualify for the 2009 Stimulus Plan tax credit for energy-efficient products.

www.pgtindustries.com

3 LIFT AND SLIDE DOORS
MONTAG WINDOWS & DOORS

After making its U.S. debut last year, Montag has achieved Miami-Dade and State of Florida HVHZ (high-velocity hurricane zone) Impact certification. With impact design pressures of +65/-77 psf, 4-by-8-foot doors are available in two-, three-, or four-panel configurations with an optional remote operating system.

www.montagwindows.com

4 WINDQUEST SERIES
KOLBE

Not only certified to meet large-missile impact Level D and Wind Zone 4 testing standards for hurricane zones, Windquest vinyl doors can be ordered with LoE2-270 insulating glass with argon, enabling them to meet or exceed Energy Star guidelines in all climate zones.

www.kolbe-kolbe.com

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SEPTEMBER

THURSDAY 24
LECTURES
Loretta Keller and Olle Lundgberg
The Moss Room
6:00 p.m.
Trespa Design Centre
62 Greene St.
www.trespa.com

Willem Frijoff
A Dutch Mystic in the New World: Reverend Everardu Bogardus (1607–1647) and His Callings
6:00 p.m.
Bard Graduate Center
18 West 86th St.
www.bgc.bard.edu

Lace in Translation
The Design Center at Philadelphia University
4200 Henry Ave.
www.philau.edu

EVENTS
Inhabitat New York Launch Party
6:00 p.m.
Green Depot
New York Flagship Store
222 Bowery
www.inhabitat.com

Bronx River Alliance: An Upstream Soiree
6:00 p.m.
Hunts Point Riverside Park
Lafayette Ave. at Edgewater Rd., Bronx
www.bronxriverart.org

FRIDAY 25
LECTURE
Laura Forlano, Dana Spiegel, Antonina Simeti, and Anthony Townsend
Breakout!
7:00 p.m.
The Urban Center
457 Madison Ave.
www.mas.org

SYMPOSIA
Cities and the New Wars
12:00 p.m.
Columbia GSAPP
114 Avery Hall
www.arch.columbia.edu/buell

Planning for the New York Region in Challenging Economic Times
8:00 a.m.
NYU Kimmel Center
60 Washington Square South
www.nyu.edu

EXHIBITION OPENINGS
Wade Kavanaugh and Stephen B. Nguyen
The Experience of Green
Dumbo Arts Center
30 Washington St., Brooklyn
www.dumboartscenter.org

Mapping New York's Shoreline: 1609–2009
New York Public Library
5th Ave. and 42nd St.
www.nypl.org

Arnie Zimmerman and Tiago Montepegado
Inner City
Rhode Island School of Design
224 Benefit St., Providence
www.risd.edu

SATURDAY 26
SYMPOSIUM
The Preservationist's Eye: Esthetics in Reuse and Conservation
9:00 a.m.
Institute for the Study of the Ancient World
15 East 84th St.
www.nyu.edu/isaw

EVENT
Annual Student Program
11:00 a.m.
The Urban Center
457 Madison Ave.
www.mas.org

WITH THE KIDS
Discovering New Amsterdam Family Workshop
12:00 p.m.
Museum of the City of New York
1220 5th Ave.
www.mcny.org

SUNDAY 27
LECTURE
Masha Chlenova
The Cubist Breakthrough, 1907–1921
Museum of Modern Art
11 West 53rd St.
www.moma.org

MONDAY 28
EVENT
Auspicious Stitches: Fabric Arts Workshop
12:00 p.m.
Rubin Museum of Art
150 West 17th St.
www.rmanyc.org

TUESDAY 29
LECTURES
James Bleeker
The Beauty Shot: Architectural Photography & New Romanticism
8:00 p.m.
National Arts Club
15 Gramercy Park South
www.nationalartsclub.org

Christian de Portzamparc
Wake Up the Cit[ies]
6:00 p.m.
Center for Architecture
536 LaGuardia Pl.
www.aiany.org

WEDNESDAY 30
LECTURE
Sarah Wigglesworth
6:00 p.m.
Temple Gallery
259 North Third St., Philadelphia
www.temple.edu

SYMPOSIUM
Post Ductility: Metals in Architecture and Engineering
6:30 p.m.
Columbia GSAPP
Wood Auditorium
113 Avery Hall
Through October 2
www.arch.columbia.edu

OCTOBER

THURSDAY 1
LECTURES
Greg Hise and Barbara Campagna: Plan Like Your Life Depends On It
6:30 p.m.
National Building Museum
401 F St. NW, Washington, D.C.
www.nbm.org

Ines Powell
The Patio from Velez Blanco
11:00 a.m.
Metropolitan Museum of Art
1000 5th Ave.
www.metmuseum.org

EXHIBITION OPENINGS
Beyond the Surface
Material ConneXion
60 Madison Ave.
www.materialconnexion.com

Meier 75
Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum
2 East 91st St.
www.cooperhewitt.org

FRIDAY 2
LECTURES
SENSEable City Lab
Trash Track
7:00 p.m.
The Urban Center
457 Madison Ave.
www.mas.org

Max Bond, Multiculturalism, and Social Equity in the Built Environment
3:30 p.m.
Harvard Graduate School of Design
48 Quincy St., Cambridge
www.gsd.harvard.edu

EXHIBITION OPENING
Rococo and Revolution: Eighteenth-Century French Drawings
The Morgan Library & Museum
225 Madison Ave.
www.themorgan.org

SATURDAY 3
WITH THE KIDS
Mannahatta Family Workshop
2:00 p.m.
Museum of the City of New York
1220 5th Ave.
www.mcny.org

SUNDAY 4
FILM
Our City Dreams
(Chiara Clemente, 2009), 85 min.
2:00 p.m.
Institute of Contemporary Art
100 Northern Ave., Boston
www.icaboston.org

MONDAY 5
LECTURES
Michelle and James Nevius
A Streetwise History of New York City
6:30 p.m.
Tenement Museum
108 Orchard St.
www.tenement.org

Ulrich Beck, Homi K. Bhabha and Mohsen Mostafavi
Multiculturalism or Cosmopolitanism?
6:00 p.m.
Harvard GSD
110 Barker Center, Cambridge
www.gsd.harvard.edu

TUESDAY 6
LECTURES
Thomas Rochon
Revisiting Tunisia
6:30 p.m.
New York Institute of Technology
16 West 61st St.
www.nyit.edu

Ingeborg de Roode
The Stedelijk Museum Collection and Dutch Design
6:00 p.m.
Trespa Design Centre
62 Greene Street
www.trespa.com

Paco Underhill
City: Rediscovering the Center
6:30 p.m.
Municipal Art Society
457 Madison Ave.
www.mas.org

EXHIBITION OPENINGS
Watteau to Degas: French Drawings from the Frits Lugt Collection
The Frick Collection
1 East 70th St.
www.frick.org

Eccentric Visions: The Worlds of Luo Ping (1733-1799)
American Stories: Paintings of Everyday Life, 1765-1915
Metropolitan Museum of Art
1000 5th Ave.
www.met.org

Context/Contrast: New Architecture in Historic Districts 1967-2009
Center for Architecture
536 LaGuardia Pl.
www.aiany.org

WEDNESDAY 7
LECTURES
Albert Speer, Jr.
Planning Sustainable Cities for Tomorrow
6:30 p.m.
Great Hall, Cooper Union
7 East 7th St.
www.cooper.edu

Ann Buttenwieser, Ed Cook, Eric Sanderson, et al.
Shaping the Shoreline of Manhattan
6:30 p.m.
Museum of the City of New York
1220 5th Ave.
www.mcny.org

James von Klemperer and Kohn Pedersen Fox
Sentient City Case Studies: New Songdo City and Meixi Lake
7:00 p.m.
Scholastic Auditorium
557 Broadway
www.scholastic.com

THURSDAY 8
LECTURE
Anthony Flint
Wrestling with Moses: How Jane Jacobs Took on New York's Master Builder and Transformed the American City
6:30 p.m.
Tenement Museum
108 Orchard St.
www.tenement.org

EXHIBITION OPENING
Adia Millett
Change
Mixed Greens
531 West 26th St.
www.mixedgreens.com

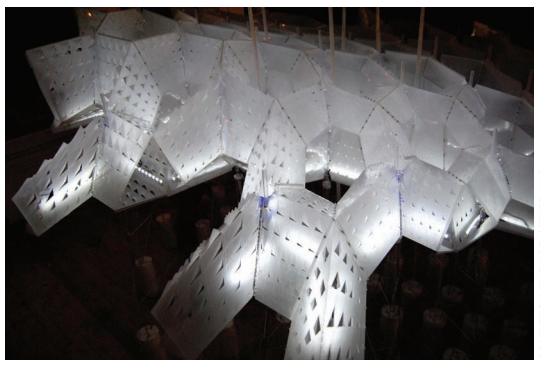
EVENT
Heritage Ball 2009
6:00 p.m.
Pier 60, Chelsea Piers
www.aiany.org

GENEVIEVE HANSON

JAMES TURRELL: LARGE HOLOGRAMS

PaceWildenstein
534 West 25th Street
Through October 17

James Turrell continues his longstanding exploration of the illusionary potential of light in *James Turrell: Large Holograms*, an exhibition of 15 never-before-seen, five-to six-foot-high works at PaceWildenstein's 25th Street gallery. Whereas his famous *Projection Pieces* from the 1960s threw light onto walls to create seemingly solid cubes and pyramids, in this show he experiments with dichromate reflective holograms, using technologies he has developed and refined over the past two decades. The sleek forms change shape and color—shimmering with various hues of red, green, and blue—when seen from different distances and vantage points, fading into their backgrounds when viewed at an oblique angle. Some shapes are fiery, as in the bladelike *Untitled (7ROA+B)*; others, like *Untitled (19NSB)* (2007, above), are cool and rounded, suggesting a distant planet that waxes and wanes as one circles it. The darkness of the gallery space, and the reflections of other gallery visitors superimposed with the glowing holograms, make for a hypnotic experience.

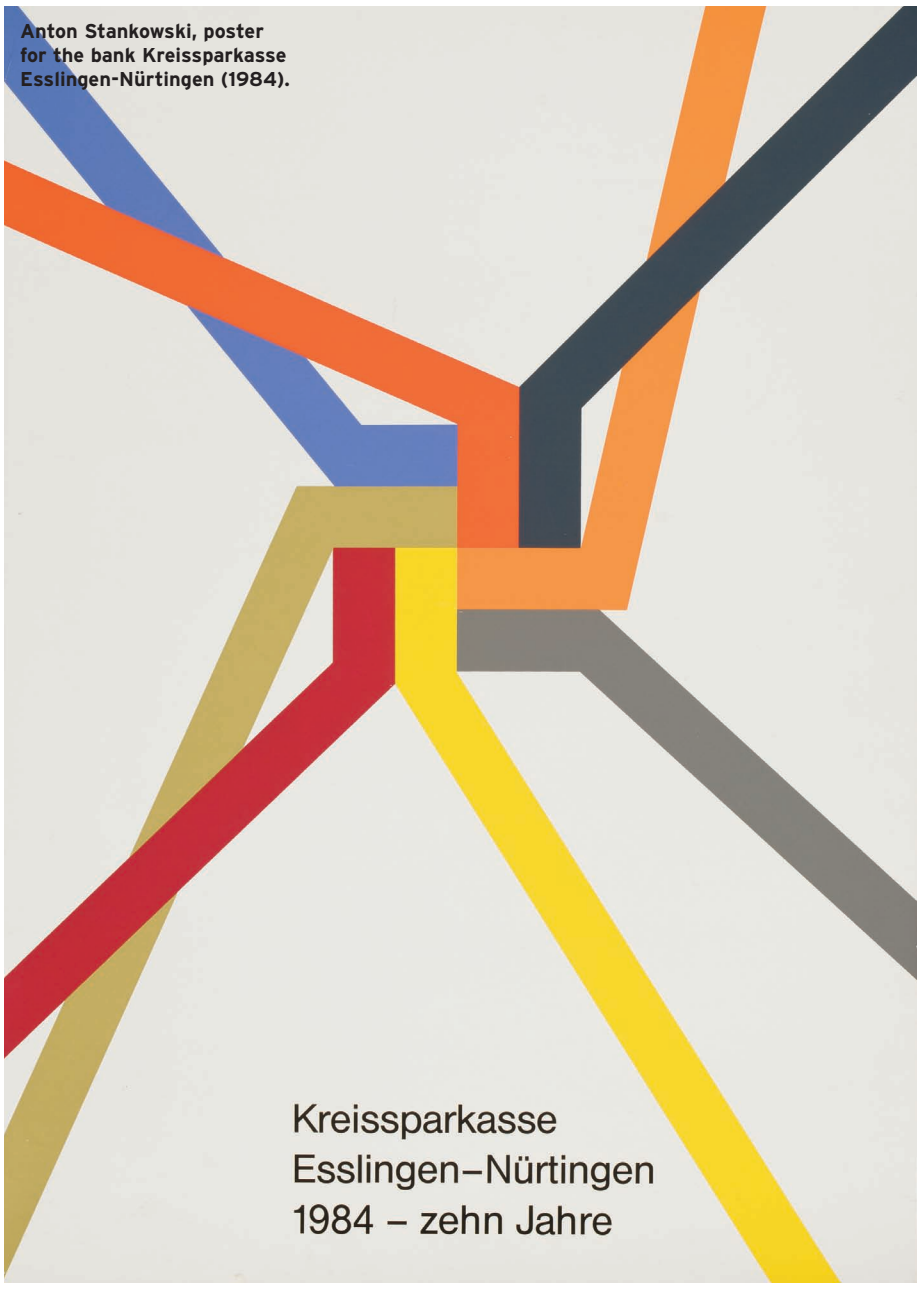


COURTESY FUTURE CITIES LAB

THE AURORA PROJECT

Van Alen Institute
30 West 22nd Street
Through October 15

New York Prize fellows Jason Kelly Johnson and Nataly Gattegno meditate on humanity's impact on the arctic environment in *The Aurora Project*, an interactive show at the Van Alen Institute. In the first of the exhibit's three parts, a three-dimensional, abstracted map of the arctic ice shelf (above) recorded at the end of summer is outfitted with LED lights and motion sensors; when no one is in the gallery, it glows uniformly, but as foot traffic builds around it, patches of light begin to dim. Accompanying it is an installation the artists refer to as a "glaciarium," a tripod-mounted sculpture containing an ice core that is replenished daily by the gallery. A heat lamp is triggered when viewers approach the piece, with the dripping sounds of slowly melting ice captured by a microphone and amplified throughout the gallery. The artists' data and maps are on display in a separate room that puts the artworks in a larger environmental context, speculating on possible futures for the endangered arctic world.



Anton Stankowski, poster for the bank Kreissparkasse Esslingen-Nürtingen (1984).

COURTESY REAKTION BOOKS

TEUTONIC TOME

Designing Modern Germany
Jeremy Aynsley
Reaktion Books, $35.00

The history of design in modern Germany is as politically fraught as it is influential. Given this, plus the numerous existing histories on institutions like the Bauhaus or individuals like Peter Behrens, design historian Jeremy Aynsley was faced with a formidable task in the writing of *Designing Modern Germany*. The task, however, is also a worthy one, and Aynsley largely succeeds in delivering a history of German design from 1870 to 2005 that is informative, concise, and also comprehensive.

Aynsley's is a straightforward chronology, covering a wide variety of media, from graphic design to textile design, interior design and architecture to furniture design, industrial design, and fashion. In doing so, he draws on numerous sources, incorporating contemporary newspaper and journal accounts, discussions of cultural theory and critical studies, even sources from popular culture and literature, such as Heinz Huber's short story "The New Apartment" from 1958, which is used in an analysis of postwar West German interior design. Aynsley's focus is not so much on individual objects or buildings, though he does highlight particularly influential examples, but more on the development of a German *culture* of design under the various political regimes of Germany's 20th century. Thus, chapters are more likely to discuss important institutions or exhibitions, such as the Ulm Academy for Design or the 1914 Werkbund exhibition in Cologne, rather than perform analyses of particular aesthetic traditions or innovations.

In fact, Aynsley is to be commended for his ability to negotiate between the general and specific, deftly alternating between summaries of events that span decades, and discussions of individual designers such as Marianne Brandt or Margaret Jahny, whose careers are exemplary or whose work is influential. In addition, Aynsley avoids many of the pitfalls that plague other histories of German cultural production during this period. For example, in his discussion of the Weimar years, Aynsley examines the work of the Bauhaus, of course, but also the more traditional, conservative design that, as he notes, no doubt graced the majority of German households. He presents a nuanced discussion of design during the Nazi era in chapter three, acknowledging the unavoidable influence of the Nazis' racist and nationalist ideology, but also the regime's ambivalent attitude toward modernism and the "dilemmas" confronted by individual German designers of this period. Likewise, in writing about the postwar era, Aynsley offers a comparative account of design produced in both the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG, West Germany) and the German Democratic Republic (GDR, East Germany), addressing the influence each country had on the cultural production of the other.

Though there is much to recommend *Designing Modern Germany*, there are oversights. For example, while the political history that so influenced design in the Nazi and postwar eras is given fair due, there is almost no discussion in the opening chapter of the formation of the German nation in 1871, and the implications this may have had on debates about the role of design in German culture. This would be the place to introduce the theme of the so-called "problem" of German national identity. Not only did this issue influence the development of design culture during the so-called "foundation years" of the German nation, but it was **continued on page 34**

Go East

China Prophesy: Shanghai
Skyscraper Museum
39 Battery Place
Through March 2010

During a visit to Shanghai in 2007, Paris Hilton—that noble sage of our times—gushed to reporters repeatedly throughout her visit that "Shanghai looks like the future!" This caused her quote to be splashed across headlines around the world, with the line often appearing next to photos of her eating dumplings in old tea houses, or wearing traditional Chinese *qipaos* while sauntering through historic villas.

I often wonder who gave Paris the idea that Shanghai was a futuristic place, especially since she spent most of her time in the city's historic core and colonial districts. This duality of Shanghai is ever-present, because despite the art deco villas, old Chinese lane houses, and omnipresent bicycles, the city currently enjoys an image in the popular culture as a place of Dubai-esque urban ambitions.

China Prophesy: Shanghai, a show curated by Carol Willis at the Skyscraper Museum, threatens to deliver just that image, but ends up giving so much more. The last in a series that earlier focused on New York and Hong Kong, the core of the show consists of three super-tall skyscrapers designed for Luijiazui, the new commercial epicenter in Shanghai's Pudong, or "east of the river," district.

In the early 1990s, when the city government was developing this farmland tract across from the city's historic riverfront Bund district, it decided that three mega-tall skyscrapers would rise, each successively taller than the other, in a spiral-like arrangement. In 1998, Adrian Smith of Skidmore, Owings & Merrill designed the 370-meter (1,214 feet) Jinmao Tower, while Bill Pedersen's Shanghai World Financial Center, completed last year, reached a height of 492 meters (1,614 feet). In 2014, Gensler's Shanghai Tower will rise to a height of 632 meters (2,073 feet).

China Prophesy is an excellent show, not simply because it tallies up the building heights. It doesn't feed the stereotypical image of Shanghai. Instead, the exhibition is thorough, incredibly well researched, and surprisingly balanced. I say "surprising," because for an exhibition on Shanghai skyscrapers, there's an awful lot of consideration given to the historic development of the city by the British and the French in its colonial era, and to the sweeping governmental policy changes in the 1980s and '90s that have brought about these colossal corporate and civic monuments. That's the right way to do it, and is also what makes this exhibition—small in size but not in stature—a truly exceptional study of Shanghai as it relates to the world landscape.

Willis presents a few practical but essential visuals, including two wall-sized aerial views of Manhattan and Shanghai, images that face each other and offer a basis for understanding the cities' respective geographies. Other well-placed gems include a glimpse of the now-discarded masterplan by Richard Rogers for the Pudong area, and American architect Ben Wood's **continued on page 34**

The once and future Shanghai skyline.

COURTESY SKYSCRAPER MUSEUM

YOU ARE HERE

Urban Design for an Urban Century: Placemaking for People
Lance Jay Brown, David Dixon, and Oliver Gillham
Wiley, $80.00

CHRISTIAN RICHTERS

The Beursplein in Rotterdam, designed by the Jerde Partnership, won an AIA Honor Award in 1997. Where a postwar traffic artery had split downtown in two, the plan placed a pedestrian street under glass canopies, with a 30-story apartment tower and metro station to help resurrect the retail and residential neighborhood.

A precise definition of urban design is elusive, as it has been since the term's first articulation over 50 years ago at a Harvard GSD conference spearheaded by José Lluis Sert. Today the term, like sustainability, is batted about by architecture firms and the media, pointing toward an interpretation that favors architects and their super-sized projects. While practitioners of the quasi-discipline are typically seen to fall somewhere between planning's public policy and architecture's formal concerns, the urban designer's role in the process of development is often misunderstood and many times questioned. *Urban Design for an Urban Century* sets itself the task of clarifying the role of urban design in shaping urban places.

The book is the product of New York–based professor and practitioner Lance Jay Brown, David Dixon of Boston-based Goody Clancy, and the late architect and planner Oliver Gillham. The authors begin the book by acknowledging the ambiguity of the urban designer's job, determining that a shared emphasis on "finding the right fit between people and place" predominates. To illustrate this thread, they collect all 70 winning projects of the AIA Institute Honor Awards for regional and urban design over the last ten years, commenting on these with respect to principles such as building community, advancing sustainability, expanding individual choices, enhancing public health, and making places for people.

Case studies are grouped into seven areas: regional growth, downtowns, older neighborhoods, new neighborhoods, waterfronts, the public realm, and campuses. It is clear from these divisions that one long-held purview of the urban designer, the public realm, is not the sole area of concern. Streetscapes and plazas and their accessory elements like furniture, signage, and trees are still addressed by urban designers, but so are land use, bulk, density, form, transportation, and ecology. Much of this expanded scope normally falls to planners and local jurisdictions, suggesting the urban designer's role in giving form to public policy and private development at an early stage. Chicago's award-winning Lakeshore East Master Plan by Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM) is a fitting example of urban design's malleability. The plan is a guideline for future action by other actors, namely architects and their clients, following developed rules of land use, massing, and site coverage. Most notable among these is Studio Gang's 80-story Aqua Tower, a design marked by undulating terraces hardly foreshadowed by SOM's Rockefeller Center–esque imagery.

Preceding the case studies and principles are an excellent, concise history of urban morphology and the decentralization of cities; a call for recentralization, echoing Sert's assertion for the same a half-century ago; and finally, the authors' crack at defining urban design. To that end Brown, Dixon, and Gillham's definition outlines three characteristics: multi-disciplinary collaboration, outreach to stakeholders, and the enhancement of economic, social, and environmental realms. These broad concerns insufficiently portray what an urban designer actually does, but a review of the case studies points to placemaking generated by buildings, particularly via their form, size, and style. But instead of falling prey to ever-popular form-based codes, the authors attempt to steer the reader away from aesthetics and toward sustainability, social equity, the health of the common realm, and other concerns.

Defining urban design is difficult primarily because the discipline has one foot planted in policy and the other rooted in physical form. The pull one way or the other depends upon the actual situation in which the urban designer works. Kevin Lynch's assertion, quoted in the first chapter, that urban design "comes down to the management of change" points us in the right direction. Attentive to the impact of policies on a diverse public and equally to design's role in placemaking, urban designers are able to synthesize the competing forces shaping cities today. Ideally, with an emphasis on process and change, many of the traditional concerns found here will give way to issues like questioning consumption's role in the social life of cities, and our relationship to nature and its processes. Brown, Dixon, and Gillham are aware of the need for social and ecological balance, but their admirable book-length explication remains grounded in practice, as are the case studies that compensate in diversity for what they lack in vision.

JOHN HILL WRITES THE BLOG A DAILY DOSE OF ARCHITECTURE.

TEUTONIC TOME continued from page 33 almost always lingering beneath the surface of discussions about Germany's cultural production throughout the 20th century. It was also an important factor in the competing design cultures of East and West Germany, for example, as each was trying to claim ownership over German national identity, but also establish its own sense of "homeland" or *Heimat*. Likewise, the reunification of Germany, the attempt to establish a unified identity for the "Berlin Republic," seems a clear influence on designs such as Eva Gronbach's fashion collection "My New Police Dress Uniform" (2004-5). Certainly, Aynsley acknowledges the influence of national identity, particularly with regard to Gronbach's designs, but given its presence as a leitmotif throughout, a more explicit discussion of this issue is a critical part of understanding design in modern Germany.

Despite this, *Designing Modern Germany* remains accessible and well-balanced, but also thoroughgoing. The text frequently cites important histories and historians of German design history, such as Joan Campbell and Paul Betts, allowing the reader insight into further study of specific areas of German design. Thus in the end, Aynsley's book is an excellent overview of one of the 20th century's more influential national design cultures, a perfect introductory text for anyone interested in the subject.

EMILY PUGH TEACHES ART HISTORY AND DESIGN AT THE PRATT INSTITUTE.

Vierthaler, poster for the Entartete Kunst exhibition in Munich (1936).

COURTESY REAKTION BOOKS

The towers of Pudong rise across the Huangpu River.

COURTESY SKYSCRAPER MUSEUM

GO EAST continued from page 33 transcendent question, scribbled in his plan for Xintiandi, "What is Chinese?"

What a treat to see Shanghai juxtaposed against New York, because the comparisons are spot-on. Even if you weren't a New Yorker living in Shanghai as I am, New York has always been the standard for a classic skyscraper city, and the city to which many cities already compare themselves. My favorite moments of the show include a scale model of John Portman's Deathstar-esque Tomorrow Square shown with a charcoal Hugh Ferriss etching in the background, or KPF's mixed-use Jing An Kerry Centre with another charcoal etching of Rockefeller Center in the background. History and lineage are paramount here.

Knowingly or unknowingly, these references have always lurked in the background of Shanghai's urban development. After all, many of the prominent buildings on the 1930s Bund were built in the same stylistic language of 1930s New York. If all the architects working in the city today shared Willis' mastery of both history and contemporary design, Shanghai would indeed represent a more complex and layered vision of the future.

ANDREW YANG IS AN AMERICAN DESIGN JOURNALIST BASED IN SHANGHAI.

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COURTESY MITCHELL/GIURGOLA ARCHITECTS

Among the ECF's new projects is Middle School 114 on Manhattan's Upper East Side (left), designed by Mitchell/Giurgola Architects. Developed by 1765 First Associates, the project includes a SLCE-designed residential tower (below), and is scheduled for completion in December.

New Schools in the Air

As executive director of the New York City Educational Construction Fund (ECF), Jamie Smarr presides over one of the more interesting public/private collaborations in New York. Established in 1967 to inspire private developers to participate in the civic good by adding new schools to their mixed-use development bag, the fund had failed by 1980 through lack of developer confidence in the process. The ECF was then revived in 2005 by the Bloomberg administration, and Smarr, who joined the city's Department of Education in 2000 after serving as director of the tax incentives program in the Department of Housing Preservation and Development, is now leading the second wave of projects, including four new schools in Manhattan. *AN*'s Executive Editor Julie V. Iovine spoke to Smarr about the origins and rebirth of this little-known initiative.

***AN*: What is the Educational Construction Fund?**
Jamie Smarr: It's a 42-year-old public benefit corporation created by the New York State legislature in 1966 with a very clear mandate to create new public school facilities in the city of New York, with a further provision that they must be part of a mixed-use project—a combined-occupancy project or structure. The ECF is not allowed to construct freestanding buildings.

The first 15 years of the fund were very successful. There were 14 new buildings adding17,000 school seats, 1.2 million square feet of office space, and about 4,000 new apartments in the city.

How is the program funded?
All of our projects have been built on municipal land owned by the school district. School sites are very difficult to come by, and that land is developed under a long-term lease allowing us to maintain ownership while deriving economic value. The fund money comes from ground rents and pilot payments in lieu of taxes from the developers. We don't get any of it from the city, state, or federal government.

At some point the ECF stopped working so well. What happened?
Between 1980 and 2005 there was very little activity, and it's difficult to look back and say exactly what happened. When we made the decision to revive the fund, we wanted to make very clear when inviting developers to participate in these projects that there was now a single point of accountability, and there would be a stable partner they could work with. That was very critical, because any time you want to incentivize private capital to participate in a public project, the private capital absolutely wants to be sure not only that there's a commitment to start and finish the project but also that there's a single point of accountability for resolving any problems. And I think that's probably one of the things that did not exist between 1980 and 2005. At that time, the private sector had no confidence that the Board of Education could be a development partner. And so they weren't interested in doing these projects anymore.

In the first round, were there any notable architects involved?
Looking at some of those old ECF projects, I would hope not. Some were quite horrible looking. I am not a designer, and people often tell me that because I am not a designer I do not have the right to comment on the appearance of projects. It's worth noting that very often in these mixed-use projects, the school piece and the non-school piece are by two different firms.

Now that Bloomberg has revived the fund, what's the mission?
First and foremost, my priority has been to design projects that meet the requirements of the school system, so that even though private developers construct them, they would not vary in any significant aspect from schools by the School Construction Authority that actually builds most facilities in New York City.

Second, they have to have design appeal. I don't want any more ugly school buildings.

Third, there has to be some rationale behind this, apart from making sure we get a school that meets all the specifications and standards. We're inviting these developers from the private sector to do these schools because we think they can do them faster and cheaper. And that has been the case. Since we revived the fund in 2005, we have two projects in progress which when complete should create four new schools—all on the Upper East Side—and they will deliver 3,200 school seats, some this or next year, and the rest by 2012.

One of my other professional goals is to let school districts across the country know about this concept. To our knowledge, the only other area where we've seen it is in Washington, D.C., and we're working on our 18th and 19th projects.

How do these school-plus projects work on site?
Certain things need to be there to qualify for the ECF. You have to have density, and Manhattan is an area where you can get high-density zoning where even if you build the school, there's still enough FAR left over for private use. The NYC school system has about 1,200 school facilities and we figure that we have on the magnitude of 140 to 150 million square feet of undeveloped air rights above the schools. So as you might imagine, the vast majority of opportunity is in the high-density zoning areas of Manhattan, and certain areas of Brooklyn and Queens.

The law was fairly specific that it had to be a combined occupancy, so they have to share part of a structure. There's the over-under combination, but the more recent have been adjacencies where both school and residence or office still share a foundation. At Three Park Avenue, a high school sits under an office tower. As so far most of these projects are in Manhattan, they have tended to be over-under or adjacencies. It suits the way the fund works that New Yorkers don't mind density, and they don't see mixed use as an oddity. That's not necessarily the case in other parts of the country.

Sounds like a huge opportunity. Is there a downside?
I get a lot of questions about why aren't we doing hundreds of these. My first response is that these public/private collaborations can by their nature be difficult, as they have to go through all the same approval processes as any other development project. And you can't just say you have all these air rights—go build them. Every ECF project we do represents a strategic opportunity where we have gone out and done a study and looked at a site. The low-hanging fruit are the vacant buildings in a high-density area, and there are really none of those left. But then there are others like facilities coming up to the end of their useful life that have the right zoning characteristics. And that's where there's a strategic opportunity.

Are there any RFPs for new projects going out now?
Not for the next 6 months. The deterioration of the real estate market has really put a big cramp in our development plans. We are focused on finishing up the Upper East Side projects, and at the start of 2010 we can look at and evaluate whether it looks worthwhile to pursue any more. The market has to come back and be more stable before we can put out more RFPs.

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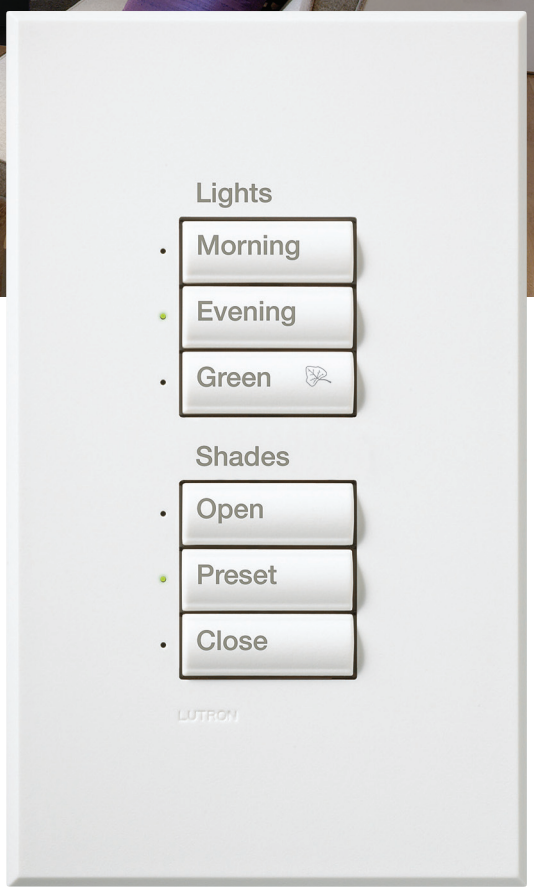

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