

# THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER

12 07.07.2010

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## PASS THE SUGAR

Transportation and density have been two of the biggest issues surrounding the redevelopment of the 11-acre former Domino Sugar refinery on the Williamsburg waterfront. The City Planning Commission (CPC) extracted

two minor concessions for both on June 7, prior to giving the project its unanimous approval. But local councilmember Steve Levin managed to win considerably more from the developer ahead [continued on page 11](#)



PLANS FOR EAST RIVER ESPLANADE APPROACH THE NOW-OR-NEVER HOUR

## KICK STARTED

Midtown East is home to the United Nations and to some of the ritziest real estate in Manhattan. But by some measures, it is also one of the borough's most [continued on page 6](#)



EXPANSIVE DEVELOPMENT PLAN RILES NEIGHBORS

## NYU TAKES A VILLAGE

A stroll along Washington Square South provides a good primer on NYU's approach to development in recent decades. On one side is the park, former stomping grounds of O'Neill, Dylan, and Jacobs. On the other, a stretch of stone-faced institutional buildings, their imposing facades beckoning [continued on page 7](#)

AFTER THREE STRONG MONTHS, BILLINGS TUMBLE

## Bumpy Road Ahead

Just as the architecture industry was beginning to see sustained economic improvement, another rough month suggests that the recovery will be a long slog, with a full turnaround [continued on page 3](#)

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**WILLIAM J. MITCHELL, 1944-2010**

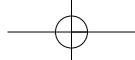
Lively in person, prescient about the future, and fearless in borrowing quotes from *Star Trek*, William Mitchell, who died on June 11 of cancer at age 65, brought an indefatigably humane [continued on page 6](#)



ARCHITECTS FIND WORK OR MAKE IT. SEE PAGE 14

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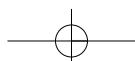


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**LETTERS****DON'T CALL IT PARAMETRICISM**

Patrik Schumacher makes a convincing argument that a new style is emerging on par with the Gothic and Renaissance "on the basis of advanced computational design tools and techniques" ("What Style Is That?," AN 10\_06.02.2010). I thought the article was very well written and articulate. Then, he names this style "Parametricism."

Well, architects are not well known for naming anything, let alone an "epochal" style. The words Gothic or Renaissance were certainly not coined by architects. My guess is, when and if this style holds, it will certainly not be called "parametricism," and in all likelihood the name will be connected to and inspired by an artistic or scientific field which will be

more relevant to its time than architecture.  
GARO GUMUSYAN  
GGA ARCHITECTURE  
NEW YORK

**TERMINAL 6 TAKEDOWN**

While I.M. Pei's Terminal 6 is a work of beauty ("Terminal Hour," AN 11\_06.16.2010), there are many elements in this terminal that render it "obsolete," inefficient, environmentally unfriendly, and inflexible.

As an architect who has worked in this building for many years, I have seen the problems the structure presents in today's times, and the excessive costs of operation that have hindered carriers since the 1980s. When considering such a terminal—built

when airline travel was quite different and a different type of passenger used the building—bringing it up to today's standards from a user's and code standpoint is unrealistic. While adaptive reuse is wonderful for rehabbing an old civic building, what alternative use is there for an old, tired airline terminal?

JOHN MICHAEL BRATICHAK  
JOHN N. BRATICHAK ARCHITECTS  
BROOKLYN

**CORRECTION**

Our feature on innovative facade systems ("Skin Craft," AN 09\_05.19.2010) misspelled the name of Pei Cobb Freed partner José Bruguera, who directed the project team for the firm's Palazzo Lombardia in Milan.

**MORE THAN JUST BOOKS**

It is incredible to realize that with the shuttering in January of Urban Center Books, New York no longer has a single bookstore devoted to architecture, urban design, and city planning. Like Chicago, which lost its legendary Prairie Avenue Bookshop in 2009, New York may have other stores that stock architecture titles, but it has lost a communal haven. These were places where architects from around the world would go to see what was new and exciting in the world of design publishing, bump into friends, and compare notes. I remember seeing Richard Meier and Philip Johnson in the tiny shop checking out each other's purchases, and another time watching Bruno Zevi graze through new titles on a crowded book table.

Even in the best of times, selling books is not a gold mine for store operators, and Urban Center Books existed in its high-rent Midtown space as a special concession forced on the developer of the landmark Villard Houses, where the store was located. Harry Helmsley, who built the 51-story Palace Hotel behind the Villard brownstone in 1980, was required to rent the northern portion of the Madison Avenue structure at a much-reduced rent for 30 years. An umbrella organization was created to bring under one roof the Parks Council, the Architectural League, the New York chapter of the AIA, the Municipal Art Society, and the bookstore. The 30-year easement ended last year, and the organizations scattered all over the city. Urban Center Books, operated by MAS, had hoped to find another space in the city—perhaps with MAS in the Steinway building—and several plans were hatched to relocate the much-loved store into a suitable home. Apparently, this effort has come to naught. And with MAS reportedly no longer interested in carrying the store, Urban Center Books has died a lamentable death. (The books remain available online through [www.urbancenterbooks.org](http://www.urbancenterbooks.org).)

It may be hard to remember for people who now buy books online, but New York once had multiple shops that featured architecture books. The old Rizzoli store on 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue carried a healthy supply, and it continues the tradition at West 57<sup>th</sup> Street. And how many remember the tiny Perimeter books in its several Soho iterations run by Kazumi Futagawa? Other specialized shops abounded, often carrying esoteric titles on architecture: Wittenborn and Ursus on Madison Avenue, Hacker Art Books on 57<sup>th</sup>, and our favorite, Jaap Rietman in Soho. In a city where design, publishing, and media still intersect in an intense feedback loop, it is hard to imagine these stores are gone, and with them untold opportunities for serendipitous inspiration. Of course, there are still shops in New York that carry architecture titles like Spoonbill & Sugartown, Book Culture, Archivita, St. Mark's, and the redoubtable Strand (especially its 2<sup>nd</sup>-floor rare book room). We should treasure and buy from these places before they also disappear. No amount of searching online can create the ambience and excitement of these shops, and the city is a poorer place without them.

WILLIAM MENKING

**BUMPY ROAD AHEAD** continued from front page unlikely until at least next year. After three months of gains culminating in April with the highest billings since January 2008, the AIA Architecture Billings Index took a dive in May, reversing much of the recent gains and slipping back into the territory in which billings have languished for the past year.

"I was a bit surprised by it, particularly the magnitude," AIA chief economist Kermit Baker said. "It's been jumping around for the past six to nine months, but this is a big drop after some pretty steady gains."

Billings fell to 45.8 from 48.5 in April, the first decline since January, when the index fell from 45.4 in December to 42.5. Baker believes that the index will continue to rise in coming months, but the slip also points to a slow, unsteady recovery. "I think we're looking at many more months of sluggish activity. It's just that it'll be sluggish on the upside, not the downside," Baker said.

Inquiries for new work also fell to 55.5 from 59.6 in April, reversing two months of strong growth. (A reading above 50 means billings or inquiries are rising, below means they are falling, and the further they are from 50, the stronger the movement up or down.)

In another bad sign, every region declined in May. The Northeast did manage to stay above 50, falling to 50.6 from 51.0, as much as could be hoped for an area that has been headed in the right direction since December. The Midwest remains almost level at 48.5, down from 49.2 in April and 50.5 the month before, when it was the first region to break through into positive territory. The South continues to struggle, dropping to 45.6 from 46.5. The West, which spent almost all of 2009 in the 30s before rallying in the winter to reach 46.0 in March, has seen its second month of serious declines, falling to 42.9 in May from 44.7 in April.

The one bright spot in May was the commercial/industrial sector, which hit 51.3, its first time across the threshold since December 2007, rising from 48.5 in April and showing strong gains since December 2009 when it was at 42.7. While Baker noted that industrial growth has powered much of the architecture industry over the past few months either directly or indirectly, he cautioned that the sector was one of the most volatile. "I wouldn't necessarily count on office buildings, hotels, and factories to get us out of this," he said.

The residential sector also saw gains in May, rising to 46.9 from 45.8 and reversing a four-month decline from 50.1 in January, though the housing market also remains shaky due partly to the expiration of the homebuyer tax credit and the potential for rising interest rates. The mixed-use sector had its first decline to 46.8 in May since

August, when it was at 38.8, having steadily risen to 48.4 in April before falling, a clear step in the wrong direction for a sector that has been performing better of late. And the institutional sector, typically the strongest during downturns, continued to languish, dropping to 43.4 from 46.8 in April and March, having been at 44.2 in February.

"I don't know if it's Greek debt or whatever, but there has been a lot of fluctuation in the stock market that may have caused some people to rethink their projects or caused some lenders to reconsider," Baker said, though he still remains optimistic. "I don't see anything here in the fundamentals that doesn't lead me to think we're going to continue to trend up." MATT CHABAN



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WHITNEY COX

You won't find racks of spandex at this new Tribeca bike shop, designed as an alternative to the sporty vibe at most Manhattan stores. Owner Julie Hirschfeld of graphic design firm Stiletto NYC had a fondness for chic, vintage-style bicycles, yet found few sources for women's bikes in the city. She also wanted to create a space that would appeal to downtown cyclists—part fashion boutique, part art gallery. To keep her German Retrovelos, Italian Abicis, and Dutch Gazelles from cluttering the 1,300-square-foot store, Milan-based designer Andrea Tognon crafted a sculptural display system that wraps the staircase to the basement repair room, showcases books and accessories, and provides a platform for the candy-colored bikes. "Normally you would use the concept of parking," Tognon said, "but we basically created a theater stage." A yellow display shelf inspired by neon markers enlivens the counter, while behind it horizontal planks form a flexible shelving system for bells, helmets, and bags. Between these oak elements, a gray-toned wooden floor makes a tiny indoor test ride possible. The shop's double title, by the way, honors the owner's grandmothers—both named Adeline. REBECKA GORDAN

## FLOAT LIKE A GLASS HOUSE, STING LIKE A MIES

We thought we were the only ones who dreamed about Philip Johnson and Mies van der Rohe sporting spandex shorts and glistening with sweat! New York designer Demian Repucci has pitted "the New Canaan Cowboy" against "Plano's Master Planemaker" in a modernist title bout touted on prints created to benefit the National Trust for Historic Preservation's Modern Views project (see page 22 for more featured designs). The colorful posters present Johnson and Mies dressed in boxing trunks or suits and ready to rumble—notwithstanding Johnson's spectacles and Mies' omnipresent cigar. "I imagine Philip maybe moving around rather quickly but not quite sure how to hold himself or if people think the trunks look good on him," Repucci said. "And Mies not really moving much, just sort of standing stoically in the center of the ring." So who would take the title? "I see it as the classic battle between strength and cunning," Repucci said. "Maybe it would be a draw. Can that happen in boxing?"

## WHAT CARY GRANT TAUGHT LIBESKIND

A young Daniel Libeskind turned down an offer from Pratt Institute in favor of a "free" Cooper Union, but that didn't prevent him from collecting an honorary degree at Pratt's 2010 commencement. The ceremony's venue—Radio City Music Hall—made Libeskind nostalgic for his second day in New York, in 1959. "I came here to see the Rockettes and I watched a movie in English which I did not understand, but it was a fantastic movie, *North by Northwest*," he told the graduates. "I was really impressed when Cary Grant was walking on the nose of George Washington, and I saw this incredible car, trains, airplanes, and even a fantastic piece of architecture, and I realized New York City and America were absolutely the greatest places in the world and the place to be." Libeskind was joined on the dais by fellow honorary degree recipients including director Steven Soderbergh, who offered his own life lessons, musing that "you cannot sustain a relationship if you do not know how to kiss properly." Meanwhile, commencement speaker and rock star Patti Smith dispensed the ultimate in practical advice: "Take care of your damn teeth."

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COURTESY PARSA KHALILI

LARGE-SCALE FUEL CELL CHARGES MIXED-USE HIGHRISE IN NEW HAVEN

## POWER TOWER

In late May, a 60,000-pound fuel cell nearly the size of a freight car was hoisted onto the site of 360 State Street, a mixed-use highrise under construction in downtown New Haven. The 400-kilowatt unit is the first large-scale fuel cell to power a residential development anywhere in the world, according to the building's developer, and just might herald the next wave of sustainably-powered design.

The team explored several potential sources of renewable energy before deciding on the fuel cell, which uses oxygen and hydrogen to generate electricity and heat, according to Bruce Becker, president of Connecticut-based Becker + Becker, both developer and architect on the project. The cell will meet

nearly 100 percent of the building's electricity demands, and its waste heat will become thermal energy to heat the 700,000-square-foot building's pool and domestic water sources for 500 apartments. Installation of the cell on the ground floor of the 32-story structure had only minor impacts upon construction, including piping to link it to the pool and domestic hot water sources; thermal storage tanks to hold the hot water produced by its waste heat; and electric conduits to transfer electricity to residential and commercial units.

The project did face engineering challenges unique to the technology. The daily cycles of energy consumption require connections to municipal utility grids, from which the building can draw electricity and natural gas when energy demand is peaking. Such an arrangement is an obstacle for residential projects like 360 State Street: Under Connecticut state law, tenants cannot be direct customers of both the fuel cell owner and the utility company, and similar laws exist in most states. "The main reason fuel cells have not been used in residential buildings is [because] it is difficult to figure out how to meter the residential tenants [who receive] the majority of their power from the fuel cell and supplementary power from the grid," explained project manager Michelle Lauterwasser. "We are still in discussion with our utility company on exactly how this will work."

The fuel cell was possible thanks to a grant from the Connecticut Clean Energy Fund to cover nearly half the cost of the \$1.8 million unit. This assistance, in addition to the annual energy savings, allow for a payback period of 5.5 years. Given the need for subsidies, William Leahy, director of the Institute for Sustainable Energy at Eastern Connecticut State University, suggested that the cost of fuel-cell power must dramatically decrease before it can compete with the alternatives. "For this project, I think the technical efficiency and environmental benefits of a fuel cell will be apparent," he said. "But I'm not sure the economic benefits will be."

KATHERINE LINDSTEDT

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COURTESY GSA

ELENI REED NAMED AGENCY'S FIRST SUSTAINABILITY CZAR

## GREENING THE GSA

The U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) has long been a sustainability pioneer, having planted its first green roof in 1975. But under President Obama's push to boost the nation's energy efficiency, the agency has rolled out an ambitious new agenda to slash the carbon footprint of federal buildings. "We at GSA are embracing a zero environmental footprint goal," agency administrator Martha Johnson declared on May 18. "We are setting our sights on eliminating the impact of the federal government on our natural environment."

Though not committed to a timeline for the effort, Johnson has moved to make good on her pledge, announcing on June 8 the appointment of Eleni Reed as the agency's Chief Greening Officer. Reed's immediate task will be helping the GSA heed an executive order signed by the president last fall that calls on federal agencies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 28 percent by 2020, among other goals. But perhaps the more far-reaching goal of the post is to leverage a portfolio of 1,500 owned and 8,100 leased buildings to advance new sustainable strategies.

"Part of the role is to establish GSA as a green proving ground," Reed told AN. "What we mean by that is to beta-test emerging green technologies within GSA buildings." To that end, the agency is currently taking a close look at photovoltaics, as well as lighting technologies and smart metering. Such efforts may seem modest, but the idea is that small improvements in efficiency, scaled up, can have ripple effects that incentivize green service providers, drive smart-grid modernization, and broaden cradle-to-cradle design.

Reed, 42, arrives with an intriguing mix of experience, having studied urban planning at the Université de Montréal and at McGill University, where she received her masters degree in the subject. A veteran of Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg's office of environmental coordination, she helped lead the implementation of New York City's green building standards law in 2005, which requires that many city-funded construction projects meet LEED standards.

Most recently, Reed developed green strategies at real-estate giant Cushman & Wakefield, helping craft a 2009 pact with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to reduce the carbon footprint across leased space the firm managed in the U.S., including decreasing energy consumption in more than 3,000 buildings by 30 percent by 2012. Reed also participated in a USGBC pilot program allowing the company to LEED certify a batch of 18 buildings the firm managed across six states. "The benefits of scale are so much more apparent for any approach you can take that touches a portfolio rather than one individual building," Reed said.

That experience should prove useful at the GSA, which has commissioned dozens of LEED projects but has had less success greening its sizable leased portfolio. Current strategies on that front include green-lease provisions that require a certain level of LEED or Energy Star rating, but efforts have been hampered by the lack of fine-grained data about energy use in most commercial office space. "We don't necessarily have solid environmental metrics," Reed noted. "So we're currently looking at opportunities to phase in submetering, to look at actual consumption and how that influences tenant behavior." **JEFF BYLES**



COURTESY COOPER, ROBERTSON

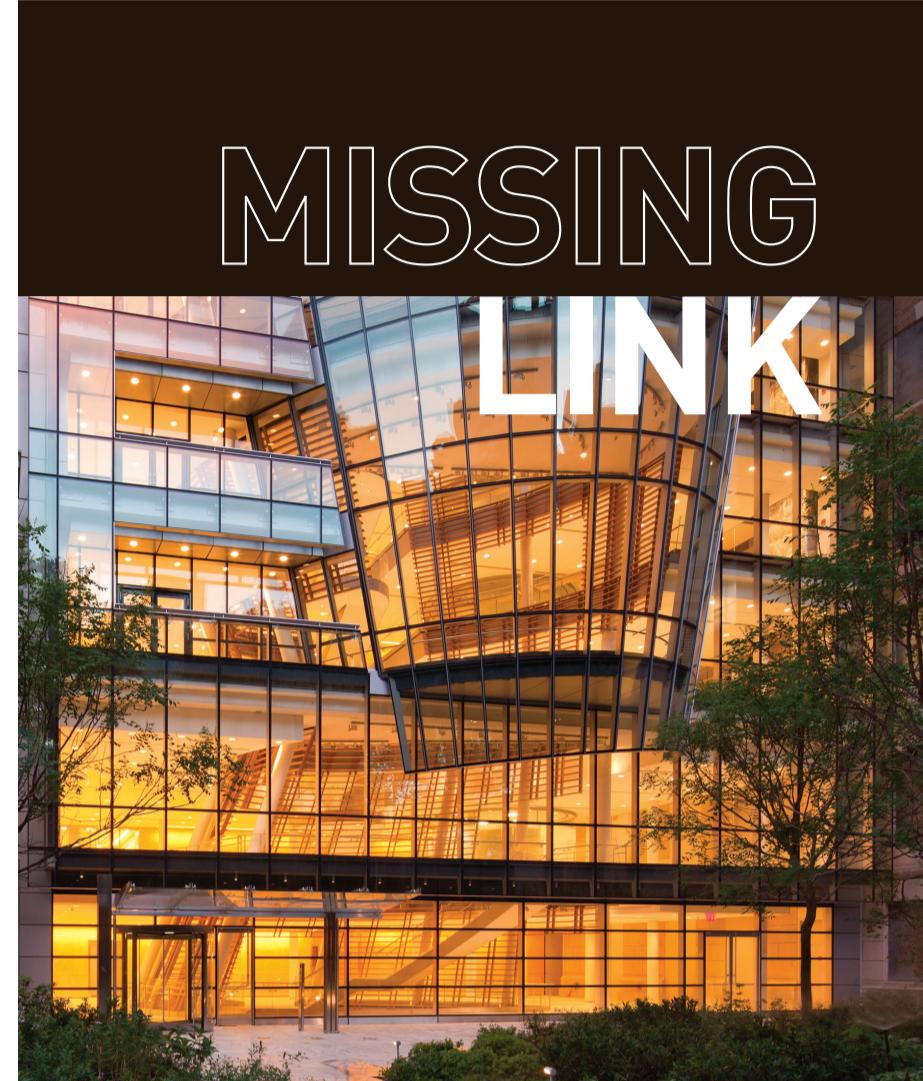
### UNVEILED

**RICHARD RODGERS AMPHITHEATER** A decade ago, at Marcus Garvey Park in East Harlem, the old 1960s bandshell was barely in use. But through the efforts of the City Parks Foundation, "it's become exponentially busy" and short of space, said David Revell, the foundation's executive director. Thanks to an unexpected \$4 million mitigation payment from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue subway and \$1 million from the Rodgers

Family Foundation, Parks now has money to spend in the area.

With community input, Cooper, Robertson determined that what was most needed was shading. Working within the existing contours of the site, the stage will be shifted forward. (It had been so far from the seats that joggers ran through the space during shows.) Black bricks matching the neighboring recreation center will sheathe the stage and a new multipurpose space, which will house offices and rehearsal rooms that can double as yoga and dance studios. Within the frame of the stage, stucco walls support a roof of acoustical concrete panels that appears to float thanks to translucent material at the edge. Lighting and sound hookups will be incorporated into the roof and surrounding light poles. Demolition began in June, and construction is expected to take nine months. **MC**

**Architect:** Cooper, Robertson  
**Client:** City Parks Foundation  
**Location:** Marcus Garvey Park, East Harlem  
**Completion:** 2011



A curtain-walled addition at Rockefeller University's new **Collaborative Research Center** links two historic buildings, transforming them into a place where scientific history will be made. The design by **Mitchell/Giurgola Architects** joins modern, open-plan laboratories through a six-story atrium, an inspiring elliptically shaped nexus in which scientists from diverse disciplines will meet and share ideas. Creating such a unique enclosure required another meeting of the minds as the designers worked with fabricator Frener & Reifer and erector Champion to form a curtain wall that expresses the collaboration necessary to achieve new heights—whether the structure is architectural or genetic.

## Transforming design into reality

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Architect: Mitchell/Giurgola  
 Architects  
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THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER JULY 7, 2010



The folding City Car prototype.

**WILLIAM J. MITCHELL, 1944-2010**  
continued from front page sensibility to his far-reaching investigations into the integration of technology and computers into urban life.

A former dean of the School of Architecture (1992–2003) at MIT and head of the media arts and sciences at the school's Media Lab, Mitchell was a pioneer in computation design, later focusing his research on cities, cars, and social issues. As part of his Smart Cities initiative, he produced the folding, electric City Car prototype. As advisor to MIT President Charles M. Vest, Mitchell was instrumental in upgrading the school campus to world-class status

with buildings by Frank Gehry, Steven Holl, Kevin Roche, Charles Correa, and most recently, Fumihiko Maki, whose Media Lab Complex opened this spring. Famously in 1999, Mitchell gathered a roster of eminent architects on campus for a three-day design charrette, with the additional aim of directing the architects' attention to community building. (At one point, to lighten the workaholic mood on campus, Gehry is said to have suggested installing a Ferris wheel.)

Terry Knight, a professor of design and computation at MIT's School of Architecture, had Mitchell as a faculty advisor at UCLA in the late

1970s. She recalls how he impressed her at their first September meeting as someone to whom constant attention must be paid, but then he ended the meeting by saying he'd see her next in January. "He was just like that—always inspiring, always traveling," Knight said. When he became dean at MIT, he brought Knight along to help with his work in establishing a computation program as he had at UCLA and Harvard. His dedication to students was boundless, she said, with his door always open, and on at least one occasion staying up all night to wait for a plot to come off a computer (back in the very early days of computation). "He was always hands-on, and had a way of showing students what could be done and also pushing them to do things they didn't think they could do," Knight said. "The field of computer-aided design owes much to him in building up its foundations on both coasts. There is not a person in the field today not taught either directly by him or by one of his students."

Larry Stass, an associate professor in the architecture department and former student, built and tested computer models as a member of Mitchell's computation group at MIT. He described how early in the 1990s, Mitchell was already promot-

ing and using video-conferencing, digital fabrication, prototyping, and parametric modeling. "At MIT, his interest shifted from scientific research to applications and applied research. He told me once that he really wanted to find ways to interact with the public," said Stass, adding that Mitchell found deep inspiration in the works of science fiction writer William Gibson, especially the 1984 novel *Neuromancer*.

Born in Victoria, Australia, Mitchell never forgot his small-town origins and, according to Knight, "considered himself 100 percent Aussie." His relaxed and inclusive manner suited him well throughout his years teaching architecture and urban design at UCLA in jeans and sandals, switching to a suit when he started teaching at Harvard's Graduate School of Design but always ready to roll up his sleeves for hands-on involvement with his students at MIT and the Media Lab.

As colleagues back in UCLA in 1975, George Stiny and Mitchell pursued parallel and intertwining career paths. Stiny, now a professor of computation at MIT, remembers Mitchell inking the drawings on one of his first papers. "He was an extremely good draughtsman," Stiny said. "He had one of the fastest hands I ever saw. Drawings would take me a day; he could do

one—and do it well—in about five minutes." Mitchel Resnick, another colleague at the Media Lab, was equally amazed at Mitchell's prolific facility at writing books, among them the still relevant *Computer-Aided Architectural Design* (1977); *The Logic of Architecture: Design, Computation and Cognition* (1990); and *E-Topia: Urban Life, Jim, but Not as We Know It* (1999), with its titular nod to *Star Trek*'s futuristic and all-too-human starship captain.

Mitchell's love of architecture was imbued with that same sense of expertise and finesse. Colleagues describe his determination in making sure architects saw the full range of what computers were capable of doing, as well as making them see the necessity of using these new tools. Long before others, he understood the implications of the cultural shift underway, whether it was his anticipating that ATMs would change banking or, more recently, understanding that laptop screens visible in sunlight could alter how people do their jobs by allowing them to work outside. "He was always ahead of everyone else but not so far ahead that he didn't drag everyone along with him," Stiny said. "Bill set the agenda for computers in architecture and made sure that it took root in a meaningful way."

**JULIE V. IOVINE**

Stephen Talasnik's *Stream*.

viewer to have a profound influence on finishing it." He credits *Stream's* linearity and transparency for enabling the viewer's engagement. "If I preserve the line, it preserves a degree of intimacy," he said during a recent visit to the site. "When the skin goes on, it takes the mystery of the structure away."

*Stream* manages to preserve a certain mystique, however. Steel cables and helical screw piles are hidden underground, leaving visitors to wonder how the structure's 3,000 bamboo poles are secured. Talasnik collaborated on the design with French architect Mateo Paiva, along with a team of engineers and fabricators.

In the coming months, *Stream* will continue to influence the works that influenced Talasnik while he worked on-site in May. The completed project's degrees of transparency have created new vantage points for nearby sculptures on Storm King's Museum Hill. The piece also resonates with the work of Talasnik's nine colleagues in the exhibition, which includes Storm King veterans such as Andy Goldsworthy and Mark di Suvero, along with newcomers John Bisbee, Maria Elena González, Darrell Petit, and Alyson Shotz. **KL**

ARTIST OFFERS BAMBOO FOR THOUGHT IN LATEST STORM KING INSTALLATION

## INTO THE WOODS

Storm King Art Center's 500-acre landscape abounds with bamboo in Stephen Talasnik's *Stream: A Folded Drawing*, one of 12 sculptures in 5+5: New Perspectives, a 50th-anniversary exhibition that opened on June 5. Talasnik, a New York-based artist known for his architecturally inspired drawings and sculptures, drew on a number of sources for the site-specific installation, among them the intricacy of basketry construction and the grid-like frames of zeppelins.

*Stream's* own infrastructure consists of bamboo poles that intersect with the help of stainless-steel ties. Additional poles

**KICK STARTED** continued from front page unattractive locations. The neighborhood district can claim the least amount of public open space in the city, and is cut off from its waterfront by ramp spaghetti from the FDR Drive.

East Side elected officials and community leaders have been brainstorming for years over how to close a 24-block gap here in a potential East River Esplanade stretching from the Battery to Harlem. In 2007, the Municipal Art Society convened a charrette in which stakeholders and design professionals hammered out a bold vision for a new deck over the FDR Drive that connected via a slope to a new waterfront esplanade.

But now, what has been touted as a once-in-a-lifetime planning opportunity could be in danger of expiring. The immediate threat to any plan for closing the gap in the esplanade is the potential removal of a row of caissons in the East River.

The caissons served as supports for a temporary roadway that the New York State Department of Transportation built while they were working on the FDR Drive several years ago. Planners say the caissons potentially could be repurposed to serve as supports for a section of the waterfront esplanade that would stretch from about East 53rd Street to about East 62nd Street. Reusing the caissons could save \$20 million to \$25 million toward the cost of building this section. However, citing environmental concerns, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), which has oversight of the caissons, wants the city to either move forward on a plan for the East River Esplanade or remove them.

"The reality is that if some sort of agreement isn't reached that would generate building part of the promenade over the

existing caissons, it certainly would be a loss," said Sarra Hale-Stern, district office director for New York State Senator Liz Krueger, who has been working with the city's Economic Development Corporation to develop a proposal for the waterfront park. According to Hale-Stern, not only would the city lose the opportunity to save millions of dollars toward the cost of building the esplanade, there is also the possibility that DEC would not even allow installation of new supports.

The DEC has extended a March deadline for removing the caissons, but officials say these structures may require significant work to prevent them from eroding. "DEC has not yet set a 'drop dead' date, in order to allow for the possibility of the city using the caissons as part of its East River Esplanade design," said Lori Severino, a DEC spokeswoman, adding that the city needed to show progress toward a design if the caissons were to remain.

The caissons are just one of the many hurdles to closing the gap in the esplanade. Financing the missing link could cost up to \$200 million in a complex real estate deal that would radically reshape the Midtown East neighborhood.

But to make that plan work, two city-owned office buildings currently occupied by the UN would have to be sold. A popular playground that shares a full block site with a ventilating tower for the Queens Midtown Tunnel would also have to be demolished to make way for a new UN building.

"This conversation has been going on for ten years," said New York City council-member Daniel Garodnick. "The question is whether you could come to a preliminary agreement that would allow the process to move forward at all." **ALEX ULAM**



the other for a controversial hotel. Because the Landmarks Preservation Commission landmarked not only Pei's three towers but the grounds surrounding them, NYU must seek its approval to build the new tower in line with Wooster Street, which the designers argue creates the best sight lines within the complex. The grocery store at the corner of LaGuardia Place and Bleeker Street would be replaced with an underground garage and a playground on top; the designers could have built here as of right, but prefer not to.

To the east of the towers is the squat Coles athletic center, which would be demolished to make way for the 17-story, Mori-designed Zipper Building, so called for the light wells creating bays in the structure's upper half. The Zipper would accommodate both a new grocery store and academic space.

The most complicated piece of the plan is at Washington Square Village. The designers are proposing to replace a park and underground parking lot between the extant slab buildings with a two-level, 500,000-square-foot academic building below grade. In the center, a sunken garden would provide natural light into the space inspired, according to the architects, by Dominique Perrault's Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris.

Bookending the site would be two more academic towers, one of which may also include an elementary school, a nod to the community. Rising up to 8 stories on LaGuardia Place and up to 17 on Mercer Street, the buildings are crescent-shaped in a yin-and-yang layout meant to reflect light into the heart of the new quad. NYU intends to take the entire project before the City Planning Commission next year, after Landmarks determines what, if anything, can be built on the Silver Towers site.

In spite of NYU's efforts, the community is not happy with the ambitious plan. In part, their anger is based on a 2007 promise NYU made not to pursue non-essential development within the Core. NYU counters that it has reduced the amount of its development and concentrated it within a tight footprint. "For them to turn around and stab us in the back so quickly is unconscionable," one local resident said. "Some of us tried to maintain as much goodwill as possible, but I don't see how that is possible anymore."

There is also rage about the proposed hotel and NYU's apparent disinterest in considering Lower Manhattan because of its distance from the Core. That NYU presented it as a single ULURP rather than phased per project has attracted particular vitriol.

Just as when Moses created these superblocks a half-century ago, the designs on paper meet far different conditions on the ground. The university needs to expand; the community doesn't want 2.6 million square feet of new development. The density, if not the design, is as of right. This being New York, it just might happen. This being the Village, it just might not. **mc**



**NYU TAKES A VILLAGE** continued from front page exclusively to students and faculty with a severity alien to the lively mood that otherwise energizes Greenwich Village. In the bad old days, these buildings were constructed in an as-of-right, piecemeal fashion with little community input.

Now the school is attempting a different approach, creating a masterplan that maps out the creation of roughly six million square feet in the city over the next two decades, an effort university officials said has been rooted in thorough planning and outreach. Yet despite the change in tactics, many in the community remain wary as ever, saying the university continues to ignore local input.

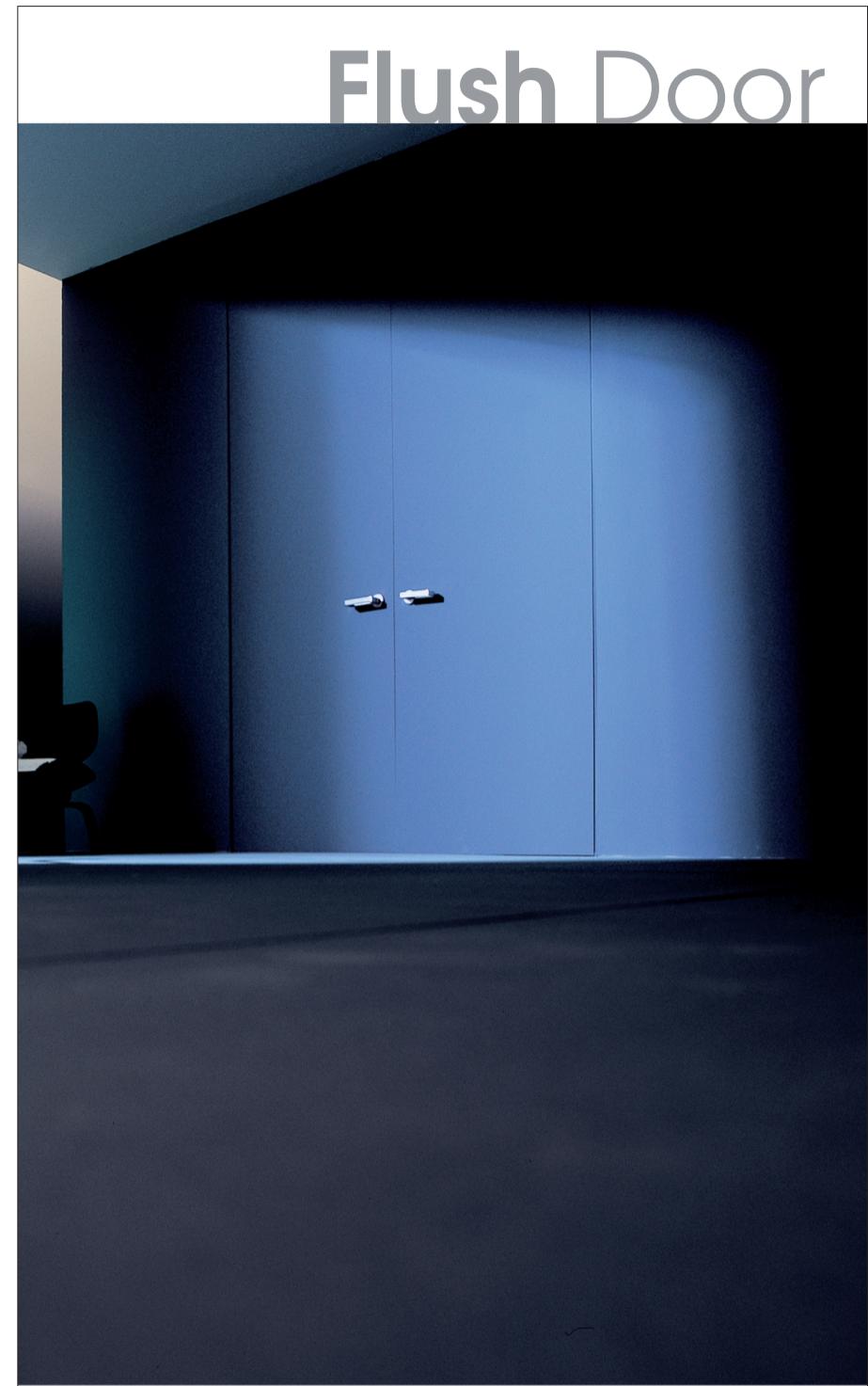
NYU is in fact looking as far away as downtown Brooklyn and Governors Island for opportunities, yet the heart of its plan—and of the university—remains in the blocks surrounding Washington Square Park, known as the Core. The university wants to put nearly half its new development in the area, much of it focused on the two Robert Moses superblocks north of Houston Street: Washington Square Village and the landmarked Silver Towers. By concentrating development in these already dense areas owned by the university, officials say, NYU can avoid buying up more of the Village.

The university and its designers—Grimshaw, Toshiko Mori, and Michael Van Valkenburgh—are proposing four thoughtful, albeit large, buildings that strive to minimize their impact on the neighborhood by peeling back the problematic parts of the superblocks, including serpentine fencing and landscapes, dreary street frontage, and a hodgepodge of circulation paths in order to create a more inviting environment.

Mori said the idea is to work within the logic of the disparate superblocks, where a plan for three slab buildings was abandoned by the original developer in the face of economic challenges in the late 1950s. Two of these Paul Lester Weiner-designed slabs were built, becoming University Village, which NYU then acquired along with the site of Silver Towers, which were built the following decade. "This is not a tabula rasa," Mori said. "We're not replacing the buildings but rationalizing, enhancing, and making them better."

The first piece of the plan to enter public review will be a tower designed by Grimshaw for the Silver Towers site. Rising to 38 stories (eight more than its neighbors), the new tower will pay tribute to I.M. Pei's distinctive facades with its own inventive glass treatment. The tower consists of four L-shaped volumes, with two elevated to create transparency and entrances, one for residents,

## Flush Door



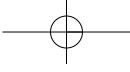
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## OCEAN HOUSE



The mill in Old Saybrook, Connecticut, has changed quite a bit since it served as a factory for drill bits in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. After taking up residence in the shuttered complex in the 1970s, Centerbrook Architects and Planners—run by partners Chad Floyd, Mark Simon, Jeff Riley, and Jim Childress—has joined its disparate buildings and successively renovated and transformed its interior spaces. But despite all the changes, the turbine that powered the old mill's operations is still running. Taking its power from the stream's 11-foot drop on its way to Falls River, it supplies the firm with about ten percent of its power, joined by two new banks of photovoltaic panels on the roof that chip in another 20 percent. Other pieces of the past live on in new guises: An old factory wheel becomes a table, and a mass of melted drill bits leans propped up against the outer wall as an objet d'art.

It's all part of a lighthearted aesthetic that pervades the firm, whose designs reveal echoes of the postmodern work of its co-founder, Yale architecture dean Charles Moore. Moore's famously exuberant juxtapositions of classical colonnades with anachronistic materials like neon have been tempered by Centerbrook's current partners with subtlety and pragmatism: borrowing the styles of mountainous rural Italy to honor the peaks surrounding University of Colorado's Boulder campus, for example, or turning sideways logs into a functional sun screen. That approach has garnered them a long list of accolades over their firm's 35 years—over 300 in total, including the prestigious AIA Firm Award in 1998.

Despite the chilly economic climate, business is still humming along with their turbine. That's thanks in part to some new ways the firm has found to cut costs, including a real-time digital meeting system that reduces the need to travel, a particular boon for Centerbrook because so many of their clients are institutions and nonprofits whose board members and trustees are scattered all over the country. It's also thanks to repeat customers, who come back to Centerbrook again and again for its proficient yet playful spirit. **JULIA GALEF**

## OCEAN HOUSE

WATCH HILL, RHODE ISLAND

On the dunes of Watch Hill, Rhode Island, an 1868 hotel was badly in need of restoration. "I stayed there once and it was terrifying—there were holes in the floor," said Riley. Centerbrook was hired to restore the hotel, but, finding it too far gone, performed a historical replication, salvaging what they could and reconstructing capitals and balustrades. They also added a north wing in the style of the old, with 49 new rooms and 23 condominiums, soon to open as a year-round resort.

## CENTER FOR COMMUNITY

BOULDER, COLORADO

Locally-sourced sandstone and limestone facades and red terra-cotta roofs lend a laid-back Tuscan charm to the monumental new student center that Centerbrook designed for the University of Colorado-Boulder. Along with the law school that the firm recently completed for the campus, the project marks a return to the university's original Italian rural aesthetic from which more recent campus buildings had strayed. When the 323,000-square-foot Center for Community opens for the fall semester of 2010, its main-floor dining hall will be the largest restaurant in Colorado.

## LAKEWOOD HOUSE

NORTHEASTERN U.S.

At an undisclosed location in a northeast forest stands this rustic but elegant home for a large extended family. Its glass-walled south face features locally-sourced logs, minimally processed with salt preservatives and arranged in horizontal strips to form a solar screen. Folding glass walls connect the first floor with the surrounding grounds, and an arched, two-story hall lined with local stones forms the house's east-west spine. With runoff draining into the adjacent lake, Centerbrook constructed a sophisticated underground system to filter rainwater before returning it to the earth.

## ADDISON GALLERY OF ART

ANDOVER, MASSACHUSETTS

A celebrated collection of American art has a new home in the restored and expanded Addison Gallery of Art on the Phillips Academy campus in Massachusetts. The original 1930 building was brought gently into the modern era with a three-story, 11,800-square-foot glass expansion overlaid with stainless steel mesh. Centerbrook took advantage of their own campus to test-drive design approaches such as the Ipe deck system. "The people at Addison would never have used this if we hadn't tested it out for a few years ourselves," Floyd said.

## YORK HILL CAMPUS

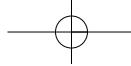
HAMDEN, CONNECTICUT

Centerbrook is in the process of turning longtime client Quinnipiac University's new York Hill campus into a veritable exhibition of sustainable strategies, including a micro-turbine powering the student center and a wind garden of vertical-axis turbines. Located on a hill overlooking the Long Island Sound, the 250-acre campus includes a hockey and basketball arena, and Centerbrook is adding an octagonal student center, dormitories, and parking. The firm installed seating at the base of the turbines, allowing the wind farm to double as an interactive art exhibit.

## CULLMAN-HEYMAN TENNIS CENTER

NEW HAVEN, CONNECTICUT

On a cramped, sloping site, Centerbrook was asked to double the capacity of Yale University's Cullman-Heyman Tennis Center, a prefabricated box dating from the 1970s. Centerbrook added a new building that doubled the number of courts, with a new canopied entranceway and viewing lobby connecting the two facilities. A former teacher of the partners, architect and sculptor Kent Bloomer, created the columns that adorn the entrance, crafting metal capitals to echo the arching trajectory of a tennis ball and the interlocking weaves of a racket.

NEWS  
09

CENTER FOR COMMUNITY



LAKWOOD HOUSE



ADDISON GALLERY OF ART



YORK HILL CAMPUS



CULLMAN-HEYMAN TENNIS CENTER



COURTESY CENTERBROOK EXCEPT ABOVE AND BELOW RIGHT: PETER AARON/ESTO

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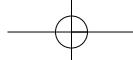
PROFESSOR VICTOR REGNIER, FAIA, ACSA  
Author on housing and community planning for the elderly

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Architecture and Thought Production Office



WILLIAM STAFFORD



Much has been written about the trouble that Cornell University's College of Architecture, Art, and Planning (AAP) has faced in striving to get its new building off the ground. On the one hand, national program officials have threatened to revoke the school's accreditation on account of its woefully out-of-date facilities. On the other, the university itself, in the midst of financial straits, has balked at

construction costs and halted building projects across the institution. So it is remarkable to report that the erection of steel framing members has been completed on the Office for Metropolitan Architecture (OMA)-designed Paul Milstein Hall, a \$55 million, 47,000-square-foot project that will fill out the AAP's programmatic needs and secure its place as a top-of-the-heap design education program. Just as remark-

able, however, OMA's design seems to defy gravity, with a structural system of muscular steel members that support jaw-dropping cantilevers, and a unique, cast-in-place concrete dome as complex in construction as it is simple in form.

Milstein Hall will supply students with much-needed studio, crit, and exhibition space, as well as a 275-seat auditorium and fine arts library. Its most essential

role, however, will be as a connector and common space for the college, which is currently situated in four separate buildings at the northern edge of campus: Rand Hall, Sibley Hall, The Foundry, and Tjaden Hall. These buildings are stylistically diverse, but typologically identical: linear, corridor-based buildings that segregate the school's various functions without ever managing to create a sense of community. OMA's design attempts to fill this gap.

Rising on a former parking lot at the north end of this academic quad, the building features three levels, two above grade and one below. The upper level, known as the top plate, shoulders the majority of the programmatic burden and showcases the wonders of modern structural engineering.

Connecting to the second floors of Rand and Sibley halls, the top plate houses the crit and studio spaces and the library. Rather than separating these uses with walls, the architects delineated them with subtle manipulations of the section. The library, for example, sits within a sunken area, while the studio and crit spaces occupy elevations all their own. The entire area is flooded with natural light by perimeter floor-to-ceiling glass walls and a

grid of skylights.

Fitting these elements on one level proved too much for the area of the site, so OMA cantilevered the volume 48 feet out above University Avenue to the north. The building features an even more impressive cantilever of 60 feet to the south where Milstein Hall connects to Sibley. Here, landmark regulations prohibited columns from obstructing the view of the historic edifice. These cantilevers are made possible by a system of full floor-height trusses custom-designed by Robert Silman Associates. These trusses, which are made up of extremely hefty steel members with webs as thick as 4 inches, ring the perimeter of the volume but also cut through the plan in two places. In order to maintain the upper plate's open circulation, engineers designed a hybrid truss somewhere between a Vierendeel and Warren, which features

Clockwise from top:  
Milstein Hall seen under construction, connecting Sibley and Rand halls; a rendering of the building; the west elevation; the upper and lower floorplates are joined by a concrete dome.

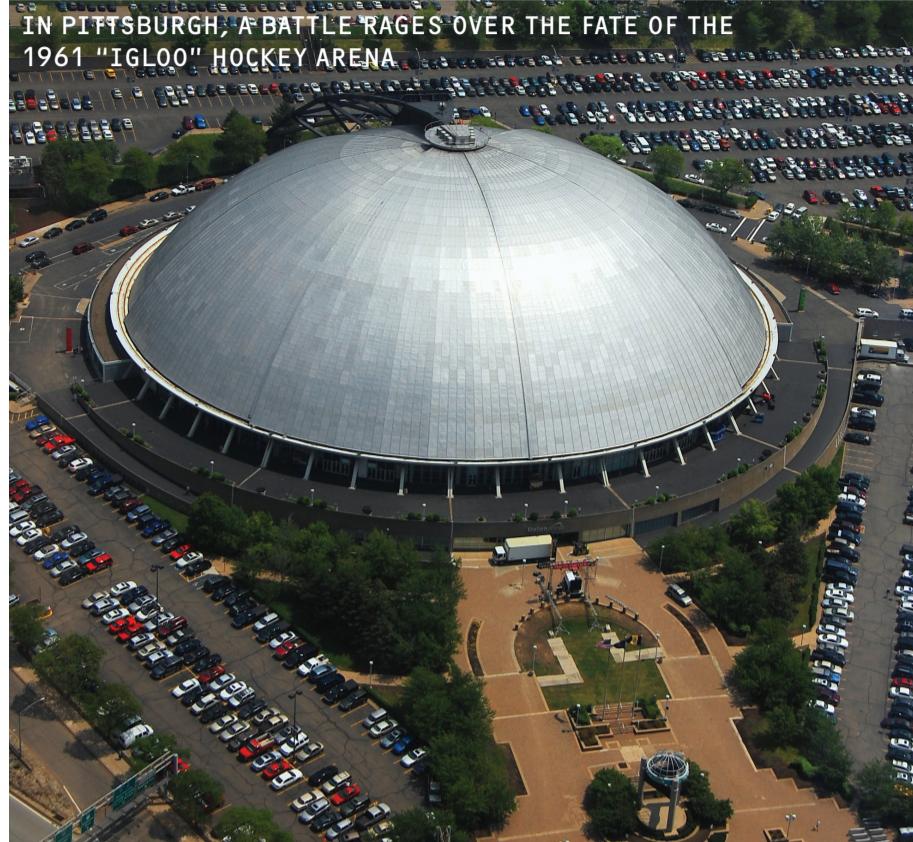
both vertical and diagonal bracing elements that deliver rigidity as well as permeability. The trusses were shop-fabricated in Canada, then trucked to the university under police escort. Once on site, ironworkers craned the massive assemblies into place, shored them up, and welded them together.

To connect the upper plate with the lower two levels—which house the lobby and exhibition space at grade (middle plate), and auditorium and computer labs below grade (lower plate)—OMA designed the lower plate's ceiling as a smooth concrete dome that pierces the floor of the upper plate. While a simple and elegant form, this sloping volume is putting the concrete contractor, Pike Company of Rochester, to the test. The concrete will be both structure and architecture, meaning that its execution will have to be flawless the first time and executed in one uninterrupted pour. In order to accomplish this, Pike has designed a form of wooden trusses on 16-inch centers topped by several layers of MDO plywood. To ensure a smooth finish, the plywood will then be treated with a polyurethane coat, which will be washed with water before the pour begins, clearing the surface of any boot marks or cigarette stubs that may accumulate while the #9 rebar reinforcing and sprinkler and lighting systems are wired in place. Pike is currently completing a 20-foot mockup to test its method. If all goes well, the official pour will begin on site in early July.

AARON SEWARD



COURTESY OMA



## Igloo on Thin Ice

As the Pittsburgh Penguins' final season wound to a close this spring, the debate over the historic Mellon Arena's fate shifted into high gear. The hockey arena, dubbed the

"Igloo" for its iconic domed roof, was the largest dome in the world when it was built in 1961. Though that record was soon displaced, it has remained unchallenged for the honor

**PASS THE SUGAR** continued from front page  
of a final vote on the project, clearing the way for its unanimous passage by the city council's land-use committee on June 29.

The Rafael Viñoly-designed, 2.8 million-square-foot complex has been in the works for four years, first winning Landmarks approval to transform the refinery into community space and apartments, and now, the developer hopes, surrounding it with 11 towers, some rising as high as 40 stories with about 2,200 apartments, 30 percent of which would be affordable, one of the project's hallmark features.

To win the commission's support, the developer promised to reduce the number of parking spaces from 1,694 to 1,428 and the height of a commercial tower from 30 stories to 25 stories. Levin succeeded in reducing the two tallest towers from 40 stories to 34, though the commercial building will return to 30 stories in exchange. However, developer CPC Resources maintains that the changes will not impact the density of the project. As that had been among the community's chief concerns, the reduction in heights could be more a symbolic than serious victory.

City Planning Commission chair Amanda Burden warmly endorsed the project. "This project will bring high-quality design and architecture, much-needed affordable housing, significant community facilities, and open space on the waterfront to a Williamsburg community in need of all these things," she said. She stressed, however, that a restrictive declaration would be put in place to ensure the designs of the final project resembled those presented to

the community, a particular concern for the commission of late.

Though all 13 commission members voted in favor of the project, some still expressed concerns that it remained too dense and is underserved by public transit. "I've had to wait for three or four packed trains to get on sometimes," commissioner Angela Battaglia said. "I certainly hope New York City Transit and the developer can come up with a solution to this issue." The developer has now promised to provide a shuttle bus to a nearby JMZ station.

Meanwhile, the Bloomberg administration, a staunch supporter of the project, has promised to begin transportation and open space studies to address a number of concerns the community has had during the recent building boom. A clause has also been put into the plan to ensure any changes to the community space—there has been talk of a hotel—would return to the land-use process for community and council oversight.

Councilmember Diana Reyna, who represents the district adjacent to Levin's, had been a strong supporter of the project despite her colleague's opposition, an unusual situation at the council, where deference is generally paid. She argued that the affordable housing it provides was worth the density. "I'm happy to say this land will be reinvigorated and happy this project has reached a level of satisfaction for all parties," Reyna said.

Levin counted the agreement a significant achievement. "This will ensure Williamsburg continues to thrive," he said. At press time, the council's land-use committee voted 23-0 in favor of the project, and it was expected to pass the full council later in the day. **MC**

of having the world's largest retractable steel dome roof.

Designed by eminent engineers Ammann & Whitney of New York, the dome comprises a steel truss system covered with a metal deck and a lightweight stainless steel skin. Its eight leaves rotate out on railroad tracks to form a closed, self-supporting dome, and rotate in to open the dome three-quarters of the way to the sky. When fully retracted, the roof is entirely supported by a 260-foot cantilevered arm—essentially half of an arch bridge—anchedored at its base in large caissons.

The Igloo's owners, the Sports & Exhibition Authority (SEA), gave the Pittsburgh Penguins the development rights to the Igloo and its surrounding 28-acre property, and the Penguins have publicized their plans to raze the arena and replace it with offices, retail, hotels, and entertainment. As the Penguins and the SEA urge speed, citing the costs of maintaining the closed arena, activists have been pleading for time to make the case for preservation.

Among the leaders of the preservation movement is the nonprofit Reuse the Igloo, founded by architect Rob Pfaffmann, who led an unsuccessful campaign in 2003 to have the arena designated a city historic structure. His own proposal for saving the arena includes mixed-use development around the Igloo but would transform the arena itself into a public space. Pfaffmann envisions leaving the dome open for most of the year and removing the interior seating bowl to clear floorspace that could be used for festivals or ice skating. Citing Bryant Park and the High Line in New York, he argues that an innovative reuse of the arena would do far more to attract visitors and boost real estate than a new mixed-use development

would. The battle over the Igloo is being waged both politically and economically. From a financial perspective, a report recently prepared by the SEA's consultant, Oxford Development, estimates a \$103.5 million windfall from the Penguins' plan to raze the arena and replace it with mixed-use development. They project only a \$53.8 million benefit from Reuse the Igloo's plan.

However, Todd Poole, president of 4ward Planning, the consultant hired by Reuse the Igloo, argues that the Oxford estimate engages in double-counting. The new tenants they expect will more likely come from businesses relocating from other parts of the city, and the money they foresee being spent on new retail would otherwise have been spent on old retail, he said. "Ultimately, they're going to be diverting dollars from merchants who have been there for many years and who are only just starting to rebound," Poole explained.

The debate over the Igloo's future is also complicated politically by its checkered past. Its construction was part of one of the city's major urban renewal schemes that severed the street grid, isolating the predominantly African American Hill District from the city's downtown on the other side of the arena. "Hill district residents are split," Pfaffmann said. "Some think it should be symbolically erased from the face of the earth." While city leaders like Mayor Luke Ravenstahl advocate for the benefits of reconnecting the street grid by removing the arena, Pfaffmann and other preservationists argue that with adaptive reuse, the arena can transcend its past as a barrier and begin to function instead as a connector. **JG**

### AT DEADLINE

## POLSHEK NAME CHANGE

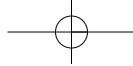
While it may sound a tad like a movie starring Kirk Douglas, Ennead Architects is the new official name of the firm formerly known as Polshek Partnership. The change, according to partner Todd Schliemann, who joined in 1979, is meant to reflect the collaborative and dedicated spirit that has long suffused the practice's philosophy—founded in 1963 by James Polshek, now 80—and that will now be even more pronounced. Polshek retired from active duty five years ago, and there was some confusion, according to Schliemann, about who had designed which projects. Currently, there are four senior design principals, including Schliemann, Susan Rodriguez, Richard Olcott, and Tomas Rossant, and five management principals. They will work collaboratively as well as having their own dedicated spheres within the firm. Ennead, by the way, stands for "group of nine" in ancient Greek, though it meant more as an ideal than an actual number of partners.

## COLUMBIA'S FULL COURT PRESS

New York State has some of the most notorious eminent domain statutes in the country, and they have been upheld once again, as the state's highest court reversed a lower court decision on June 24 that would have stopped the seizure of four warehouses in Manhattanville for conveyance to Columbia for its 17-acre, Renzo Piano-designed campus. The earlier decision found that there was no public purpose in transferring private land to a private university, but the Court of Appeals disagreed, arguing that the new campus will erase blight and, furthermore, it is not the court's place to overrule public officials. Nick Sprayregen, owner of the Tuck-It-Away self-storage buildings, has vowed to appeal the decision to the Supreme Court, which has not addressed eminent domain since the controversial Kelo decision that essentially laid the groundwork for this case.

## BREAK OUT THOSE URBAN PAINTBRUSHES

When it comes to building in New York, one of the necessary evils is the construction sheds and netting that keep pedestrians safe but do plenty of damage to the eyes. The Department of Buildings is hoping to pretty things up with a new competition called *Urbancanvas*, where artists and designers can propose new coverings for sheds, netting, and other safety systems. A group of creative professionals and city officials will select between six and eight winners, which can then be deployed across the city, or building owners can opt for a rendering of the future building. Currently, such displays are prohibited by the building code. Registration closes July 19.

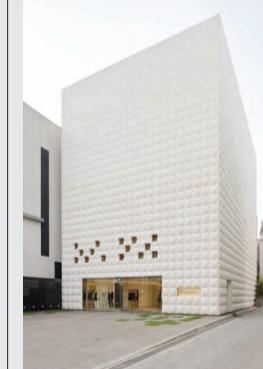


## HONORS



## ARCHITECTURAL LEAGUE PRIZE

New York's spring awards programs honored a diverse group of established practices, design darlings, and up-and-comers. The latter cohort was showcased in the **Architectural League Prize**, open to designers out of school for ten years or less. This year, portfolios addressed the theme "ReSource," or how global crises have spurred new thinking about resources within architecture. The league honored six firms, including **Eric Schuldenfrei** and **Marisa Yiu** of **ESKYIU**, whose *Urban Pastoral* (top) envisioned a vertical landscape to green hyper-urban Hong Kong. Also honored was **Keith VanDerSys** of **PEG office of landscape + architecture**, whose investigations include the *Not Garden* (center), exploring geotextile customization to create unusual landscape forms. New York-based **Emily Abruzzo** and **Gerald Bodziak** of **Abruzzo Bodziak Architects** were selected for projects including a proposal for sustainable housing in Charlottesville, Virginia (bottom). Also honored were **Jason Austin** and **Aleksandr Mergold** of **Austin+Mergold; Marc Frohn** and **Mario Rojas Toledo** of **FAR frohn&rojas**; and **Michael Loverich** and **Antonio Torres** of **Bittertang**. The winners' designs will be on display through August 6 at Parsons' Arnold and Sheila Aronson Galleries.



## NATIONAL DESIGN AWARDS

Some familiar faces were honored by this year's **National Design Awards** at the Cooper-Hewitt. Earning the lifetime achievement award, **Jane Thompson** was cited for her career as an editor, designer, and planner who with her husband Benjamin Thompson helped reinvent Boston's Faneuil Hall Marketplace and launch the mod emporium Design Research.

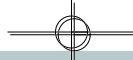
The landscape design award went to **James Corner Field Operations**, known for New York's High Line among other projects, while runners-up included Boston's **Stoss Landscape Urbanism** and San Francisco-based **Andrea Cochran Landscape Architecture**, designer of the Stone Edge Farm in Sonoma, California (top). Prolific designer **William Sofield** won the award in interior design, along with finalists **Aidlin Darling Design** and Los Angeles-based **Clive Wilkinson Architects**, whose workspaces include One Shelley Street in Sydney, Australia (center).

Finally, Philadelphia's **KieranTimberlake** extended a winning streak by taking top honors in architecture design, prevailing over finalists **Lake|Flato Architects** and the nonprofit **Design Corps**, creators of community-based projects that include the Gulf Coast raised-house typology (bottom) in Biloxi, Mississippi.

## NEW PRACTICES NEW YORK

Young firms again took the stage in the **AIA New York** chapter's **New Practices New York** awards. The biennial competition honors architects who have been in practice for less than five years. **Easton+Combs** received the highest honor for work including *Lux Nova*, their entry for MoMA PS1's Young Architects Program, in which the Brooklyn-based studio drew inspiration from the use of stained glass in religious gothic architecture, proposing a system of multicolored polycarbonate blades.

Additional honorees included **Manifold**, **Tacklebox**, and **SO-IL**—whose entry *Pole Dance* won this year's PS1 competition. The latter firm's public-spirited explorations include designs such as *Party Wall* (top), a typology that posits a spatially layered network of semi-public space. **Archipelagos** was cited for work including its competition-winning proposal for an academy of performing arts in Sarajevo (center), expected to be complete in 2012. Brothers Dominic and Chris Leong of **Leong Leong** have completed work in New York, Los Angeles, and Seoul, where their 3.1 Phillip Lim flagship (bottom, left) opened in 2009 with a facade of pillow-like concrete tiles. And final honoree **SOFTlab**'s work includes the colorful *CHROMAesthesiae* installation (bottom, right) at Brooklyn's Devotion Gallery. **KL**



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## THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER

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### A FLASHIER FULTON MALL

While much of the New York real estate market may still be frozen, a bud of hope has sprouted on a troubled lot in downtown Brooklyn. On April 7, the Public Design Commission approved a scheme by Cook + Fox Architects for a new, 50,000-square-foot retail building on the dilapidated Fulton Mall.

*continued on page 7*



### FORD FOUNDATION LARGESSE FUNDS NEW ARTS SPACES

*continued on page 4*

### ARTS ON THE RISE

Artists have long pioneered the rebirth of hard-hit urban districts, but rarely as part of a larger vision for social welfare. On April 5, the Ford Foundation announced a bold effort aimed at offering just that kind of neighborhood-based support: a \$100 million program. *continued on page 4*



### EPA FLY-ASH BAN COULD STUNT USE OF GREEN MATERIALS

*continued on page 14*

### PAIN IN THE ASH

Over the past two decades, fly ash has become a staple of the sustainable building materials movement, but that could change if the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) goes ahead with rules proposed last fall that would designate fly ash and other coal



### CITY TAKEOVER PRIMES FIRST PHASE OF GOVERNORS ISLAND

### SETTING SAIL

After winning the competition to redesign Governors Island in 2007, the team of West 8, Rogers Marvel, Diller Scofidio + Renfro, Mathews Nielsen, and Urban Design+ toiled for

*continued on page 10*



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### D.C. TROLLEY STATION SEEKS NEW LIFE AS ART GALLERY

### TUNNEL VISION

*continued on page 9*

When Washington, D.C.-based architect Julian Hunt first started looking into the possibility of revitalizing the abandoned trolley station underneath D.C.'s Dupont Circle, he discovered that it was even more abandoned than it looked. Not only could no one tell him whose jurisdiction it fell under, the old station was no longer even on the city's list of properties. "I couldn't get a building permit for it because it had no registration number," Hunt says.

The station had operated from 1949 until 1964, at which time it was turned into a Cold War fallout shelter, and was finally boarded up in 1975. Although proposals had surfaced to restore it over the following years, none were successful. Only one attempt got off the

*continued on page 9*



### PLUG IN TO THE LATEST IN DESIGN. SEE PAGE 22

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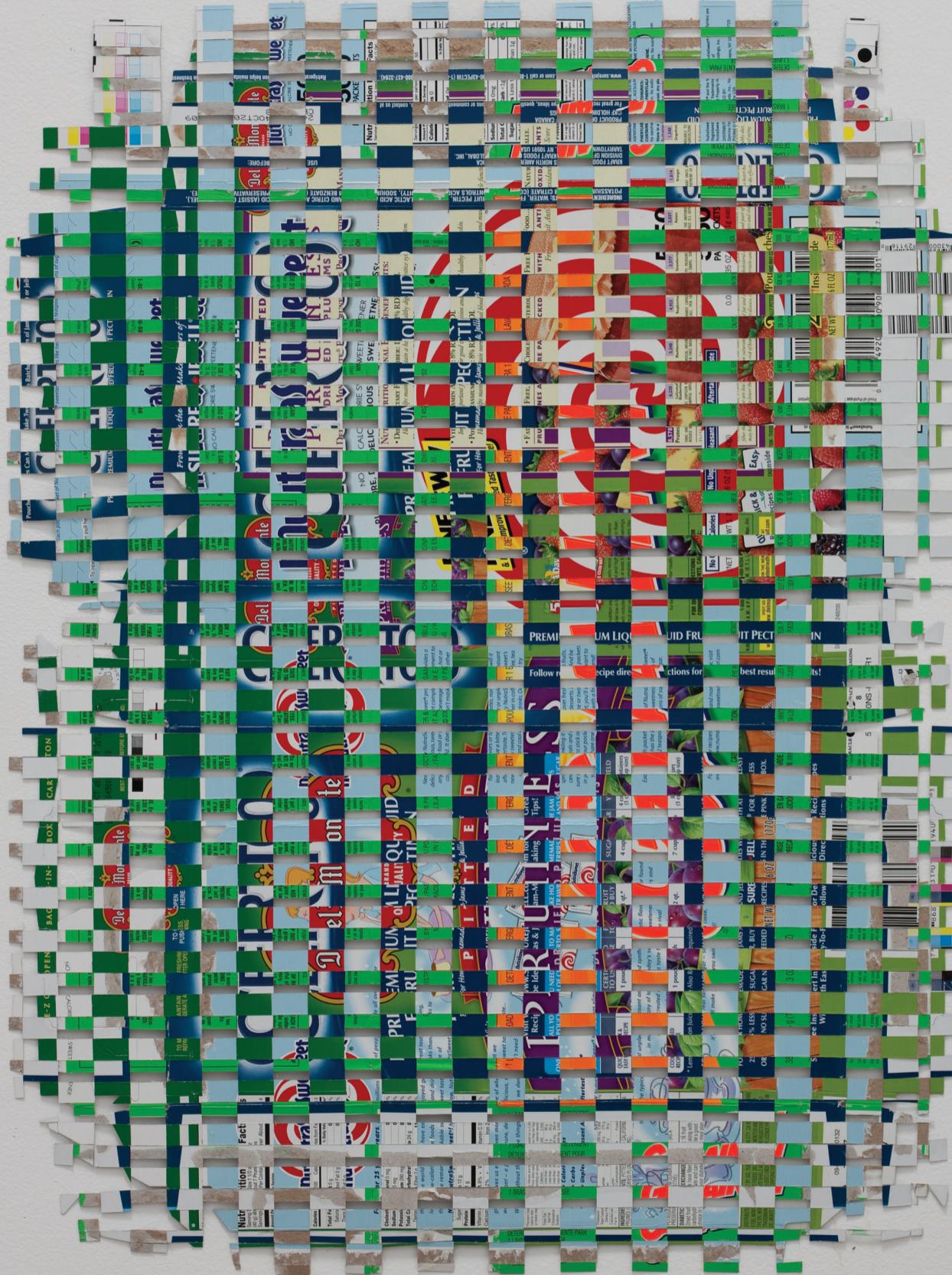
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THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER JULY 7, 2010

# The Kids Are All Right



Preferring hands-on building to paper-architecture ponderings, a new generation of emerging architects are weathering the recession with creativity, grit, and good form.

How do you find free housing in New York? Answer: Pretend to be homeless, clean houses, turn tricks, or provide childcare.

For the principals of Faké Industries Architectural Agonism, questions like these have architectural implications, especially during the downturn. Such unconventional thinking has been an asset for younger firms as they have weathered the last two years.

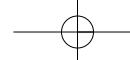
The Great Recession has hit architecture harder than almost any other profession. Small firms with the least fat to trim are inevitably some of the most vulnerable. But as AN found out through interviews with young architects selected primarily from the roster of recent AIA New York New Practices winners and Architectural League Young Architects honorees, many emerging firms have been highly enterprising and nimble in adapting to the times. No one is sitting on his or her hands, waiting for the old economy to come roaring back to life.

Not surprisingly, many of these firms balance teaching with practice, and many principals have been spending more time at school to make ends meet. Some firms have had to reduce staffing, but most have maintained their already lean offices.

For DUMBO-based Manifold Architecture Studio, the shifting tastes of clients was an opportunity to rethink a classic New York building typology. Co-principal Philipp von Dalwig's firm has seen many of its residential clients jump the East River to take advantage of the downturn and buy whole brownstones in Brooklyn. Formerly favoring downtown lofts, these clients didn't want to trade sleek surfaces and open plans for narrow Victorian interiors. "It's been a productive investigation," the architect said. "How to import a loft into a brownstone, how to open it up." Beyond custom work, Manifold has also created downloadable plans for a modern house for the website Hometta.com. They hope to both generate sales and increase the firm's visibility. German by birth, von Dalwig is also able to take advantage of Europe's vast system of architectural competitions, which allows the firm to think and work through larger projects. "They're a good training run. After a while you get to be good at certain typologies," he said.

Access to the European competition system has also been a boon for Faké. They see their New York office as a research arm and Europe as the place where they build. Principals Cristina Goberna and Urtzi Grau, both Spanish-born, are building or masterplanning several projects in Spain won in competitions.

Building on their research into



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"free" housing, Faké has designed and built two secret, illegal apartments, one in a warehouse and one in an office building, deliberately thumbing their noses at zoning restrictions. The House for Cesar conceals a loft bed, kitchen area, and closets behind a translucent wall that could easily pass for an office partition. Located in a commercial office building, the client lives and works in the space, having lost his home. Addressing legitimate low-cost housing needs, the projects capture Faké's irreverent spirit to a tee.

While many firms are spending more time on research and writing projects, this work differs from the paper architecture boom of the 1970s and early '80s. "It's not about formalism, or a critique of where architecture is today," said Todd Rouhe, a principal at IdS/R and co-founder of Common Room, a practice on the Lower East Side. In addition to the renovation of Artists Space among other built projects, Common Room has launched a publishing imprint, Common Books, and founded a New York chapter of an art-based community school called the Public School. For Common Room, the social, historical, and community functions of architecture—both as built work and as theoretical investigation—are as important as formal concerns. "There's a reserved nature to the gestures we make," Rouhe said. "We want the user to complete the work. It's not predetermined."

Pursuing more artistic R&D than theoretical critiques, Detroit- and LA-based architect Andrew Zago is participating in an experimental fundraising and social network platform soon to be launched by



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- 1 A collage installation of spliced packaging by Zago Architecture.
- 2 Loft meets brownstone by Manifold Architecture Studio.
- 3 Zago's Rock Candy lamps.
- 4 A Box & Flea bandanna and bag co-designed by Tacklebox.
- 5 Foodopolis by Phu Hoang Office.
- 6 Haiti SOFTHOUSE by Easton + Combs et al.
- 7 Faké Industries Architectural Agorism's House for Cesar.

United States Artists, where visitors to the website can contribute funds to support the creation of specific works by some 64 artists and designers. Zago's project challenges current ideas about 3-D digital form-making software by growing a chandelier modeled on the beautiful imperfections of rock crystal candy. His elevation studies of cut-and-tiled product boxes have been selling successfully enough at benefit auctions to encourage the architect to contemplate a gallery exhibition.

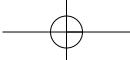
For Phu Hoang, principal of Phu Hoang Office, a slower workload has allowed his firm to pursue large-scale research projects such as the

proposal *Foodopolis, a Rising Currents-meets-locavore scheme* that would suspend an interlocking series of greenhouses in a space-frame-like structure over the edge of the waterfront. For all the scheme's eye-appeal, Hoang doesn't want it to be seen as purely visionary. "We believe putting the ideas out there will help us find clients," Hoang said. Thanks to his participation in Young Architects, his firm has been included in several invited competitions, two of which they have won.

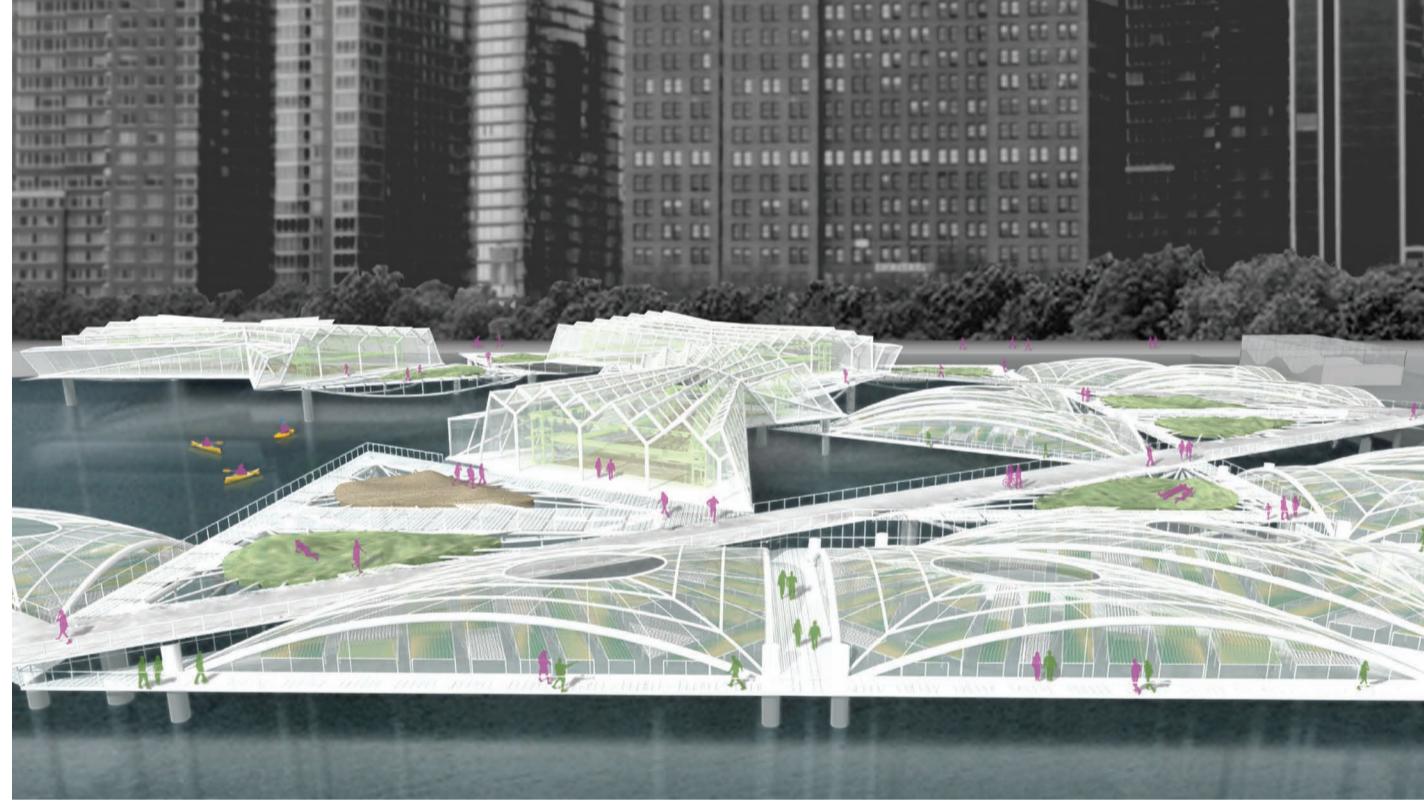
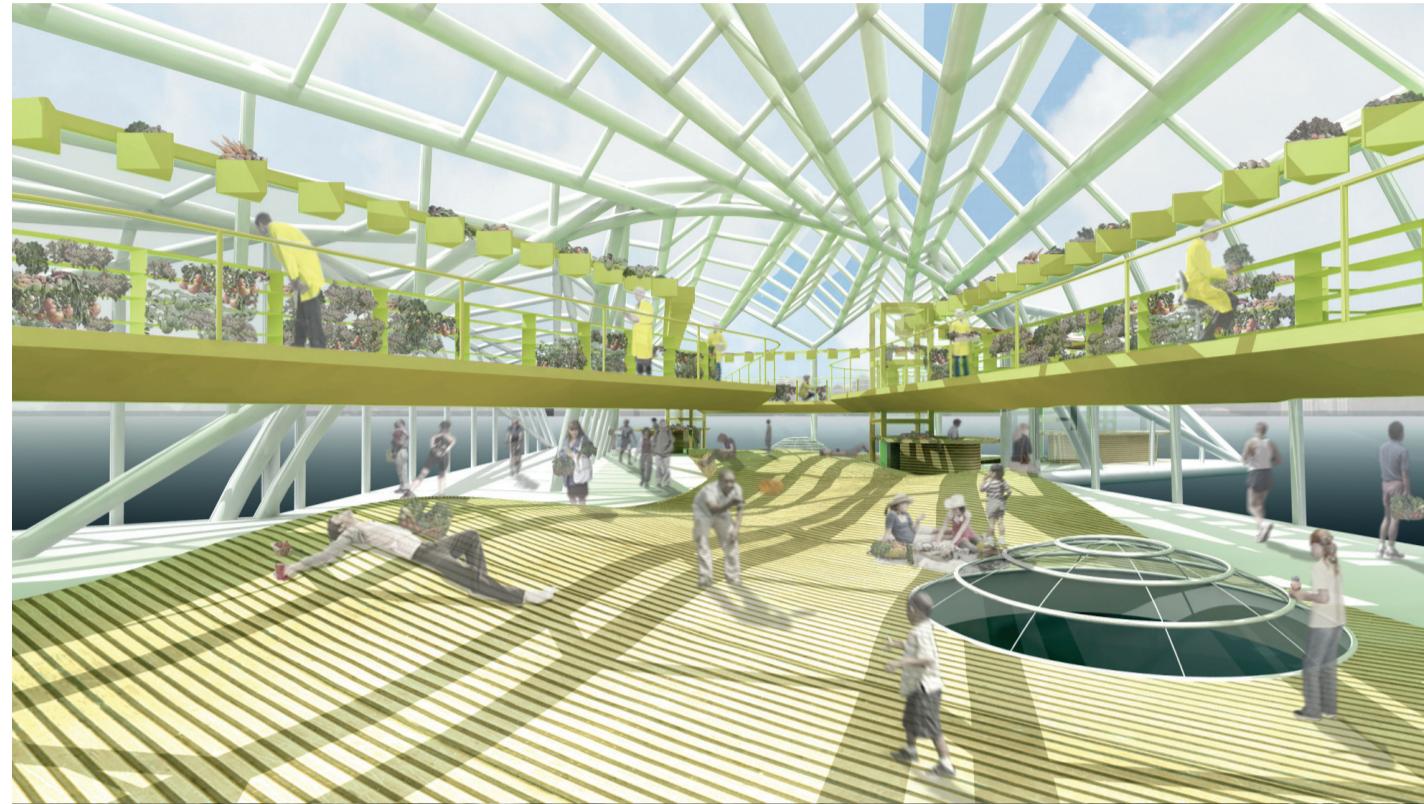
For Matter Practice, fabrication and design/build projects have helped them survive the recession. The longer duration of these highly

customized projects, as well as capturing design and construction fees, have kept the firm busy. In addition, their interest in fabrication—and the additional time on their hands—led them to apply for and receive a grant from the New York State Council on the Arts for a project entitled *Tolerance in Architectural Production*. The project explores the imperfections that sometimes arise when premade, prefabricated elements meet real-world construction and on-the-ground conditions.

Similarly, Williamsburg, Brooklyn-based Tacklebox, a firm with extensive experience designing



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retail environments, took the slow-down as an opportunity to take on their first design/build project, a florist and handmade soap shop in Red Hook, Brooklyn, made from reclaimed barn lumber. In the same vein, through their connections to the fashion industry, Tacklebox launched a line of scarves and satchels under the name Box & Flea, working with fashion designer Andrew Woodrum. The accessories line has introduced them to store owners and fashion designers, some of whom are discussing new jobs with Tacklebox. "It works both ways. Box & Flea has the same sense of craft and timelessness as our architecture," principal Jeremy Barbour said.

Easton + Combs is using their expertise in light structures—developed through competitions like MoMA PS1's Young Architects Program—to improve conditions for victims of the Haitian earthquake. "We wanted to be effective, not just make another proposal," principal Lonn Combs told AN by phone from Haiti. Working with a group of architects including Haitian-born Rodney Leon who had local knowledge and access to a site, Combs and his collaborators began raising money to build a series of demonstration temporary structures called the Haiti SOFT-HOUSE. Two will be built in the next couple of weeks, followed by 15 or 20 more during the summer. The simple structures, built by a Chicago-area awning and trade-show booth company, are covered in colored fabric that could be upgraded with hard panels for more permanent housing or community uses. "We call them trans-permanent structures. You have the option to build it out or combine multiple structures for different programs," Combs said. "We're always looking at economically efficient ways to work through our material research."

If architects of previous generations used economic downturns to enrich theoretical discussions and develop new formal languages that were spoken primarily within the academy, today's younger practitioners seem drawn to combining thinking with making, extending architecture into new disciplines and real-world applications. Many of these self-starters are working outside traditional architect/client relationships, stretching the role of the profession into new social, artistic, or entrepreneurial directions. In the digital age, it seems that image-making alone is not enough. "Today, paper architecture is seen as the more conservative stance. People are just less interested in that," Zago said. "What one can get built is now the most radical investigation in architecture."

**ALAN G. BRAKE IS THE EDITOR OF AN'S MIDWEST EDITION.**

<b>JULY</b>	<b>WEDNESDAY 7</b> <b>LECTURES</b> <b>Alexander Lamis and Annabelle Selldorf</b> <b>Beyond Architecture</b> 6:00 p.m. Center for Architecture 536 LaGuardia Pl. <a href="http://www.aiany.org">www.aiany.org</a>	<b>Laurie Fabiano and Maria Laurino</b> <b>Elizabeth Street</b> 6:30 p.m. Lower East Side Tenement Museum 108 Orchard St. <a href="http://www.tenement.org">www.tenement.org</a>	<b>EXHIBITION OPENING</b> <b>Charles LeDray:</b> <b>workworkworkworkwork</b> Institute of Contemporary Art 100 Northern Ave. Boston <a href="http://www.icaboston.org">www.icaboston.org</a>	<b>Eric Bunge and Mimi Hoang</b> <b>Rising Currents: Projects for New York's Waterfront</b> 12:00 p.m. Columbia GSAPP Wood Auditorium Avery Hall <a href="http://www.arch.columbia.edu">www.arch.columbia.edu</a>
	<b>Tobias Armbrust, Georgeen Theodore, and Dan D'Oca</b> <b>What We Do</b> 12:30 p.m. Columbia GSAPP 114 Avery Hall <a href="http://www.arch.columbia.edu">www.arch.columbia.edu</a>	<b>SYMPORIUM</b> <b>Interactive City: Reading the Metropolis</b> <b>Sarah Williams, John Havens, and Eric Howeler</b> 6:30 p.m. Columbia GSAPP Wood Auditorium Avery Hall <a href="http://www.arch.columbia.edu">www.arch.columbia.edu</a>	<b>FILM</b> <b>Reidy, Building Utopia</b> (Ana Maria Magalhães, 2009), 77 min. 4:00 p.m. Museum of Modern Art 11 West 53rd St. <a href="http://www.moma.org">www.moma.org</a>	<b>FILM</b> <b>Five x Favela</b> (Luciana Bezerra, et al., 2010), 101 min. 8:00 p.m. Museum of Modern Art 11 West 53rd St. <a href="http://www.moma.org">www.moma.org</a>
	<b>EXHIBITION OPENING</b> <b>Brion Gysin: Dream Machine</b> New Museum 235 Bowery <a href="http://www.newmuseum.org">www.newmuseum.org</a>	<b>WEDNESDAY 14</b> <b>LECTURES</b> <b>Robin Karsner</b> <b>American Landscape Design and the Idea of Nature</b> 6:00 p.m. Institute of Classical Architecture 20 West 44th St. <a href="http://www.classicist.org">www.classicist.org</a>	<b>EVENT</b> <b>Special Dance Performance: garage/dances</b> 8:00 p.m. 1711 Florida Ave. NW Washington, D.C. <a href="http://www.nbm.org">www.nbm.org</a>	<b>THURSDAY 22</b> <b>LECTURE</b> <b>Michel Rojkind, Sarah Dunn, and Martin Felsen</b> <b>Spotlight on Design</b> 7:00 p.m. National Building Museum 401 F St. NW Washington, D.C. <a href="http://www.nbm.org">www.nbm.org</a>
	<b>THURSDAY 8</b> <b>LECTURES</b> <b>Dan Doctoroff and Paul Goldberger</b> <b>Conversations on New York 2</b> 7:00 p.m. Great Hall, Cooper Union 7 East 7th St. <a href="http://archleague.org">archleague.org</a>	<b>Michal Horowitz and Ian Marvy</b> <b>Urban Food Networks</b> 12:30 p.m. Columbia GSAPP 114 Avery Hall <a href="http://www.arch.columbia.edu">www.arch.columbia.edu</a>	<b>SATURDAY 17</b> <b>EVENT</b> <b>Around Manhattan Official NYC Architectural Tour</b> 2:15 p.m. Pier 62 Chelsea Piers <a href="http://www.aiany.org">www.aiany.org</a>	<b>EVENT</b> <b>N.Y. Harbor Geology Tour</b> 6:00 p.m. Pier 62 at Chelsea Piers <a href="http://www.workingharbor.org">www.workingharbor.org</a>
	<b>Mayor Adam Ortiz</b> <b>From Grey Street to Green Street: Redefining the American Main Street for an Era of Sustainability</b> 12:30 p.m. National Building Museum 401 F St. NW, Washington, D.C. <a href="http://www.nbm.org">www.nbm.org</a>	<b>Alice Sparberg Alexiou</b> <b>The Flatiron: The New York Landmark and the City that Arose With It</b> 6:30 p.m. Lower East Side Tenement Museum 108 Orchard St. <a href="http://www.tenement.org">www.tenement.org</a>	<b>WITH THE KIDS</b> <b>Design Kids Festival</b> 11:00 a.m. Cooper Hewitt, National Design Museum 2 East 91st St. <a href="http://www.cooperhewitt.org">www.cooperhewitt.org</a>	<b>FILM</b> <b>Mean Streets</b> (Martin Scorsese, 1973) 112 min. 6:30 p.m. Columbia GSAPP 113 Avery Hall <a href="http://www.arch.columbia.edu">www.arch.columbia.edu</a>
	<b>EXHIBITION OPENING</b> <b>Discoveries</b> Bruce Silverstein Gallery 535 West 24th St. <a href="http://www.brucesilverstein.com">www.brucesilverstein.com</a>	<b>EXHIBITION OPENING</b> <b>Phantasmorganica</b> Allegra LaViola Gallery 179 East Broadway <a href="http://www.allegralaviola.com">www.allegralaviola.com</a>	<b>MONDAY 19</b> <b>LECTURE</b> <b>Jim LaRoe</b> <b>Self-Funding Improvements to Reduce Energy Consumption</b> 12:30 p.m. National Building Museum 401 F St. NW Washington, D.C. <a href="http://www.nbm.org">www.nbm.org</a>	<b>SATURDAY 24</b> <b>EVENTS</b> <b>City of Water Day</b> 10:00 a.m. Governors Island, Brooklyn Bridge Park, and Liberty State Park <a href="http://www.cityofwaterday.org">www.cityofwaterday.org</a>
	<b>FRIDAY 9</b> <b>LECTURE</b> <b>Sergei Tchoban</b> <b>Factory Russia: Russian Pavilion Exhibition at the 2010 Venice Architecture Biennale</b> 6:00 p.m. Center for Architecture 536 LaGuardia Pl. <a href="http://www.aiany.org">www.aiany.org</a>	<b>THURSDAY 15</b> <b>LECTURE</b> <b>Genesis Breyer P-Orridge</b> 7:00 p.m. New Museum 235 Bowery <a href="http://www.newmuseum.org">www.newmuseum.org</a>	<b>TUESDAY 20</b> <b>LECTURE</b> <b>Adrian Benepe, Amanda Burden, David Burney, Janette Sadik-Khan, and Paul Goldberger</b> <b>Conversations on New York 3</b> 7:00 p.m. Great Hall Cooper Union 7 East 7th St. <a href="http://archleague.org">archleague.org</a>	<b>New Museum</b> <b>Block Party 2010</b> 12:00 p.m. Sara D. Roosevelt Park and New Museum 235 Bowery <a href="http://www.newmuseum.org">www.newmuseum.org</a>
	<b>EXHIBITION OPENING</b> <b>The Geometry of Kandinsky and Malevich</b> Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum 1071 5th Ave. <a href="http://www.guggenheim.org">www.guggenheim.org</a>	<b>Ain't I A Woman</b> Museum of Contemporary African Diasporan Arts 80 Hanson Pl., Brooklyn <a href="http://mocada.org">mocada.org</a>	<b>EVENTS</b> <b>Green Roof at Grand Street by Goode Green</b> 4:00 p.m. 176 Grand St. <a href="http://www.urbangreencouncil.org">www.urbangreencouncil.org</a>	<b>MONDAY 26</b> <b>LECTURE</b> <b>Bruce Katz, Ira Harkavy, Susan Popkin, et al.</b> <b>Moving to Opportunity: The Story of an American Experiment to Fight Ghetto Poverty</b> 10:00 a.m. National Building Museum 401 F St. NW Washington, D.C. <a href="http://www.nbm.org">www.nbm.org</a>
	<b>MONDAY 12</b> <b>LECTURE</b> <b>Deborah Goldberg</b> <b>The Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Sculpture Garden</b> 1:30 p.m. Museum of Modern Art The Donald B. and Catherine C. Marron Atrium 11 West 53rd St. <a href="http://www.moma.org">www.moma.org</a>	<b>FRIDAY 16</b> <b>LECTURE</b> <b>Elizabeth Nogrady</b> <b>Defining Beauty: Albrecht Dürer at the Morgan</b> 7:00 p.m. The Morgan Library & Museum 225 Madison Ave. <a href="http://www.themorgan.org">www.themorgan.org</a>	<b>WEDNESDAY 21</b> <b>LECTURES</b> <b>Jerry van Eyck and Prakash Pinto</b> <b>City as a Living Laboratory</b> 12:30 p.m. Columbia GSAPP 114 Avery Hall <a href="http://www.arch.columbia.edu">www.arch.columbia.edu</a>	<b>TUESDAY 27</b> <b>LECTURES</b> <b>Cynthia Davidson</b> 2:00 p.m. Columbia GSAPP Wood Auditorium Avery Hall <a href="http://www.arch.columbia.edu">www.arch.columbia.edu</a>
	<b>TUESDAY 13</b> <b>LECTURES</b> <b>Peter Pennoyer and Anne Walker</b> <b>The Architecture of Grosvenor Atterbury</b> 6:30 p.m. Skyscraper Museum 39 Battery Pl. <a href="http://www.skyscraper.org">www.skyscraper.org</a>		<b>Thomas Geisler</b> <b>From Imperial to Contemporary: A Rediscovery of Traditional Austrian Craft and Manufacturing</b> 6:30 p.m. Cooper Hewitt, National Design Museum 2 East 91st St. <a href="http://www.cooperhewitt.org">www.cooperhewitt.org</a>	



COURTESY GOODMAN GALLERY, SOUTH AFRICA

**SOUTH AFRICAN PHOTOGRAPHS: DAVID GOLDBLATT**

The Jewish Museum  
1109 5th Avenue  
Through September 19

For more than five decades, David Goldblatt has used his camera to document his native South Africa, illuminating apartheid's impact on a changing society. His photographs do not focus on major political events or horrifying violence, but are rather images of everyday life. With an attitude informed by his own experiences of anti-Semitism, Goldblatt chronicles an evocative span of South African culture: the Afrikaners of Dutch descent that he once served in his father's clothing store; a dancing lesson in a small middle-class community; a widow's simple home in one of the "puppet states" where blacks were forced to live; and the racialized geography of today's Johannesburg. Perceiving his photographs more like prisms than mirrors, Goldblatt aims not to duplicate this reality but rather to "offer a changed direction or view of it." From his perspective, South African structures are not architecture but expressions of value, and a property developer's speculative house in the Tzaneen district (1989, above) not "authentic Cape Dutch," as claimed, but in fact a "grossly corrupted version of that form." Each of the 150 black-and-white silver gelatin prints on view, taken between 1948 and 2009, include precise captions written by the artist. The exhibition also includes a timeline of events in South African history and an excerpt from a 1985 documentary about the photographer.

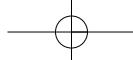


BEHRANG BEHIN

**FIGMENT 2010 CITY OF DREAMS: LIVING PAVILION**

Liggett Hall Courtyard  
Governors Island  
Through October 10

Comprised of 437 milk crates, plywood ribs, and shade-tolerant Monkey Grass, a lushly planted vault makes the newest contribution to the evolving landscape of Governors Island. The low-tech, zero-impact structure by Behrang Behin and Ann Ha was chosen as the winner of the City of Dreams Pavilion Competition 2010, which called for a temporary gathering place with a low environmental footprint. Intrigued by systems that are neither entirely natural nor artificial, the architects went for a synthetic hybrid that could harness nature's productive capacity by relying on an emphatically unnatural infrastructure. The two recent GSD alums—Ha used Governors Island as the subject of her thesis—envisioned a future where nature is brought back into the city, not to replace its dense vitality, but to add some green to the mix. Grass growing on the outer surface helps to keep the roots of the Monkey Grass cool, while structural connections are designed to minimize the labor required for assembly. The modular nature of the milk crates also enables their deconstruction and distribution to community gardens around the city, which allows reuse rather than recycling and makes the installation temporary and sustainable at once. The annual competition, organized for the first time this year, was sponsored by FIGMENT, the AIA's Emerging New York Architects Committee, and the Structural Engineers Association of New York.



THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER JULY 7, 2010



## It Never Rains

*Architecture of the Sun:  
Los Angeles Modernism, 1900–1970*  
Thomas S. Hines  
Rizzoli, \$95.00

Dione Neutra at VDL house.  
Left: Pierre Koenig and model at  
the Bailey house.



COURTESY RIZZOLI

Ardent modernists and book lovers have equal reason to celebrate this splendid production and to congratulate its publisher. Succinct yet meticulously researched chapters explore the origins and flowering of the modern movement in Southern California. In contrast to so many mega-scrapbooks of stunning images and multi-lingual captions, it offers nourishment for the mind as much as for the eye. Here are insights and visual delights of a quality you'll never find online. The designer, Green Dragon, has done an exemplary job of seamlessly weaving text and pictures together and setting them off with luxurious expanses of white space. *Architecture of the Sun* is as cool as a vintage Richard Neutra house.

Tom Hines, a native of Oxford, Mississippi, arrived in LA in 1968, around the same time as Reyner Banham and David Hockney, and all three have enhanced perceptions of a city most outsiders disparage. *Architecture of the Sun* is his

magnum opus, drawing on 40 years of teaching, writing, and exploring the modernist legacy. He traces its roots from the Greene brothers' Craftsman bungalows to the pioneering work of Irving Gill and Frank Lloyd Wright and Wright's art deco houses. There's a masterly comparison of Schindler and Neutra, the Austrian émigrés who embodied the twin strains of expressionism and rationalism that have shaped LA architecture down to the present. Neutra's protégés—including Ain, Soriano, and Harris—receive their due, and Hines provides a judicious summary of Craig Ellwood as an impresario who inspired his associates but stole credit for their creativity. He evokes the regional tradition and sketches the context within which these architects worked.

The book provides a brilliant synthesis of a drama with many themes and players. The strongest sections, on Gill and Neutra, reprise the texts of Hines' books on those

## UTOPIA'S GHOST

*Tatlin's Tower:  
Monument to Revolution*  
Norbert Lynton  
Yale University Press, \$50.00

Norbert Lynton's "circumstantial" approach to the work of Vladimir Tatlin combines an art-historical analysis of Russia's Socialist Revolution with a symbolic reading of *The Monument to the Third International*, the visionary Russian designer's unrealized monument and headquarters for the Communist International in Petrograd. Considering the sources and significance of that 1920 project, Lynton moves on to discuss *Letatlin*, the artist's proposed organic flying machine, in the context of Tatlin's utopian vision of

society. While Lynton sometimes complicates a clear understanding of Tatlin's aesthetic trajectory by analyzing it through concurrent movements in painting, political alliances, and a miscellany of tangents, the author illuminates the artist's role in a momentous social program.

Lynton, a professor of art history at Sussex University who died in 2007, opens the book with informative chapters on Tatlin's contributions to the Russian avant-garde. The reader is acquainted with the young artist's interests,

including drawing, folk art, and Russian religious icon paintings. Tatlin's preoccupation with the theories of K. Danilevsky concerning dirigibles is also discussed and shown to complement the artist's love for utilitarian objects and the simple life he led as a cadet sailor. For Lynton, his subject's ability to synthesize these influences through painting predicts the emergence of Constructivism.

The author asserts that Tatlin's nautical experiences and fascination with flight provided him with a lifetime of symbols. This is not only suggested in his designs for the tower and *Letatlin*, but also in his early work as a painter, scene builder, and student at the Moscow College of Painting, Sculpture, and Architecture. According to Lynton, Tatlin began to exhibit his work regularly by

1910, and was increasingly engaged in an anti-traditional mode of painting concerned with material relationships and movement as opposed to pictorial representation. In his chapter on Constructivism, Lynton continues to highlight Tatlin's evolving techniques of production. This provides the reader with a point of departure for the author's deconstruction of the tower's multiple layers of meaning.

Chapter 4, entitled "Monument to Revolution," outlines the events that placed Tatlin in Petrograd, the intended site for his tower, and provides an account of how his ideas for a monument to the Revolution made their way to the public. It also supplies a brief history of Russia's tendency to memorialize great events by erecting commemorative buildings. Lynton appropriately introduces the **continued on page 19**

Tatlin, at center, and assistants working on the tower model (1920).



N. PUNIN ARCHIVE, ST. PETERSBURG

REVIEW  
19

Robinson's Store by Beckett &amp; Pereira, 1952.



COURTESY RIZZOLI

architects, but there is much new material. Architectural descriptions are enlivened by portraits of remarkable clients who took chances and often sacrificed themselves in the cause of artistic experimentation. But the last two chapters are anti-climactic. Hines seems to have little appreciation for John Lautner, whose achievements in the 1960s far outshone those of Neutra and the other rationalists. It's ironic that his cursory or dismissive comments mirror those that were directed at Schindler during his lifetime. More space is devoted to the corporate modernism of Welton Becket and William Pereira, whose work (most notably the

Music Center and LACMA) symbolizes LA leaders' eagerness to settle for mediocrity. (It was the suits, remember, who fought Gehry's vision for Walt Disney Concert Hall.) In essence, nothing has changed.

*Architecture of the Sun* concludes on the same low note as the architecture it chronicles: 1970 was a bad year all around. What matters are the decades of innovation that went before. Here is a body of work that captures the spirit of place and retains its power to inspire, in California and around the world.

**LA CRITIC MICHAEL WEBB IS A FREQUENT CONTRIBUTOR TO AN.**

**UTOPIA'S GHOST** continued from page 18 subject of architecture here and analyzes the "aspirations of the moment" in terms of the work of Walter Gropius and the "experimental designs" developed by Rodchenko. Here the optimism of Vladimir Mayakovsky, the Russian Futurist poet, further expresses the new government's aim to give its utopian technological vision a monumental form. This form for Tatlin is expanded to accommodate a governmental building program with moving parts.

Across the chapters, Lynton concisely depicts Tatlin's motivation to work with others. This aspect of Tatlin's character is consistent with his desire to move beyond the aesthetic confines of what he termed "synthetic-static compositions" and into the larger three-dimensional space of the theater and the public realm. Furthermore, Lynton's careful review of Tatlin's academic roles suggests that his subject was clearly gravitating toward a social mission. This mission, primarily one of art education reform, builds on Tatlin's successes as an artist, as well as his recognition of the value of an icon for the new government. Tatlin's appointment as head of the art department within the Ministry of Education under Lenin, for instance, led him to administer Lenin's campaign to eliminate the obsolete monuments of the past and replace them with monuments in support of the Socialist Revolution.

Chapter 5, "Concept and Design of the Tower," describes how the conceptual model for the tower evolves from this central role. Here, Lynton is sensitive to the magnitude of Tatlin's project, whose actual

A side elevation of the monument (1920).



N. PUNIN ARCHIVE, ST. PETERSBURG

design exists only in written descriptions, front and side elevations, and two models of different scales with variable levels of material complexity. But he is also diplomatic in his discussion of the tower's inadequacies and inconsistencies. Lynton's discourse on the various elements of the tower and its siting challenge us to consider whether or not the values of the symbol match up to the quality of the building design. The author's own struggle to comprehend every aspect of the project's significance results in a humanized, holistic vision of Tatlin and his work.

**T.A. HORTON IS A DESIGNER AT KOHN PEDERSEN FOX ASSOCIATES.**

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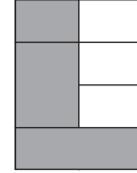


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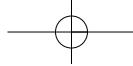
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PORTFOLIO &gt; MODERN VIEWS

COMMENT

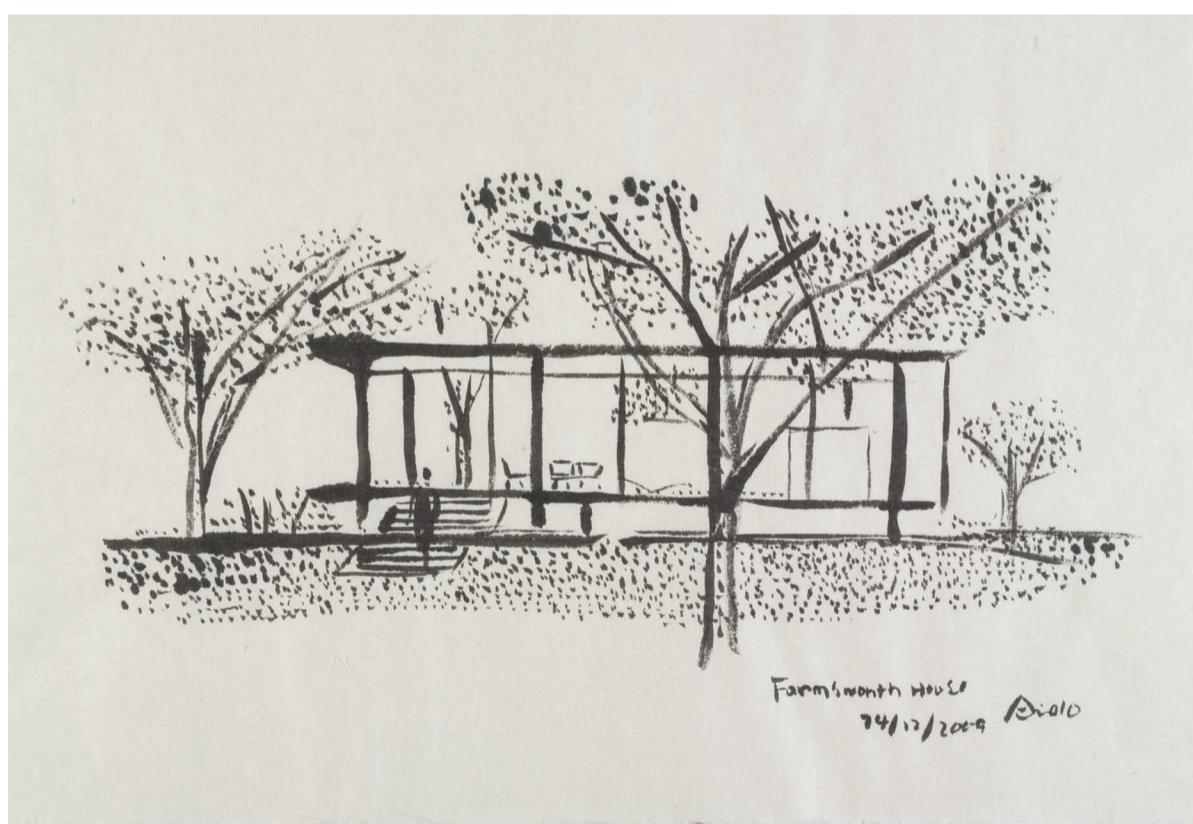


Diana Balmori



COURTESY SOTHEBY'S

Clockwise from top left:  
Diana Balmori;  
Kevin Roche;  
Gary Hilderbrand;  
Tadao Ando

Farnsworth House  
24/12/2009 Photo

## Glass House Menagerie



PAUL WARCHOL/ERIK JOHNSEN



More than 100 architects, designers, and artists were invited to donate a drawing (or any other artifact) and a statement reflecting upon how Philip Johnson's Glass House and Mies van der Rohe's Farnsworth House have inspired their own work. While donations included a mixed-media I-beam by Constantin Boym and a drawing of the San Francisco Federal Building by Thom Mayne, only a few archi-

tects had the courage to submit drawings that actually riff on one or both of the buildings. AN offers a selection of those here, from landscape designer Diana Balmori's pointillist vision for a potential Farnsworth landscape to Gary Hilderbrand's "almost nothing" collage and Kevin Roche's kissing cousins cut-out.

Sponsored by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the project hopes to raise \$1 million

to restore both houses. The Farnsworth, having come under the group's umbrella last January, is in particular need. Fundraising galas and auctions will take place in Chicago on September 16 and in New York on October 6, with an online exhibition debuting in September ([www.sothebys.com/modernviews](http://www.sothebys.com/modernviews)) and a book of all the artworks with learned essays forthcoming from Assouline. **JVI**

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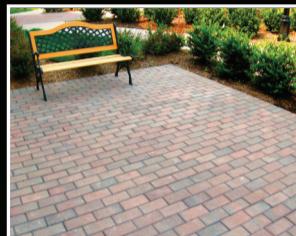
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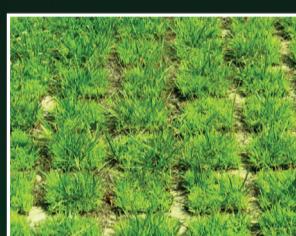
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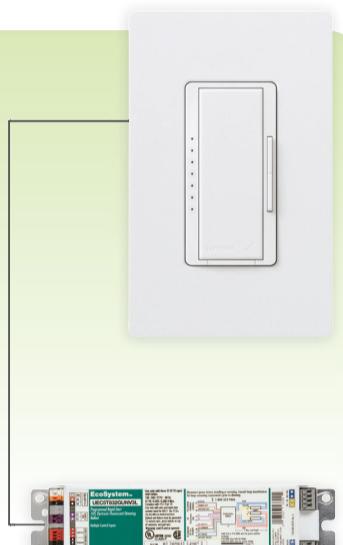
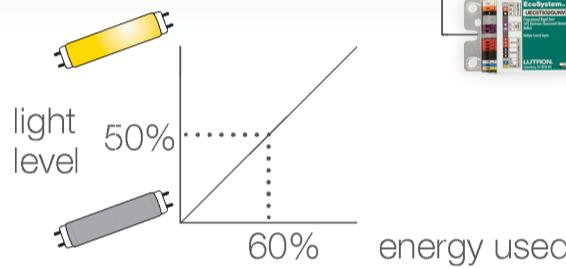
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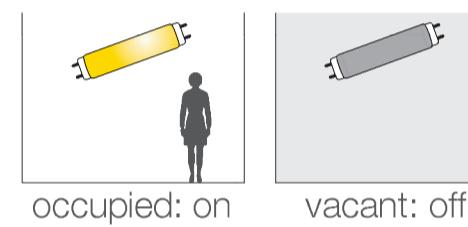
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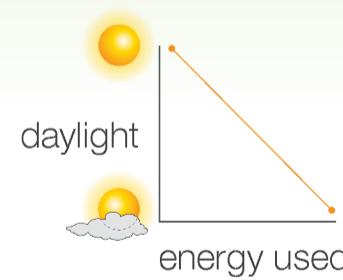


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