Over one week in mid-February, SHoP Architects was selected to design the first two residential towers at Hunters Point South, add a 429-foot residential tower and school to the recently rezoned Hudson Square, and continued on page 7

Protocols for gray water recycling could soon become much clearer for U.S. consumers. Working with product manufacturers who have found success in Europe and Asia, continued on page 5

PS1 and the Museum of Modern Art have selected Brooklyn-based urban design and planning firm Interboro Partners as the winners of the 2011 Young Architects Program. Celebrating its twelfth year, the honor means designing what by now is widely recognized as the liveliest party space of the summer: the outdoor plaza of PS1 in Queens. The Brooklyn-based firm proposed a literally and figuratively lofty solution to the challenge of creating a space where hundreds of enthusiasts can mill and mingle from late June through the fall, weather permitting. Interboro’s simple but large-scale Holding Patterns continued on page 11

With active and abandoned industrial sites, rail lines, a commercial port, and a highway, the Minneapolis riverfront is physically and psychologically separated from the lives of most residents. That is changing thanks to a recent competition conducted by the Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board and other partners. On February 10, they named Berkeley, California-based landscape architects Tom Leader Studio and Boston-based Kennedy Violich Architects (TLS/KVA) as the team charged with masterplanning and redesigning 5.5 miles of the riverfront. The team’s RiverFirst concept prevailed over proposals by Ken Smith, Stoss Landscape Urbanism, and Turenscape. Leader and Kennedy Violich have also collaborated on the recently opened 19-acre Railroad Park in Birmingham, Alabama. While the proposal is full of specific plans and detailed analysis, Kennedy Violich Architects principal Sheila Kennedy continued on page 7

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INTERBORO PARTNERS TO DESIGN THIS SUMMER’S COURTYARD IN QUEENS

PS1 PARTY LINES

INTERBORO PARTNERS TO DESIGN THIS SUMMER’S COURTYARD IN QUEENS

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PS1 PARTY LINES

WE RECYCLING STANDARDS GROW LESS MURKY

GRAY AREAS

PS1 PARTY LINES

OLD MINN RIVER

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REACH FOR THE SKY

SHOP GETS A SHOT AT HUNTERS POINT SOUTH AFFORDABLE MEGAPLEX

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GEHRY IN MIAMI.
SEE PAGE 8

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With an unanimous vote on February 15, the Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) saved what remains of the swank mid-century interiors of the former Manufacturers Trust Bank building at 310 Fifth Avenue. While it’s the 12th interior to be landmarked, it joins a far more inclusive roll call of landmarked buildings, now numbering 7200.

Inside and outside, modernism is finally getting its due, albeit slowly—this will be only the 12th modernist property designated since 2003. The designation of the bank interiors with its Dreyfuss vault and paneled ceiling of light is certainly something to celebrate, even if two place-making Bertoia sculptures have been mothballed somewhere by previous owners.

However, along with the relief comes a degree of perplexity. One minute, last October, those celebrated interiors were being matter-of-factly dismantled as part of a routine change of ownership. Then, one tip-off later, the Municipal Art Society spoke for all when calling the office floor “a masterpiece of modern architecture.” (Although the AIA Guide to NYC has long described the SOM-directed project simply “a glass-sheathed supermarket of dollars.”) Shouldn’t there be a few stops along the way from dumpster-ready to masterpiece?

This Fifth Avenue story has ended well; others have not. In 2001, while a reporter at The New York Times, I was tipped off that a conference room complex designed by Alvar Aalto located across from the United Nations—his only work in NYC and one of four in the entire U.S.—was about to be gutted by new Japanese owners. I sound the alarm and an uproar followed that managed to turn the landlords into reluctant conservators, but the LPC did not consider it for landmarks in accordance with a sticker of a stipulation that only publicly accessible interiors can be protected. Today, as remarked by the website, Place Matters, a joint effort from the MAS and City Lore, the Alvar Aalto room “stills lies in preservation limbo, eagerly awaiting the LPC’s official designation. Until then, this space remains vulnerable, unprotected and largely unknown to many New Yorkers.”

A real challenge for preservationists and the guardian institutions we trust to protect our legacies lies ahead when dealing with interiors (and also landscapes which are even more seriously underrepresented at the LPC, now numbering ten). To risk the obvious, interiors are not the same as buildings that are wholly visible, tangible, and easily comprehensible as cherished pieces of our shared environments. Interiors are not seen, only they are hidden, face everyday wear and tear, made of so many bits and pieces, and far more subject to transitory taste moments. Change will inevitably have been more a part of an interior’s day-to-day survival as rugs wear out, heating and cooling methods are updated, and glass breaks.

The LPC has a very full plate—complaining in 2008 to the New York Times that dealing with over 10,000 requests that year for alterations to already designated landmarks had sapped most of its resources. But surely there’s a better way to save interiors than with eleven hour reprieves and heartbreakingly long times for anyone walking down the street, buildings have a presence in the public consciousness, sometimes from the moment they are built. Interiors live a more subtle existence. For one, fewer people experience them. With the creation of interiors the landmarks had sapped most of its resources. But surely there’s a better way to save interiors than with eleven hour reprieves and heartbreakingly long times for anyone walking down the street, buildings have a presence in the public consciousness, sometimes from the moment they are built. Interiors live a more subtle existence. For one, fewer people experience them. With the creation of interiors the moment they are most excited and least concerned about cashing out. Perhaps, that pride can be somehow harnessed to save interiors down the line by advertising in the press?

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PRE-EMPTIVE PRESERVATION

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The LPC has a very full plate—complaining in 2008 to the New York Times that dealing with over 10,000 requests that year for alterations to already designated landmarks had sapped most of its resources. But surely there’s a better way to save interiors than with eleven hour reprieves and heartbreakings losses. For anyone walking down the street, buildings have a presence in the public consciousness, sometimes from the moment they are built. Interiors live a more subtle existence. For one, fewer people experience them. With the creation of interiors the recognition of their specialness—whether it’s hiring Aalto for his first New York project or bringing on a team with Dreyfuss and Bertoia to design a bank interior, it is more often only the clients who know they are aiming for the exceptional. Perhaps, that pride can be somewhat harnessed to save interiors down the line by asking the clients themselves to create documentation and to file it with the LPC at that moment when they are most excited and least concerned about cashing out.

Such pre-listing would not come with any conditions beyond recognition. This would simply be a badge of quality—a sort of design provenance—and a usable benchmark later. There would be some extra work there. It would be the same work that goes into the already overburdened LPC staff, sure, but pre-listing would save immeasurable hours of consideration and much more difficult retrospective research later when the time does come for landmark consideration. That the Manufacturers Trust Bank was something special in 1953 was no surprise; it attracted between 90,000 and 100,000 nonbanking visitors the first year it opened. It only slipped from view and from the public’s protective watch later. Why not give important interiors more of a fighting chance by noting from the start that they have lasting qualities worth recognition rather than leave it to a last minute scramble, with far less certain odds of success.

JULIE J. IOVINE

LETTERS

MARVELOUS MFA

I had the good fortune to visit the recently opened Foster addition to the MFA and am dumb-founded by Thomas de Monchaux’s review (“Crit: Museum of Fine Arts, Boston,” AV01_01.19.2011). The 1981 Pei addition that the reviewer lauds has always felt like we were entering the museum through the service entrance, an entrance suited to a shopping mall than a museum. Entering now through the original Lovell entrances and encountering Foster’s subtle interventions for visitor services makes one feel as though they are entering hallowed halls. The courtyard is breathtaking, relaying the compression one feels in the galleries and providing direct views of the outside, something so rarely seen in museum galleries. It happened to be there during the December 26th blizzard, so we felt as though we were in the proverbial snow dome! The new galleries provide a logical path through chronological and social history, including art from the “other” Americas, not just the United States. Hidden behind the main galleries on each floor are the “Behind the Scenes” exhibits that are interactive, informative, and engaging.

MICHAEL LYNCH
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GRAY AREAS continued from front page

NSF International, the non-profit, non-governmental standard developer for product certification is likely to release new standards for gray water treatment systems sometime in the coming year.

The new standard, called NSF 350, would “establish minimum materials, design and construction, and performance requirements for onsite residential and commercial reuse treatment systems,” according to the organization’s web site. The standards would address residential systems that treat only wastewater from a home, in addition to those that treat only gray water from laundry or bathing.

That’s good news for companies like Hansgrohe, who is hoping to bring its Pontos AquaCycle 2500 system to the United States in the near future. Released last year in Europe, the system is designed to work mainly in 30 to 60-person residential buildings, offices, and hotels by treating about 500 gallons of grey water per day, as well as integrating rainwater and heat recovery systems. Though Pontos is in its second generation in Europe, “We have been hesitant to import it until we have a standard for the quality of the gray water,” said Lars Christensen, Hansgrohe’s director of product development. This hasn’t stopped the company from developing government-funded pilot projects in Virginia and California that will move forward with or without new standards.

With the NSF standard set to reach a ballot approval stage later this year and additional guidelines forthcoming from the International Code Council’s International Green Construction Code, the stage will be set for a new gray water treatment market in the U.S. But will the systems take off in this country? Without the high water costs experienced by Europeans, consumers are more likely to focus on hygiene than anything else.

“People are a little hesitant—what happens if kids drop toys in it?” said Christensen. Though standards are written based on averages, the technology must account for deviations (you never know what people might pour down their sinks, and systems must be able to shut down if high levels of contamination are detected. Though the European Pontos system doesn’t use chemicals, the company will have to add chlorine treatment systems to units stateside as an additional safeguard, but, “It will be less chlorine than you have in drinking water in the U.S.” said Christensen. Other precautions, like purple dye and special signage to indicate treated gray water, will also likely be put into place. “Manufacturers of PVC pipes already have a purple pipe ready to go,” said Craig Selover, director of plumbing product technology for Masco R&D. Purple water wouldn’t be used for irrigation, but it would help consumers feel safer about allowing gray water back into their homes or businesses. “The second issue is local health authorities becoming comfortable and being able to approve the systems,” said Selover.

According to a report issued last year by policy analysis organization Pacific Institute, approximately 50 percent of water used by U.S. homes could be used for irrigation and toilet flushing. Though national legislation regarding gray water reuse is unlikely, nearly 30 states already have regulations for treating gray water before reuse. In 2009, California changed its plumbing code to allow installation of simple laundry and single-fixture systems without a permit, thus enabling licensed plumbers to work on new or existing systems in the state. While other states where water is scarcer could follow suit, the cost of water more than anything will determine whether gray water reuse becomes a lifestyle norm in the states. “I’m reading more and more about water utilities looking at changing rate structures in order to encourage conservation,” said Selover. “At this point, to add cost to the plumbing system in a house isn’t desirable—people are more likely to select a granite countertop. But I think that’s something that’s evolving.”
UNVEILED
TORONTO STEELES WEST SUBWAY STATION
Will Alsop, the British architect best known to Torontonians for his controversial “tabletop-on-stilts” redesign of the Ontario College of Art and Design, has released his final designs for the new Steeles West Subway Station and Bus Terminal. Renderings of the whopping $159-million project, which is to be built across the street from York University’s Northwest Gate, reveal a bold departure from existing transit hubs. Looking as animated as architecture in “The Flintstones,” the subway station’s façade facing Steeles Avenue West will be clad with Cor-ten steel, which will oxidize to a rusty-patina. The distinctive façade, crowned with large plain letters spelling the station’s name, is joined by a wide, swooping roof, which extends to and hovers over a six-bay York Region Transit bus terminal. The design also incorporates several sustainable elements, including cool and green roofs, LED lighting, and water-efficient plumbing fixtures. The new station, however, faces an important challenge aside from its controversial design—it’s situated in an area whose low density, some say, is nowhere close to justifying the huge costs of the new construction, triggering mixed responses from the community. The new station is scheduled to open in 2015. CINDY YEWON CHUN

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CLIENT: CITY OF TORONTO  
LOCATION: TORONTO  
COMPLETION: 2015

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LIGHTS, CAMERA, ENROLL ‘EM
In January Mayor Bloomberg announced that Brooklyn College’s graduate film program would move into a renovated warehouse at Steiner Studios in the Brooklyn Navy Yard. The excitement over the unique partnership somewhat overshadowed Dattner Architect’s restoration plans for the historic building. The warehouse will add 235,000 square feet and nine more stories to the five already on Steiner’s lot. William Stein, a principal at Dattner, said the adaptive reuse project is aiming for LEED certification, but the firm plans to do nothing that would detract from the industrial heritage, noting that they must contend with stringent restrictions from the State Historical Preservation Office. “On the one hand you have the historic concern and on the other you have LEED,” said Stein.

The seven-story warehouse is a classic Deco building with bands of steel casement windows that wrap around the facade, gently curving round the corner at Washington and Flushing avenues. The floors are 96 feet deep and 350 feet wide and ceiling heights graduate upward, from 14 feet high on a lower floor to 24 feet high on top floors. The windows flood the space with natural light, but the building’s biggest asset also represents one of its biggest challenges. “You need a window that’s much higher-performing,” the architect said. Dattner plans to use new aluminum casements that mimic the original steel. “The approach is to pick up the muscular aesthetic in a contemporary way,” he added.

Defunct radio towers atop the building—which once carried messages commanding the entire North Atlantic Fleet—rise 200 feet above the sidewalk and will remain in place, said studio chairman Doug Steiner, noting that they plan to light the towers at night. “This will give us our identity,” he said.

Brooklyn College will rent two of the building’s seven stories. Steiner has lined up $90 million in state subsidies, $65 million in mortgage financing, and $420 million in state tax credits that will go toward production companies also using the facility. The Navy Yard will contribute to environmental maintenance and remediation of the property as well as the interior demolition. The college moves into the facility in 2013, and Steiner said the studio plans to implement an internship program. He added that the informal nature of the film business, and by extension the studio, will work to the students’ advantage, allowing them to rub shoulders with the pros. “It’s certainly not an ivory tower setting; it’s the real world,” Steiner said. TOM STOELKER
Mississippi River is the superhighway for migratory birds in North America,” Kennedy said. “So we think we could create habitats and greatly increase opportunities for bird watching.” The proposal also aims to maintain existing industries, encourage new green industries, and increase public access in and around industrial sites. The principals are looking at precedents, such as the port in Rotterdam, where industrial and park uses coexist. The idea of relocating industries in favor of a sanitized riverfront seems, to the designers, unnecessarily expensive and disruptive. “You’re just moving the issue somewhere else,” she said. A series of “knot bridges”—parasitic pedestrian and cyclist paths suspended from existing concrete bridges—would bring people closer to the water and the river’s edge.

The team is also looking at innovative revenue generating schemes, like opportunities to pick fruit at orchards along the highway or downloadable smart phone applications with detailed analyses of wildlife and water conditions. Another possible scenario would extend the historic Fairview Park down to the river via a cap over the highway, converting it into a green space for urban agriculture projects.

The design team expects to refine their proposal and zero in on specific sites, funding plans, and phasing strategies over the next four to six months.

Alan G. Brake
Nearly five decades after founding his Los Angeles-based practice, Frank Gehry is such the quintessential starchitect that it is easy to forget that he was once a Southern California practitioner just working out problems—something that gets lost in his later, more expressive signature works. Venice and Santa Monica are peppered with his hits and misses. Without CATIA’s sophisticated computer effects, the early works can be a mash-up of material choices and forms, but in hindsight, there’s a delight in the awkwardness. So, it’s a surprise to find that the New World Symphony in Miami Beach, which opened on January 25, is pleasantly retrospective.

The 100,641-square-foot building is a part of a three-block development project in downtown Miami Beach, just steps from Lincoln Road. (Herzog and de Meuron’s high-class parking lot, 1111 Lincoln Road, is several blocks away.) It’s sandwiched between a retail and gallery pavilion in the mid-1980s—smallish objects (and offices. Yielding to Florida’s strict hurricane restrictions, Gehry squeezed it all within four, mostly flat facades.

Michael Tilson Thomas is the New World Symphony’s founder and artistic director. He and Gehry are old friends, but the collaboration between these two icons at the peak of their respective careers seems uneasy. At a press conference held the summer before the opening, the charismatic Thomas, attempting to act out the creative exchange between designer and client, interviewed Gehry in front of several dozen New York City journalists. Where Thomas’ questions were expressive, Gehry’s answers were perfunctory. The same can be said about the building’s main façade, which is adjacent to the public park and speaks to their artistic collaboration. One half is MTT territory: a 7,000-square-foot projection wall that will be used for potential broadcast). An open, curvy stair ascends through the space, linking the ground floor to the concert hall’s upper galleries and the academy’s offices. All convex and concave surfaces are painted white, leaving them neutral enough to serve as backdrops for video projections or event lighting (think Disney Hall and the Floridian titanium canopy). Gehry’s sculptural gestures behind the glazed surface.

Although enclosed, it has the feel of a courtyard. Object-like practice and rehearsal rooms cluster in one corner (each wired to the teeth with fiber-optic cable and theatrical lighting for potential broadcast). An open, curvy stair ascends through the space, linking the ground floor to the concert hall’s upper galleries and the academy’s offices. All convex and concave surfaces are painted white, leaving them neutral enough to serve as backdrops for video projections or event lighting (think Design Miami). The blue corner (each wired to the teeth with fiber-optic cable and theatrical lighting for potential broadcast). An open, curvy stair ascends through the space, linking the ground floor to the concert hall’s upper galleries and the academy’s offices. All convex and concave surfaces are painted white, leaving them neutral enough to serve as backdrops for video projections or event lighting (think Design Miami). The blue
Ceramic Tiles of Italy. A natural beauty.

Choosing Italian tiles is a question of style. Beauty alone is no longer enough, you have to create harmony which is beauty and respect together. The beauty of a product of superior technical quality along with respect for working conditions and the environment.
For the past 25 years or so, the Kupferberg Holocaust Resource Center at Queensborough Community College has assembled an impressive assortment of archival materials relating to the Holocaust. These include photographs, dissertations, books, films, newspaper articles, and even taped interviews with survivors—Queens happens to be home to the largest population of Holocaust survivors in the United States. What the Center lacked, however, was an appropriate place to store and exhibit its collection. All it had was a rather cramped and unpleasant space in a campus basement.

The president of the school, Dr. Eduardo Marti, and the director of the Center, Arthur Flug, wanted this to change significantly. They wanted the Holocaust Center to assume a prominent place within the college and to broaden its focus to encompass not just the capital H Holocaust, but also holocausts that have affected peoples all around the globe, whether it be the Rape of Nanking or the Kosovo genocide.

Queensborough, after all, has students of more than 100 nationalities, and Marti felt that the Holocaust Center should represent as many people as possible, becoming more of a general center for tolerance.

Marti worked tirelessly to raise money for the project, both from CUNY as well as from private sources, finding a major donor in Harriet and Kenneth Kupferberg. He raised money not just for design and construction but also to fund operation, ensuring that the space would never be co-opted for a facility with enough landscaping around it to add a pavilion. After a public-design competition, New York City firm TEK Architects was awarded the job. TEK co-founder Charles Thanhauser is himself of German-Jewish extraction and took a personal interest in the subject matter. Thanhauser and his team found themselves with the challenge of renovating the existing space while designing an addition that would create a distinct and prominent presence for the Center. All in all, the space had to accommodate everything from offices to auditoriums and a cafeteria. The space itself was an old loading dock and printing facility with enough landscaping around it to add a pavilion. After a public-design competition, New York City firm TEK Architects was awarded the job. TEK co-founder Charles Thanhauser is himself of German-

Note as well as satisfy Marti’s beacon analogy: Kristallnacht, or the Night of Broken Glass, a series of attacks against Jews throughout Nazi Germany in November 1938, that that filled the streets with shattered shop windows after the violence.

TEK Architects worked with facade consultant R.A. Heintges Associates and wall manufacturer KPA Group to refine this idea into an architectural expression. They decided that the part of the cladding, about one-third, would be an ordered, orthogonally-framed glass wall, while the rest would be composed of a “shattered” elevation of irregular quadrilaterals. The designers fiddled with the dimensions of these shapes to find what looked best and make sure that there were no difficult-to-fabricate tiny triangles or parts that were too large to be fit with a single panel of glass. To frame the glass, they decided on using mild carbon steel rather than aluminum, wanting the milluons to be as thin and sinuous as possible. In the end, the milluons were down to three-quarters of an inch by six inches, far skinner than the two-and-a-half inches by six inches that aluminum would have required. At the top of the elevation, the wall angles 90 degrees, forming a five-foot skylight and adding rigidity to the wall, which is self-supporting. TEK varied the type of glass used to reinforce the difference between the ordered and chaotic elevations. The orthogonal elevation is transparent, while the chaotic is translucent white. All of the glass panels are low iron, low-emittance, insulated units laminated with a PVB interlayer (white for the chaotic parts) to provide some protection from projectiles. Since the transparent elevation faces southwest, it was treated with a significant fit pattern to cut down on sun loading and protect the exhibitions. The wall was fabricated whole in KPA’s Brooklyn factory then cut into transportable pieces and reassembled on site—custom made jewel box to further Queensborough’s mission of tolerance.

AARON SEWARD
PS1 PARTY LINES continued from front page

A kind of public living room and rec room are trademarks of this young Brooklyn firm,” said Barry Bergdoll, MoMA’s Philip Johnson chief curator. “Interboro is interested in creating elegant and pretentious spaces with common materials. Their work has both a modesty and a commitment quite at odds with the luxury and complex computer-generated form that has prevailed in the city in recent years.”

Interboro has also been selected this year as one of the eight firms participating in the Emerging Voices series at the Architectural League. Much of their work focuses on urban challenges, from completing a neighborhood development plan for Newark, the first in decades, to a temporary park at Canal and Varick streets called Lent Space, with mobile trees, seating, and walls.

Meanwhile in Rome, a companion program called YAP MAXXI, to be held at an outdoor space at the entrance of the new Zaha Hadid-designed museum, was also launched. The Roman architects stARTT have been selected as the first-up in a partnership between MoMA PS1 and the overseas institution, a model of a collaboration that could easily expand to other countries in no time. stARTT’s entry Whatami appears to be a series of discrete and turf-covered hillocks with Hadid-like curves constructed of various recyclable materials including straw, geo-textiles, and plastic.

Recycling, in fact, was a key theme this year as Interboro also canvassed local libraries, greenmarkets, and senior and daycare centers to see who might be able to use the rope and other materials when summer is over.

CARRIED AWAY

On February 15, the Landmarks Preservation Commission voted to protect the interior of the Gordon Bunshaft/SOM-designed Manufacturers Trust Building. But notably missing from the designation is the Harry Bertoia-designed screen and a sculptural mobile, which former owner Chase Manhattan Bank squirreled away before selling the building to real estate giant Vornado. Vornado representatives voiced support for the designation to the LPC, while several preservationists argued that the screen is hardly a stand-alone work of art, but more akin to a mural inherent to the overall design. Fortunately, the vault by Henry Dreyfuss might have proved too cumbersome and expensive to haul away from its glass-fronted perch on Fifth Avenue.

THREE AMIGOS

Quadriad Realty is building four new towers on Broadway near the Cloisters in Upper Manhattan. The firm’s president and CEO, Henry Wollman told AN that the company was interested in building mid-income housing at the site, and that they would be engaging some major talent for the job: Stan Allen for overall design, Selldorf Architects for interiors, and Balmori Associates for landscape. Nestled between Ft. Tryon and Highbridge parks and adjacent to Gorman Park, the towers range from 22 to 44 stories high. The developer was scheduled at press time to present plans to Community Board 12’s Land Use Committee on March 2.

PLAYING HARD BALL

Even further uptown (aka-Upstate Manhattan), Columbia University got the green light on February 16 for their Baker Athletic Complex project. City Planning Commission gave Steven Holl the go ahead for his design for the Campbell Sports Center building. The facility lies at the tippy top of Manhattan Island. But instead of forking over 15 percent of waterfront property for public access, the norm for building riverside, the university sought to hand over just 1.5 percent and engage James Corner/Field Operations to spruce up adjacent wetlands in Inwood Hill Park, arguing that Columbia doesn’t have enough land. At the moment the university can barely squeeze in fields for football, baseball, softball, soccer, and field hockey, as well as six indoor tennis courts and two boathouses. The community is literally split down the middle on the project. Half of CB12 is for it and half against. At press time, the proposal was moving on to the City Council for hearings in early March.
Never before did a kitchen have so much history.

SieMatic BeauxArts – Bringing new tradition to kitchen interior design

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SAM LUBELL

NEXT YEAR WILL BE THE 30th ANNIVERSARY OF THE ARCHITECTURAL LEAGUE’S EMERGING VOICES AWARDS. THE ARCHITECT’S NEWSPAPER HAS ONLY BEEN COVERING IT FOR SEVEN YEARS, BUT IN THAT TIME WE HAVE COME TO SEE OUR ANNUAL FEATURE PROFILING THE EIGHT WINNERS AS AN OUTSTANDING OPPORTUNITY TO TAKE THE MEASURE OF THESE SELECT PRACTITIONERS, THEIR FOCUS, EXPLORATIONS, AND GOALS, AS THEY PASS A KEY STAGE IN THEIR DEVELOPMENT. THAT THRESHOLD WHEN THEY HAVE ACHIEVED A DEGREE OF RECOGNITION BUT STILL RESPOND TO SMALL PROJECTS WITH PURE EXCITEMENT ABOUT THE OPPORTUNITIES TO TRY SOMETHING NEW IS ALWAYS REVEALING. THIS YEAR, THE EMERGING VOICES CLASS OF 2011 OFFERS SOME ESPECIALLY POLISHED WORK AT A VARIETY OF SCALES, AND WITH A RICH DIVERSITY OF EXPRESSION, FROM POLITICALLY SAVVY URBAN CONCEPTUALIZATION TO ART-QUALITY FABRICATION. AS ANNE RIESELBACH, PROGRAM DIRECTOR OF THE SERIES, SAID, “WE FOUND THIS GROUP HAD A REAL JOY IN EXPLORING DIFFERENT MINDS AND MATERIALS. COMPARED WITH YEARS PAST, THERE WAS MORE SENSE OF PLACE AND NOTHING GENERIC.” IN SHORT, PAY ATTENTION NOW, TO UNDERSTAND WHAT WE’LL SEE BUILT TOMORROW.

THE UNDISPUTED KINGS OF WEST COAST INSTALLATION ARCHITECTURE ARE BALL-NOGUES, AN LA-BASED FIRM THAT MERGES ART, ARCHITECTURE, AND A KEEN SENSE OF HOW TO MAKE THINGS. BALL, A DESIGNER OF FILM AND TELEVISION SETS INCLUDING WORK ON “MATRIX,” MEET AS STUDENTS AT SCI-ARC AND, MUCH TO THEIR ADVANTAGE, HAD BOTH WORKED IN SEVERAL OTHER FIELDS OUTSIDE ARCHITECTURE. BALL DESIGNED INSTALLATIONS AT A VARIETY OF SCALES, AND WITH A RICH DIVERSITY OF EXPRESSION, FROM POLITICALLY SAVVY URBAN CONCEPTUALIZATION TO ART-QUALITY FABRICATION. AS ANNE RIESELBACH, PROGRAM DIRECTOR OF THE SERIES, SAID, “WE FOUND THIS GROUP HAD A REAL JOY IN EXPLORING DIFFERENT MINDS AND MATERIALS. COMPARED WITH YEARS PAST, THERE WAS MORE SENSE OF PLACE AND NOTHING GENERIC.”

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The urban design and planning firm Interboro operates across many channels. Run by three Harvard GSD graduates—urban designers Georgeen Theodore and Tobias Armbrorst, and planner Dan D’Oca—the Brooklyn-based firm straddles the worlds of architecture, planning, landscape, sociology, and urban theory, proudly flouting disciplinary boundaries. “We try to harness various disciplines and approaches to garner desirable outcomes,” Theodore said.

While their most visible project to date, a temporary park on Canal Street called Lent Space, is built, the practice currently focuses largely on community-based studies, teaching, exhibitions, and books. They recently completed a neighborhood development plan in Newark, the first in decades. Aware of the limits of traditional community meetings—which tend to attract those who are already involved in civic matters—the firm created a tabletop game to interact with people on the street. “We wanted the process to be truly participatory,” Theodore said. They also distributed leaflets and postcards advertising the neighborhood, its assets, and an accessible description of the planning process. Their efforts resulted in a number of recommended zoning changes as well as design proposals to facilitate development for specific sites.

At Lent Space, they also thought about how the temporary park could live on even after it was dismantled. Built on a half-acre development site at Canal and Varick streets, the park includes trees planted in moveable planters and a moveable fence with benches. Developed for the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council, Lent Space also incorporates temporary art installations to activate the space, which was built with materials typically associated with construction sites, such as plywood and chain link fencing. Development plans for the site were announced recently, so the space will be carted off and placed elsewhere to spruce up the Hudson Square business improvement district.

Their recent studies for books and exhibitions examine the way space is made or controlled. The Arsenal of Inclusion/Exclusion, an exhibition and forthcoming book, is a dictionary of 101 “weapons” that developers, real estate agents, architects, and planners use to control access to spaces and communities. These weapons range from physical objects, like highways, to zoning codes and racial covenants. For the study “The Dream of a Lifestyle: Marketing Master Planned Communities in America,” the firm requested marketing materials from every master planned community built or planned between 2006 and 2008. The hundreds of brochures and other materials offer a compelling survey of current exclusionary practices that the firm suspects have been disrupted by the ever-widening foreclosure crisis.

“We have a very broad definition of what architecture is,” D’Oca commented.

ALAN G. BRAKE

As a speculative practice, New York-based Ruy Klein experiments with almost every kind of digital fabrication technique available, studying a range of media from banana plant fibers and plywood to aluminum-nylon composites. Though the body of physical work they produce is very small, this approach to architecture is gaining more value as fabrication techniques and materials continue to evolve exponentially in the ways they are integrated into spaces. “There are other fields where work is engaged without a client, investments are made without having a buyer,” said David Ruy, who started the practice with his wife, Karol Klein, in 2000. “We are forecasting where we think things will go—we won’t be able to do it all at a sudden.”

The couple met in graduate school at Columbia and started out designing renovations. “We quickly discovered it wasn’t the type of practice we wanted to have,” said Ruy. Both soon moved to academic positions and began creating digital experiments in 2004. Their Klex series, part of the Matters of Sensation exhibition at Artaudit Space in 2006, was a breakthrough. Drawing inspiration from Hermann Rorschach’s Inkblots, the team approached German fabricator EOS, a pioneer in metal joint and implant manufacturing, to create 3-D printed Alumide bricks that tile seamlessly into one gleaming panel, yet never read as a single object. The piece is visually captivating, but also a leading-edge example of digital modeling’s possibilities when paired with the right techniques, in this case subdivision surfaces in place of NURBS (non-uniform rational basis spline).

Now, the team is on the cusp of a new phase as it begins its first large residential project, a 7,500-square-foot house on a seven-acre site in Bedford, New York. “They’re going to be incorporating everything we’ve learned in terms of digital fabrication,” said Ruy. “The project is fairly adventurous in terms of tactics.” On a larger scale, Ruy and Klein are also planning experiments for high-density housing in emerging economies.

The changing focus brings some uncertainty about their future relationship with fabricators, but “as another generation of fabrication comes into play, there will be a greater willingness to take risks,” said Ruy. He reasons that the same companies that have taken a chance on small, experimental pieces for an emerging firm will be willing to take on similar risks for projects large enough to sustain an entire fabrication shop. “You have the most freedom with the smallest projects and with the largest,” he said. JENNIFER K. GORSCH
Roberto de Leon and Ross Primmer aren’t radicals. Rather, they prefer a more reasoned and contextual architecture rooted in community involvement. “We’re not really looking to play outside the box,” explained De Leon. “We’re more interested in collaborating and learning to work within the existing rules to create something new.”

This approach has helped guide the duo behind De Leon & Primmer Architecture Workshop in Louisville, Kentucky. After earning their masters in architecture at the Harvard Graduate School of Design in 1993, Primmer, a Midwesterner, and De Leon, a San Franciscan, looked around for an evolving post-industrial city, eventually landing in Louisville. Finding the right city was important. “Our peers were settling outside the country—in Hong Kong, Shanghai, and Rotterdam—but we were interested in getting to work on real projects right out of grad school,” De Leon said. Louisville’s untapped potential represented an opportunity to utilize their skills while being actively involved in the community.

It turned out, De Leon recalls, that being local had its own hurdles. After winning a competition, for example, his firm was later rejected for lack of national name recognition. “We simply weren’t an out-of-town firm,” De Leon said. “We were always competing against outsiders, which is a little ironic considering the rise of sustainability and the localism that supports it.”

Those local roots, however, have informed such projects as the Mason Lane Farm Operations Facility, where De Leon & Primmer used locally-harvested bamboo and simple construction methods from the surrounding agricultural region to create an elegant lattice structure with an adjacent corrugated metal barn that are distinctly modern with a rural flavor.

Now, De Leon & Primmer is collaborating on a sprawling high-adventure base camp for the Boy Scouts of America situated on a reclaimed coal strip mine in West Virginia. The site seems tailor-made for De Leon & Primmer, who are collaborating with Lake Flato, BNIM, Mithun, and Fernau-Hartman to create a series of villages focused on the site’s varied landscapes including wetlands and exposed coal seams.

“We were interested in architecture that impacts the landscape at an infrastructural level,” De Leon said. He and Primmer are designing ten structures at the scout camp, from an interactive merit badge pavilion to restrooms and cisterns. The basic necessities of the program do not diminish their enthusiasm. “It’s about what these mundane little buildings can become,” said De Leon. “Everyone has to use the restroom; these buildings are part of any site’s pervasive experience. We’re interested in the in-between spaces that connect buildings—the front stoops—where happenstance moments occur, where interpersonal connections take place.”

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Jeff Taylor and B. Alex Miller occasionally find the need to hire a clown. "We've got this one guy, he went to acting school and he's a working clown," said Miller, who founded Taylor & Miller Architecture and Design with his partner in 2002 while the two were still graduate students at MIT. Working mainly as a two-man team they have always built parts of their projects in their carriage house workshop in the Berkshires, but when they need to hire extra hands, they find unschooled hands are best. "If you're working at a system that's a very intuitive thing, like folding aluminum flashing, it's almost easier for someone who has very little background in construction," explained Miller. Construction using experimental systems is at the core of the pair's work. They gained wide recognition for Peel House in 2007, whose stacked, cedar-member facade provides opacity and transparency at intervals, revealing windows and doors through a perfectly uniform grid organized by digitally fabricated vertical teeth that maintain consistent overlapping.

Taylor began his career as a licensed contractor, but neither partner has a distinct role during the design and fabrication process. "We definitely share a brain, but we bring slightly different things to the table, and we like to battle verbally," said Miller. Though work in the Berkshires was plentiful, most of the firm's current projects are in New York, including a private residence on East 5th Street with walls of carefully molded and lapped wood panels, and an office between 119th and 120th streets. The latter, a design for the non-profit Environmental Grantmaker's Association, adapts to the office's seasonal staffing requirements with a series of movable partitions akin to those found in libraries. In spite of their hands-on approach, the firm is not a design-build operation. The geographical shift in workload could limit the amount of construction taking place in the Berkshires shop, but Taylor and Miller will not relinquish their approach to material fabrication. "Right now, we don't have a mockup phase, because we're designing through building," said Miller. "We may develop a system, but there's always a moment where we acknowledge if the system is not working. In that way, we are bending the way the material tells us to bend."

The team has often eschewed profit in favor of creating their ideal designs, an approach that has gained them many first-person referrals and left them relatively unaffected by the slow economy and well-positioned to maintain their focus on material research in the field. "For the most part, we consider ourselves outsiders," said Miller. "We took a very non-academic trajectory; we focused on getting projects built."
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"Like all good experimenters, we graduated with no plans and no agenda," said Mason White about setting up Lateral Office with Lola Sheppard in 2002. Still, the husband-and-wife team was well equipped with MArch degrees from Harvard, several years of working abroad and in the U.S. (including Sheppard at Atelier Jean Nouvel in Paris; White, at Machado and Silvetti Associates in Boston), and an interest in public work, especially infrastructure. In the public realm, said White, there's an overlap in architecture, urbanism and landscape; it's never clear cut and that ambiguity is exciting to us."

Upon settling in Toronto, Sheppard and White decided they would explore their architectural interests primarily through teaching, writing, curating, and installations. "We do not try to get clients in a conventional sense," said White. "It's not that we don't like building; but to build just for the sake of building—doing garage additions and cottages—would probably squash our freedom to pursue the kind of experimental thinking at the environmental edge that we believe in."

Lateral Office is investing in architectural thinking in the broadest sense, what the two call "extrinsic architecture." They applied this expansive vision for architecture in a competition entry that called for a bridge and "Peace Park" connecting Russia and the U.S. at the Bering Straits. Here, they proposed in parallel to a high-speed rail connector, a series of catchment piers that would link and respond to seasonal ice flows while also collecting ice melt for a water bank. In another project, the team's research discovered the Baltic Sea, an accidental lake fed by farm irrigation run-off in California. Extreme saline levels at the lake, once a tourist attraction visited by Marilyn Monroe, have rendered it an ecologically-at-risk landscape that local engineers plan to overhaul and basically erase with dams. Lateral Office would rather explore opportunities for what's there, proposing to float rings, spanning 40 to 80 feet wide, for a variety of compatible programs including harvesting fresh-water, fishing tilapia, for example, thrive in salt water, salt-water diving, and other eco-industries and tourist ventures.

Through installations, the couple has investigated the similarities between constructed infrastructures and natural ecologies. Last November, they presented "Active Layer" at the now-closed Extension Gallery in Chicago, consisting of a field of 25,000 dowels, ranging in height from eight to 30 inches, to try and communicate some sense of the unstable geography of the Canadian North, an underexplored but overexploited terrain. The firm has expanded even more laterally to include Infranet Lab with Neera Bhatia and Maya Prozvinsky, a blog, collaborative research, and publishing effort that is producing an annual collection of critical essays; the first co-published with Actar, is "On Farming."
To watch Claire Weisz in action at a community board meeting is to see an architect slice through the arch speak and level with the locals. This is no small feat in a city where talking local in Inwood differs from talking local on the Upper West Side, Hunts Point, or Battery Park City, all places where Weisz’s WXY firm has projects pending or built. For WXY, urban design equals urban collaboration. She started the firm with her husband Mark Yoes in 1998; partner Layng Pew joined the team in 2006. Together the three have developed an ethos of collaboration—amongst themselves, within communities, and within the profession. “Our work involves a lot of other disciplines,” said Weisz. “It’s community broadly defined and assumes that other designers and engineers are a part of the process.” From a sanitation garage to a finesse, a charter school, concession stands, and several parks, bridges and plazas, the firm’s work has subtly, and sometimes not so subtly, shaped New York landscape. “We do believe in a certain amount of excess,” she said. “Making everything even doesn’t make it interesting. Sometimes, the answer is counter intuitive. Sometimes ‘too much’ is good. That’s how you get a flower district or a garment district.”

Weisz said that for the past ten years the firm grew alongside technology, which fed her own interests and designs, such as the widely praised NYC Information Center completed in 2009. With its touch screen maps and whimsical design, the lab-like space operates like a 3-D iPad. “The tools have made it more interesting,” she said. She credits the firm’s comfort level in communicating digitally as key to collaborating with a diverse range of disciplines. “It really expanded the way we work,” she said.

The firm recently designed a double spanned redbrick pedestrian bridge that braids its way across the Nanhe River, in Xinjin, China. It is scheduled to open later this year. The firm, however, remains essentially regionalist. “New York City has been our laboratory. It’s a good lab, but a tough one,” Weisz said.

The partners also spend a good deal of time studying the work of visual artists. “We take a lot of inspiration, but no obvious visual references, from post-minimalist artists like Richard Tuttle and Al Taylor,” said Mark Yoes. “We especially like the way these artists create visual conundrums with such simple means.”

Indeed, the zipper bench at Peter Minuit Plaza in lower Manhattan could easily pass for sculpture. But here too, the essence of the design boils down to cooperation. “The zipper bench started out as an urban design problem, because there were a lot of private development plans that might have caused the developer to look at the esplanade as their own front yard,” said Weisz. The bench starts as two benches facing in opposite directions before melding into one surface. The public has a choice of two views: the bustle of development or the calm of the park.

At the corner of Sunset and Halftway in Los Angeles, a multi-tiered façade of heat-formed plastic panels twists down and points toward a glass entrance-way, drawing visitors into an art gallery. The facade designed by Patterns both reflects the street gallery. The facade designed by Patterns both reflects the street

TOM STOELKER

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- Runtal’s unique design provides much greater heat transfer.
- Efficient even at system water temperatures as low as 120° F — or less!
- The Towel Radiators are also offered in self-contained electric versions as well as hydronics.

For more information or a dealer near you call 1-800-526-2621 or online at: www.runtalnorthamerica.com
Factory and showroom located in Haverhill, MA
MARCH 2011

THURSDAY 3 LECTURES
Jennifer Gray Cubist: From the Philosophy of Brodie to the Three Musicians 11:30 a.m.
The Donald B. and Catherine C. Marron Atium Museum of Modern Art 11 West 53rd St.
www.moma.org

Jennifer Gray Building Collections: Recent Acquisitions in Architecture 1:30 p.m.
The Donald B. and Catherine C. Marron Atium Museum of Modern Art 11 West 53rd St.
www.moma.org

Brian Holy Continuities 6:30 p.m.
Sciame Auditorium CUNY Spitzer School of Architecture 160 Convent Ave.
www.ccny.cuny.edu/ssa

Casimir Shepard Urban Omnibus and the Culture of Citymaking 12:30 p.m.
Avery Hall Columbia Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation www.arch.columbia.edu

Eric Kandel Uncoupling the Unconscious: A Modern Dialogue, Inspired by Vienna 1900, Between Science and Art 6:30 p.m.
Neue Galerie 1048 Fifth Ave. www.neuegalerie.org

MARCH

WEDNESDAY 2 LECTURES
Alan Pascua Brave New World: Preserving Post-War Britain 6:00 p.m.
Center for Architecture 536 LaGuardia Pl. cfa.aiy.org
Fabian Scheurer Digital Craftsmanship: From Thinking to Modeling to Building 6:00 p.m.
Betta Auditorium Architecture Building Princeton University Princeton, New Jersey www.so.a.princeton.edu

Arjun Appadurai Matter, Material, Materiality: Thoughts on the Social Life of Design 6:30 p.m.
Piper Auditorium Harvard Graduate School of Design 48 Quincy St., Cambridge, MA www.gsd.harvard.edu

EVENT New Practices 2010 Winner Presentation: SO-IL 6:00 p.m.
Center for Architecture 536 LaGuardia Pl. cfa.aiy.org

FRIDAY 4 LECTURES
Jorge Riguas The Problems of Preserving Paradise 5:30 p.m.
Pratt Manhattan 114 West 14th St.
www.pratt.edu

Luis Flores Meet the Author 6:00 p.m.
Center for Puerto Rican Studies CUNY Hunter College www.centropr.hunter.cuny.edu

SYMPOSIUM In the Life of Cities: Parallel Narratives of the Urban Harvard Graduate School of Design 48 Quincy St., Cambridge, MA www.gsd.harvard.edu

EXHIBITION OPENING reOrder: An Architectural Environment by Situ Studio Great Hall Brooklyn Museum 200 Eastern Parkway www.brooklynmuseum.org

EVENT Jugaad Urbanism Film Series: Delhi 6 6:30 p.m.
Center for Architecture 536 LaGuardia Pl. cfa.aiy.org

SATURDAY 5 WITH THE KIDS
New Museum First Saturdays for Families: Lynda Benglis 10:00 a.m.
Second Floor Gallery New Museum 235 Bowery www.newmuseum.org

SUNDAY 6 EXHIBITION OPENING Sung Hwem Kim: From the Commanding Heights... New York City Building Queens Museum of Art Flushing Meadows Corona Park Queens, NY www.moma.org

EVENT Arty Facts: Homes 11:00 a.m.
Brooklyn Museum 200 Eastern Parkway www.brooklynmuseum.org

WITH THE KIDS Mark Bradford: Alphabet and the Production of Space 1:00 p.m.
The Studio Museum in Harlem 144 West 125th St. www.studiomuseum.org

MONDAY 7 LECTURES
X-rite Inc. Fundamentals of Color and Appearance Seminar 9:00 a.m.
NYC Seminar and Conference Center 71 West 23rd St. www.xrite.com

David E. Brooker, Judith E. Irvine Planning in a Complex World 8:30 p.m.
Piper Auditorium Harvard Graduate School of Design 48 Quincy St., Cambridge, MA www.gsd.harvard.edu

TUESDAY 8 LECTURES
John Bartone The Brooklyn Navy Yard 8:30 p.m.
The Skyscraper Museum 39 Battery Pl. www.skyscraper.org

Arjun Appadurai Can Fashion Really Be Allied With Design? 12:00 p.m.
Piper Auditorium Harvard Graduate School of Design 48 Quincy St., Cambridge, MA www.gsd.harvard.edu

Ebba Koch The Mughal Touch on the Indian Landscape 6:30 p.m.
Piper Auditorium Harvard Graduate School of Design 48 Quincy St., Cambridge, MA www.gsd.harvard.edu

SATURDAY 12 EXHIBITION CLOSING
Building Connections 2010 Center for Architecture 536 LaGuardia Pl. cfa.aiy.org

WITH THE KIDS Archhifs 10:15 a.m.
The Skyscraper Museum 39 Battery Pl. www.skyscraper.org

MONDAY 14 LECTURE
Bijoy Jain Current Work: Studio Mumbai 7:00 p.m.
The Great Hall The Cooper Union 7 East 7th St.
www.cooper.edu

SYMPOSIUM Mario Carpo, Inigo2000, Prikat Schumacher The Eclipse of Beauty: Parametric Beauty Piper Auditorium Harvard Graduate School of Design 48 Quincy St., Cambridge, MA www.gsd.harvard.edu

EXHIBITION CLOSING Nordic Models + Common Ground The American-Scandinavian Foundation 8 Park Avenue www.asnc.org

THURSDAY 10 LECTURES
Julie Levine, Michael Graves, Calvin Tsao, Gluza Hariri, Jeffrey Bennett Drafted: The Evolving Role of Architects in Furniture Design 7:00 p.m.
Museum of Art and Design 2 Columbus Circle www.mad.org

Victoria Meyers DWP & Sacred Architecture: Symbolism in the Digital Realm 6:30 p.m.
Sciame Auditorium CUNY Spitzer School of Architecture 160 Convent Ave.
www.ccny.cuny.edu/ssa

Bill Tsiens, Aaron Schwarz, Sanjeev Shankar, Brinda Somaya Invention by Necessity: Construction Practice in India 6:00 p.m.
Center for Architecture 536 LaGuardia Pl. cfa.aiy.org

FRIDAY 11 EVENT
Jugaad Urbanism Film Series: Dhavari Slum for Sale 6:30 p.m.
Center for Architecture 536 LaGuardia Pl. cfa.aiy.org

EVENT With the Kids Archhifs 10:15 a.m.
The Skyscraper Museum 39 Battery Pl. www.skyscraper.org

EVENT Emerging Voices: Interboro Partners; Lateral Office 7:00 p.m.
New Museum 235 Bowery www.newmuseum.org

Bjarke Ingels and Julie Irvine New York After Bloomberg 8:30 p.m.
Core Club 66 East 55th St. www.designtrend.org

EVENT Art Truths: Homes 11:00 a.m.
Brooklyn Museum 200 Eastern Parkway www.brooklynmuseum.org

WITH THE KIDS Mark Bradford: Alphabet and the Production of Space 1:00 p.m.
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STANDARD DEVIATIONS:
TIES AND FAMILIES IN CONTEMPORARY DESIGN Museum of Modern Art 11 West 53 Street Through January 30, 2012

Thanks to digital technologies like 3D printing, the concept of the family tree is no longer exclusive to nature. This MoMA exhibit celebrates a humanist revolution in design that started in the 1980s, when designers began to develop ways of individualizing what once were standardized, mass-produced objects, resulting in “families” of objects whose members, while never identical to each other, had recognizable common traits. The exhibit, curated by Paola Antonelli with Kate Camody, showcases various objects and designs in the Museum’s collection that belong to families, including Gaetano Pesce’s pioneering Pratt Chair (1984), above, in fact a chair family of nine, each a little different due to the slight changes in temperature or density of the resin. Also on view: variations on clamps that can hold candles, books, and clothes; an endless array of Swatch watches; and the familiar Kidrobot toys, all colorfully unique while based on the same blank model. The museum’s recent acquisition of 23 digital typelaxes, including OCR-A, also made their debut in the show.

VIENNA 1900: STYLE AND IDENTITY
Neue Galerie 1048 Fifth Avenue Through June 27

Neue Galerie is currently hosting a major loan exhibition of over 100 pieces of fine and decorative arts from turn-of-the-century Vienna, and the radical era for culture heralded by the publication of Freud’s first writings and characterized by an iconoclastic spirit. The exhibit, spanning two floors of the gallery, not only boasts collections of the familiar paintings by Gustav Klimt, Egon Schiele, Oskar Kokoschka, and Richard Gerstl, but also examples of women’s changing fashion and the revolutionary music of composers such as Gustav Mahler and Arnold Schönberg. Of special interest are the design and architecture pieces in the exhibit; the third floor is dedicated to the decorative works of architect Otto Wagner and the design innovations of the Vienna Secessionists, among them Josef Hoffmann, whose tobacco case (1912) is shown above. Curated by Christian Witt-Dörring and Jill Lloyd, the exhibit unites its rich collection of art objects under the theme of emerging modernity and its redefinition of “the self.”

THE ARCHITECT’S NEWSPAPER MARCH 2, 2011
PATTERN RECOGNITION

Morris Lapidus: The Architecture of Joy
Deborah Desilets
Rizzoli, $65.00

Deborah Desilets subscribes to the notion that images of architecture have critical value as well as the ability to convey an immediate psychological message that is sometimes more effective than words. To that end, her new book, The Architecture of Joy, mainly consists of a carefully curated selection of pictures that document the illustrious career of one of the most prolific architects of our time, Morris Lapidus. Lapidus’ work represents an exotic brand of the International style that became central to the formation of Miami’s cultural identity during the mid-twentieth century. Although image-heavy, the book includes a foreword by hotelier Ian Schrager and two essays, one by Desilets and the other by Lapidus entitled “Motion and Emotion in Architecture” (based on an acceptance speech for a National Design Award in 2000). Around these short texts, images of Lapidus’ work are organized into chapters by building type—hotels and resorts, retail, commercial and public, and residential—each with a succinct introduction by Desilets.

As The Architecture of Joy makes clear, Lapidus recognized Miami’s sub-tropical allure as a destination spot. It’s here that he created a genre of luxury design infused with pop culture, a style of architecture that amplifies experience through theatrical force and creative programmatic sequencing. Most of the photographs in the book are black and white, and this mode of representation is particularly revealing with regard to building exteriors, allowing an instant appreciation of the clean lines and flowing spaces that characterize Lapidusian space. Whereas Lapidus’ interiors are defined by a combination of patterns and space-making from textures, materials, curves, and general oddities (hats, busts, bird cages), his exteriors are those of an architect that is beyond shock value. The black and white imagery confronts the reader with the seriousness of his facades, and though his interiors are remarkable, Lapidus is first and foremost invested in branded wrappers replete with dramatic gestures that convey his understanding of light, dark, shade, shadow, volume, and the negotiation of site. The photographs, taken over time by a variety of photographers that include Peter Bormer, James Forney, and the team of Samuel Gottscho-William Schlesiner, to name a few, introduce mis-en-scene to each image; context is critical to amplifying experience through pop culture, a style of architecture genre of luxury design infused with brand.

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Romancing the Platonic

Anne Tyng, Inhabiting Geometry
Philadelphia, PA
Through March 27

Anne Tyng’s infectious enthusiasm for pure geometric shapes and the hope of their generative powers for urban planning and architectural form is almost as interesting as the juicy subplot of her lifelong office love affair with Louis Kahn. Both stories are on display at a new show at the Institute for Contemporary Art (ICA) in Philadelphia. Mounted in collaboration with the University of Pennsylvania Architectural Archives, the exhibit features some fascinating studies of geometric shapes, along with a rich, gossipy hook for architecture junkies—Anne Tyng’s professional associations read like a who’s who in early modernist architecture. As one of the first women to attend the Design School at Harvard, she has been called “Kahn’s geometrical strategist.” Her long career working for Kahn—and her romantic attachment with the architect—began after her graduation when she returned home to the Philadelphia area.

ICA has blown up and built at human scale Tyng’s models of the five Platonic solids so that visitors may actually step inside them. Whether or not you are a Fibonacci fan, to be inside the pure forms of a tetrahedron, dodecahedron, or icosahedron is to somehow experience both the ancient and the new. Nearby, an illustration from Plato’s Timaeus depicting the five Platonic solids (which Plato attributes to the major elements of the earth) is on display. Small-scale models of the shapes that Tyng was constantly playing with, appropriately labeled “Tyng Toys” are juxtaposed with Buckminster Fuller’s letter of support for her Graham Foundation Scholarship application. Fuller describes his train rides up to New Haven with Kahn and touches upon the boundaries and overlaps of their simultaneous investigations with geometry.

Architects who have spent hours getting their lead holder point just right will appreciate the series of exquisitely hand-drafted graphite drawings of sectionally-cut tetrahedral shapes and triangles on mylar. These same triangles are also drafted at various scales in brilliant colors and hang next to a table displaying models of their architectural adaptations. Triangles in three-dimensional architectural form define the Walworth-Tyng residence, which Tyng designed for her parents on Maryland’s Eastern Shore. Tyng also applies the triangulated space frame geometry to a high tower structure, the unbuilt City Tower Project, as her work visibly matures in Kahn’s office.

An elegant photograph mounted on the wall of two interlocking nautilus shells encapsulates Tyng’s life-long investigation into and romance with geometry.

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JULIE SCHAFER IS A PRINCIPAL AT SALLES SCHAFFER ARCHITECTURE.

Tyng’s five Platonic solids in oak plywood.

AN_04_28_FINAL:AN_06_CLH_Mar25  2/22/11  7:13 PM  Page 4
The lobby of the Eden Roc Hotel, Miami Beach, 1955.
Right: Mangels Department Store, Philadelphia, 1943.

boy image as a fantasist with “near encyclopedic recall of styles” while insightfully describing his general approach to work, if in a overly worshipful tone: “Lapidus embellished his interiors with his sense of emotion and motion, where the joyous celebration of life and all the particularly human occurrences would occur—laughter talking, whispering, dancing, all feelings in the human drama. Like a maestro, he used the rules of patterns, symmetry, and asymmetry, and broke them all.” Though Desilets often seems to impose too much of her subjective opinion on what could be a more serious critical exegesis of Lapidus’ legitimacy—especially given the range of powerful images—the author does offer a useful outline of the architect’s career. Through all the gushing emotions, the reader may still perceive Lapidus’ governing principles: the necessity of ornament; a predisposition for luxury, pleasure, and experience; surface dematerialization through the use of form, texture, and color; the value of “shock and awe”; and ephemeral quality underscored by lighting and formal plasticity.

“Motion and Emotion in Architecture,” Lapidus in his own words, offers a more down-to-earth look at the architect’s approach. Here, Lapidus ties his career back to a fundamental concept of movement that he associated with the material of the human soul. For Lapidus, architecture can be reduced to seven “guidelines”—a list of elements, from color to stairways to “delight”—that should be considered essential to his manifesto. While on a surface level this manifesto may be looked upon as one written by an outlier, it also indicates a deep bond with humanity, one which Desilets often seems to impose too much of her subjective opinion on what could be a more serious critical exegesis of Lapidus’ legitimacy—especially given the range of powerful images—the author does offer a useful outline of the architect’s career. Through all the gushing emotions, the reader may still perceive Lapidus’ governing principles: the necessity of ornament; a predisposition for luxury, pleasure, and experience; surface dematerialization through the use of form, texture, and color; the value of “shock and awe”; and ephemeral quality underscored by lighting and formal plasticity.

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ALLAN HORTON IS A BROOKLYN-BASED WRITER AND FREQUENT CONTRIBUTOR TO 

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**GLOBALCON**

Energy, Power, & Facility Management Strategies & Technologies

**MARCH 30-31, 2011**

**PENNSYLVANIA CONVENTION CENTER**

For 2011, the Association of Energy Engineers (AEE) has teamed up the host, PGW, along with a powerful cross-section of sponsors to present this industry conference and expo which addresses innovative energy management programs, distributed generation strategies, HVAC and building systems success stories, green buildings, the role of renewables, energy procurement updates, power quality solutions, and more. The conference and expo is held on March 30-31, 2011 at the PA Convention Center located in Philadelphia, PA.

GLOBALCON 2011 offers more training flexibility than ever before with a multi-track conference program, intensive seminars, and an energy, power, and facility management expo. Make sure to visit the GLOBALCON 2011 exposition and discover the latest strategies to reduce costs, upgrade equipment, and improve operational efficiency. Access to this valuable expo is included with full conference registration. The expo offers the chance to network with various equipment and service providers. We have also added a series of FREE exhibit hall workshops to help get you up to speed on the latest technologies and success stories. For full details on the events during the GLOBALCON conference and expo, visit the show web site for full details on all the programs: [www.globalconevent.com](http://www.globalconevent.com).

GLOBALCON’S Northeast Green showcase, co-presented by the U.S. EPA’s ENERGY STAR®, will also be a prominent part of the event for 2011. Here you can examine firsthand the latest green / sustainable / environmentally-friendly technologies now available for both new design and retrofit projects. Conference presentations will facilitate your understanding of these technologies, covering such topics as green building design and retrofit; LEED certification and building commissioning; high performance facilities; the latest developments in renewable energy; reducing carbon emissions; transportation solutions for the future; and green/sustainable project success stories.

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BREAKING NEW GROUNDS AT abc
The architectural news how and the new layers adding to this metropolis we call New York City. Apart from the queuing buses and the access road to George Washington Bridge.

Cities are constantly evolving as they maintain their status quo as conceptual incubators for modern living. As migration of individuals from rural to urban settings increases throughout the world, building typologies are constantly adjusting to meet new programmatic services. At the same time, locating suitable land for development has become marginalized as irregular-shaped sites are tested for feasibility, and too often found inadequate. I have followed such typologies integrating with various forms of infrastructure through research conducted in various cities. In Bangkok, for example, one can travel through Siam Square from the elevated rail and convene towards multi-layers of floor plates consisting of restaurants, offices, hotels rooms and shopping spaces without touching the ground plane. Here, various building structures have optimized a method of attracting individuals as they egress from transportation nodes directly into the shopping domain. Developers have noted that controlling flow of the pedestrian towards commercialized areas translates to a larger spending pool of consumers and higher rental cost per square foot.

These Heterotopias—places that define urban change, while accommodating exceptional activities within the standard type of the city, making programmatic functionality within the public realm as defined by urbanist Grahame Shane in his book Recombinant Urbanism—can be seen in various forms throughout the world. In the Middle East, Asia, and South America, new concepts of urban planning are being developed and tested as cities grow and acquire their own star on the map.

In our own backyard, I have been researching a selection of urban infrastructure projects that combined residential housing and public programming. One project I have found particularly fascinating is the Bridge Apartments, a unique building type that during the planning stages in the 1960s was considered revolutionary in conceiving new ideas for housing within transportation infrastructure, construction means and methods, public policy, and funding opportunities for affordable housing. Located in Washington Heights and adjacent to the George Washington Bridge, the four high-rise towers were an urban renewal project headed by the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey (PANYNJ). It was completed in 1964 as part of an overall project named the Washington Bridge Extension Complex. The development included the recession highway that connects to the Cross Bronx Expressway implemented by Robert Moses and a bus terminal building with parking structure designed by Pietro Nervi.

Designed by Guernier & Brown Architects, the Bridge Apartments complex has become a visual landmark in the ridges of the Washington Heights landscape, symbolizing an alternative to the six-to-seven-story apartment walk-ups common throughout this community. The Bridge Apartments stood for modernism and progress. It identified the American dream of working hard and obtaining a better living environment. The project consisted of incorporating affordable housing units within four city blocks. This location marked the endpoints of one of New York’s arterial roads and the gateway to the United States, through the George Washington Bridge. The Bridge Apartments introduced a new typology where housing and automobiles were mixed as a composite hybrid. It included 960 residential units with parking at the base and support spaces such as communal laundry rooms.

The Bridge Apartments’ structure was made of steel spanning over the highway, a massive structural innovation displaying its lightness. The curtain wall system was revolutionary for residential applications as it was the first non-office application of an aluminum-clad system in the city. The idea of middle-income families living in apartment spaces high in elevation was commonly an experience only granted to the wealthy elite.

As progressive as it was, it is necessary to also consider the environmental impacts and long-term effects on the building’s tenants. Even during construction, community groups raised concerns about building living spaces over highways. After the building’s completion, numerous studies were conducted on both the air quality above the highway and inside the apartment units, and the results were alarming. The carbon monoxide and noise produced by the automobiles below contributed to considerable health and social issues for the tenants, including headaches, mental dullness, physical tiredness, dizziness, nausea, and learning disabilities. All these effects pointed to the open wells between the towers where carbon monoxide concentrated. The reasoning for the wells was attributed to the PANYNJ’s attempt to naturally ventilate the highway. If the openings were covered, a mechanical venting system would need to be integrated to exhaust the carbon out to higher elevations, constituting an additional cost for the agency.

The environmental conflict was picked up by the press, drawing both public interest and criticism. In 1967 Senator Robert Kennedy toured the building and spoke personally with some tenants. He was dismayed by their strained voices and how they blamed the building for speech deficiencies. He attacked the building’s air quality problems in the press, but with minimal results. The project’s location north of the Manhattan core probably dampened the general public’s interest.

Besides new building ownership and changes in the rent structures, little to no alterations and upgrades have occurred within the four tower structure. The environmental issues still remain as the open wells to the expressway below continue to produce and impact air quality. Further studies, testing and monitoring of the carbon impact will be necessary to determine the levels and threats of contamination. Design studies are also needed to strategize possible remediation solutions. One option could study the closure of the open wells to determine the percentage of carbon reduction. Another can look at a simplified solution through implementing ‘carbon scrubbers’ or vegetative planting where trees and plants can absorb and filter carbon in a more organic process.

What has astonished me was the building’s ability to adapt to the changing neighborhood over the years, as the community has evolved to absorb new Latino immigrants. The building has adapted to such changes by providing for more community uses and services. At the base of one of the four towers, a monolithic masonry wall with minimal to no window openings defines the street wall. Behind this plane that was originally back of house supportive space for the towers, a series of businesses and community services were inserted over the course of several years, including vocational schools, income tax and immigration consulting, and a cultural center.

Within the residential towers, tenants have sold, bought, or traded square footage among themselves to adjust to the fluctuating size of their families. These are common traits in live-work habitats, residential loft living, and communal environments, but such activities are more rare where land use and zoning play a minimal role in supportive community programming. We can see other examples of these hidden infrastructures taking place in such neighborhoods as Chinatown.

Currently, the bus terminal is designated a New York City landmark. Over the past two decades aside from the queuing buses importing and exporting commuters to this busy transportation node, the once progressive official commercial programming has become diluted. In 2008, plans between the PANYNJ and the Related Companies were initiated for developing mixed-use towers above the expressway. Those plans have never gone forward. While questioning the feasibility of the building site and function, current plans by PANYNJ are undertaking the renovation of the two-level commercial spaces with improved storefronts and commercial anchor tenants. Hopefully the project will take some cues from the precedents in Bangkok mentioned earlier.

As architects, we can also learn how the adaptations made by the public can be utilized for the next generation of buildings, with programs changing according to community needs. The Bridge Apartments is close to celebrating 50 years since the day of its inception. This is just one example to the architectural community of how we could begin to evaluate building structures, their design, contribution to and impact on their users. We can then see more clearly new forms of urban juxtapositions developed within the city’s diverse neighborhoods and the new layers adding to this metropolitan we call New York City.

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