In 2001 Richard Meier and the developer CoCo Brown set about to create a new kind of suburb on Long Island that blended the region’s tradition of excellent modern houses with affordability, geared to attract the upwardly mobile buyers flooding into the nearby Hamptons. Meier hand-picked the architects, a mix of mid-career architects and marquee names of his continued on page 3

Amid the flurry of manuals and plans released by various city agencies over the past few months, only the NYC Waterfront Vision and Enhancement Strategy brought out Mayor Michael Bloomberg and City Council Speaker Christine Quinn for the kickoff. Touted as the continued on page 2

Columbia University is in the final stretch of the public review process for the proposed Boathouse Marsh designed by James Corner Field Operations and the Campbell Sports Center by Steven Holl, both at 218th Street. But the noise of City Council infighting threatened to overshadow the proceedings. Columbia Executive VP continued on page 4

On March 16, NYU announced updates for their latest expansion plan, part of NYU 2031, that seemed to say the University had heard the public’s criticism and was ready to be a nicer neighbor. Previously, the school proposed a 400-foot tower on the Silver Towers site, where three concrete towers designed by I. M. Pei and completed in 1966 currently stand; two are owned by NYU while the third is a is a middle-income cooperative. In the new rendition, the proposed fourth Silver Tower is gone. This hotel/residence raised an outcry before being scrapped in November and has now been replaced in part by something called the Morton Williams tower, a 14-story building structure for the site continued on page 7

In 2001 Richard Meier and the developer CoCo Brown set about to create a new kind of suburb on Long Island that blended the region’s tradition of excellent modern houses with affordability, geared to attract the upwardly mobile buyers flooding into the nearby Hamptons. Meier hand-picked the architects, a mix of mid-career architects and marquee names of his continued on page 3
NYU’S EXPANSIVE APPROACH

How to grow good cities? The answer keeps changing. Few large-scale entities in the city understand that better than the 180-year-old New York University with its ill-starred developments. When the private school first felt growing pains in the 1890s, it leapt to the far north and commissioned Stanford White to create a new campus in the Bronx. According to Mosette Broderick in Triumvirate: McKim, Mead & White, Columbia also considered the site but decided it was too far too. And so it ultimately was for NYU, which started moving back to its Washington Square home by 1933 but did not sell the University Heights campus until 1974 (in a dire moment of need to meet payroll).

In the 1990s, Robert Moses equipped himself with the latest tool of urban growth—slum clearance—and aimed straight at Greenwich Village and NYU, proposing to wipe out 27 blocks south of Washington Square to make way for ten superblocks with Corbu-approved “towers in the park.” We shudder now, but at the time that approach was enthusiastically embraced by the most sophisticated urban planners. One community rebellion later, with an emerging Jane Jacobs and Lewis Mumford crying “civic vandalism,” it was scaled back to three superblocks. NYU owned one of them and immediately hired I.M. Pei, a tower-in-park believer but with the refined abilities to finesse the inescapable chunk of a plan into something exceptional. By 1964, NYU owned the second and third superblocks, too, leasing one to the Mitchell-Lama affordable housing program.

A pattern emerged: When a university wants to extend its financial instability trying to move forward responsibly, with course corrections along the way. (Does that jive with the institution’s buying up the Village indiscriminately as opportunity has allowed? Of course, if you factor in the most basic real estate instincts, honed over more decades than most any other resident of the area.) And now Pei’s Silver Towers, those finely executed renditions of an entirely discredited notion, are being fiercely defended. And that’s as it should be—the democratic process playing itself out in twitter-feed outrage and poster-loaded community meetings.

On reading the NYU proposal, however, it does seem that the institution is attempting to follow the most current enlightened approach to development. They hired their own triumvirate of real talent—Takashi Mori, Michael van Valkenburgh, and Grimshaw. They talk the talk of increased public accessibility, underrubtized ground floors given over to non-profit or commercial uses, and a public dog run. The brochure is sprinkled with knowingly aquotant quotes from Michael Sorkin’s latest and Rem Koolhaas’ indelible tome. Political machinations! Naturally!—the plan name NYU 2031 doesn’t echo the mayor’s PLANYC for nothing. Six million square feet, half of it within an already crowded Village neighborhood, is still a scary prospect for anyone who doesn’t want their corner of the city to be altered beyond recognition, or maybe changed at all.

But today is just a snapshot. As all designers know, change is already written in the glossy brochures. And the urban planning practices of today might well be displaced by an entirely different approach in no time. Architects, landscape urbanists, and engineers involved, therefore, all have a duty to speak up, loud and clear and not just in nerve-wracking community confrontations, to let people know now that as long as NYU commits to quality—and so far its hiring practices suggest it is—that inevitable expansion can be OK. It can, in fact, be tomorrow’s fiercely defended quality of life improvement. Call it the Silver Lining.

BUILDING BENCHMARKS

As of May 1, New York City building owners with more than 50,000 square feet must report energy and water use through the Environmental Protection Agency’s Portfolio Manager Tool. Owners will get a benchmarking grade of 1 to 100, with 50 being average. The grade is not unlike miles per hour for cars—complete with fines—but the national program adjusts to reflect regional differences in fuel consumption. To arrive at the grade, building managers must input several variables into the program, including energy use, floor area ratios, number of occupants, and definition of space use. Within a year, potential funding sources and lenders could be factoring in a building’s efficiency by going to the Department of Building’s website.

DOB spokesperson Jennifer Gilbert said property owners are ultimately responsible, but building managers will likely be the one’s plugging in the data. Non-compliance will result in a quarterly fine of $500 or $2,000 annually. The DOB will issue and collect fines. Owners will need to obtain energy use information from their tenants, but as privacy issues may hinder that effort, DOB will provide formulas to calculate information withheld.

In the weeks leading up to the public hearing, AIANY Chapter President Margaret O’Donoghue Castillo held a benchmarking seminar at the Center for Architecture to get out the word. Castillo said that as architects’ clients begin to understand how well their buildings are performing, the market would eventually shift toward efficient, high-performing buildings. She added that the new law has the potential to create more work for architects as they will be called upon to improve building envelopes, mechanical systems, and lighting. On the state level, the Center has received a grant from NYSERDA to develop a lecture series on the subject. She added that energy calculations are already required on all architectural drawings and that by September of this year the State will be conducting hard audits to make sure the numbers are there. Castillo noted that the local benchmark law fits in with the bigger picture.

“This is something an architect should know how to do, whether they do it or not,” she said. “This is coming from the law, but it’s also what the AIA believes in. Our goal is to have zero emissions by 2030.”
Money in the Bank

The Williamsburgh Savings Bank, purchased this past December by Juan Figueroa for $4.5 million, is set to become a catering hall, concert space, and art gallery. Project manager Carlos Perez San Martin said Figueroa plans to spend $1.5 million to $2 million on restoring the bank located at the corner of Broadway and Driggs Avenue in Williamsburg, Brooklyn. The owner has yet to face the scrutiny of the community board and preservationists, but San Martin, who is also Figueroa’s cousin, noted that the owner has already restored one building in the borough: the warehouse in Bushwick housing the New York Loft Hostel. The 25,000-square-foot bank building is divided into three sections. The main neo-classical building was built between 1870 and 1875 and designed by George B. Post, architect of the New York Stock Exchange and City College. Post included a smaller tower addition in 1908. The original structure has both a landmarked interior and exterior. Only the exterior is landmarked on the later building. The third section, an addition built in the 1940s, sits on a separate lot and is not landmarked at all. When the scaffolding went up on that structure a few months back, the biographies of the building were put up for speculation. While the owner was not divulging much information, zoning would permit him to add a residential tower and ground floor retail.

New York-based architect Jorge Bosch, who will oversee the restoration, has already drawn up plans for the basement of the main buildings, which will house the kitchen facilities (in a nod to the Hasidic neighbors, a separate kosher kitchen will be installed). The restoration, has already drawn up plans for the basement of the main buildings, which will house the kitchen facilities (in a nod to the Hasidic neighbors, a separate kosher kitchen will be installed). The restoration, has already drawn up plans for the basement of the main buildings, which will house the kitchen facilities (in a nod to the Hasidic neighbors, a separate kosher kitchen will be installed). The restoration, has already drawn up plans for the basement of the main buildings, which will house the kitchen facilities (in a nod to the Hasidic neighbors, a separate kosher kitchen will be installed). The restoration, has already drawn up plans for the basement of the main buildings, which will house the kitchen facilities (in a nod to the Hasidic neighbors, a separate kosher kitchen will be installed).

While workers have cleared and whitewashed the space, no serious structural issues have yet appeared. “If we find some problems, we’ll address it,” he said. “We are at the very beginning, you know, only three months in, so we’re still searching and thinking about what to do.” Elsewhere in the vast complex, though it hasn’t been determined exactly where, the owner plans to install a “museum,” although it sounds more like a rotating gallery. One possibility is to show Latin American art, said San Martin. “But it definitely will be a place for Brooklyn artists. Brooklyn doesn’t have a place to show all Brooklyn artists together.” As for the performance space, San Martin said, “It would be wonderful to have classical or blues or jazz, but we will not be bound to one type of style.” However, with catering as the main focus, it’s unclear when the general public will get access to see the art or hear the music. The new owner plans to offer in-house catering in addition to renting to outside operators and has already consulted with several firms to understand their needs, suggesting comparisons with Cipriani or Skylight One Hanson — an event hall in another renovated Williamsburgh Savings Bank in Downtown Brooklyn. “Our goal is to have every night of the year rented,” said San Martin. TS

But that’s not all: the developers also plan to offer a 1954 Usonian house designed by Frank Lloyd Wright. Currently owned by the husband and wife team behind Tarantino Architects, the fully restored Bachman Wilson House in its current location in suburban New Jersey has been beset with potentially hazardous run-off due to surrounding development and needs to be moved. The buyer will have to pay to relocate the house. There’s more: preliminary talks are also underway between the developers and Jake Gorst, the grandson of Andrew Geller, about relocating a potentially threatened Geller House to the development. The whimsical Elizabeth Reese House features triangular punched windows with projecting flaps, and a rough-hewn interior with exposed beams. Currently up for sale, the tiny beachfront house would likely be torn down by a new buyer. It, too, could be moved. And there are still more empty lots for which the developers might offer up unbuilt Geller designs. “We like the idea of juxtaposing contemporary design with modernism of 50 years ago,” Oza said.

While design is very much still a driving force behind the Houses at Sagaponac, the new approach shows how much the world has changed since 2002. Most of the original unbuilt designs will likely survive as paper architecture, but Oza won’t rule out the possibility that some of those published houses could someday get built. “If someone wants to pay to build them they are welcome to,” he said. ALAN G. BRAKE

DEFUNCT WILLIAMSBURGH SAVINGS TO BECOME CATERING HALL AND ARTS VENUE

SIC TRANSIT SAGAPONAC continued from front page generation, to design the spec houses that quickly devolved into high-luxury properties. Houses at Sagaponac, as the development was called, garnered worldwide attention, but only about a third of the 34 lots attracted serious interest and only eight of the original designs were built. The most recent building of the set, by Andrew Geller.

The third section, an addition built in the 1940s, sits on a separate lot and is not landmarked at all. When the scaffolding went up on that structure a few months back, the biographies of the building were put up for speculation. While the owner was not divulging much information, zoning would permit him to add a residential tower and ground floor retail.

Working with real estate agents Brown Harris Stevens, the developers began the art of repackaging in earnest by showing the lots and the new possible designs at the Architectural Digest Home Design Show in mid-March. “We’re foregrounding the marketing,” said Nilay Oza, a partner with Sagaponac Dream Homes. This time developers won’t be building on spec, either. Buyers will pony up for lot and design together. The developers have solicited designs from both the young and up-and-coming and the young and well-regarded, including ARO, Delle Valle Bernheimer, Resolution 4 Architecture, Leven Betts, David Biagi, Hannaham Meyers, Thread Collective, Morris Sato Studio, Flying Elephant, Plaid, XTen Architecture, Cook + Fox, BVA, Tarantino Architects, and Zung Design. “We want to offer opportunities to younger architects at a point where it could make a difference in their career,” Oza said. Based on how the current batch performs this summer season, the developers are also considering an open competition for yet more designs, possibly as soon as September.

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Joseph Ienuso made two separate presentations to neighborhood residents on Friday night March 18 and on Sunday afternoon March 20 to address two estranged council members. Council member Jackson supports the proposal but is also lobbying for the addition of a public boathouse, while council member Rodriguez appears to want to stall the project for more community input. Media outlets dubbed the gatherings as "dueling meetings" after infighting between Jackson and Rodriguez erupted into a shouting match at an earlier subcommittee meeting. The situation devolved into charges of racism, with Jackson claiming that Rodriguez and State Senator Adriano Espaillat were spreading rumors that he was anti-Dominican. The political noise heightened an already-tense atmosphere.

The City Planning Commission has already green-lighted a proposal to build the $100 million Campbell Sports Center, a 47,700-square-foot sports facility at the Bakers Athletic Complex that sits at the northernmost tip of Manhattan. In order to build on the riverfront lot, however, the university is required by law to devote 15 percent of the waterfront property to public access or 181,315 square feet. Instead, the university requested a modification to the access requirements, enlisting Field Operations to spruce up adjacent wetlands in city-owned Inwood Hill Park and offering 17,793 square feet of the university land for public use, plus 9,318 square feet of marshland. Columbia's argument is that 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.

Espaillat amplified the spat between Jackson and Rodriguez by calling for a meeting on Sunday afternoon, separate from Jackson’s Friday night gathering. Rodriguez holds Espaillat’s old city council seat, which sits next door to Jackson’s district but doesn’t include Bakers Athletic Complex. Jackson did not endorse either official during their last run for office. Espaillat called the second meeting a complimentary meeting intended to address the needs of the community, not just the district. He told the crowd, “We will not support any fast track effort.” But City Council deadlines loom and a vote must take place by April 28th or the agreement forged with City Planning goes into effect without Council input. “They [Epaillat and Rodriguez] said we tried to speed up the process,” said Jackson. “If anything we tried to slow it down.” As City Council usually votes with the councilmember representing the district, Jackson became the de facto negotiator with Columbia. “The point man is me,” said Jackson. “Everybody knows that.”

For their part, Columbia representatives and community activists continued to forge ahead with negotiations. Columbia’s Ienuso pointed out that the university has put an “action plan” in writing that promises to supplement land use agreements with additional community benefits. The eight-point plan focuses primarily on access to their sports facilities, but also emphasizes access to get on the water, a timely initiative that found its way into the recently released NYC Comprehensive Waterfront Plan.

The university has agreed to deed the boathouse dock to the city and develop children’s programs that teach rowing. Several rowers, who spoke at both meetings, apparently got Jackson’s ear. The rowers are pushing for another item to be added to the action agenda: a place to store boats. They pointed out that the only boathouse on Boathouse Marsh is the one privately owned and operated by Columbia. “I’d like to see some storage facility,” said Jackson. Founding member of New York Outrigger and Inwood resident Roger Meyer said, “What happened to rowing is it became a private club that had all the trappings of an exclusive blue blood kind of thing, and that’s not how it is. If anybody could change that perception, Columbia could. There’s enough physical room for a boathouse, and I am hoping there’ll be a partnership-based approach. At the moment, they’re clearly protecting the hallowed region of their boathouse.”

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WE’LL DRINK TO THAT

Things got off to a splashy start at “State of Design,” a new annual series of dialogues created by the ASID’s Education Legacy Fund to honor Metropolis publisher Haroon Havemeyer III. One guest took a front-row seat for the evening’s discussion, held at the plush midtown offices of Steelcase, and proceeded to kick over the full glass of red wine that he had placed at his feet. As the expanding maroon puddle threatened to overtake the unsuspecting leathergoods of those in the second row, speaker Michael Murphy sprang into action. The MASS Design Group cofounder (who bears a striking resemblance to a current Ralph Lauren model) located some napkins and dropped to his knees to mop up the spill. IDEO president and CEO Tim Brown, who was sharing the stage with Murphy as the recipient of the Havemeyer Award, was impressed. “You must be doing something right,” he told the man. “You have the speaker cleaning up your wine.”

In introducing Murphy to the crowd, Metropolis editor-in-chief Susan Szenasy referred to his appearance in the magazine’s January issue, “where we identified him as one of the game changers of the decade—or at least the next year.” But he chuckled modestly when she described him as an architect. “At the OSD, they would disagree with calling me an architect,” said Murphy, who only expects to pick up his MArch from Harvard later this year.

HOW PETER MARINO HANGS ON

How has Peter Marino managed to accumulate such a loyal base of clients in the luxury goods world? “When they hire me, I wrap my arms around their legs and never let go,” he told Women’s Wear Daily recently. And if that doesn’t work, try sheathing yourself in leather. “When I was a young architect at Skidmore, Owings, & Merrill, I had to dress like a little architect mouse in little suits,” he recalled. “When I turned 50, I went back to riding a motorcycle, which I’d done in college. It’s helped my work big time. People started talking about ‘the crazy guy who wears leather.’ All I was trying to do was reconnect with my youth.”

STEELY RESOLVE

On the same day that RISD faculty slapped president John Maeda and provost Jessie Shefrin with an overwhelming vote of no confidence, across the pond, a small group of students and staff were attempting to do the same with the AA’s grad school, was unable to rally enough disgruntled attendees who in the wind: it came down to speaking up, the leader of the palace revolt was left twisting had come under attack for controversial amendations to his contract. But when it came down to speaking up, the leader of the palace revolt was left twisting in the wind: Michael Weinstock, the director of research and development for the AA’s grad school, was unable to rally enough disgruntled attendees who were willing to put a vote where their mouth was. Weinstock withdrew the no confidence motion and even offered the council embarrassed apology.

EVERYTHING TO DRINK TO THAT

Everything having to do with the economy these days feels in flux. Maybe that’s why the phenomenon of the temporary pop-up store remains a particularly relevant model for retail. A new Wonder Woman-themed pop-up by M.A.C. cosmetics recently opened in SoHo, and it’s very hard to miss: the cast iron facade is painted the brightest, candy apple red hue, radically setting the store apart from its less heroic neighbors. The color theme continues inside with red lacquer walls and cabinets, a tribute to America’s favorite Amazonian super-heroine, Wonder Woman, who was the inspiration behind the makeup brand’s newest collection of primary tones and toy-like packaging. An oversized Wonder Woman cutout greets visitors at the entrance, walls are covered in graffiti of the various M.A.C. logos, and both sides of the store feature a chronological display of Wonder Woman comic-books from the 80’s. Comic book action words are blown up throughout the space, jolting customers with a “POW!” or “BANG!” at every turn. The store itself is a bold departure from the brand’s usual black-and-white-chic boutique, looking more like a Roy Lichtenstein exhibit or a comic book shop. Rather than shoppers on a beauty errand, customers may feel like superheroes on a mission: step inside the space and come out transformed.

FEVESDROPISSADORA MULLTON

UNVEILED

AMANORA APARTMENT CITY

Like its neighbor to the northeast, India is urbanizing at break-neck speed. Much of the resulting development takes the shape of monotonous towers and slabs designed to house the maximum number of people, as quickly as possible. The innovative Dutch firm MVRDV’s project Amanora Apartment City punches through, twists, and slices off pieces of a monolithic superstructure, to create a new park-side landmark within a largely undifferentiated urban field. The first of three buildings will contain 1,068 naturally-ventilated apartments ranging from studios to villa-sized units, to capture a variety of family sizes and income levels, as well as retail and community facilities. Many units will have garden balconies overlooking a park and the city beyond. While the massive, mountain-like building is built of concrete, it will be richly detailed with a variety of materials, including ornamented sunshades, wood cladding on the balconies, and stone facing on passageways through the building. Taken together, the three-building complex will eventually include over 3,000 units, and their multi-peaked, zigzagging forms will create a new urban identity for the rapidly expanding city.

ARCHITECT: MVRDV
CLIENT: City Corporation, Ltd.
LOCATION: Pune, India
COMPLETION: Phase One, 2013

OTHER NEWS

ISADORA MULLTON

05

Expect to pick up his MArch from Harvard later this year. But he chuckled modestly when she described him as an architect. “At the OSD, they would disagree with calling me an architect,” said Murphy, who only expects to pick up his MArch from Harvard later this year.

SEND SPOT REMOVER, CHAPS, AND CROW RECIPES TO EAVESDROP@ARCHPAPER.COM
As the 21st century dawned, Princeton University found that, at least in one respect, it was rather lagging behind the times. The institution’s chemistry department continued to inhabit a college gothic structure that had been built in 1929—the old Frick Chemical Laboratory. It is a beautiful building, but its venerable stonewalls could not adequately accommodate the most recent advances both in the technology of chemistry as well as in its pedagogy. What’s more, these outdated facilities were making it difficult for the university to attract the kind of faculty—the rock stars of the chemistry world—that an upper tier institution like Princeton sorely needs on its roster if it wants to maintain a competitive edge with its ivy league peers. So the school drew up a short list of design talent and asked them to submit a proposal for a new 265,000-square-foot chemistry building. The winners were Hopkins Architects of London in collaboration with the Boston architectural firm, Payette.

The primary challenge faced by the design team was to create an environment that fostered collaboration, not just between the faculty and students of each discipline of chemistry, but between the disciplines themselves, and even between the entire department and other branches of the sciences. The old Frick Chemical Laboratory, with its dormitory style layout, kept the divisions separate, sequestered in small closed rooms where if one was working in organic chemistry there would be little chance to observe what was happening in biochemistry. Breaking down these boundaries meant developing a more fluid, modular, and transparent architecture, one that would keep the entire department in visual contact with one another and allow each discipline to grow or shrink as necessary. Of course, this open, collaborative environment also had to adhere to the stringent safety and ventilation requirements of a contemporary chemistry laboratory while at the same time meeting the university’s ambitious sustainability goals.

Hopkins and Payette began by organizing the building’s program elements into two parallel rectangular volumes that face each other across a 27-foot-wide atrium. On the ground floor, one volume houses teaching laboratories, while the adjacent one is home to faculty offices, lounges, and other amenities. A similar arrangement exists on the upper three research floors, only there the laboratory sections separate, sequestered in small closed rooms where if one was working in organic chemistry there would be little chance to observe what was happening. The inner walls of the atrium are clad in glass, allowing sightlines to pass all the way through the building. This arrangement also had a payoff with the HVAC system. Intake air moves first into the offices slab, where it is conditioned either by a chilled beam in the ceiling or by hydronic radiators along the wall. From there it is pulled into the atrium, where it circulates before being drawn into the laboratory slab. This is the last stop before the air is vented out the roof through some 300 high-efficiency fume hoods that operate on motion sensors. Thus, the building uses intake air three times before exhausting it, cutting down on heating and cooling loads. And because the air always moves from the offices to the labs and out, there is no danger of contaminating the dry areas with potentially hazardous clouds of poison gas.

The same transparency that allows building users to keep an eye on one another was also applied to the exterior to let ample, but controlled, natural light into the interior. The facades are clad with an insulated glass curtain wall outfitted with aluminum shades and ceramic fritting to cut down on glare and heat gain. The atrium also has glass walls and a glass skylight. An array of 216 photovoltaic panels shelters the skylight, generating electricity for the atrium and then to the lab spaces before being exhausted out the roof via fume hoods.
NYU wants to add 6 million square feet of building to their campus over the next 25 years, with 33% of that planned for its current campus, 17% for the surrounding neighborhood, and 50% for remote locations. The masterplan for the three sites already part of the campus, including three acres of outdoor space, was drafted by Grimshaw Architects, Toshiko Mori Architects, and Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates.

The March 16 meeting highlighted new building outlines and proposed landscaping plans. The square footage in the defunct plan for Silver Tower’s hotel and residential complex is spread over four new buildings, including the Morton Williams Tower, and totals 2.2 million square feet of new space. A building with many different interlocking heights at 181 Mercer Street has been dubbed the Zipper Building, and would replace the current NYU Sports Center. At the tallest part of the Zipper, a 150-bed hotel remains in the plan in a portion that will rise to 275 feet; the rest of the building will be used for faculty offices, classrooms, retail, and student housing. Two more buildings between 3rd and Bleeker streets and Mercer Street and LaGuardia Place have been nicknamed the “Boomerang Buildings” for their curving shapes, which open onto an enhanced plaza in the newest plan. Formally called the LaGuardia Building and the Mercer Building, respectively eight and 14 stories, they will be a mix of classrooms and faculty offices.

At the meeting, Van Valkenburgh principal Matthew Urbanski talked about wanting to attract the community to walk through NYU with a new playground and dog run, and by making the plazas more accessible and garden-like. In further efforts to win over the public, NYU has set up an exhibit on NYU 2031 at the new Open House gallery at 528 La Guardia Place with renderings and models. The exhibit was designed in house by NYU and is now open to the public. However, none of this seemed to help much at a community board meeting on March 21, according to the New York Times. “A slide presentation by university spokeswoman Alicia Hurley was greeted by hostile interruptions, catcalls and hisses,” wrote Kim Davis for the Times’ “The Local East Village” blog. The only supporters in attendance appeared to be NYU faculty, while critics still felt that this new plan just reshuffled the same components of the Silver Towers plan they previously opposed. Davis reported that Andrew Berman, the executive director of the Greenwich Village Society of Historic Preservation, wanted NYU to take its expansion elsewhere, meaning downtown: “You can’t meet your needs to grow by asking residents to sacrifice their quality of life,” he told the board. Urbanski, who attended the meeting, told AN that “people did not seem to understand that access to the site is currently impeded and that we need public passage. [In the 2031 plan] we can add nice movement and a holistic approach to make it more useful and beautiful for everyone.” SARAH F. COX

Creating green space in New York is not always a walk in the park. Challenged with drawing activity to its campus from 65th Street, Lincoln Center commissioned Diller Scofidio + Renfro and FXFOWLE to design a restaurant that would allow street life and arts events to come together, enlivening pedestrian paths while adding valuable public space. The team’s unique solution was an elegant parabolic-roofed pavilion that grows out of the Center’s plaza, creating a lawn for those who wish to lounge, and a canopy for those who wish to lunch. Steel’s slender, lightweight profile made the project possible by enabling the structure to bear on existing foundations, a new stage among many that give the performing arts center its life.

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Architects: Diller Scofidio + Renfro with FXFOWLE
Structural Engineer: Ove Arup & Partners
Photo: Iwan Baan
ARCHITECTS EXPLORE NEW HYBRID SURGICAL SUITES

As advances in medical technology allow surgeons to use less invasive procedures, more architects are heading to the operating room to radically rethink its design. New surgical suites called “hybrid ORs” are cropping up across the country. While few institutions have the money to afford them, empirical and informal evidence of their success is gaining attention from both design and medical professionals.

Traditionally, diagnostic medical procedures are performed in labs, not in operating rooms. But medical specialists are beginning to move these procedures to sterile ORs in a coordinated effort to let real-time imaging inform surgery. With this approach, patients spend less time on the operating table and in recovery.

The strategy is good for a hospital’s bottom line, too. Though one hybrid operating suite may cost several million dollars, hospitals are able to schedule more procedures per day. Getting healthy patients out the door also reduces costs and the chance of hospital infections.

“So many hospitals are interested now. It is still very much a new concept,” said Ross Cole, a principal at BAM Studio in Manhattan. At Yale New Haven Hospital, BAM designed a Class C hybrid OR for the hospital’s pediatric catheterization lab. The lab’s control room is open to the main OR, allowing the space to feel larger and encouraging natural conversation without microphones or speakers between technicians and surgeons.

Beyond the latest technology, the space integrates materials that are more pleasing. Frosted glass shields the ugly plastic bins ubiquitous in most hospitals. New LED surgical lights are more maneuverable and give off less heat than fluorescents, and surgical lights are more maneuverable and give off less heat than fluorescents. New LED surgical lights are more maneuverable and give off less heat than fluorescents. New LED surgical lights are more maneuverable and give off less heat than fluorescents. New LED surgical lights are more maneuverable and give off less heat than fluorescents. New LED surgical lights are more maneuverable and give off less heat than fluorescents.

In Europe, acceptance has been greater, perhaps because of regulatory issues more conducive to change. “When you talk with Philips, Siemens, or GE, the first thing they do is talk to you about what they did in Europe,” said Cole.

Along with medical technology innovators, product makers are advancing hospital design. Last year Michael Graves collaborated with medical equipment manufacturer Stryker on a new line of healthcare furniture including patient room tables and chairs. Kvadrat, Carnegie, and Armstrong are all expanding lines for healthcare that include new bacterial- and slip-resistant materials, not to mention new colorways and finishes.

Institutional reluctance is another challenge. Doctors and U.S. healthcare regulators often prefer a tried-and-true approach. So far, most American hybrid ORs are affiliated with research institutions. Although many institutions have the money to afford them, projects can cost $1,000 per square foot without equipment, versus the $600 per square foot average for most hospital projects. Space is also a concern. A code-compliant OR can be as small as 400 square feet, but most hybrid spaces are closer to 1,000 square feet because of equipment, which also necessitates greater floor-to-floor heights and large column-free spaces. Some imaging equipment requires structural isolation to prevent vibrations.

Above: BAM Studio’s new pediatric operating room for Yale New Haven Hospital.

WHAT’S UP, DOC?

As advances in medical technology allow surgeons to use less invasive procedures, more architects are heading to the operating room to radically rethink its design. New surgical suites called “hybrid ORs” are cropping up across the country. While few institutions have the money to afford them, empirical and informal evidence of their success is gaining attention from both design and medical professionals.

Traditionally, diagnostic medical procedures are performed in labs, not in operating rooms. But medical specialists are beginning to move these procedures to sterile ORs in a coordinated effort to let real-time imaging inform surgery. With this approach, patients spend less time on the operating table and in recovery.

The strategy is good for a hospital’s bottom line, too. Though one hybrid operating suite may cost several million dollars, hospitals are able to schedule more procedures per day. Getting healthy patients out the door also reduces costs and the chance of hospital infections.

“So many hospitals are interested now. It is still very much a new concept,” said Ross Cole, a principal at BAM Studio in Manhattan. At Yale New Haven Hospital, BAM designed a Class C hybrid OR for the hospital’s pediatric catheterization lab. The lab’s control room is open to the main OR, allowing the space to feel larger and encouraging natural conversation without microphones or speakers between technicians and surgeons.

Beyond the latest technology, the space integrates materials that are more pleasing. Frosted glass shields the ugly plastic bins ubiquitous in most hospitals. New LED surgical lights are more maneuverable and give off less heat than fluorescents, and a perimeter band of LEDs can be changed according to patient preference. “It helps make the patient feel a little more in control of their environment,” said Cole.

The University of Michigan’s new children’s and women’s hospitals will have a hybrid OR for neurosurgery designed by Detroit-based SmithGroup Health Studio. The project shows how much of a hybrid OR’s design is driven by equipment according to Ann Kenyon, who co-leads the Health Studio. An IMRIS MR machine docked in a room adjacent to the OR will move along ceiling-mounted rails should the surgical team want to examine a patient's brain immediately following a procedure. Previously, a patient would be sent to recovery, then to diagnostic testing weeks later to examine results.

Upfront costs are still the largest deterrent for many institutions. Depending on the amount of infrastructure in place, projects can cost $1,000 per square foot without equipment, versus the $600 per square foot average for most hospital projects. Space is also a concern. A code-compliant OR can be as small as 400 square feet, but most hybrid spaces are closer to 1,000 square feet because of equipment, which also necessitates greater floor-to-floor heights and large column-free spaces. Some imaging equipment requires structural isolation to prevent vibrations.

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Q&A: SUZANNE FRANK

As a young art historian with a Ph.D. on Dutch Modernist Michel de Klerk, Suzanne Frank arrived at the Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies (IAUS) in 1970, three years after its founding. Her husband, Dick, had photographed Peter Eisenman’s architectural models, and soon Eisenman would be designing a home for the couple in Cornwall, completed in 1975 and named House VI.

Frank remained at the Institute as a researcher and librarian until 1982. Her unauthorized memoir of those days was 12 years in the making. Clearly a labor of love by an historian eager to make a record of an extraordinary moment.

TEAM VITRUVIUS

The most curious image I know of the Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies—the New York think tank that, from the late 1960s through the early 1980s, quite simply reshaped architectural discourse in the United States—appeared in a 1971 issue of Casabella. A cut-and-paste job, it pictured sixteen of the Institute’s members as a soccer team, wearing sweatshirts emblazoned with the Institute’s logo, the Vitruvian man of Cesarani’s 1521 edition. Crouched, at the far right, is Suzanne Frank, then an intern, later the Institute’s librarian, and now the author of a new book, at once an unofficial history of the Institute and, as the subtitle reads, “an insider’s memoir.”

FEATURE

09

IAUS fellows and friends at one of Peter Eisenman’s Indian dinners circa 1974. Clockwise from lower left: Bill Ellis, Rick Wolkowitz, Peter Eisenman, Liz Eisenman, Mario Gandelsonas, Madelon Vriesendorp, Rem Koolhaas, Julia Bloomefield, Randall Korman, Count Wrede, Andrew MacNair, Anthony Vidler, Richard Meier, unidentified woman, Kenneth Frampton, Diana Agrest, Caroline “Coty” Sidnam, Jane Ellis, Suzanne Frank, and Alexander Gorlin.

Q&A: SUZANNE FRANK

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TEAM VITUVIUS continued from page 9

The early years of the Institute (notwithstanding its later, unjust reputation as cerebral, arcane, and elitist) were marked by what can only be called a modernist engagement with the city, culminating in the building of a low-rise, high-density housing complex in Ocean Hill/Brownsville, Brooklyn, a prototype sponsored by the Urban Development Corporation and designed by Kenneth Frampton (top row, fourth from the left, with a resolute, captain-like mien). By the early 1970s, though, when the money and the political will to sponsor projects and research on public housing dried up, the Institute had already gone through an aggiornamento of sorts. Indeed, over the years the Institute embarked on a variety of other programs, going through several changes of faculty and through what Eisenman called, in a 1979 interview with Alvin Boyarsky just published in Brett Steele’s book Supercritical, several “palace revolutions”—the first already in 1969, when Colin Rowe had his students do theoretical designs instead of real projects, and Eisenman, in Frank’s retelling of the story, responded by locking Rowe out of the Institute, literally changing the door’s lock. Over little more than a decade, the Institute became enormously influential, attracting architects, historians, and theorists to lecture, teach, exhibit, and do research there. Even a casual list of some of the protagonists (Diana Agrest, Anthony Vidler, Robert Slutzky, Rafael Munoz, Philip Johnson, Rem Koolhaas, etc.) would fill a page. Eventually, the Institute expanded its educational operations (at one point it had graduate, undergraduate, high-school, and continuing education programs), organized extraordinarily intense lecture series, and mounted dozens of exhibitions (Marti Stiam, Ivan Leonidov, Wallace Harrison, but also Aldo Rossi, Mathias Unger, the Krier brothers, etc.) in the double-height main space of the offices it occupied from 1970, on the top two floors of 8 West 20th Street, just opposite the New York Public Library. The Institute also became a publishing house: it produced the aptly-named journal Oppositions (1973–84), edited by a pugnacious triumvirate made of Eisenman, Frampton, and Mario Gandelsonas (top row, third from the left) joined later by Vidler and then Kurt Forster; the monthly tabloid newspaper Skyline (1978–83); and, in the early 1980s, Oppositions Books (Rossi, Aldo Rossi, Mossei Ginzburg, Alan Colquhoun). Frank readily acknowledges that hers is not a scholarly book but a personal memoir, “a labor of love.” (A few historians in Europe and the US are currently working on scholarly histories, most notably Ph.D. candidate Kim Forster at the ETH in Zurich.) Frank’s history is in fact impressionistic; the author is at her best when she lets us into her personal recollections of characters, personalities, allegiances, and conflicts, as opposed to the narrative sections outlining the many activities of the Institute. The last third of the book, a series of twenty-seven interviews that Frank conducted over the past decade with former Institute members, offers a wealth of valuable information (much of it anecdotal, certainly) and countless perceptive memories and thoughts: Julia Bloomfield, managing editor of Oppositions, discussing the journal’s graphic design (“the Massimo Vignelli ‘punch’” and “the somewhat combative relationship” between Eisenman and Frampton; Andrew MacNair telling of a momentous 7:00 a.m. phone call with Eisenman (“[Robert] Stern and Frampton and I have gotten a grant to start a lecture series... we want you to run it, get your ass down here”); William Ellis (bottom row, third from the left) reflecting on the feat of Oppositions and on Eisenman’s organizational prowess (“an absolute impresario”); Joan Copjec recounting organizational prowess (“an absolute impresario”); Joan Copjec recounting the formation in 1979 of a women’s group at the Institute to voice concerns about “the not-so-veiled sexism”; Suzanne Stephens telling of her editorship of Skyline, of articles paying ten cents a word, Christmas lists about books to give to architects, and where Johnson got his glasses or Eisenman his shoes (“it’s Churchill shoes for Peter, very Loosian”). One of the most revealing stories is told by Stanford Anderson (top row, far right): in 1964 Eisenman wanted to form an association of young architects interested in new ideas (what would later become CASE, the Conference of Architects for the Study of the Environment, a prelude to the Institute), convinced Princeton to put up some money, and invited for a weekend-long meeting a group that included Anderson, Michael Graves, Robert Venturi, and young Emilio Ambasz (bottom row, fourth from the right, in jaunty Greek fisherman’s cap); on Sunday the question came up whether that kind of group discussion should continue: “Venturi immediately said, ‘Well, it is going to help my practice!’ Everyone agreed, ‘No.’” Eisenman, whose name appears in almost every page of the book, declined to be interviewed: the figure most central to the myriad stories interwoven at the Institute emerges as more remote, different, and, if anything, to serve as a vehicle for critical discourse, for challenging the prevailing empirical attitude in the United States vis-à-vis architecture—i.e. that it is something useful, something that can be marketed, a commodity.” A critical history of that discourse, of those conflicts theoretical and ideological, remains to be written. Or, perhaps, as with that other great 20th-century think tank called the Bauhaus, the history of the Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies may need to be told, written, and rewritten many times over.

Above left: The number 1 on the cover designed by Robert Stutely indicated that more were to come.
Top row from left: Joseph Rykwert, Duarte Cabral de Melo, Mario Gandelsonas, Kenneth Frampton, Mandel, Greg Gale, Thomas Schumacher, and Stanford Anderson; bottom row from left: Elizabeth Cronley, Robert Stutely, William Ellis, Beth Spector, Emilio Ambasz, Peter Eisenman, Victor Calandro, and Suzanne Frank.

Left: A photo-montage from a 1971 issue of Casabella showed Institute members wearing sweatshirts with Vitruvian Man images and posing as a soccer team.

Below: The IAUJS journal, Oppositions 5, edited by Eisenman, Frampton, and Gandelsonas.
The Architect’s Newspaper: How did you come to be at the Institute? Suzanne Frank: I was doing an art history Ph.D. at Columbia and they thought my research was good so they hired me. I combed resources for studies I never had an office or anything, I was mostly working on a HUD-funded project, the Streets project, at least in the first year. Did Philip Johnson supply funds for the Institute? Yes, I don’t know how much, but I know he was an angel. People didn’t like his architecture; they hated the AT&T. He didn’t mind, and Peter was very close to him, so was Bob Stern. Did everyone get along? The receptionists had a hard time; they would start crying, and his wife at the time would have to console them.

**Q&A: SUZANNE FRANK continued from page 9**

The Architect’s Newspaper: Why did you decide to write a private memoir about The Institute? It was a great time in my life. The projects they were doing were very interesting and important. What made me write it? I am a historian. I like to do research and write. I never dreamed it would take so long.

**Q&A: SUZANNE FRANK continued from page 9**

How easy was it to get people to talk? There were 27 cooperatives. Tony Vidler didn’t agree; Rem (Koolhaas) agreed then backed out; and Peter said he’s not giving any interviews on the Institute. A doctoral student at ETH in Zurich, Kim Foerster, is working on the official history. I think he has done something like 100 interviews.

Was the focus on talk or on building, too? They wanted to implement building. One of the student projects with a grant was to reorganize streets with buildings in a more public way. And they did it in print, but it didn’t happen because HUD took the money away when Bill Ellis insulted the HUD people when they were visiting. They only built the one housing project that Kenneth (Frampton) worked on, Ocean Hill-Brownsville in Brooklyn.

Did Philip Johnson supply funds for the Institute? Yes, I don’t know how much, but I know he was an angel. People didn’t like his architecture; they hated the AT&T. He didn’t mind, and Peter was very close to him, so was Bob Stern. There was also fund-raising for Opposizioni by Julia Bloomfield. They were all pretty good at it. I mean, here was this little magazine with a leftist tinge, but they still got Exxon and Mobil to give to it.

Rumor has always had it that women had a hard time there. What was your experience? Peter hired women to have posts in the Institute, but he was very mean, here was this little magazine called Oppositions by Julia Bloomfield. They were all pretty good at it. I mean, here was this little magazine with a leftist tinge, but they still got Exxon and Mobil to give to it.

What’s your final impression of The Institute? It was important. It stood for a really high level of thought and a high level of camaraderie. I am also relieved that I can finally go on to some other things now.

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DESIGNED BY COSMIC, SPAIN

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FAUCETS FIXTURES BATH TILE

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Sleeker kitchens are better, but integrated systems trump all. Spotlight on Valcucine, GD Cucine, SieMatic, Aster Cucine. Cooktops, outdoor kitchens, new flexible vents and more.
It’s safe to go back into the kitchen. According to a recent survey by the National Kitchen and Bath Association (NKBA), 82 percent of kitchen and bath professionals anticipate an increase in kitchen remodels and sales volume in the first quarter of this year. Optimistic about the outlook, American and European manufacturers are unveiling new designs with never-before-seen technology and material options, hoping to capture the imaginations of a growing legion of at-home chefs across the country.

As Americans spend more time cooking at home, they want the results to prove it. It’s no longer enough for the kitchen to look like a lab, it must function as if it were approved by the aeronautic industry. Bosch’s induction cooktop with a new AutoChef Sensor can gauge the temperature of specialized cookware and can even beep when your steak is medium-rare or your pancake reaches perfect fluffiness. The cooktop boasts results that are more like those of a gas range while using a fraction of the energy. For gas-cooking devotees, new models like Dacor’s new 36-inch Distinctive Series cooking, developed with BMW DesignworksUSA, have bigger burners and more ergonomic designs, allowing large pots to slide around cast iron grates with ease. While it may be difficult to keep an 18,000 BTU burner under wraps, other appliances are going incognito. Once the eyesore of any kitchen, new ventilator technology is quieter and sleeker than ever. Unveiled late last year, Bulthaup’s new winged air extractor or Elica’s Victor model could be mistaken for expensive lighting fixtures. Ventilators are no longer just for the range. Put one over the dining table and a host can prep fondue, raclette, or teppanyaki to guests’ amazement.

In a world that has now met the second-generation iPad, kitchen manufacturers are trying to keep up by installing touch screens and wireless connectivity in cabinet fronts and refrigerator doors. Instead of pasting kiddie art projects to the fridge, parents can monitor their Twitter feeds on Samsung’s new LCD touch screen refrigerator, due out in June. But along with electronic technology, material technology has moved to the forefront. Designers and architects with environmentally savvy clients are asking for recycled and recyclable content, but consumers also demand durability as often as good aesthetics for their money. Educating American customers about new, lower cost, longer lasting laminates has been a challenge for the U.S. branch of German kitchen company SieMatic, who calls them only “select surfaces” on its web site. They wait until the customer is in the showroom to explain that it’s a laminate, said Hans Henkes, the company’s general manager of marketing and sales. “Their first reaction is usually, ‘Wow,’” he said. Offering finishes and styles in a range of price points has helped luxury kitchen companies stay afloat during the economic downturn. In the suffering multi-family residential market, they are an attractive option for developers who want a brand-name kitchen to help market their units.

American company Henrybuilt captured a new market in 2009 when it launched the Viola Park brand as a lower-cost ($15-$20,000) alternative. Since then, it has also found that customers who could easily afford higher-priced lines were equally interested in Viola Park’s design and manufacturing quality. At SieMatic, a new category called “IndividualDesign” describes systems for unlimited budgets, versus a “SmartDesign” category suited to smaller budgets and floor plans. At the end of the day, said Henkes, the distinction is almost like comparing first class to business class on a Lufthansa flight. “You’re all on the same plane,” he said. “You are getting the same quality.”
1 ELLITTICA
FALMEC

Manufactured in high-grade 304 stainless steel with polished steel features, Falmec’s Ellittica vent hood is available in 70 cm wall-mounted or island versions that provide ducted or recirculating air. Etched tempered glass hides functional fluorescent lighting for the workspace below. The unit’s North American launch is slated for May or June.

www.falmec.com

2 ARCHITECT SERIES II VENTILATION KITCHENAID

KitchenAid’s new Architect Series II ventilation systems include the Commercial-Style Series, the 600 and 400 Series, and the Specialty Series with wall-mount, under-the-cabinet, and island-mount canopy hood options. Designed to suit a range of cooking surfaces and space requirements, the collection features ambient halogen lighting, automatic turn-on, timed auto-off, and tempered glass canopies.

www.kitchenaid.com

3 30-INCH GAS RANGE SMEG

Smeg’s new 30-inch series includes a stainless steel freestanding gas range with continuous heavy-duty cast iron grates to enable easy movement of large pots and pans. The central burner has an output of 17,000 BTUs, while the oven below has a usable capacity of 3.4 cubic feet with a triple-glazed removable door and halogen lights.

www.smegusa.com

4 BESPOKE COOKERS STEEL CUCINE (ALSO ON OPPOSITE PAGE)

Italian appliance manufacturer Steel offers bespoke cookers to suit a chef’s specific needs. The new Derby range features two sizes and four color options, in addition to customizable features like a rotisserie and matching ventilation hoods. Genesi models can integrate barbecue plates or lava stone grills, deep fryers, and induction cooktops (see left). Lavoro (above) is one of Steel’s new outdoor kitchen options.

www.steel-cucine.com

5 COMBISET GRILLS MIELE

Designed to match the existing 12 elements of Miele’s CombiSet series, two new barbecue grills have been introduced for indoor use. Available in 12- or 15-inch widths, the grills offer dual heating zones so that different foods can be seared, cooked, or warmed simultaneously. Cast iron grates over lava rocks evenly distribute heat to mimic outdoor grilling.

www.mieleusa.com

6 CI 491/492 INDUCTION COOKTOP GAGGENAU

Gaggenau’s new 36-inch induction cooktop is designed to fit large cookware, with five cooking zones configured for fast preparation of a range of dishes. A booster function enables even faster cooking, reducing energy loss. The cooktop is available with a stainless steel or frameless, flush-mounted design with a magnetic knob that can be removed for safety or cleaning.

www.gaggenau-usa.com
COMPANY PROFILE: VALCUCINE

Italian kitchen manufacturer Valcucine has had a lot of firsts since its founding in 1980. The company designed the first colored wood door and the first invisibly framed aluminum kitchen cabinet before it was 15 years old. In 1998, it created the Dimus Association, the first environmental protection association for manufacturers, and a little more than ten years later introduced Invitrum, the industry’s only 100 percent recyclable glass and aluminum base unit. The popular unit uses recycled aluminum parts and a single 10 mm thick structural side panel to reduce new material usage. Last year, the design won the company a Green Good Design Award from the Chicago Athenaeum.

The company uses an anthropological design approach, carefully studying human behavior to make smart kitchens that seem to anticipate a place for everything. As its designers continually explored new functions for the kitchen, the company saw an opportunity to design for the entire home and last year introduced Valcucine Living. The designs are based on the idea that furnishings are replacing walls in contemporary homes, creating an opportunity for new pieces to divide spaces without shutting them off completely. The Living system designs aim to make large spaces more comfortable, while making small spaces more versatile.

Valcucine remains focused on being an innovator in the kitchen, first and foremost. Its latest introduction, the New Logica system, is the second generation of a design introduced in 1996 and touted as Valcucine’s “new kitchen ergonomics system.” Its offspring has many of the same carefully measured features—an 80 cm counter depth, large removable drawers, and Ala and Aerius lift-up door designs—but also includes a newly equipped back section capable of storing or concealing almost any piece of modern kitchen equipment, from small appliances and storage jars to a computer monitor or ventilation hood. The system also contains material advances to ensure its longevity, including a nano-layered top that resists scratches.

Like Invitrum, the unit has recycled/recyclable components and a dematerialized design. Even with the company’s focus on recycled content, Valcucine knows its customers are not looking for a disposable kitchen, they are looking for an heirloom.
100% Recyclable
No emissions
No wood products
Glass cabinets
Glass doors
Glass countertop

A revolution in kitchen construction

design: Gabriele Centazzo

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design: Gabriele Centazzo

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COMPANY PROFILE: GD CUCINE

Founded in Treviso, Italy, in 1969, kitchen manufacturer GD Cucine opened their first United States showroom last year in Chelsea. The new 8,000 square foot, two-story flagship has the allure of an exotic car dealership, a racy orange model called Argento Vivo at its center.

Grounded in the traditions of fine cabinetmaking but keen to explore new technologies, GD Cucine frequently introduces new finishes to enhance wood textures and grains. The new Seta line and established Velvet collection both include heat-treated wood and tactile (“seghettato”) wood. These kitchens’ contemporary lines combined with more traditional materials, wood in particular, still inspire consumers, said the company’s chief of operations, Alberto Paderi. The company has based several of its lines on this trend, including the classic Treviso line and forthcoming collections Kate and Gioiosa, featuring textured wood painted in warm countryside-inspired colors.

As the kitchen has become a second living room, and in some cases the primary living space, consumers have also asked for finely crafted metal and glass to complement their homes’ modern furnishings. To meet the demand, GD sought to match the higher technology content of appliances with highly technical material fabrication. In 2009, Argento Vivo received the Chicago Athenaeum’s Good Design Award as the first kitchen in the industry to use curved glass. Its illuminated circular island with a domed centerpiece that lifts away to reveal an ice bucket reflects the company’s vision of the kitchen as an entertainment center. (Recommended kitchen layouts almost always include an island or peninsula for serving guests.) Technical advances like creating seamless, curved glass and aluminum cabinet fronts turned cabinet walls into finely-tuned backdrops for entertaining. Recent additions including electrical socket pull outs and low-consumption LED lighting allow the designs to look even more like furniture, while still working hard as food-preparation areas.

Learning about technical precision and material selection helps consumers feel more comfortable about purchasing a new kitchen in tough economic times. GD’s pricing structure address a range of budgets while still providing good craftsmanship. Paderi sees consumers paying less attention to brand names, or the idea of focusing on “Italian-made.” Instead, educating and enticing them with the longevity of its designs and materials has become the company’s biggest selling point.

TECHNICAL SPOTLIGHT: CURVED GLASS & BUILT-INS

GD Cucine’s Argento Vivo kitchen, shown with white back-lacquered frosted glass doors and countertops, and a central worksurface and sink in black Corian, was an industry leader with its curved glass design. The island’s circular dining table takes the material a step further, integrating a recessed wine cooler-fridge bowl and internal LED illumination.
In 1931 a company called August Siekmann Möbelwerke exhibited its first products at Germany’s Leipzig Trade Fair. By 1953, they had sold more than one million of their “kitchen dressers.” The same year, Siekmann presented its version of a reform kitchen, with interconnected cabinets and functional interiors. The company SieMatic was born in 1960, bringing with it the world’s first completely built-in kitchen design. Last year, SieMatic celebrated its 50th anniversary with a reincarnation of the 6006 model it introduced in its first year. The company credits much of its success to the kitchen’s handle-free design, a revolutionary idea at the time. It has worked to tweak the continuous grip-channel design for better ergonomics and visual appeal, maintaining tight control of the machining of that one element as it has reappeared again and again over the decades.

The company is also forging ahead with completely new designs, based on the idea that the traditional family home has evolved into one big entertainment center. “The home is being more and more professionalized,” said a release about two of SieMatic’s newest kitchens, the S1 and S2. These are designed to integrate all of the high-tech components modern customers have come to rely on, including television and Internet.

While SieMatic’s newest kitchen takes a step back in time for inspiration, it is still determined forward-thinking. The BeauxArts.02, on which the company collaborated with Chicago designer Mick De Giulio, has a lighter, more linear look than its original 2006 design, also by De Giulio. Though the system has already been released in the European markets, it is in the larger U.S. kitchens that its many design elements come together best. The look is sophisticated, too, with dark ebonized walnut doors contrasting with stainless steel drawer fronts and polished sterling grey glass.

“With the BeauxArts.02 look, where you’ve got symmetry and asymmetry, gloss veneer, matte lacquer, and other finishes—to put all of that into one design you need more room,” said Hans Henkes, the SieMatic USA’s general manager of marketing and sales. It also takes a strong eye for design. In that area, the company sees itself as a leader. “That is what traditional American kitchen manufacturers miss,” said Henkes. “They are manufacturers, not designers. Leadership in design is where we want to position ourselves.”
SieMatic BeauxArts.02
the next generation

Everything you want in a kitchen. Everything you expect from a SieMatic original.
The stage is set. Coming soon in 2011.
COMPANY PROFILE:
ASTER CUCINE

Last year at Eurocucina, kitchen manufacturer Aster Cucine debuted the Timeline kitchen, the Italian company’s first collaboration with New York-based firm, Workshop/apd. Such collaborations between a major Italian kitchen manufacturer and a U.S. designer have happened rarely, if ever, but point to exciting potential for the future in kitchen design.

Jacob Kindler, U.S. managing director of Aster Cucine, was a longtime friend of Workshop/apd principals Matthew Berman and Andrew Kotchen, but it took years to persuade his nearly 30-year-old company that hiring an American team would give Aster a new insight into what American consumers want. The collaboration considers the larger scale of U.S. kitchens and the more traditional tastes of consumers here, while maintaining strict Italian manufacturing standards. The team used vintage European materials that could be rendered with modern lines, a combination that should please buyers considering the resale value of their home and fearful of being over-the-top modern, said Kindler.

New York-based Berman and Kotchen drew upon historical craftsmanship and the importance of material selection in those trades to design the collection, combining sixteenth-century Venetian ceruse finishes, chemically patinated stainless steel, oxidized mirror glass, and wire mesh inspired by French country cabinetry. “It’s a modern interpretation of traditional detailing,” said Kotchen, “plus an Italian understanding of knowing how to put it all together.” The kitchens also showcase manufacturing techniques not usually seen in Italian cabinetry. Doors are built with inset handles, a style common to prewar American designs, but unfamiliar to Italian manufacturers. Aster also altered the manufacturing process by which they usually round the edge of a curved half-inch border at the base of the cabinetry to give it a cleaner line.

Because kitchens have become extensions of the living area, the Timeline series can be personalized with art panels by Toronto artist Murray Duncan. The etched pieces are incorporated as the customer desires, including as a backsplash or stand-alone cabinet. Their coatings of metallic paints, oil crayons, and resin, add another layer of complexity to the kitchen. The Timeline series is now exclusively on view at Urban Home New York.

TECHNICAL SPOTLIGHT:
VENETIAN CERUSE

The Timeline collection’s white oak cabinetry is treated with a technique that has stood the test of time. Ceruse originally referred to an ingredient known as “white lead.” Mixed with vinegar, it was a popular form of makeup during the 16th century. Also used in paint, the term ceruse now refers to a (lead-free) finish for wood that reveals grain lines while leaving the overall base color of the wood intact.

The result is a soft, ghostly patina that brings out the best of oak cabinetry.
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and urbanism at a price even a poor graduate student could afford. With the arrival of Anthony Vidler’s new collection of essays, and its inclusion of Vidler’s magisterial text on the transformation of urban European contexts under the influence of industrialization, I was transported back to the day I found a used copy of the Stanford Anderson-edited volume On Streets (1986). That text, which lends its title to Vidler’s new volume codified for me an understanding of a city not merely as a series of episodic and discontinuous moments, nor points on a teleological chain, but as a palimpsest—an organic entity strain- ing under the weight of its accumulated histories even as they mutate, degrade, and revive. This new essay collection represents Vidler’s extend- ed meditations on what he broadly calls “modern urban planning,” considered as contiguous with modern architecture (a topic that he considers separately elsewhere) and as that function of architectural practice embodied by architects when they work on an urban scale. Vidler claims that these two “disciplines”—planning and architecture—cannot be treated as separate, yet the emphasis here is definitely more on the macro-scale of urban spatial typologies than on the micro-scale of the isolated building. His project, however, is so much richer than merely parsing a legacy of historical precepts. Within a single paragraph of the preface, he interchangeably uses the terms “analyses of cities,” “history of urbanism,” “modernist planning,” and “town planning,” leading the

Less curious of readers to assume that these all are identical. In fact, the topic of Vidler’s collection is all of the aforementioned and more, grouped under the curiously untranslatable French term urbanisme with all of its implicit and comp- licated discursive frameworks. Few late-twentieth century figures possess Vidler’s erudition across such a broad historical range (notable exceptions include Kurt Forster, Jean-Louis Cohen, Robin Middleton, and the late Manfred Tafuri) and such a fundamental grasp of applied theory, both on proud display here. Each essay is a miniature study unto itself—as so few other essay collections are—while the intellectual strands that bind them arise with limpid alertness. As an architectural historian with feet firmly planted in social history, Vidler (like his contemporary, the late Reyner Banham) departed from the formalism of his mentor, Colin Rowe, in order to expose the intellectual, social, and aesthetic foundations of modern urbanism. In a text from 2000 entitled “Photourbanism: Planning the City from Above and from Below,” Vidler draws on the work of geogra-pher-ethnologist Paul Chombart de Lauwe whose aerial photography from the 1940s confirmed for Le Corbusier his persistent belief in the primacy of the view from above. As Vidler writes, “The aerial view of a city, indeed, is, in Chombert’s terms, the only means of developing a synthetic vision of its social

All Around Guy

Kevin Roche: Architecture as Environment
Yale School of Architecture
116 York St
New Haven, CT
Through May 6

Oakland Museum (1957-1958)

Kevin Roche, Architecture as Environment, on view at the Yale School of Architecture through May 6, celebrates the work of the Pritzker Prize-winning Roche, whose mod- ernist origins are grounded in a desire to improve on the banality of the corporate condition.

Roche worked for many years in the office of Eero Saarinen, and after Saarinen’s death in 1961, created Kevin Roche John Dinkeloo and Associates with his colleague John Dinkeloo, an architect known for much of the technical innovation behind Saarinen’s sublime forms. For Roche, architecture is part of a larger natural and man-made phenomenon, many of his buildings respond directly to the giant scale of transportation networks and economic and environmental systems. As a favorite archi- tect of corporate America, his commissions have also come with large-scale spatial requirements, allowing him to work with and test what he calls the “scale of the future” almost exclusively.

Despite the monumentality of much of his work, he consistently sought to create “more understandable envi- ronments”—and ultimately a happier, more productive worker—through an innova- tive integration of nature and by encouraging human interaction in generous communal spaces.

The first major work of the firm, the Oakland Museum in California, was designed as an integrated infrastructure of public museum and park, with inventive surfaces filling the site such as low lying walls that double as stairs, seating, park, and playground. In the John Deere & Company West Office Building, in Moline, Illinois, as well as the much-celebrated Ford Foundation Headquarters, in New York, the structure is conceptualized as a utopian community of like-minded individuals, with glass-walled offices providing a sense of interconnectivity, transparency, and voyeurism, across a plant-filled public atrium.

In his Union Carbide Corporation World
space. Here, Vidler brilliantly uncovers the intertwined logic of social relations and their invisible yet implicit mapping onto the conventionalized bird's eye view of the urban designer.

While his excellent monograph on Claude-Nicolas Ledoux, and The Writing of the Walls (1987), on the architecture of the late Enlightenment, represent the superb quality of his scholarship in the long form, Vidler's essays have always been, for me, his most captivating and substantial contributions to architectural discussions on the topics of the last 250 years. The popu-
arity of The Architectural Uncanny (1994) revealed the invisible yet implicit logic of social relations and confirmed this suspicion as the text as a social process. But the spatial logic was never fully tested. Within five years the devastating Bhopal chemical disaster and huge financial setbacks left the building 30% vacant. As many of Roche's commissions, the plans were optimistic about the darker side of the global economy that enabled them. The exhibition is ingeniously designed to travel, and is for the most part comprised of large suspended photographs that hint at the scale of many of the projects on display but offer limited views of the buildings. Influenced by Roche's own poetic use of reflective glass, mirrored mylar coats many surfaces, offering a shimmering reflection of building models and at times creating a not unpleasant interruption within the narrative sequence.

Among the highlights are the examples of slideshows Roche uses to present the analysis of spatial organization that leads him to his final forms. These power-point style slides often feature cut-paper diagrams and colorful painted mylar plans that reveal Roche as a masterful spatial thinker and also a fantastic storyteller. These filmic slideshow moments reveal the thinking, processes, and person behind the architecture. Roche replaces the notion of architect-as-visionary with architect-as-organizer, acknowledging of the power of architecture to harness processes, and person.

Shannon Harvey is a Curator and Designer Based in New York.

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“WELL, SOMEBODY’S GOT TO DO IT”

This is a refrain I have heard over the years from many architects in reference to my firm’s choice to design supportive housing for special needs individuals: the mentally ill, the frail elderly, the chronically homeless, the working poor, among other marginalized groups. The comment is meant to suggest that while perhaps a noble and laudable pursuit, this type of work is gritty, unglamorous and underpaid, and ultimately not worthy of an architect’s design interest.

While the work certainly has its frustrations and challenges, especially on the budgetary and bureaucratic side, I would like to suggest that the building type presents design opportunities that are richer and more satisfying than commonly understood.

Our firm is now completing the last two of six new ‘supportive SROs’ (Single Room Occupancy) built throughout Brooklyn and the Bronx. This type of hybrid housing, widely considered to be the single most successful solution to homelessness for individuals, blends studio apartments with congregate spaces like common rooms, exercise areas, library, counseling offices, and laundry.

One of the primary challenges, and perhaps the greatest design opportunity, lies in the sites we find. With the current scarcity of inexpensive lots having wide street frontage, the majority of building sites which have been left to not-for-profit developers and their architects have been the irregular “left-over” parcels: narrow on street frontage and deep in proportion; curved, triangular, or trapezoidal in shape; sloping from grade or with rock outcroppings.

The high density of the SRO housing program requires that these buildings be ‘shoe-horned’ onto their sites, and the result is a great variation of building forms in spite of a similarity of program. We see it as a ‘case study’ in urban-renewal infill.

The solving of the program puzzle within as-of-right zoning and a budget of less than $300 per square foot can be used as an opportunity to innovate and invent. And this sometimes leads to unexpected results. As an example, our 72-unit HUD-funded Domenech Residence designed for Common Ground in Brownsville (Gold LEED pending) is a U-shaped building wedged into an 80-foot wide and 155-foot deep lot. The narrow and deep dimensions of the lot precluded a typical double-loaded unit organization: instead single-loaded corridors along both side lot-lines allow abundant natural light to be brought into the public corridors at every floor. By running the bearing walls parallel to the street and opposed to along the courtyard length, the 30-foot wide court could then be skinned by seven-story checkerboard surfaces of Kalwall. This 2-3/4-inch thick material with high thermal value solves the simultaneous design problems of envelope efficiency, usable space and light in the units, and large-scale patterning of the courtyard facades.

A massing play was presented on the trapezoidal site across from Bronx Park. Here, the narrow street frontage facing west towards the Park was used as a means to privilege the common elements as a program-stacked “entry pavilion.” A figured court mediates the splayed site geometry while differentiating the public spaces from the taller double-loaded unit mass behind.

While each site condition came with its own puzzles and pleasures, in all six cases plans and sections were constantly refined for maximum efficiencies and spatial effect: variegated ceiling heights compressed and then raised within the unit entry to suggest double-loaded configurations pierced at strategic moments to allow natural light into public corridors and waiting areas, and larger scale “collective” figures carved into punched fields of regular openings. Environmentally progressive systems and elements were employed in each building iteration despite their low budget, including high performance exterior envelopes with central heating and cooling fan coils, green roofs, gearless elevators, energy efficient lighting and appliances, recycled and recyclable materials.

Beyond the design, problem-solving and technical strategies remain the often-ignored social and political implications of this type of public housing. Contemporary architects sometime overlook the fact that the Modern Movement, while often associated with a particular style and use of materials, was also one with a strong social agenda, especially in the area of multi-family housing. Until the 70’s, many architectural practices included housing as a fundamental part of their repertory, and it is only in the last few decades that this type of work has slowly disappeared from the mix, replaced in part by luxury housing marketed as brand-name architecture on the one hand and on the other barebones “match-box” low-budget housing often produced as back-office bread and butter work. It does not have to be this way.

Now, in fact, might be an excellent time for architects to reconsider how their talents could be stretched and exercised by expanding their range, embracing the Modern Movement’s social imperative to reverse the inequalities we see in our world, roll up their sleeves and get gritty.
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