The foreclosure crisis has upended old assumptions about the relative prosperity of cities versus suburbs. In many regions, waves of foreclosures have hit the suburbs hardest. In the second iteration of their “Issues in Contemporary Architecture” residency and exhibition series, MoMA and PS 1 will ask five teams to design interventions for five cities.

In February, the race began at the London Olympics. It wasn’t a race with torches, sweat, and medals, but one to open the Velodrome on time and on budget. Designed by London-based Hopkins Architects, the Velodrome, which will host the Olympic and Paralympic cycling tournaments in 2012, was the last venue to start construction at the East London Park and the first to be completed.

Arquitectonica’s Revel Casino and 53-story tower rises over urban blight.

Say “bridge” and most people think “cars.” But Squibb Park Bridge connecting Brooklyn Heights to Brooklyn Bridge Park will be strictly for the walking public. “Pedestrian connectivity is the challenge of the next generation,” said Ted Zoli, technical director for bridges at HNTB. “In an urban environment it makes less and less sense for pedestrians to take back seat.”

Visitors to Atlantic City can walk indoors block after block to the casino, without ever smelling the ocean or seeing sunlight hit the sand. But with business down and competition for casinos from neighboring states heating up, state leaders in Trenton were concerned that the potential of the city’s prime assets—the ocean, the marina, and the Boardwalk—was being overlooked. Bluntly put, Governor Chris Christie and state legislators considered it problematic that any major planning or zoning overhaul needed to go through City Hall. The solution came in the form of a state-controlled tourism district run by the state.
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When did museums change their mission to focus on urban planning and civic renewal? There have, of course, been museum-sponsored exhibitions based on urban research before, including Lewis Mumford’s housing analysis at MoMA’s 1932 International Style exhibition and MOCA’s seminal 1989 Case Study Houses exhibit that generated new housing prototypes. But museums have to my knowledge never attempted to claim they are “shaping” a city in quite the way we are witnessing today in New York.

This past week, for example, lower Manhattan witnessed The Festival of Ideas for a New City, a San Gennaro-like street fair billed as a “new collaborative initiative . . . to harness the power of the creative community to imagine the future city and explore ideas that will shape it.” This undertaking was created by The New Museum, although it claimed to have been co-organized by many of the leading downtown cultural institutions. In any case, all they seem to have forgotten that it should not be a matter of “harnessing” the community but speaking to its residents and grassroots community groups. Instead, it felt like a branding event for the museum that lazily rested on already-formed exhibitions (“Cronocasos”) by Rem Koolhaas was at the Venice Biennale in 2010) and twice-told lectures by South American mayors. These are all worthy ventures for sure. But how do they really confront the myriad of problems—affordable housing leaps to mind—that these areas must face? Weekend street fairs and authoritative pronouncements about the “future” of the city do little more than promote more of the kind of heat-seeking shops on the Bowery that have already popped up alongside the New Museum.

The first week in May also saw the announcement by MoMA of its own upcoming 2012 exhibition, Foreclosed: Rehousing the American Dream. Selected architectural practices will investigate different American suburban conditions with an eye to bringing to bear the creative architectural thinking that has largely been absent from these communities. At an introductory symposium, Buell Center trustee Harry Cobb asked (actually demanded) that each of the firms promise to keep “the architect at the center of” the research project. It was not a great way to start, but with MoMA’s architecture curator Barry Bergdoll and Columbia’s Reinhold Martin, director of the Temple Hoyne Buell Center for the Study of American Architecture leading the project, we can hope participants will not only keep the architect at the center but also collaborate with residents and experts before they design any possible futures.

Finally, at a tiny gallery in Williamsburg, the Institute of Wishful Thinking presented Artists In Residence for the US Government, a project that takes as its starting point the notion that real change must start from the bottom-up organization of people not cultural projects. The Institute brought together artists who have been involved in collaborative art collectives since the 1960s with the hope that they will submit ideas about how to engage with various government agencies and bring their abilities and knowledge into direct contact with urban policy-making.

From museums to art collectives, it’s clear that many people want to have a voice in problem solving. First, all of them must stand back and confront these issues with the people who will be affected most. We need experts who point to global solutions not just make pronouncements, but we also need to talk locally if we are to deal with New York’s considerable problems. If the museums have any other agenda than that they should go back to collecting and displaying objects of aesthetic and historical importance.
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**JUDD-MENT DAY**

New York is having a Donald Judd moment. A dozen of the late artist’s anodized aluminum boxes just went on view at David Zwirner’s two outposts on West 19th Street, and a host of events around the city sent architects, designers, and critics mining the question that is already a bumper-sticker in Marfa: WWJD? (What would Donald Judd do?). Rama Chorpash, director of product design at Parsons’ School of Constructed Environments, had a stilted conversation at the gallery with Judd’s son, Flavin, who brought along a Judd chair for audience members to sit on, not contemplate.

Over at MoMA, Barry Bergdoll moderated a panel discussion on Judd’s home at 101 Spring Street, a cast iron classic where the artist lived and worked from 1966 to 1994. Architecture Research Officer’s Adam Yarinsky, lead architect on the building’s restoration, had a stilted conversation at the gallery with Judd’s son, Flavin, who brought along a Judd chair for audience members to sit on, not contemplate.

The 400-foot path drops from Squibb Park (far right) to Brooklyn Bridge Park (left).

**NEXT STOP, PIANO**

One philanthropist has taken those F*%$& FRANK GEHRY t-shirts to heart. A deep-pocketed Iowan architecture buff has offered $300 million to any city that hires someone other than Gehry to design its art museum. In three months, he has seen no takers. That may change in the wake of Joe Queenan’s recent Wall Street Journal piece, in which the unnamed philanthropist compares Gehry’s structures to “bashed” sardine cans, “intergalactic recycling center[s],” and a Czech dance hall with a “7 47 plowed right into the façade.” Blaming status-conscious cities, the anti-Gehry crusader said, “There’s nothing a local tourism board or chamber of commerce fears more than acquiring a reputation for being un-cool.”

**Don’t be left in the dark.**

Brushstroke, a Japanese restaurant by chef David Bouley that has been seven years in the works, finally threw open its doors in late April. Designed by the Japanese firm Super Potato, the interiors are serene and graceful, evocative of a Japanese temple. Earthy hues of stone, honey-colored woods, reclaimed timber, and salvaged steel clad the walls of the main dining room, where freestanding sculptural metal panels create intimate corners within the 2,000 square foot space. Clear glass bubble fixtures illuminate the individual wooden tables, and a counter of thick-cut wooden slabs flanks an open kitchen. In a cozy bar and lounge area adjoining the main dining room, the walls become even more textural—text-heavy, in fact: they are built from over 20,000 old paperback books (page edges facing out). The books are stacked floor-to-ceiling to create a woven pattern, echoed by the fine, interwoven stripes of upholstered chairs.

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**IMPRESSIVE FEAT continued from front page**

As Brooklyn Heights Promenade clears the Brooklyn Queens Expressway before ramping down into Squibb Park, the small park seemed a logical takeoff point for a new bridge to connect the promenade with the new riverside park. Initial plans called for a straight and steep shot descending between the property lines of two development parcels. But Zoli saw an opportunity in an abandoned little sliver of green between the BQE and Furman Street below. The designer proposed a meandering path that would take visitors out into the tree tops of the small sliver, then track back across Furman at an angle, before turning again to clear the property lines of the parcels. The bridge then takes a sharp turn north before merging into a landscape slope and, eventually, the park itself. The extra turns make the 400-foot-long expanse particularly wheelchair-friendly, allowing for a 5 percent grade drop from a 32 foot height. The two main spans are 240 feet long and will be assembled off site for quick installation. Concrete piers host the wood-framed bridge high above the park blending it into the hard surfaces of Squibb Park and the BOE. By using the same black locust wood found throughout Brooklyn Bridge Park, Zoli chose a sustainable and untreated material often overlooked for urban bridges. As a practical matter the lightweight wood is also perfect for soil conditions that Zoli described as terrible for supporting substantial weight. “We certainly built wood bridges in our past, and many of these bridges last hundreds of years,” said Zoli, who grew up hiking the Adirondacks and was inspired by trail bridges. The wooden spans incorporate commercial off-the-shelf pipes for connections and galvanized steel for handrails. “We struggled a bit with the piers,” said Zoli. “At one point we had timber piers and followed the logic of a pier-and-cable bridge. But there needed to be a robustness to them, a good strong foundation.”

“The Squibb Park Bridge is not only a remarkably beautiful amenity but a key connector between Brooklyn Bridge Park and the Brooklyn Heights and adjacent communities served by the A/C and 2/3 subway lines,” said Brooklyn Bridge Park President Regina Myer. She credits the Borough President Marty Markowitz and the New York City Council with securing the $4.9 million needed to build the bridge, which is expected to open next summer.

TOM STOECKER
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NEW MATH MUSEUM COUNTS ON MADISON SQUARE PARK

The Guggenheim Engages New York’s Urban Environment

Jumping the Walls

The Guggenheim’s Frank Lloyd Wright building is one of the most iconic buildings in New York, but for its spring 2011 season the museum is taking to the streets. The contemporary art museum turned its focus to urban life with intervals: Futurefarmers, which investigates the craft of shoe-making.

“The shoe is a good vehicle to start speaking about how you perceive your life in the city,” explained David van der Leer, the Guggenheim’s assistant curator of architecture and urban studies, who organized the installation. The ten-day show that ended on May 14 was inspired by Simon the Shoemaker’s studio, the setting of philosophical conversations between Socrates and young students, and strives to help people find another way to think about the city they walk in and their lives, said van der Leer.

The installation was created by Amy Franceschini and Michael Swaine of Futurefarmers, a San Francisco art collective founded to create projects that encourage a different way of thinking. Van Der Leer said the brief was to find ways to move visitors out of the museum. “We’re trying to do many programs looking at the city, while being in the city. Amy and Michael developed a project that includes walks, dialogues, strange places, food collecting, and it’s quite beautiful to see.” Though the exhibit was anchored in the museum’s rotunda by a re-creation of the shoemaker’s atelier, its venues ranged from the Gowanus Canal and Jamaica Bay to the General Society of Mechanics and Tradesmen of the City of New York. Events included “The History of the Shoe,” “New York Shoemakers Confront the Industrial Revolution,” and “The Urban Ecology of New York: The General Society of Mechanics and Tradesmen of the City of New York.”

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THE GUGGENHEIM ENGAGES NEW YORK’S URBAN ENVIRONMENT

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track. Cited by Taylor as a primary reason for graceful concave lid illustrates this pursuit make it beautiful through its function,” said Mike Taylor, a senior partner at Hopkins.

The efficient, lightweight design celebrates the 42-degree inclined track and the sport’s dynamism. One of the most elegant articulations of its design concept is the 360-degree glazing wrapping the building. “We wanted to develop a strong visual connectivity to the Park,” said Taylor. With half the seats in the roof above the glazed ribbon and the rest below, the Velodrome makes a conscious link to the surrounding one-mile road circuit and four miles of mountain biking and BMX tracks.

“The less tangible, intellectual ambition was to emulate a bicycle’s engineering and make it beautiful through its function,” said Taylor, of the buildings design. The venue’s graceful concave lid illustrates this pursuit of beauty, directly informed by the internal track. Cited by Taylor as a primary reason for completing on time, the cable-net roof was erected in one morning and formed and tensioned over six weeks. Though cable-net is not a new technology, it’s usually covered with a lightweight skin. At the 1972 Munich Olympics, for example, Günther Behnisch’s cable-net roof supported acrylic panels, while Hopkins’ innovative design has been applied to its cladding: the cable-net supports a rigid structure of nine-inch deep panels, followed by a foot of insulation, and a conventional standing-seam metal roof.

The collaborative design team included track designer Ron Webb, who previously worked on the Olympics in Sydney in 2000 and Beijing in 2008, and British champion cyclist Chris Hoy. Unlike events, where official track dimensions are identical, cycling tracks have a degree of individuality in terms of their length, steepness of the curves, and start and finish points. Most significant, perhaps, was the level of input from Hoy, who also helped to judge the design competition in 2007. His involvement from the outset meant that critical issues weren’t merely tacked-on, such as door curtains and extra insulation. “Temperature wasn’t very important—cyclists like to be hot,” said Taylor, and the proximity of the rest-rooms to the track itself. “It has to be a quick dash before a race.”

The punctual completion also signifies an important marker for the progress of the Olympics, which is due to start in eighteen months. The Velodrome’s completion has also set the tone for the Park’s other buildings and is a far cry from the tumult at Hadid’s Aquatics Centre for the Olympics Development Authority. It is a ray of light in a turbulent history of false starts and ongoing budgetary constraints.

Though the 2012 venue is Hopkins’ first velodrome, it won’t be his last: his firm just won the job of revitalizing the 1948 London Olympics’ velodrome in Herne Hill, South London.

It’s academic

Usually it’s what is inside a school that counts. But at Manhattan’s Learning Spring School, the exterior promotes learning as well. Established for children diagnosed on the autism spectrum, the school needed a facade that could limit the effects of external stimuli and help students focus on the lessons at hand. To meet this challenge in a way that would function both academically and architecturally, architect Platt Byard Dovell White wrapped the zinc and terra cotta facade with an aluminum and stainless steel sunscreen, creating a sheltered LEED for Schools-certified environment inside, and a new vision for learning in the heart of Gramercy.

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THE SCIENCE OF COMFORT
Ever since it opened in 1986, the Jacob K. Javits Convention Center has been a bit of a disappointment. While the Empire State Development Corporation (ESD) had the wherewithal to hire a good architect to design the facility—James Freed of I.M. Pei and Partners (now Pei Cobb Freed)—it never scraped together the budget to fulfill Freed’s vision. To begin with, the northern bay of the proposed structure was cut out of the plans. Then, the ESD procured all of the materials and construction services as cheaply as possible. As a result, there were problems with the innovative space frame structural system that delayed the project. When the building was at last completed, the roof leaked. Rather than fix the problem right away, maintenance was deferred indefinitely, and the building was allowed to deteriorate.

Those, however, were not the only problems that faced architecture firms FXFowle and Epstein when they were brought on to renovate and expand the facility five years ago. In the two and a half decades that separate Freed’s design and the beginning of the rehabilitation effort, Javits fell well behind the curve of other American cities’ convention centers. At 675,000 square feet, it weighed in on the small side. In fact, it is the 18th or 19th smallest in the U.S. It also came up short on meeting rooms, which make up as much as 30 percent of the square footage in contemporary convention centers. Its gray-bronze glass skin—the pinnacle of performance glazing in its day—gave the Javits a dark, dour aspect counter to that expected from its Crystal Palace-style design. And then, perhaps most evident to conventiongoers, there was the unwinding asphalt-heavy arrival sequence, which wasn’t what it should be for such an important building (and underscores how the Javits failed to become the economic generator for the West Side that it was supposed to be).

In its initial studies, the design team looked at all of those problems in the context of an overall urban revitalization program that included a new subway expansion and a rezoning of the neighborhood that allows for a more than 21 floor-to-area ratio in new developments. They presented a proposal that expanded the Javits to encompass 1.3 million square feet, reworked the entry plaza to create a pedestrian friendly landscaped urban space, improved truck marshaling and storage, replaced the envelope with a new high-performance curtain-wall and skylights, added a 6.75-acre green roof, upgraded mechanical and electrical systems to reduce energy consumption by 26 percent, and renovated the interior. Regrettably, as happened to Mr. Freed all those years ago, design aspiration came head to head with the karate chop of political budget cuts. What began as a $1.7 billion project was, in the end, whittled down to $465 million, all collected in a bond fund established years ago to raise money to fix up the convention center and fed by a hotel tax (the Javits tax). Faced with those reduced means, the team moved ahead with what was really important: replacing the enclosure with a green roof and high-performance cladding. First and foremost, however, they erected a pre-engineered Butler structure to the north, adding 80,000 square feet to the facility to keep it operational while the renovation of the existing building progresses. While that was ongoing, structural engineer firm Weidlinger (the original engineers on the project) conducted a thorough analysis of the space frame structure, deeming it, with the exception of a few rusty spots, to be sound. The green roof was seen as a priority because the area is expected soon to be home to much taller buildings, an inevitability that will make the Javit’s crown an integral part of its exterior aspect. It also promises to increase the building’s insulation values for much of the time, the only exception being when it is cold and wet. Nonetheless, work is now underway to rip out the existing roof and build it back up. Work also includes replacing all of the center’s HVAC units with high-efficiency modernizations, a fact—along with other changes to the electronics and lighting control systems on the interior—that will help reduce the building’s energy use by 26 percent. The real challenge, however, has been replacing the glazing. The original cladding system was based on the building’s space frame structure, which established a ten-foot-by-ten-foot module that was further subdivided by a split Mullion system, creating four five-foot-by-five-foot glass panels per module. The team looked at the possibility of simply replacing the glass, but that proved problematic. The existing system was so deteriorated—and there were so many unknown conditions—that no subcontractor would touch it. Plus, simply replacing the glass wouldn’t have provided the opportunity of putting a thermal break in the system, meaning that, no matter how efficient the new glass proved to be, insulation values would not be much improved. In the end, the team decided to replace the facade entirely. The new system adheres to the ten-by-ten module, however it does so without the vertical mullion, using instead two ten-foot-wide-by-five-foot-high glass panels per module.

The new insulated glass units are treated with high performance coatings and frit patterns and are also much more transparent than their predecessors. This factor led to two other major design changes to the Javit’s former aesthetic. The original design had glass covering both transparent as well as opaque parts of the building, a move that was made with impunity since the glass was so dark and showed no difference between either condition. The new transparent glass does not offer that. Instead, the team is placing textured stainless steel panels over the opaque parts of the building where glass used to be. The team is also leading the original designers to paint the exposed space frame structure dark brown, a look that did not seem to fit with the new more transparent glass. The refreshed structure will now be painted a light grey.

Though FXFowle’s initial scheme for the renovation and expansion of the Javits had to be scaled back due to budget cuts, the firm was able to increase the building’s energy use by 26 percent through the addition of a green roof (the second largest in the nation), re-cladding the structure with high-performance glass, and upgrading the lighting fixtures and control system.
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NATION BUILDING

As South Korea’s economy stabilizes, its ambitions to be recognized as a major international business hub is leading to a bold building strategy. Ann Lok Lui investigates how Korea aims to impress the world not only with its tall towers but its large-scale sustainable planning.
stand 126 stories high and the Seoul Digital Media City Landmark Tower—renamed Seoul Light Tower—will rise over the capital at 133 stories as the tallest building in East Asia when completed. While the two high-rises began differently—the developer Lotte Group directly offered SOM the Busan tower, while the Seoul Light Tower was won in an international competition (with Gensler plus the local Samwoo Architects on the team)—both towers respond to the demand from public and private sectors in Korea for skyscrapers to represent a new Korean identity.

“We have seen a larger demand for super high-rise buildings out of Korea than from most other countries,” said Mustafa Abadan, an SOM design partner. “This has been driven by the fact that Korean contractors have been involved in the construction in the world’s tallest buildings. Part of this desire to build a homegrown super-tall tower is for the contractors to establish themselves as the contractors who will be building the super-tall buildings of the future.” Several such towers from Korea will be featured in the upcoming exhibition “Supertall!” this July at the Skyscraper Museum.

Busan, like Seoul, is becoming the launching pad for something of a skyscraper arms-race: another New York City firm, Asymptote Architecture, was commissioned in 2007 to build the World Business Center Solomon Tower, a set of three jagged spires, now under construction, designed to culminate 131 feet higher than SOM’s Busan Lotte. Because Seoul and Busan are mostly horizontal metropolises, sprawling laterally rather than vertically, permits for these high-rises were individually negotiated as anomalies to existing zoning laws. When issuing permits for such major projects, local Korean public authorities require that a certain amount of square footage be dedicated to public amenities. For example, KPF’s 110-story Hyundai Tower in Seoul will house a museum, an orchestra hall, and a cineplex. These policies exemplify a growing public demand for cultural centers and high-end public spaces.

Public interest in art and design is also creating opportunities for architects at smaller scales, including institutional and residential projects. The APAP Openschool, an art school built of eight bright yellow shipping containers, was recently completed by New York-based architects LOT-EK in the city of Anyang. Joel Sanders’ New York office in collaboration with the Korean firm Haeahn Architecture designed the Seongbuk Gate Hills, a complex of 12 private homes in Seoul’s chic Seongbuk-dong neighborhood. Also working in Seongbuk-dong is the Brooklyn-based firm SO-IL, whose design for the new Kukje Art Center is currently in construction.

Comparing Korea to Japan over a decade ago when
architects from Aldo Rossi to Steven Holl were working there, SO-IL principal Florian Idenburg said, “I think the same thing is happening in Korea, there is a growing appreciation for design and also for being Korean.” SO-IL has two Korean staff on the Kukje Gallery team, part of a growing trend wherein local designers who studied abroad then practice in Korea with local or international firms.

Jae K. Kim, the young founder of Counterdesign, recently completed his own first project in Seoul. Kim studied architectural engineering in Seoul before attending the Massachusetts Institute of Technology where he currently studies.

Kim’s approach to the Bikyoshoki House was born of his work experience at a local construction company and his education at MIT. “People [in Korea] are now starting to be interested in design itself,” said Kim. “Before, it was really profit-oriented. Now things are changing, and I’m not talking just about developers. I’m talking about people. They’re more interested in environments between architecture and people.”

The concrete and steel Bikyoshoki House defies both conventional traditional Korean and American housing typologies: it is a single-family dwelling in a place where most city-dwellers prefer high-rise condominiums, and its spatial organization is provocative. With angular concrete forms paired with glass railings and glazing, the design seems to herald a new Korean architectural identity free of overt historical iconography. While in the past few years, there were few opportunities for small firms to work on single-family residential projects—in the way young architects do in the States—such projects are becoming a common testing ground for young talent.

Sanin is currently working on the construction of ten such private houses in Jisan Waldhaus, a townhouse development of 50 houses built by five architects, all Koreans apart from Sanin. The homes at Jisan Waldhaus—which uses contemporary materials like steel and cast concrete—show off the growing collaborative relationships between international and Korean architects resulting in a new modern suburban typology.

“I think there is a new sense of critical and intellectual discussion about what is best for Korea,” said Sanin, adding that there is increasing confidence, especially among architects, in engaging with their own history objectively and creatively.

Brant Coletta, an SOM managing director working on the Seoul Light Tower, noted that rather than building a Korean cultural identity drawn from well known historical icons or philosophy, there is a desire to look forward and build toward a vision of what Korea could be in the future. And that, not surprisingly, is of considerable interest to architects both inside and beyond South East Asia.

CHICAGO-BASED ANN LOK LUI WRITES ABOUT ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN. SHE IS A RECENT GRADUATE OF CORNELL’S ARCHITECTURE SCHOOL.
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MAY 2011

WEDNESDAY 18
LECTURE
Mark Foster Gage
Orusul Book Talk: Composites, Surfaces, and Software—High Performance Architecture
6:00 p.m.
Center for Architecture
536 LaGuardia Pl.
cfa.aiany.org

Matthew Bronski
Design and Construction Durability
6:00 p.m.
290 Atlantic Wharf
Boston
www.architects.org

EXHIBITION OPENING
Knoll Textiles, 1945–2010
1945–2010
The Bard Graduate Center Gallery
18 West 86th St.
wwww.bgc.bard.edu

THURSDAY 19
LECTURES
Teddy Cruz
Politics of Affordable Housing
6:00 p.m.
Center for Architecture
536 LaGuardia Pl.
cfa.aiany.org

Samuel G. White
McKim, Mead & White
6:00 p.m.
ALWAYS
52 South Pearl St.
3rd Floor
Albany
www.aiany.org

Ira Giller, Patricia Galaich
Case Studies of The Villa Maria Housing Project & The Waldorf Hotel
7:00 p.m.
Miami Design Preservation League
1001 Ocean Dr.
Miami Beach, FL
www.mdpl.org

EXHIBITION OPENINGS
Exhibition of Work by Newly Elected Members and Recipients of Honors and Awards
American Academy of Arts and Letters
633 West 53rd St.
www.artsandletters.org

Architectural Walking Tours of Greater Philadelphia
Time and location vary.
Philadelphia
www.preservationalliance.com

MAY 23
EXHIBITION CLOSING
Projects 94: Henrik Olesen
The Museum of Modern Art
11 West 53rd St.
www.moma.org

TUESDAY 24
LECTURE
Paul Katz, Rafael Vinoly, Leslie Robertson, Cliff Pearson, Toru Hasegawa
Dialogues for a New Japan
5:30 p.m.
Center for Architecture
536 LaGuardia Pl.
cfa.aiany.org

Idra Moustt, Scott Pobiner
Design Thinking for Creativity and Business Innovation
Harvard Club of NYC
6:00 p.m.
www.cfa.aiany.org

SYMPOSIUM
Designing with Web Fonts: The Evolution of Typography in the Digital Realm
3:30 p.m.
Microsoft New England Research & Development Center
One Memorial Dr.
Cambridge, MA
www.aiiga.org

EXHIBITION OPENING
Flora and Fauna, MAD about Nature
Museum of Arts and Design
2 Columbus Circle
www.madmuseum.org

WEDNESDAY 25
LECTURE
Stavy Shoemaker Rauen, John Fraser, Elle Kumos de Voss
Restaurant Design: Stretching Boundaries
6:00 p.m.
The Gabarron Foundation
149 East 38th St.
www.cultrio.com

EVENTS
Around Manhattan Official NYC Architectural Tour
2:15 p.m.
Chelsea Piers (Pier 62)
222 West 22nd St.
www.newmuseum.org

THURSDAY 26
LECTURE
Frederic Schwartz
Vadodara Airport, Gujarat, India—Frederic Schwartz Architects
6:00 p.m.
Superstructure Auditorium
32 Avenue of Americas
(ATT Bldg), 13th Floor
www.sisney.info

Jennifer Gray
Gallery Talks: Building Collections: Recent Acquisitions of Architecture
11:30 a.m.
The Donald B. and Catherine C. Marron Atrium
The Museum of Modern Art
11 West 53rd St.
www.moma.org

Celebrating the 100th Anniversary of the Stephen A. Schwarzman Building of The New York Public Library: The Whys and Hows of Neo-Historic Architecture
6:30 p.m.
Mid-Manhattan Library
405 Fifth Ave.
www.nypl.org

SYMPOSIUM
GLOBAL Design NYU—Elsewhere Envisioned
8:30 a.m.
NYU Gallatin Labowitz Main Gallery
One Washington Pl.
www.gdnysu.com

LFLM
The Bungalows of Rockaway: A Documentary Screening with Jennifer Callahan and Elizabeth Logan Harris
6:30 p.m.
The Museum Shop
Tenement Museum
108 Orchard St.
www.tenement.org

SUNDAY 29
EXHIBITION CLOSING
Thinking Big: Recent Design Acquisitions
Brooklyn Museum
200 Eastern Parkway, Brooklyn
www.brooklynmuseum.org

MONDAY 30
EXHIBITION CLOSING
Katrin Sigurdardottir at the Met
The Metropolitan Museum of Art
1000 Fifth Ave.
www.metmuseum.org

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You could call Thoreau’s cabin on Walden Pond a “machine for living in,” but it might not have much to do with modernism. “I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life,” Thoreau wrote of the spartan one-room house he designed and built for himself by hand in 1845 on 14 acres near Lincoln, Massachusetts. Confounded by existence, he was told by a good friend to go live in a hut. This could have crossed Philip Johnson’s mind when he marched down into the woods in New Canaan, Connecticut in 1945 and sited the iconic Glass House. Accused of being a Fascist, good friends told him to get out of Manhattan. But Johnson—New England’s most famous modernist, if not Transcendentalist—spent the next 60 years shuffling the scenery on his 47 acres: moving trees, stripping forest, building hills, and ringing his front-row view with a circus of out-buildings of his own creation. Construction as contemplation. This would be kind of like Thoreau filling in Walden Pond, or stocking it with Chinese carp. These two men—100 years apart in their ambitions—share an unlikely center stage in Tomorrow’s Houses: New England Modernism with a text by Alexander Gorlin and photography by Geoffrey Gross. With 27 houses pictured and detailed, including the Glass House, the book is a useful document of American residential modernism on the East Coast. Though it is difficult to understand in its selections: there were roughly 80 ‘modern’ houses built in New Canaan alone, three-quarters of which still stand, ready for their close-ups. And there are also no archival photographs in the book—only those by Gross—with which to compare original intentions against what exists now after decades of ownership, renovation, or restoration. But the document is valuable in its way: the debate over whether to preserve these structures continues. Even incomplete, it is an important step towards a catalogue. Gorlin’s introduction—a series of quick historical abridgements, including New England settlement, Puritanism, European modernism and Melville’s “Moby Dick”—is a one-way love affair with the idea that 20th century residential architecture in the suburban woods or on the second-home shores of Connecticut and Massachusetts has a spiritual alignment with the Transcendentalist soul-searching of the 19th century or the Puritanism of the 17th and 18th centuries. In his defense, he didn’t come up with the idea himself. Gorlin’s modernist masters, like Walter Gropius, aligned themselves in America self-consciously with the great natural essayists like Thoreau. Gropius built his own home in the same neck of the woods, a fifteen-minute walk from Walden. Philip Johnson loved to ‘confess’ that he was ‘terribly, terribly Puritan’—as though meddle-some self-denial was the key to successful design—but it always sounded like it had more to do with the continued on page 18

Ansel Adams once wrote, “A true photograph need not be explained, nor can it be contained in words.” This is what I think as I look at the work of Dutch photographer Iwan Baan.

The first thing to remember is that Iwan Baan is not an "architectural" photographer. He is a photographer who happens to shoot buildings. In 2010, he was awarded the inaugural Julius Shulman Institute Photography Award. But do not let this mislead you. What is most noticeable about his new book Brasilia-Chandigarh: Living with Modernity is the living part. The architecture is eye-catching, and how could it not be since we are dealing with Oscar Niemeyer and Le Corbusier. But what pops in the photographs are the people interacting with these revolutionary and idealized modernist cities. The buildings are sometimes in shadow, sometimes obscured by blurs of people running through monsoon rains, water streaming over the lens. But the buildings must be talked about. Look at what has happened to them. They are no longer those clean, masterful drawings. These "pure" modernist spaces of Brasilia and Chandigarh continued on page 13
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Opting for a new discourse that is inclusive of modernity that is multifocal—one that does not need to negate the regional—can we have a future without the subaltern? What architecture and literature are now being produced in Caracas, Rio de Janeiro, Brasilia, Sao Paulo, Buenos Aires, Montevideo, Havana, and Ciudad de Mexico speaks to a modernism that is multivalent? To what extent were these cities the location of an international movement that incorporated avant-garde art and architecture within the heart of the city? These are some of the questions that will be addressed at the October conference.

We are just beginning to understand the significance and scope of this period and the substantial list of artists and architects who were previously unknown in the standard texts. We will look at the city from the point of view of the citizen and how architecture cannot be separate from the people that inhabit public and private spaces whether made by architects or not. Some terms taken from Homi K. Bhabha, Edward Said, and Veil Flusser such as “ambivalence,” “hybridization,” and the construction of cultural identities’ will be used to reveal the intrinsic contradictions of the contemporary architectural discourse in order to open a path towards a new discourse that is inclusive of the architectural other.

The Bronx Museum conference will investigate art practices in Latin American that did not follow the standard pedagogy of the art schools. Artists were often also students of architecture during of the golden period of 1929–1960. Latin American architects during this period were themselves influenced by art practices from Europe in the ’20s and ’30s. Carlos Raul Villanueva was living in Paris in 1937 studying at the Institut d’Urbanisme and was the co-designer of the “Diplome de Grand Prix” at the Paris Exhibition. Villanueva writes about his visit to the pavilion designed by Josep Lluis Sert and Lluis Llach and built by the Republican loyalist government in exile.

The indelible first impressions that Villanueva collected included Pablo Picasso’s Guernica, the poetry of Paul Eluard, Joan Miro’s large canvases of an upraised arm and clenched fist, Alexander Calder’s mercury fountain and mobile painted red to symbolize the Spanish Republic, as well as the documentary films shown almost continuously in the auditorium, Madrid ’36 by Luis Buñuel and Spanish Earth by Joris Ivens and Ernest Hemingway that graphically depicted the suffering of the Spanish people during the civil war.

This encounter was fundamental to Villanueva’s identity as a modern architect following a period of 15 years as an ecclesiastic designer in Venezuela. At Hotel Lusteria on Boulevard Raspail, he would sometimes entertain his fellow Venezuelan artists Jesus Soto, Carlos Cruz-Diez and others. The unusual scene was such other artists, poets, and intellectuals as Doménico Lucio Vincenzo Madeline, Jacques Lambert, Paul Lester Wiener, Maurice Rotival, Cesar Vallejo, Antonin Artaud, Juan Larrea, Vladimir Mayakovsky, Julio Galvez, Max Jimenez, Juan Gris, Vicente Huidobro, Jose Bergamin, Rafael Alberti, Federico Garcia Lorca, Andre Malraux, Louis Aragon, and Waldo Frank. Later during the ’50s and ’60s, the expatriate Latin American artists living in Paris such as Lygia Clark, Julio Le Parc, Alejandro Otero, Hélio Oiticica, Lucio Fontana, Carlos Cruz Diez, Jesus Soto, and Cesar Vallejo were all indebted to the architecture that they saw being built in Venezuela, Peru, Mexico, Cuba, Argentina, Uruguay, and Brazil in the 40s and 50s.

If Paul Ricoeur, Kenneth Frampton, and Alexander Tzonis’ advocacy for a “Cultural Regionalism” was ultimately very Euro-centric, their method of discourse opens the way for dispelling longstanding bias and beginning a more complex discussion of modernism not only incorporating the very important work of Alvar Aalto and Jorn Utzon but forming a more “Atlantic” and “Caribbean” view of American architecture. In 1928 the poet Oswald de Andrade in his “Manifesto Antropofago” advocated a “metaphorical cannibalism” as a defense against cultural conformism. This vast territory called “Latin America” has been building art and architecture for centuries and it is time to analyze what makes this modern art and architecture unique.
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