Every summer, the Serpentine Pavilion offers the chosen architects of the plot adjacent to the London gallery a chance to offer a meditation on essential qualities in their work. In this way the pavilion is not only a showcase for designers who haven’t yet built in the UK, but also a physical gauge of architecture’s current preoccupations. This year, it is the garden. Rather than open out the pavilion to the surrounding rolling green of Kensington Gardens, Swiss architect Peter Zumthor, working with landscape designer Piet Oudolf (also responsible for the plantings on New York’s High Line), created a more cloistered atmosphere, planting a dense forest of grasses and shrubs that will soften the edges of the pavilion and make the garden feel more serene. The pavilion’s serenity is the result of the architects’ collaboration, which has been ongoing for two years. Peter Zumthor’s pavilion offers gallery a chance to offer a meditation on essential qualities in their work. In this way the pavilion is not only a showcase for designers who haven’t yet built in the UK, but also a physical gauge of architecture’s current preoccupations.

With all eyes fixed on everything coming up roses on the West Side’s High Line, City Planning has been concentrating on the East Side. The long-term goal of connecting the lushly-landscaped promenades and bike paths of the West Side to the heavily trafficked spaghetti of the East Side moved a step closer with the opening on July 14 of a section of the East River Waterfront Esplanade from Pier 11 at Wall Street to...
BUILDING IN CONTEXT

As architect of the JELD-WEN Field renovation in Portland, Oregon, AECOM created an electric atmosphere for Major League Soccer in the heart of the city. The transformed stadium invites the public into its plazas and fans onto the pitch, connects to transportation and strengthens a vibrant downtown community.

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452 Fifth Avenue / HSBC Tower, NYC - Architect: STUDIO Architects  Developer/Owner: IDB Group

Bank of America Tower at One Bryant Park, NYC - Architect: Cook+Fox Architects & Adamson Associates Architects  Developer/Owner: Durst Organization / One Bryant Park LLC

601 Lexington Avenue, NYC - Architect: Kling Stubbins  Developer/Owner: Boston Properties

The Orion (350 West 42nd St.), NYC - Architect: Cetra / Ruddy Inc.  Developer/Owner: EXTELL Development Co.
The summer is barely half over and with the blistering heat many of us may only be able to think about lakes and beaches. But architects who teach are likely mulling over—in the deep recesses of their summer psyche—what they might be doing in their fall studios or lecture halls.

As with the profession at large, architectural academics today need to rethink and retool their roles. Schools of architecture are going through a truly transformative period and faculty are more than ever being forced to change how and what they teach. The reasons for this change are, of course, tied to the revolutionary power of the computer and of digital design. These tools have been around for already over a decade but as older digitally-challenged faculty are replaced by younger academics, the schools are still rushing to adapt.

While students may still sit at studio tables, make funky study models, and paste rough sketches on the walls, the projects being produced all look like extruded dinosaur bones zigzagging across imaginary—that is, digital—landscapes. The design ajax these models suggest is no longer produced in communal studios but in the computer lab and the personal environment of the digital image.

Recently, with the last school year behind them, architectural academics and deans meet in Segovia, Spain for the International Architectural Education Summit to discuss the changes taking place. Co-organized by Madrid’s IE School of Architecture and UCL it was meant to explore how innovation in architecture is creating and forcing new directions in professional education. The summit featured some of the leading educators in architecture today including Odile Decq, Hitoshi Abe, Stan Allen, Mark Wigley, Brett Steele, Winy Maas, Monica Ponce de Leon, Peter Cook, and others.

The event started with a lecture by Thom Mayne, who as a founder of SCI-Arc knows something about new models of architectural education. He began by calling for stronger links between the profession and the academy and stressed the need for educational diversity, because, as he noted, “in the age of globalization, student portfolios are becoming more and more similar.” Finaly, going against the grain of the digital laboratory, he called for architecture to become more locally based and for the uniqueness of place to remain a part of the profession.

All of the speakers who followed Mayne took up his call for increased inter-disciplinary collaboration—but with caveats. The brilliant French designer Odile Decq said she embraced diversity but thinks it’s important to “provide unpredictability and joyful disorder” in education. Hitoshi Abe pointed out the logistical and practical problems of marrying a corporate business model to academic studios because the two have different working rhythms and goals. Javier Quintana the dean of the IE school favored collaboration but suggested it not just be with other schools of architecture but with other disciplines. A summit session, called Alternative Educational Platforms, featured the ever controversial Peter Cook challenging the present condition of architecture schools by calling ironically for diverse approaches, including a school of personality or, as he called it, The Jeff Kipnis School of Architecture and the Enterprise or Coca-Cola School of Recreational Environment.

Princeton’s Stan Allen spoke in favor of flexibility, specificity and an open and inclusive outlook. He presented case studies in which the cliché of the global architect was challenged by examples of internationally renowned architects that only build locally and confronted by the flagrant cultural clashes in the work of western firms that build globally. Michigan’s Monica Ponce de Leon was the lone academic to speak unabashedly in favor of digital technology. She believes in treating digital techniques as skills, like hand drawing, that free studios and instructors to focus on teaching critical thinking.

While IE’s Martha Thorne suggested that many schools are slipping into stagnation because they refuse to adapt, it was Columbus’s dean, Mark Wigley, who situated the architectural technological challenge not just in design but also in urbanism, politics and the economy. He contended that it is in the megalopolis—the largest experimental device in the history of civilization—that architecture is directly embedded into the social contract.

It may be a lot to chew on in the searing heat of summer, but for architectural academics the message from this summit seems clear: Change what and how you teach, or slip into irrelevance. —William Menking

Let’s not forget that you’re going to produce anything better. —Diana Darling
THE KAGAN CAPRICORN COLLECTION IS AVAILABLE NOW FROM

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The Oasis Trade Showroom Represents Outdoor Furniture Collections from Vladimir Kagan, Garpa, Ego Paris, Float and DK Collections.

program. The tar-textured enclosure forces the pavilion’s requisite commercial opportunity to expand again. Those-in-the-know assume the wrecking ball will soon toll.

SOUNDS FISHY—IN A GOOD WAY

A reliable city source tells us that the Howard Hughes Corporation, the real estate company founded by the brilliant name of the same name is taking a good look at taking over the South Street Seaport waterfront project abandoned when General Growth Properties went belly up in 2010. Even better, we hear that SHoP Architects may still be on the line. No word yet if the architects intend to relaunch the net-and-sail inspired design with a mast-like tower that Landmarks Preservation tried to sink because it scraped the sky well over the height allowed on historic Pier 17.

Left: The corridors are sometimes graphically unlit.

the visitor to do nothing but look and think. The central atrium, a sharply cut rectangle open only to the sky, compels the viewer to look inwards or upwards but never outwards. As Glancey notes, the experience at times stirs claustrophobia more than contemplation: “Outside...you suddenly feel free and here is that very thing he’s trying to encapsulate...nature.”

The design is intended to create a palpable contrast between the open space of Kensington Gardens and the pavilion’s interior. While lights have been fitted along the corridors, these are not always switched on creating a somewhat menacing threshold. Perhaps the intention was to provide a sense of danger sandwiched between idyllic places—a compelling aspect of the design that has not received as much attention as the cloister courtyard.

Landscape designer Oudolf has spoken of the design that has not received as much attention as the cloister courtyard.
Larry Bogdanow, 1947–2011

Of the many tributes delivered since Larry Bogdanow’s death on June 29th, quite a few people spoke about Larry as a forager. This description referred to his passion for collecting wild mushrooms, ramps, purslane, goose foot, and violets around his Upstate property and distributing them by the brown paper bag full to friends, employees, and the kitchens of some of his restaurant clients. But forager also goes a long way in describing Larry as an architect.

Foraging is an activity that causes no harm to the environment and encourages regeneration. Larry, who specialized in restaurant design, gained renown early in his career for using salvage materials. For him, foraging also meant poring over catalogs looking for mundane industrial materials that could be put to a higher purpose. One of his proudest examples of such foraging were the two layers of bronze window screens he used to make a shimmering moiré, vaulted ceiling at Savoy in Soho. Larry first set up shop in the Soho loft that he bought communally in 1973 with six friends. After a brief stint at Beyer Blinder Belle Architects in the mid 1970s, he came back to practicing on his own, doing design work in the metropolitan area. I met Larry in 1981 when he advertised for an assistant. When he offered me the job, I accepted on the caveat that I had never worked with the name, Larry found in Danny Ashworth’s specialisms in restaurant design.

Larry’s goal was always to make people comfortable and welcome and want to come back, whether they were dinner guests at his oversized table at his loft home in Soho, his dozens of employees, or the millions of patrons who ate again and again at his restaurants.
I HAVE A MONUMENT continued from
front page March on Washington
held 48 years ago to the day. The
memorial has racked up other
impressive numbers—27 years
since Alpha Phi Alpha began
campaigning for the memorial, 900
design competition submissions,
$120 million raised mostly privately,
1,600 metric tons of granite—and
not a little controversy.

The selection of Lei Yixin to create
the figurative component of ROMA
Design Group’s winning memorial
scheme sparked comment that
Dr. King’s likeness is like italicizing
the point of historical revisionism.

Yet why does the monument
employ figurative sculpture at all?
The symbolic significance of the
site—four acres on the Tidal Basin,
between the Lincoln and Jefferson
memorials and within sight of the
Washington Monument—is weighty.
And consider ROMA Design Group’s
architectural narrative. From
Independence Avenue, the low
retaining walls of a formal forecourt
are configured in a wedge shape to
funnel visitors toward a faux granite
boulder split in two and dubbed
the Mountain of Despair, which
forms a compressed threshold
opening to the Tidal Basin. Beyond
it, circulation at the shoreline is more
fluid, and this hardscaped area is
hemmed in by crescent inscription
trees and crepe myrtles. Its center-
piece is another granite behemoth,
the so-called Stone of Hope, which
appears to have slid out of the
Mountain of Despair and rotated
slightly. From this shard Lei’s
sculpture of Dr. King steps forth, at
30 feet, 8 inches tall, much larger
than either Lincoln or Jefferson.

Struggle, seemingly impossible
accomplishment, a force of nature.
The symbolism is fairly easy to
penetrate. The boulders’ names,
taken from “I Have a Dream,” ensure
comprehension. The inclusion of
Dr. King’s likeness is like italicizing
text that’s already in boldface.

In January, Congresswoman
Eleanor Holmes Norton told
NPR reporter Allison Keyes, “It’s a
memorial to the movement he led,
and that is how he would regard it.
One has to really come to grips
with the deep humility of this man.
He would never have wanted a
memorial like this.” Even if the
Washington, D.C. Martin Luther
King, Jr. National Memorial were
commensurate with King’s character,
it is still bluntly interpretable: Just
as Dr. King is the only private citizen
to be honored with a national holiday,
this is the only memorial on the
National Mall whose purpose is not
to commemorate a U.S. president
or honor Americans’ wartime
service. And because so many of
the National Mall’s destinations
have tried figurative ground already,
this seems like a missed
opportunity for less heroic open-
endedness. In light of the Vietnam
Veterans Memorial and the numer-
ous abstractions designed in its
wake, the memorial seems, above all,
to embody towering literalism.

Although the choreography of the
memorial’s forecourt is reminiscent
of Maya Lin’s epiphanic creation,
the design remains largely unin-
formed by alternatives.

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Easter Egg roll, the lighting congregate for protests, the active space where people landscape at the front of the White House—a large ellipse forming a public extension of the White House's front lawn—this meant concrete jersey barriers and fences along E Street.

NCPC chairman L. Preston Bryant, Jr. praised RMA's design as a bold statement about the possibilities of blending security and landscape design, one that offers a model for keeping public spaces open and inviting. Robert M. Rogers, principal at Rogers Marvel Architects, said of his firm's proposal, "We talked about the change from an embalmed romantic landscape at the front of the White House to a much more active space where people congregate for protests, the Easter Egg roll, the lighting of the Christmas Tree, and an overall much denser program for recreation and assembly." Rogers stated that the new President's Park South would "physically and conceptually connect the President and the people." Security perimeters are strategically layered throughout the landscape, forming a flexible boundary to accommodate a variety of security scenarios. RMA raised the central ellipse and placed an anti-ram wall that doubles as a bench around its perimeter; the bench seating faces the ellipse and helps define the iconic space. According to Rogers, this elevational tilting formally "presents" the ellipse lawn to the White House while also screening nearby parking spaces from the view of park goers. Punctuating the new perimeter wall are distinct pedestrian entrances with sculptured bollards to help guide pedestrian flow. Pushing this security boundary to the ellipse's perimeter allowed for the pedestrianization of E Street facing the White House. RMA vastly expanded the public space forming a large plaza—the E Street Terrace—flanked by leafy groves containing concession and maintenance structures. Rain gardens with natural vegetation to handle runoff from a perimeter parking lot provide a less formal counterpoint on the edge of the ellipse.

Funding has yet to be secured for the new park and several regulatory hurdles remain, including preparing an Environmental Impact Statement and moving through federal, local, and public review, a process that could take years. William Herbig, an urban planner at the NCPC said the National Parks Service and the United States Secret Service will review RMA's design. Over coming months, elements of all five short-listed proposals could be incorporated into the final plan.

RMA is no stranger to blending security design seamlessly with the civic landscape. In New York, the firm created secure streetscapes in 2007 and 2010, near the World Financial Center in Battery Park City and on Wall Street, complete with anti-ram walls, public amenities, and sculptural bollards. Both spaces create a distinct pedestrian environment and permit service vehicle access. But Rogers was aware that his was the only non-landscape firm in the NCPC competition. "That's why I wore a flowered shirt to the press conference," he said.

LABOR AND DELIVERY DISPUTES

In recent weeks judges have been very active in New York City real estate issues. Though the Barclays Center stadium progresses at full steam, Forrest City Ratner will have to cool their heels on the residential and office component of the Atlantic Yards. State Supreme Court Justice Marcy Friedman ordered the Empire State Development Corporation to conduct a new environmental review process. Though the lawsuit that spurred the ruling was launched by residents arguing that not enough jobs are going to Brooklynites, the order might please union members unhappy with the prefab construction of a SHoP-designed residential building. The use of prefab components delivered from a factory favors low-wage labor over on-site workers, say the unions.

ESCALATION OVER ESCALATORS

Justice Lucy A. Billings put the brakes on another high profile project: the renovation of the Manufacturers Hanover Trust Building on Fifth Avenue. The proposed updates by owner Vornado Realty Trust intended to accommodate the retail store Joe Fresh will go on hold. Though the SOM-led renovation would restore key features of the building, like the illuminated glass ceiling, there would also be dramatic alterations, like moving the escalators and entryways. The lawsuit, filed by Citizen Emergency Committee to Preserve Preservation, asserts that Vornado's changes fly in the face of Landmarks Preservation restrictions, and that Landmarks colluded with developer to move the project forward.

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 Scofield + 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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[Ad Image]

Architects: Diller Scofield + Renfro with FXFOWLE
Structural Engineer: Ove Arup & Partners
Photo: Iwan Baan
How can you create a vibrant community from scratch? To Chinese developer IMC Octave it’s not a theoretical question but a working plan for a series of new communities across China.

The 21st Century Living development project is the product of the real-estate arm of IMC Group, a Chinese conglomerate that began its life as a small-fry shipping company in 1949. Leading the charge is Calvin Tsao of New York’s Tsao & McKown and his brother Frederick Tsao, who took over as director of IMC Group from the company founder, their father, in 1995. Approached for years to design projects in China, the brothers were disheartened by the commercial objectives of prospective developers. “We felt design should serve a higher purpose, especially in China,” said Calvin Tsao, who also teaches frequently at Harvard’s Graduate School of Design. Octave’s stated mission—to develop an environment that “balances agrarian and urban societies”—responds to a perceived “malaise and anxiety” resulting from China’s rapid urban growth as it cuts large portions of the population off from its rural past without cohesive alternate planning strategies.

The firm is implementing a variety of projects across China, each one a different development under a unified concept. Ranging from 300,000 square feet to upwards of 24 million square feet, the projects are divided into three categories: Ex-Urban links agricultural communities to the city; Urban or “Agora” focuses on live-work-play concepts in a mixed-use urban context, while Post-Industrial Mixed-Use Development re-purposes industrial sites. Octave recently completed Qingdao IMC Center, an Urban project and will finish two more: Free Trade Zone Phase 2 Development in Dalian in 2013 (Post Industrial) and Yang Chang Lake Harmony Hotel development in Suzhou in 2014 (Ex-Urban). Designs for 21st Century Living masterplans such as Chengdu Longchi and Chengdu Xiqu (both Ex-Urban) emphasize pedestrian-oriented neighborhoods with an interconnected network of courtyards and parks. Though similar to many “healthy living” concepts with outdoor areas, pedestrian scale, and front-end landscape design, Octave’s developments also reference traditional Chinese architecture and culture. But there is an additional rigor in their intent to reconnect Chinese villages and cities through new infrastructure. It is a tall order, but Octave has devised a holistic approach, which in June included an extensive educational tour of New York for a handful of company colleagues. Including lectures, theatre trips, walking tours, and tracking down local food carts, the 10-day itinerary offered New York as a blue-print for a diverse and cosmopolitan urban environment. Noted academics contributed, too, including Peter Rowe, from Harvard Graduate School of Design, who spoke about patterns of growth in China and identified net-worked communities as a potentially fruitful approach to new development. So far the Chinese government has been supportive. “Of course, we seek out regional governments that are already enlightened, so the agenda is shared,” said Tsao. Still, there is a long way to go before these instant towns prove their worth as models for future development, but the road is wide open.

CREDIBLE UTOPIAS

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A $250 million plan for high-end.

Both practical and symbolic.

We were delighted they were.

were a central meeting spot.


But after 9/11, their.

moment at the top of the.

Willis’ master-of-the-universe.

opening scene’s long tracking.

“Bonfire of the Vanities,” the.

stairs conjured the money and.

Center (WFC). For years, the.

the Cesar Pelli-designed.

Brookfield Properties backed.

leaders and local politicians,

City Economic Development.

said City Planning commis-

thing for lower Manhattan.

Street Seaport. “After 9/11 we.

said that the most important.

for Manhattan is rebuilding and the transfor-

of the East River,” said City Planning commis-

sioner Amanda Burden. The plans for the park are being.

with the New York City Economic Development.

Corporation and will ultimately extend up to Pier 35 just north.

of Manhattan Bridge.

With much of the park.

sitting beneath the FDR Drive.

that is distinct from the West.

So-called Get-Downs,

bleacherlike stairways that.

drop down to water level and.

give visitors a chance to get.

their feet wet and feel the river.

spray, occur at several key.

spots—one directly across.

Wall Street and also at.

uninterrupted sightlines. “We.

thought an important way.

was that you could.

the water all the way back.

the city,” said SHoP’s.

a line of bar stools sit.

against ipe wooden rails pro-

viding another unimpeded.

perch. The rail is wide enough.

to accumulate lunch or a.

accommodate slabs of.

to打造出 various patterns for.

bench seating, inspired by.

shipping crates and pallets. At.

Burden’s insistence, seating is.

arranged in multiple groups of.

or four, around chess tables,.

and, for the more harried.

New Yorker, alone.

Ken Smith arranged multi-

hued grey hexagon pavers.

according to highly pixilated.

photos of water. He also.

extended up to Pier 35 just.

north of South Street Seaport. “After 9/11 we.

said that the most important.

for Manhattan is rebuilding and the transfor-

of the East River,” said City Planning commis-

sioner Amanda Burden. The plans for the park are being.

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of Manhattan Bridge.

With much of the park.

sitting beneath the FDR Drive.

the Esplanade will likely draw.

comparisons to the High Line for.

its embrace of infrastruc-

ture, though it’s literally.

the flipside. Here, it’s about.

being beneath, not above.

“Embracing the FDR seems.

so obvious now, but it wasn’t.

so obvious then,” said Burden.

“it provides important shade.

and it’s an organizing principle.

for all of the programming.”

The overall look—a collabora-

tion between SHoP Architects and landscape.

architect Ken Smith—establish-

es its own signature design.

“We had to ask, ‘Are we going.

to shutter the building or open.

it up?’” Embracing new tech-

nologies, the team designed.

a glass wall and balcony over-

looking the construction site.

at the top of the stairs. Today,

thousands visit. “We anticipat-

ed it would be popular but that.

wasn’t our motivation,” said.

Copeland. “It was a way to.

connect back to the city.” It’s.

a concept that honors the new.

holistic vision of downtown. Or.

as City Planning commissioner.


‘back’ of the World Financial.

Center should look like a front.”

In the new PCP design,

the balcony will also stay, but.

a generous pavilion will sit.

out east toward West Street,

overlooking Memorial Plaza.

The design anticipates a retail.

tenant for the area beneath.

the staircase, perhaps a café.

The space is prime as it will.

be the first thing commuters.

see when they enter the pavil-

ion from underground transporta-

tion. Six elevators connecting.

to transit will run beneath.

West Street and emerge in.

the pavilion’s center. From.

there, two retail-lined corridors.

wrap around the Grand.

Staircase for access to.

Winter Garden. Changes inside.

will result from editing: two.

multistory-roof-colored marble.

walls flanking the stairs on.

the first floor will be eliminated.

in favor of glass to give visitors.

a glimpse of daylight as they.

pass through. Construction.

begins in October with com-

pletion expected in 2013.

This fall, the bi-level Pier.

15 also by SHoP will be finished.

The 17-foot-long upper pier.

features an extended lawn,

while a maritime museum.

and cafe sit below. Next.

summer, at Maiden Lane a.

pavilion café, run by the same.

operator as the Pier 15 café,

will open. The final phases.

of the project from Broad Street.

Old Slip and from Pike and.

Allen Streets up to Pier 35 are.

expected to be completed in.

2012 and 2013, respectively.


SITTING PRETTY.

After facing substantial.

opposition from community.

leaders and local politicians,

Brookfield Properties backed.

away from a plan to demolish.

the Cesar Pelli-designed.

Grand Staircase in the Winter.

Garden of the World Financial.

Center (WFC). For years, the.

stairs conjured the money and.

power of the go-go ‘80s. In.

“Bonfire of the Vanities,” the.

opening scene’s long tracking.

shot culminates in Bruce.

Willis’ master-of-the-universe.

moment at the top of the.

stairs. But after 9/11, their.

communal aspect became.

more important. “It was always.

town square,” Community.

Board 1 chair Julie Menin said.


were a central meeting spot.

We were delighted they were.

saved, because they serve.

both practical and symbolic.

purposes from before 9/11 and.

After.

Brookfield has now unveiled.

a $250 million plan for high-end.

retail and restaurants by Pelli.

Clarke Pelli Architects that.

includes revamping most of.

the West Street facade while.

keeping the stairs intact. The.

initial reasons for demolishing.

the stairs involved congested.

traffic flow behind the stairs.

and an absolute purpose.

With the original World Trade.

Center, the towers’ raised.

platform led to a bridge across.

West Street directing pedestrian.

traffic to WFC’s lobby level,

making the lobby levels of both.

complexes about two stories.

above street level. With the.

new World Trade Center now.

at street level the Grand.

Staircase will no longer serve.

that connecting function.

The challenge is to accom-

modate nearly 35,000 rush.

hour commuters, most of.

them office workers on their.

way from underground transit.

to second floor lobbies. Torn.

into that mix will be thousands.

of shoppers and tourists. Back.

in 2002, Brookfield spent $50.

million to restore the garden.

and staircase. Craig Copeland.

was a team leader for PCP.

at the time and remembers.

a debate focused on how to.

handle the West Street facade,

which overlooked the massive.

cleanup and rebuilding effort.

While the real estate market.

in New York never stalled.

as fully as it did in the rest of.

the country, many projects.

went on ice. One that.

seemed unlikely to.

be revived, a 20-story tower.

on 23rd street designed by.

Carlos Zapata, is coming.

back to life. Initially planned.

as a hotel by Horizon Global,

Abnau Enterprises acquired.

the lot 39-41 West 23rd for.

$18.5 million and plans to.

build the Zapata design as.

condominiums with ground.

floor retail.

“Abnau Enterprises’.

development philosophy is to.

create architecturally.

distinguished buildings that.

make positive contributions.

to their neighborhoods. In.

the case of 39-41 West 23rd.

Street, we have the ability.

to bring a brilliant design to.

life and deliver exceptional, sus-

tainable homes to a neigh-

borhood that is becoming a.

true 24/7 community,” wrote.

Barbara van Bueren and.

Stephen Glasscock, principals.

at Abnau, in an email. The.

company is also developing.

nearby 124 West 23rd, in.

the belief that Chelsea/Flatiron.

will continue to perform.

well as a high-end residential.

area.

Located in the Ladies Mile.

Historic district, the Zapata.

design received approval.

from the Landmarks.

Preservation Commission in.

2005, which was a major.

incentive for the developers.

to retain the scheme. “We.

really like the design and we.

have a good working relation-

ship with the architect. This.

is great news for us since.

the site is in a landmarked.

district,” Glasscock and van.

Bueren wrote. “To change.

the design would mean.

going through a new two-

year-plus approval process.

with uncertain results.”

The design respects the.

existing streetwall with a.

contextually scaled base,

topped with an angled.

glass-clad tower reminiscent.

of Zapata’s Cooper Square.

Hotel. “It was important for.

the Commission and our.

team to arrive at a set of.

rules on which to evaluate.

the design,” Zapata wrote.

in an email. “Ultimately, we.

agreed that the design had.

to be consistent with the.

evolution of styles in the dis-

trict, that the building should.

be representative of our.

times and make use of mod-

ern technologies, and that.

the design should maintain.

a level of quality consistent.

with the best buildings of.

the district.” — ALAN G.

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Through August 14, New Yorkers will have access to a unique opportunity, namely that of seeing five of Shakespeare’s best plays performed in an environment not too terribly different from that in which they were originally showcased in Elizabethan England. As part of the Lincoln Center Festival and to celebrate its 50th year, the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC) has erected a near facsimile of its brand new Royal Shakespeare Theatre (RST) in Stratford-upon-Avon within the drill hall of the Park Avenue Armory. There, the RSC is putting on such Shakespeare favorites as As You Like It, Romeo and Juliet, Julius Caesar, The Winter’s Tale, and King Lear, all within the intimate confines of a temporary steel-structured 975-seat thrust-stage auditorium modeled on the cozy arrangements of the Globe, Rose, and other Renaissance period playhouses.

To understand what now occupies the Armory it is best to begin with the recent changes that the RSC has made to its Stratford-upon-Avon home base. The original RST was a 1,460-seat art deco cinema-style theater designed by Elizabeth Scott and opened in 1932. While this theater had its virtues, its back seats were more than 88 feet away from the stage, making it difficult for those seated there (most notably school groups) to take part in the drama. To improve this experience, the RSC hired a design team led by Bennetts Associates of London to deliver “an auditorium Shakespeare might recognize.”

Shakespeare wrote for a theater in which actors and audiences shared the same space. By reducing the number of seats to 1,040 and selecting a thrust-stage design—where the audience surrounds the stage on three sides—the team halved the distance of the furthest seat from where the actors strut and fret. Bennetts also settled upon a faceted auditorium based on a 12-sided polygon reminiscent of the Globe and supported the two upper tiers with Messian steel cruciform columns placed near the edge of the balcony.

The purist view of theater design is that if there is a column then there is a problem. However, adding columns provides a front to the architecture that makes it part of the scenery. The columns also allow the tiers to sit much closer together, whereas can- tilevers would make them higher and further apart. In addition, the column and beam construction harkens back to the timber building of Elizabethan times and creates small, subdivided communities within the theater, providing an experience where everyone feels that they are in their own private box.

The thrust stage does create acoustical challenges. Since the audience surrounds the stage on three sides, it is inevitable that at some point during the play the actors will have their backs to much of the crowd, casting their voices away from them. To keep the sound bouncing back to their ears. At the Armory, the team also placed acoustical sails up around the fly space, keeping the actors’ voices from escaping into the cavernous drill hall.

To prepare for the Armory show, the RSC staff built a mirror image of Bennetts’ RST in their workshop in Stratford-upon-Avon. Some differences, of course, were inevitable. Rather than use the cruciform steel columns they used more economical and lighter hollow tube sections. The number of seats was also reduced slightly. The entire assembly was shop fabricated in sections and then packed into 46 shipping containers before making the trip across the Atlantic. Once in New York, it took the RSC 15 days to erect the auditorium within the Armory, connecting the sections with some 18,000 bolts, nuts, and washers. Even the packing containers were used in the construction, making up a platform for the backstage as well as space for costume and prop storage.

The difference in the ventilation systems at the RSC and at the Armory is also worth noting. In Stratford-upon-Avon, the ventilation is under the seats. Cool air enters there and then drifts up as it gets warm. The temporary auditorium, however, uses the air conditioning system of the armory, which is pumped in through two large ducts that cross the ceiling. Feeder ducts were patched onto these ducts to deliver air to the top of the theater. This created a challenge, because the top is where the hot lights are, and the hot lights create convection currents that force air up. Intakes at the ground level, however, draw the air down through the space, keeping everyone as cool as cucumbers.
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Mapping higher education as a potent force of development across the city, now and in the future.
CUNY’s City College is building a new Advanced Science Research Center and City College Center for Innovation and Discovery, adding 396,000 square feet to the 3 million square foot campus.

Columbia’s new 17-acre Manhattanville campus will add 6.8 million square feet to the university’s holdings. The campus will be built seven blocks north of the Morningside Heights campus, and two blocks west of the City College of New York’s campus, separated by a public housing development.

MANAHATTANVILLE/HARLEM

CUNY’s City College is building a new Advanced Science Research Center and City College Center for Innovation and Discovery, adding 396,000 square feet to the 3 million square foot campus.

In spite of the recent economic slowdown, New York City’s colleges and universities are on a building spree, providing planners, land use lawyers, architects, and construction workers with well-paying and stable employment. Once a sleeping giant, the city’s colleges and universities have long been active in acquiring individual parcels, modernizing outmoded structures, and building “as-of-right” by taking advantage of the city’s permissive zoning that falls under the heading of “community facilities.” But today, the city’s higher education industry is playing hardball as it seeks to build classrooms, labs, residence halls, student centers, and administrative palaces in order to attract students and faculty in the 21st century. And the leaders of the city’s colleges and universities are anything but shy when it comes to expanding their campuses. In fact, they are using every possible planning and zoning tool: eminent domain, rezoning, leasing, trading air rights, public-private partnerships, strategic acquisitions, and, of course, contributing space for public purposes, as they negotiate the treacherous minefield of land use planning in New York City.

Unlike its reputation as a capital of finance, media, and fashion, New York is not thought of as a college town. And, with the notable exception of the St. John’s University basketball team, this is not a mecca for college athletics. Yet, with approximately 100 colleges, seminaries and universities scattered throughout the city, the number is constantly expanding as neighboring colleges and universities establish beachheads in New York City, no one area of the city is exclusively defined by—or absent of—a concentration of students and faculty.

New York is not Baltimore, where Johns Hopkins University dominates the town, or quaint Philadelphia, where the University of Pennsylvania and Drexel Institute of Technology have created an educational enclave. Colleges and universities are dispersed throughout New York, diminishing their cumulative visual impact on the city. Despite this, they have historically been powerful forces for stabilizing and strengthening communities, from Fordham University’s beautiful Rose Hill campus next to the Bronx Zoo to the ivy-covered Brooklyn College situated in Flatbush on the last stop of the 2 train. As major employers and landown-
NYU, bounded on three sides by historic districts and by restrictive manufacturing zoning that prevented the creation of classrooms east of Broadway has decided to expand by boldly redeveloping land it currently owns that was once part of the old Washington Square South Urban Renewal District, a designation that reflected the 1960s “tower in the park” approach to urban development.

In other cases, colleges have quietly made strategic acquisitions, such as the School of Visual Arts, which now holds the lease for the Clearview Cinema on West 23rd Street, and the New York Film Academy, which took over what was once Tammany Hall on East 17th Street. In recent decades, CUNY has built a few community colleges from scratch using masterplans, including Queensborough Community College, located on the site of the old Oakland Country Club in northeast Queens. NYU currently plans to add six million square feet of space over the next two decades, not just on its Washington Square campus and in the surrounding area, but also at sites on the First Avenue healthcare corridor in and Downtown Brooklyn.

What’s essential to recognize is that as New York’s economy and population have evolved, colleges and universities have moved out of the shadows and are playing a more powerful and forceful role in land development. A branch of CUNY, Hostos Community College, where one-third of the students are single parents, occupies space on 149th Street and the Grand Concourse also at sites on the First Avenue healthcare corridor and in Downtown Brooklyn.

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The city. Over the past two decades, from April 1991 to April 2011, private college and university employment in New York City grew by 77 percent. In fact, the number of new jobs created by private colleges and universities since 1991—47,600—is equivalent to 12 percent of the total net increase in private sector wage and salary jobs in the city during the past twenty years. Hugh O’Neill, president of Appleseed, notes that during the past twenty years, higher education has become one of the city’s leading “export” industries. “It brings in billions of dollars each year in tuition revenues, research grants, and the like from elsewhere in the U.S. and around the world, most of which is then spent within the city.”

Today, there are more than half a million students enrolled in degree programs in New York City. The city’s degree-seeking population is bigger than the entire population in Atlanta, Miami, or Minneapolis. There are twice as many people enrolled in degree programs in New York City than live in the entire city of Buffalo.

In the 20th century, colleges were typically in quiet, remote areas, away from the pandemonium of urban life. Colleges resembled monasteries, after which many were modeled. In the 21st century, young people raised in the suburbs are more attracted instead to the lure of the city, not to pristine small town college life. And with New York City’s consistent record as the safest large city in the nation, it’s even more appealing to scholars who depend on colleagues, not the library stacks, for ideas and interaction.

That’s why we are entering a golden era for college and universities in New York City. University presidents have demonstrated the ability to respond to the needs of their students and faculty, but now they are facing a new challenge: building for their institutions while accommodating the values of the surrounding community, an especially complicated mission in a time when development must be smart, sustainable, and environmentally sensitive. In the coming years we must expect conflict and debate over what this means as higher education continues to establish itself as a major force in the physical development of the city.

MITCHELL L. MOSS IS HENRY HART RICE PROFESSOR OF URBAN POLICY AND PLANNING, WAGNER GRADUATE SCHOOL OF PUBLIC SERVICE AT NEW YORK UNIVERSITY.

Cooper Union has owned the land under the Chrysler Building since 1902—well before the Art Deco skyscraper was built—deeded by relatives of the school’s founder, Peter Cooper. As a result, the building has never paid property taxes to the city, making those payments instead directly to the private free university in the amount of about $7 million a year. This tax-exempt status for a commercial entity is unprecedented and legislation has been introduced over the years to make sure it is never repeated, while efforts to repeal Cooper Union’s arrangement have also failed.
Mayor Bloomberg, who himself holds a B.S. in electrical engineering, hopes to galvanize the city’s growing technology sector with an influx of doctoral-level research in the applied sciences. In December 2010, the mayor’s office and the NYC Economic Development Corporation issued a Request for Expressions of Interest from academic institutions who might consider developing an applied science and engineering campus in New York. In order to attract attention, the deal was sweetened with not just a promise of capital investment, but the one thing hardest to come by for an urban campus: wide open space.

Universities responding to the RFEI were asked to indicate an interest either in a privately-owned site they identified themselves or in one of four city-controlled sites that would be “potentially offered on favorable terms”: the Navy Hospital Campus at the Brooklyn Navy Yard, the Goldwater Hospital Campus on Roosevelt Island, sites on Governor’s Island, or the Farm Colony on Staten Island. By March, eighteen institutions had thrown their hats into the ring, from local schools with engineering programs like Cooper Union to foreign universities in countries stretching from Finland to India.

The city is currently reviewing the responses, and on July 19 the mayor announced a formal Request for Proposals. If all goes according to plan, a winning campus plan could be selected by the end of 2011.
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While architects and designers are focusing on the grand gestures—where to place a door, a stair, or a walk-in shower—the individual parts of those elements can be overlooked due to tight budgets or timeframes. But hardware components like handrails and doorknobs are crucial not only to a design’s safety and function but also to its longevity. In the world of component hardware, manufacturers are upping their customizable options to cater to a range of indoor and outdoor needs, from high-traffic public spaces to high-design residences. And in the bath, often-neglected details like drains, grab bars, and even speaker covers are getting a modern makeover. From the front door to the kitchen cabinet, quality hardware always adds a luxury finish, while high-caliber components make a solid impression from the very first touch.

Jennifer K. Gorsch
Cambridge Architectural offers full design, engineering, and collaboration services on a wide range of interior and exterior architectural mesh systems including stair railings and enclosures. The company recently introduced several new open-weave stainless steel mesh styles while continuing to offer classic patterns and attachment systems for a range of projects.

DecorCable’s X-Tend2 line is a timesaving solution for interior and exterior balustrade applications. Mesh panels available up to 78 inches long and in heights of 28, 33, and 37½ inches are pre-installed on stainless steel frames. These attach to the company’s universal mounting system, available for post, floor, wall, or handrail applications. Diagonal panels are available in a range of sizes.

Silhouette pre-engineered railings integrate a range of options and materials usually only available for custom installations. Drawing from Form+Surfaces materials palettes, the expanding line includes interior and exterior systems. Stainless rails can be specified with an embedded continuous LED light strip powered by low-voltage DC current. The lens assembly is weather resistant and can be angled depending on the desired effect.

Though not for use as a hand railing, Gera’s Light System 8 is a light rail suitable for horizontal or vertical use. The aluminium luminaire has a variable width and hides technical components, emphasizing the adjustable screen, which is available in metal, translucent glass, or custom decorative options.
### Hardware

#### Bike-Pullway Bicycle Ramp

Until now there was no easy way to lug a bike up stairs. Korean company Neomerce has introduced a new solution, an anti-skid public bike ramp that allows bicyclists to safely roll their bike alongside a stair rail. Rounded edges prevent users from injury, while a narrow, extruded aluminum design leaves as much room as possible to pedestrians.

[Image: bike-pullway.com/en]

#### Artline Brugg

Architectural rope manufacturer Brugg has created a line of outdoor accessories designed to fit with its range of high-grade steel railing systems via vertically adjustable rods. The modular system includes shelves, weatherproof lighting, bird baths and bowls, and privacy screens. Attachment systems for steel handrails and glass railings are available.

[Image: www.brugglifting.com]

#### Linea Handrail Santa & Cole

Santa & Cole's line of outdoor urban elements includes the Linea handrail, a simple stainless steel line that serves the dual purpose of pedestrian barrier and resting place. Suitable for any public space where a subtle barrier is required without the visual obstruction of a full fence.

[Image: www.santacole.com]

#### Sloper Handrail Onn Outside

Contemporary street furniture manufacturer Onn's Sloper handrail is designed to complement the other elements of the angular Sloper line, including a lighting beacon, bollard, and fencing. Available in two heights, the cast aluminum post can be fitted with two or three stainless steel rails and an optional glass panel.

[Image: www.onnoutside.com]

#### Bespoke Balustrades and Stairs Ee Stairs

Four-year-old company Ee stairs has developed a range of bespoke balustrade and stair designs for commercial and residential applications. Beginning with a patented 1m² staircase that requires only one square meter of space, designers moved on to develop a range of designs including the Flat Rhythm balustrade (pictured) with a horizontal infill of steel tubes or wire and (on page 23) the TransParency 1-06 balustrade.

[Image: www.eestairs.com/en]
Clean-lined drains and covers are better than invisible.

1 ADVANTIK VARIO SHOWER DRAIN VIEGA
The Vario drain’s customizable length allows it to integrate seamlessly with the walls of enclosed shower areas. Suitable for new construction or renovation, the 47-inch basic channel can cut as short as 12 inches in length. Its recessed design is less than one inch wide, allowing for a nearly uninterrupted floor surface.

www.viega.com

2 ZENTRIX SHOWER DRAIN DALLMER
Partnering with the CeraNiveau drainage system from Dallmer, the rectangular Zentrix drain can drain more than 12 gallons of water per minute. Designed to eliminate the risk of flooding in level-access shower designs, a polymer concrete collar secures the drain in the screed while providing a solid bond for waterproofing beneath bath tiles.

www.dallmer.de/en

3 STARCK SPEAKER MODULE AXOR
The basis for Philippe Starck’s Axor shower collection is the square—all elements in the line are derived from a 5-by-5-inch module. The high-performance watertight speaker module follows the formula with a 40-watt speaker encased in a sleek aluminum membrane with a rubber seal. Available in chrome or aluminum, the unit is rated for indoor use only.

www.hansgrohe-usa.com

4 CERAMIC SHOWER DRAIN ROYAL MOSA
Netherlands-based tile producer Mosa recently released a ceramic shower drain that eliminates any visible stainless steel. Available in twelve finishes, the 6-by-36-inch drain is installed in combination with an Easy Drain shower channel leaving a barely visible drainage opening, less than half a centimeter thick, around its perimeter.

www.mosa.nl/us

5 SHOWER GRID DRAINS WATERMARK DESIGNS
Brooklyn-based Watermark Designs recently launched a new collection of six shower grid drains designed to complement contemporary or traditional baths. Drains are held in place with rare earth magnets, creating a clean finish without visible fasteners. The 5-by-5-inch grids are available in 37 finishes including polished chrome, antique brass, and charcoal.

www.watermark-designs.com

6 EMPIRE DRAIN PLUG WATERWORKS
A modern adaptation of late 19th-century styles, Waterworks’ Empire collection includes a chain and plug waste drain. The drain includes a removable grate for cleaning and servicing. The hardware is designed to complement the company’s Empire tub and is available in nickel (pictured), matte nickel, and chrome.

www.waterworks.com
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Artist and designer Ted Boerner has collaborated with Rocky Mountain Hardware to create five hardware collections. Cast in recycled, art-grade bronze, the collections include 27 pieces of hardware and cabinet pulls available in nine standard finishes. Pictured is the 121⁄16-inch Shift grip shown in white bronze and brushed patina.

www.rockymountainhardware.com

German manufacturer Jado’s new Flux door handle has a seamless form made from a single piece of metal sculpted downward and affixed to a softly rounded square doorplate. Coupled with a durable chrome finish, the shape is made to resist dirt accumulation and complement a range of door styles. Coupled with a durable chrome finish, the shape is made to resist dirt accumulation and complement a range of door styles.

www.jado-hardware.com www.hafele.com/us

Rejuvenation has added new exterior door hardware to its Mid-Century Modern Collection. Cast in iconic shapes from the 1950s and 60s, the collection includes square, star, and round (pictured) knobs designed to fit the Schlage Orb door set. Sets are made with solid brass and are available in three finishes: brushed chrome, polished chrome, and lacquered brass. Matching doorbell buttons are available.

www.rejuvenation.com

Compatible with most locks and latches, the C Class door handle is a patented design with a concealed tie-bolt and self-adjusting spindles. Approximate dimensions are 3½ inches by 1 inch with a 2-inch depth. Constructed with solid brass and stainless steel components and three standard finishes, the knob is available in special finishes on request.

www.architrend.com.au

Inspired by Asian architectural details, Top Knobs new Sanctuary collection of knobs and pulls emphasizes delicate details wrought so that they do not compromise durability. The full line is available in eight finishes including brushed satin nickel, flat black, German bronze, oil rubbed bronze, pewter antique, polished chrome (pictured), polished nickel, and Tuscan bronze.

www.topknobs.com

Designed in partnership with the Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation, Reveal’s new Taliesin collection includes three series: Series 630 and 631 can be mixed and are available in 4¼- or 7¼-inch round or rectangular pulls finished in stainless steel and beech, walnut, oil rubbed bronze, or as solid stainless pieces; Series 632 handles (pictured) have a solid wood and metal form and are available in three sizes.

www.reveal-designs.com
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www.cambridgearchitectural.com

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www.decorcable.com

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www.forms-surfaces.com

gera.publick.net

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gera.publick.net

Stair design is moving up, and expanding out.
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Neomerce: bike-pullway.com/en

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Santa&Cole: www.santacole.com

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Ee Stairs: www.eestairs.com/en
HARDWARE

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www.viega.com

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www.mosa.nl/us

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www.waterworks.com

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1 TED BOERNER COLLECTIONS
ROCKY MOUNTAIN HARDWARE

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www.jado-hardware.com

3 ROUND DOOR SET REJUVENATION

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www.rejuvenation.com

4 C CLASS ARCHITREND

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www.architrend.com.au

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6 TALIESIN DESIGN REVEAL DESIGNS

Designed in partnership with the Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation, Reveal’s new Taliesin collection includes three series: Series 630 and 631 can be mixed and are available in 4 1/4- or 7 3/4-inch round or rectangular pulls finished in stainless steel and beech, walnut, oil rubbed bronze, or as solid stainless pieces; Series 632 handles (pictured) have a solid wood and metal form and are available in three sizes.

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Hello World!, above. While developing the exhibition, Talk to Me explores the subject of communication between people and objects. In some cases, objects contain information that goes well beyond their immediate use or appearance. In other cases, information systems, visualization design, communication devices, and interfaces, like the QR code mowed into a field in Bernhard Hopfengärtner’s project Hello World!, above, deepen the exhibition. The curators kept an online journal, creating a forum for expanding database but also their thinking: “The exhibition hinges on an important development in the culture of design (and in culture at large), a shift from the centrality of objects to include information systems, visualization design, communication devices, and interfaces, like the QR code mowed into a field in Bernhard Hopfengärtner’s project Hello World!, above, which deepened the exhibition. The curators kept an online journal, creating a forum for expanding database but also their thinking: “The exhibition hinges on an important development in the culture of design (and in culture at large), a shift from the centrality of objects to include information systems, visualization design, communication devices, and interfaces, like the QR code mowed into a field in Bernhard Hopfengärtner’s project Hello World!, above, which deepened the exhibition. The curators kept an online journal, creating a forum for expanding database but also their thinking: “The exhibition hinges on an important development in the culture of design (and in culture at large), a shift from the centrality of objects to include information systems, visualization design, communication devices, and interfaces, like the QR code mowed into a field in Bernhard Hopfengärtner’s project Hello World!, above, which deepened the exhibition. The curators kept an online journal, creating a forum for expanding database but also their thinking: “The exhibition hinges on an important development in the culture of design (and in culture at large), a shift from the centrality of objects to include information systems, visualization design, communication devices, and interfaces, like the QR code mowed into a field in Bernhard Hopfengärtner’s project Hello World!, above, which deepened the exhibition. The curators kept an online journal, creating a forum for expanding database but also their thinking: “The exhibition hinges on an important development in the culture of design (and in culture at large), a shift from the centrality of objects to include information systems, visualization design, communication devices, and interfaces, like the QR code mowed into a field in Bernhard Hopfengärtner’s project Hello World!, above, which deepened the exhibition. The curators kept an online journal, creating a forum for expanding database but also their thinking: “The exhibition hinges on an important development in the culture of design (and in culture at large), a shift from the centrality of objects to include information systems, visualization design, communication devices, and interfaces, like the QR code mowed into a field in Bernhard Hopfengärtner’s project Hello World!, above, which deepened the exhibition. The curators kept an online journal, creating a forum for expanding database but also their thinking: “The exhibition hinges on an important development in the culture of design (and in culture at large), a shift from the centrality of objects to include information systems, visualization design, communication devices, and interfaces, like the QR code mowed into a field in Bernhard Hopfengärtner’s project Hello World!, above, which deepened the exhibition.
so Pruitt-Igoe (named for a black World War II pilot and a white congressman) was all black. It was easy for white people to fear and for white politicians to scapegoat. With white flight to the suburbs, the once-vibrant city lost its population, and the industrial jobs which new arrivals from the rural South expected simply weren’t there. Men were unemployed, and families surviving on welfare were denied benefits if there was a father in the house. The spiral headed downward.

St. Louis, with its relatively tight municipal bonds, seemed to be aiming at more than the physical obliteration of what was considered a factory of crime and decay. If the African-American residents of Pruitt-Igoe had their homes leveled, there would be nowhere for them to live in St. Louis. Once out of the projects, they would be out of town, out of sight and out of mind. Abandonment of the residents, the film tells us, seemed a deliberate policy.

Strong in sociology, and edited deftly to keep the film from becoming an earnest lecture, The Pruitt-Igoe Myth is not a documentary about architecture. The architect, Minoru Yamasaki, is never named, although we do hear endless versions of the received wisdom that big and modern is bad, especially if taxes pay for it. Absent from the film are the facts that Yamasaki had originally planned a lower-rise project, at varying heights and higher cost. The plan exceeded federal cost guidelines and the local authority then mandated uniform 11-story buildings, which were more dependent on elevators than the original plan. It cost an over-budget $36 million. Were it a lower-rise project, at varying heights and density there? Probably.

Abandonment led to vandalism and more neglect. The projects were stigmatized as a black hole of crime and inexhaustible spending. Few risked defending the place, certainly not politicians seeking re-election. Academics and former residents rhapsoitize about the early days of Pruitt-Igoe. And why not? The slums that were cleared on the site were felid places. The same choruses agree in the film that the problem at Pruitt-Igoe (and in most public housing) was not overheating but the failure to fund its operations, which doomed it to ruin. Once a place of 33 buildings and 2,870 apartments, there were 600 people living there when the fuse was first set on March 16, 1972.

In St. Louis, other factors were at work. Public housing in Missouri wasn’t legally desegregated until 1954 (when the first building opened)
CORB'S CARS continued from page 31

already become established, and he found himself up against some very stiff competition. Amado beautifully reproduces plates of 78 entries by rivals, many featuring rear engines, earnest attempts at streamlining, a surprisingly agile juggling of features, and, quel scandale, a progressive industrial rather than architectural language. Viewing them as an ensemble, as a snapshot of the struggle to represent fluid (read sexy) forms with an engineer's kit, I'm once again made aware of the hair-raising digital revolution we are witnessing today, and reminded of the incredible breakthrough embodied in pioneering designs like the Cisitalia. Le Corbusier, focused on the Modular and the harmony of intersecting lines with no Xenakis in sight, was caught off-guard. Lacking beziers and splines, locked into antideluvian T's and angles, he found himself far from the shells and airfoils he lauded in Towards a New Architecture. Nevertheless, he soldiered on, eventually producing drawings for a strange, pug-nosed vehicle which would be right at home in Trey Parker's garage. Slab-sided, and aggressively Euclidian, with arcs and planes where his peers imagined aircraft-like swoops and ogee curves, it has all the charm of a self-propelled, home-built travel trailer. Interior room presses to the margins, barely acknowledging the running gear, popping the wheels half the way into the passenger compartment. As soberly utilitarian (it fairly shouts “Home Depot!”) as the Voisin is proud and majestic, the design is a tart reminder of the disconnect between Le Corbusier's rhetoric and his bid to personally enter the world of the industrialist. That world, at least on the surface, seemed willing to entertain his entreaties. Amado has unearthed fascinating letters politely shunting Corb to those the authors deem likely to collaborate, which, like a spurned lover, he pursues with increasing ardor. Between the lines, however, the message was blunt: architecture was fine for the estate, but not for the road. Conflicted? Indeed. This was an era in which the contesting forces of industrialization and elite culture were uneasy companions. Architects, noses in the air, were awash with grand illusions. Gropius shed his austere identity to build his very own bling-mobile, and Frank Lloyd Wright tooled around in a grand but off-putting Continental with portholes (the automotive equivalent of Johnson's Chippendale tower!). Fuller and Molino threw their hat in the ring, but, ultimately, there was no there there. It was up to a new breed of industrial designer—Norman Bel Geddes, under-the-radar William Stout, and of course Raymond Loewy—to crack the code that separated elite patronage from the all powerful consumer. Matter of fact, there is still no way to connect the dots. The Citrohan House, the Lustron House, and the Wachsman/Gropius Panel House all failed to work out the simple fact that the public eyeballs buildings but craves consumer goodies.

Amado doesn't try, which is to his credit. Discussing the Citrohan House along with the Stein house, Amado avoids a mash-up by confessing that his passion for automobiles drove him to cross conceptual and academic boundaries, finally giving birth to a thesis that favors fervor for the subject over academic limits, and leaving us with the tantalizing thought that the automobile was the secret force behind Le Corbusier's urban vision. He gives us the goods, packaged in a in a generously designed format, which fills page after page with foolscap sketches (in color), and a remarkably astute collection of period photographs. Corbusian lore peppers the pages, sparked by the occasional well chosen bon mot and, above all, untainted by a whiff of undeserved authority. This book is clear and innocent, and the author is passionately devoted to his subject. Leafing through the reproductions of the competitor's drawings, I thought as Le Corbusier must have thought, perhaps for the first time, “Merde—all the good ideas are taken!”

CRAIG HODGETTS IS A PRINCIPAL AT HODGETTS + FUNG IN CULVER CITY, CA.
Yesterday’s Project: Memorial Sloan-Kettering Mortimer B. Zuckerman Research Building

Architect: SOM/ZGF

Stones: Heathermoor slate

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NEW DEVELOPER ON THE BLOCK

Andre Singer is a developer with a mission. In 2008 Singer moved from Belgium to New York and founded MNHTN LLC. He brings with him an attitude not shared by many a more established local developer: a respect for architects. For his first mid-scale project at an as yet unannounced site in lower Manhattan, he has enlisted both OMA and Diller Scocfield + Renfro. Dedicated and ambitious, the 46-year-old developer wants to change the face of New York with good design and good planning at the fore. Gwen Webber gives him a background check.

What experience do you have in building?

I started in development 20 years ago and from the beginning there was an ambition to work with high-quality architecture. Then as the projects became bigger, I also wanted to work on town planning. In Europe, I was doing projects between $30 million and $1 billion, which included extensions of the city. This was in Belgium and France—in Paris, Brussels, Antwerp and the Cote D’Azur. In 2008 I was lucky enough to sell my shares in Project2 (a real estate development based in Antwerp and Paris, founded in 1991) and set up MNHTN LLC.

Why did you move to New York?

Essentially, I found Belgium very dull. I wanted to move to a major economic center. My wife is English, and I studied at Oxford, so I was going to move to London, but the opportunities for development were really bad. The big attraction to New York was the downtown rezoning. I can do really interesting, ambitious stuff here for the rest of my life. Then once I moved here I fell in love with New York.

What projects are you currently working on in New York?

I purposely started here with a small project (a 9,000-square-foot townhouse on 9th Street between 5th and 6th avenues) to find my way around. In September, I will be acquiring a plot downtown to develop an 80-unit apartment in two phases. The first phase is by Rem Koolhaas and the second by Diller Scocfield + Renfro.

Why did you approach these particular architects?

I think Rem Koolhaas—with Herzog and de Meuron and Frank Gehry—is the most important architect from the last 25 years. Also, the pricing of these apartments isn’t very high, so to work with an architect who is used to building for a reasonable price and good at cost control was very attractive: it is a combination of someone who is interesting conceptually and who is also pragmatic. And I think DSR is one of the best American firms.

When did you start tapping into high-profile architects?

There was no one particular experience. I have been interested in visual arts since childhood... in painting, photography, etc. Although I worked in finance for four years, it was never a question that I wouldn’t work with good design. If I was going to do this job, it was always going to be in this way.

I started off doing much smaller projects with the best or better Belgian architects. Then ten years ago, I did a really large project—250,000 square feet above grade—with Hans Kolhoff (the architect of Potsdamer Platz in Berlin) on the docks of Antwerp.

How have you found the New York development scene?

How does it compare to working in Europe?

I think the big difference is that on a large scale, European developers are used to working in tandem with the city on master planning and the underlying idea of public good, public space, and social cohesion. In New York, there hasn’t been significant master planning initiatives since the war, so the city isn’t used to working like that.

While I think public space in New York has been successfully done, what has not been so successful is building significant buildings, creating a new paradigm. The last building I would put in that category is the Seagram building. The most interesting buildings in America are happening in Miami—Herszog and de Meuron’s car park is astoundingly good. Rem’s work in Seattle or what he did at Mies’ campus in Chicago. These are the buildings that are the most important in America in the last ten years. None of them have been built here in the past 50 years. Why?

What kind of master plans have you been involved with in the past?

In Antwerp we won a competition to redevelop the Dry Docks area (about 2.7 million square feet) that involved a large public park, a building for the symphony orchestra by Herzog and de Meuron and a master plan by [Swiss architects] Diener and Diener. We won the master plan hands down, but in typical Belgian fashion it didn’t move on to execution.

What makes large-scale development in New York appealing to you?

If you look at the housing stock you have excess inventory in the second tier of the market, it is a shadow inventory, it has been taken off the market and turned into rentals but when prices go up again these will be on sale again. I think it will take three or four years for this capacity to be absorbed, but once that is absorbed, you’re looking at significant price increases. Although Downtown Manhattan has been rezoned, the people who were willing to sell easily have sold already, but the people who own sites where you can build at a much greater density are more loathe to sell because they are getting a good return from renting or using it as a parking space. It’s enough to keep someone like me happy, but it’s not enough for the market to be in equilibrium. I don’t think people will want costs to grow in this exponential manner. The social cost is too high. That’s why I think it would be smart for the city to look at developing sites, not in Manhattan but in other areas in New York. The only way you could do it coherently is with a master plan. I have no idea if the city would do it, but I have little doubt that the city would benefit.

Do you see your role as very hands on?

Yes. I think you have to be both a puppeteer and a manager. I respond very strongly to architects’ proposals. I work in a friendly but very critical manner. They don’t have an easy ride with me, but they enjoy that. If you look at why 1111 Lincoln Road in Miami and the High Line are both successful, you are looking at a client who is knowledgeable and passionate and committed, and I think that’s what gets you outstanding results. I’m very active in the design role but not in the sense that I try to impose my vision.

Are you creative?

Yes. And I channel it into the work. I also look at art a lot. I go to museums and have a serious interest, and recently I discovered opera. When I was at university I did a lot of drama, directing. There was definitely a possibility that I would have gone into drama professionally. Actually what I’m doing now is a perfect combination of business and creativity.

What are your long-term plans?

I’re doing projects here in Seattle or what he did at Mies’ campus in Chicago. These are the buildings that are the most important in America in the last ten years. None of them have been built here in the past 50 years. Why?

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Andre Singer is getting to know downtown.

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