The vision for Governors Island came into sharper focus after more details of the first phase of development were revealed to AN last month. Leslie Koch, president of the Trust for Governors Island, confirmed that the city has committed $300 million to the project. During construction through 2012, the island will only be

Many urbanists see the parking garage as a necessary evil of contemporary city making, but the city of Miami Beach has elevated the structure to civic art. The newest addition to a collection of eye-catching parking structures makes perfect sense: a pile of curving forms by one of the world’s most sculptural architects,

After the city sealed the deal to sell Robert Moses Playground to the United Nations to finance the waterfront park between 38th Street and 60th Street, the East River Greenway moved a step closer to completion. But once the Greenway links upriver at 60th Street, a host of issues await. There, stretching from 60th to 125th, the 60-year-old

A pile of curving forms by one of the world’s most sculptural architects, Zaha Hadid, is the newest addition to a collection of eye-catching parking structures. The structure is a civic art piece that elevates the parking garage to a contemporary city-making necessity.

The Reading Viaduct, a grass and tree-covered stretch of historically rich yet defunct industrial rail line in Philadelphia, has opened up a lively dialogue about its potential as an urban connector. With a location ripe for development, the viaduct has become a symbol of urban renewal.

The East Side and East Harlem, Mind the Gap: After the city sealed the deal to sell Robert Moses Playground to the United Nations to finance the waterfront park between 38th Street and 60th Street, the East River Greenway moved a step closer to completion. But once the Greenway links upriver at 60th Street, a host of issues await. There, stretching from 60th to 125th, the 60-year-old

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The viaduct turned into a park by Bryan Hanes Associates.
On November 15 an impressive group of academic minds, official movers, urban activists, and out-of-town works took to the stage and swarmed into the seats of the mid-century swank McGraw-Hill auditorium. Hosted by the director of the department of city planning, Amanda Burden, with adroit monitoring by Harvard visiting professor of urban planning (a.k.a. Mr. MPORS), Jerold Kayden, speakers included NYU professor Hilary Ballon, Skyscraper Museum director Carol Willis, urban planner Alex Garvin, Bloomberg CEO Daniel Doctoroff, Community Solutions president Rosanne Haggerty, developer gentrified and Vishaan Chhatre and architect Robert A.M. Stern and Thom Mayne, plus chief city planners from London, Boston, and San Francisco. The audience was just as loud.

The subject was zoning. It is the 50th anniversary of the 1961 Zoning Resolution. Or as Harriet Tregoning, director of planning in D.C., so wryly put it: “It’s a good idea to take a look at zoning every 50 years or so.” The event was billed as “Zoning the City: Addressing New York City’s 21st Century Challenges.” Would that it had been that direct. As it turns out, these zoning whizzes are as in the dark about zoning as you and I; and forget its legibility to the average citizen (although city planning is trying to fix that with its new interactive ZoLa app). There was much talk of zoning as a tool (San Francisco planner John Rahaim called it “a blunt instrument”), but whether it supported or controlled growth, enhanced or sold-out the public realm, helped or created havocs with transferable air rights and FAR was uncertain. If a tool, it sounded like it must be an astrolobe, so arcane that one who doesn’t know how to use it. The city’s zoning regulations, said Garvin, are “something no ordinary human being can understand.”

But this was no ordinary group of human beings; these were folks fluent in ULURP. And so it was disappointing that while they groped substantively with familiar challenges, they failed to be creative about opportunities (with the exception of Chaharabi who so out there he envisioned a Manhattan twin out of landfill—a zoning blanket slake—in the harbor.) Overall, the conversation kept spinning its wheels on terms and definitions; I guess even high performance cars can get stuck in a deep enough rut.

And I, the later learned even the speakers, wanted to hear more about new approaches and experiments, pilots and initiatives. Garvin made an interesting point about Lower Manhattan turning into a police state due to all the security (not a zoning problem. Should it be?) but settled back into marvelling about the loneliness of Parisian boulevards. Charming place, but does anyone really want New York to lapse into some Old World museum city for nostalgia-swilling tourists? Keeping it competitive was the litany heard repeatedly by the pro-developers speakers. That’s fine, too, but where are the ideas about how to do it in tandem with providing equity for the needy? Kairo Shen, the chief planner in Boston, talked about the concept of “curated uses” referring to his city’s recently established Innovation District on the South Boston waterfront, modeled on a similar success story in Barcelona, where developers are required to turn over 25 percent of space to incubator businesses. In Washington D.C., there’s the Green Area Ratio, a sustainability metric established in 2010 to set standards for landscape and site design pertaining to runoff, air quality, urban heat island effects. Our managing editor, Molly Heintz just returned from Beijing where she saw the booming zoning/development strategy called SOHO for Small Office, Home Office. Many of the architects we write about daily are designing these mixed-use buildings geared to a real-world live/work conundrum, including Steven Holl, Kengo Kuma, and Zaha Hadid, and I wish the conference had delved more into such efforts.

New York may have the High Line, urbanism’s triumph du jour, but it seems to be lagging behind in the kind of nifty-gritty innovations that make the real difference for the most people in the long run. As a tool, zoning has become too unwieldy, more like a loose cannon. The ideas are out there, it’s time to bring them home. But see for yourself, the conference was taped and can be seen at www.zoningthecity.com.

ZONING: A BLUNT INSTRUMENT

A concrete structure that calls to mind both gyroscopes and pizza dough in mid flight. Located in Collins Park, home to the new Gehry-designed New World Symphony (with its own Gehry garage), the Hadd garage joins a roster of commercial and commercial spaces designed by Herzog & de Meuron, Arquitectonica, Ten Arquitectos, and Perkins + Will. Commissioned by the City of Miami Beach, the Hadd garage is the city’s latest to use design as a tool to attract urban notoriety. “Even our parking garages are more than a group of commercial spaces—destinations within themselves and have attained individual iconic status,” said Miami Beach Mayor Matti Bower in a statement.

“The subject was zoning…”

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Joshua Olin / Christopher Morris

The three winners will be announced next May. About 90 minutes into the two-and-a-half-hour event, local designers took the opportunity to meet and greet each other. Rob Rogers of Rogers Marvel Architects in New York, caught up with landscape architects Ken Smith and Gary Hilderbrand. “The competition environment is healthy and inspiring for everyone….You enjoy your competitors,” he said, noting that they’re just as often working together on projects as competing against each other, and that seeing them all gathered in a room is a stark reminder of the talent’s he’s up against.

When the local networkers started to arrive, conversations flowed. Steven Phillips, a vice president of estimating at Maryland-based James G. Davis Construction Corp., came to scope out who was at the stage, the second in the three-phase competition which addresses three distinct Mall sites.

About 90 minutes into the two-and-a-half hour event, Michael Arad and his partner Barbara Wilks had “made few people,” but if any of vendor spaces, dates, they wasn’t letting on. Across the room, Warren Byrd was precise about the scale he wanted, and out-of-town wonks took to the stage and swarmed into the door matched up. Because his team’s lead architect, Paul Murdock, is based in Los Angeles, the partners need a local architect in D.C. as well as “a few more technical specialists,” Byrd said. So far that morning, he had seen local architects, landscape architect, cost estimators, and consultants. The 15 semi-finalist teams were selected out of 58 entries in Stage I. After they submit team qualifications and identification, they will be winnowed down again to four for each of the three sites, to be announced on December 15.

The three winners will be announced next May.

THE ARCHITECT’S NEWSPAPER DECEMBER 14, 2011

AMANDA KOLSON HURLEY

SEARCH ON FOR LOCAL PARTNERS FOR WASHINGTON MALL REDO

D.C. DATING GAME

This is a super-wendy list for Washington, D.C.,” said Dan Wood, a principal of WOODS, as he glanced around a gathering of contenders participating in a “networking event” for the National Mall Design Competition. The room was ringed by tables, behind each of which stood acclaimed architects and landscape architects, largely from outside D.C.’s orbit: Michael Arad, Ken Smith, Rob Rogers, Alex Krieger, Tom Leader, and Wood himself, among others. Most of the designers had traveled from points north or west for the meet-up, sponsored by the nonprofit Trust for the National Mall. All were selected as longlist finalists on Oct. 26 and are now fleshing out their project teams for overhauling one of the oldest public spaces in the country. Veteran competition manager Donald Stansty is running the show helping the name brand architects to hook up with talent from the D.C. area. Lead designers were encouraged, but not required, to attend.

Stansty told AN that he pioneered this kind of event a decade ago for competitions for U.S. embassies in Nairobi, Kenya, and Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, where local input was desirable but security issues, paramount. “It was tremen-

duously successful,” and since then they’ve included it in our [U.S.] competition rollouts,” said Stansty, who was also point man on the Disney Concert Hall and Flight 93 Memorial competitions. Stansty pointed out that these mixers are also “a way of making contacts that may pay off down the line, if not necessarily on this project.” The jury includes architects Thom Mayne and Craig Hodgetts, landscape architect Elizabeth Mayer, and former Washington Post critic Benjamin Forgey.

New contacts, however, were scarce for the first half hour, so designers took the opportunity to meet and greet each other. Rob Rogers of Rogers Marvel Architects in New York, caught up with landscape architects Ken Smith and Gary Hilderbrand. “The competition environment is healthy and inspiring for everyone….You enjoy your competitors,” he said, noting that they’re just as often working together on projects as competing against each other, and that seeing them all gathered in a room is a stark reminder of the talent’s he’s up against.

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The three winners will be announced next May.
THREE CONFERENCES AND AN ART FESTIVAL

There was Making Room sponsored by the Architectural League and the Citizens Housing and Planning Council; Zoning the City from the department of city planning; Manifesto at Columbia; Second Wave of Modernism on the rise of landscape, and Reconsidering Postmodernism from the Institute of Classical Architecture & Art. It just didn’t stop. At the PoMo conference, Tom Wolfe took pot shots left and right. Daniel Libeskind? “He is a treat. When you’re looking for fun in architecture, look up images of his work on Google.” About “quote Lord Norman Foster” “Whenever you hear an architect say the word ‘dialogue,’ think of the word ‘clash.’ The building they’re talking about doesn’t belong there.”

Noting that Philadelphia could not ring, and removal of the viaduct would cost nearly $50 million including $25 million for soil remediation. Developers have until January 1 to submit letters of opposition, which would further stall the project. The other roadblock is in the constraints have prevented the demolition from occurring, and removal of the viaduct would cost nearly $50 million including $25 million for soil remediation. Residents have until January 1 to submit letters of opposition, which would further stall the project. The other roadblock is in the structure’s ownership. The Philadelphia and Reading Railroad, one of America’s earliest constructed railroads (and a Monopoly game icon), has morphed into Reading (and a Monopoly game icon), a former manufacturing neighborhood. However, in most public projects where budgets are tight, the realization of an elevated park has a long way to go. Paul Levy, president of Center City District (CCD), believes in the developmental potentials of an elevated park and the importance of the park as an impetus for growth in an area that is otherwise beleaguered by desolation. “Growth is stunted by the blighted and terrible conditions of the viaduct,” he said. Levy mentioned the High Line and the Promenade Plantée in Paris as successful iterations of a similar condi
tion, but he was quick to add, “Philadelphia is not New York.” Noting that Philadelphia could not possibly raise the amount of private financial and celebrity backing that buoyed the High Line, he said, “Philadelphia’s conditions for design are more geared towards an industrial feel.” Two primary obstacles stand in the way of the park’s realization. CCD’s creation of a Neighborhood Improvement District (NID) with a 7 percent tax surcharge on residents has caused push-back from Callowhill and stirred much public debate, while in 2004, the Chinatown Plan called for the removal of portions of the viaduct for affordable housing. Budget constraints have prevented the demolition from occurring, and removal of the viaduct would cost nearly $50 million including $25 million for soil remediation. Residents have until January 1 to submit letters of opposition, which would further stall the project. The other roadblock is in the structure’s ownership. The Philadelphia and Reading Railroad, one of America’s earliest constructed railroads (and a Monopoly game icon), has morphed into Reading International (RDI), owner of cinema houses and real estate in Australia, New Zealand, and the United States, including the legacy land on which the viaduct sits. Levy and Alan Greenberger, chairman of the City Planning Commission, have been in discussions with the former rail titan in their Los Angeles headquarters. Greenberger is optimistic that Philadelphia will eventually strike a deal to either involve RDI or obtain the necessary permission to build, but he believes it will be a protracted process.” However, grass roots have sprouted in Philadelphia and the vision of a park on the Reading Viaduct has significant popular support. With permission from the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA), property owner of the viaduct “spur,” and a grant from the William Penn Foundation and The Poor Richards Charitable Trust, CCD has hired landscape architect Bryan Hanes Associates to conduct feasibility studies and design schematics for the viaduct. Hanes told AN that he is looking at this project not as “phase one” but as a “catalyst for enthusiasm.”

This month, New York Nolita neighborhood’s historic Puck Building—the original home of Puck magazine and J. Ottman Lithographic Company and a 19th century survivor of the city’s old printing and publishing district—welcomed its first retail tenant: national outdoor co-op Recreational Equipment, Inc., a.k.a. REI. The enormous 35,000-square-foot,atrium-like space, which stretches over three levels connected by a central staircase, underwent a thoughtful renovation process involving an architectural historian and preservation experts at the Smithsonian. Leading the design team was the New York-based architecture firm Callison, who strove to incorporate elements reclaimed from the Puck Building into REI’s signature naturalist décor. The original brick walls, wooden-beamed ceilings, and antique steel columns were exposed to bring the building’s 1905 features back to life; joints removed from the floor were used to create new, modern stair treads; over 500 slab marble tables excavated from the printing remnants were put on display or repurposed in the store design; wood from the original structure was recycled into almost everything in the retail space, from the casher counters to the signage—and two original chandeliers were locally refurbished by artist Robert Ogden.

While the co-op is known for its community-minded programming and partnerships with local non-profits (a New York partner will be Friends of the High Line), REI’s occupancy of the historic building yields another unforeseen benefit: its public accessibility enables the retail store to double as a small museum. Among the various historic artifacts on display throughout the retail space, the most noteworthy are the two 14-foot Whirlies from the building’s original steam engines, increasingly rare relics of New York’s industrial past.

CINDY YERIN CHUN

ROLLING OUT continued from front page redevelopment, the mile-long viaduct runs north from the edge of Center City to Callowhill, a former manufacturing neighborhood. However, in most public projects where budgets are tight, the realization of an elevated park has a long way to go. Paul Levy, president of Center City District (CCD), believes in the developmental potentials of an elevated park and the importance of the park as an impetus for growth in an area that is otherwise beleaguered by desolation. “Growth is stunted by the blighted and terrible conditions of the viaduct,” he said. Levy mentioned the High Line and the Promenade Plantée in Paris as successful iterations of a similar condi
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ANCHORS AWAY

COOPER UNION CONSIDERS TUITION AFTER 152 YEARS
Pay to Play?

In October, Jamshed Bharucha, the new presi-
dent of The Cooper Union for the Advancement
of Science and Art, addressed a New York
Times reporter that the school is operating at an
annual deficit of near $16.5 million. With expendi-
tures of $59.7 million, this represents a deficit of
approximately 28 percent. President Bharucha
went on to acknowledge that such an unsustain-
able financial model requires finding a way to
balance the operating budget without selling
assets or raising the endowment. That means
identifying revenue models that scale to the
growth of expenses. Rumors about the school’s
increasing financial woes have been circulating
for some time, even prompting a series of open
meetings to discuss the problems. However, no
one was expecting the other shoe to drop in the
immediate future, which is exactly what happened when
President Bharucha let slip that a new revenue
stream might have to come from an unprece-
dented tuition levy, albeit as a last resort.

Unlike the tuition-based structure of virtually
every other private institution of higher educa-
tion, the Cooper Union offers education in
art, architecture, and engineering tuition-free.
Peter Cooper, the inventor and industrialist
who founded the school in 1859, believed
that education was a democratic right, not
a privilege, and should be available to qualified
individuals regardless of their means. Now it
seems that Cooper’s guarantee of free-tuition
in perpetuity may be threatened.

As expected, the reaction from students,
faculty, and alumni was swift and incredulous.
“It is not that the Cooper Union holds up free
education, but that free education holds up the
Cooper Union. We are now confronted with a
self-perpetuating crisis that threatens to collapse this
structural principle,” argued Professor David Gersten at
an assembly in the school’s legendary Great Hall
two days after President Bharucha’s pronounce-
ment. Gersten, who has taught at the school
since 1981 and served as associate dean under
John Hejduk, sees the school’s financial woes
as an existential crisis, demanding verification of
the founder’s principles. “The hard work of navig-
ating this moment, of clarifying the meaning of
our principles, will not be found in the neutrality
of looking forward only. The questions of
accountability, of broken bonds of trust, of hysteric-
tic excesses will large, figure strongly within our
current crisis. We must not shy away from these
facts. Any solution requires an honest, hard
look at the decisions made that led to the crisis.”

Gersten is not alone in questioning what many
see as responsible management practices prior
to Bharucha’s appointment. Others criticize the
timing of the new $166 million academic build-
ing at 41 Cooper Square, designed by Morphosis
Architects. State-of-the-art environmental sustainability propped up by an unsustainable
business model is an irony lost on few.

It seems unlikely that the institution will start
charging tuition any time soon, but there are
few clues as to how it will reduce its mounting
deficit. There are calls for a financial audit, and
the president proposes a task force. In a letter
posted on the school’s Web site, President
Bharucha doesn’t mention tuition but rather calls for “a bold plan of reinvention.” It remains
to be seen how bold a reinvention the ghost of
Peter Cooper can bear.

SARAH HART
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PUBLIC REALM TO BE TOPIC A AT BIENNALE Chipperfield Takes Venice

Political tensions have stalled preparations for the 13th Venice Architecture Biennale, as the event still has no officially appointed curator. Though it is generally accepted that British architect David Chipperfield, who won the Mies van der Rohe Prize for his Neues Museum in Berlin in June, will take up the post, he wrote a letter to Building Design in late November denying his involvement.

Earlier this year the architect was reported as the favorite from a list including Eduardo Souto de Moura, but his disapproval of the proposed appointment of Giulio Malgara, an Italian food importer and friend of Silvio Berlusconi, as Biennale director, usurping Paolo Baratta from his long-held post, stalled his commitment and threw the Biennale into a state of static. The divisive atmosphere dissipated with the Italian prime minister’s resignation in November. Seemingly at odds with his architecture, which is often sober and austere but also profoundly contextual, the London-based designer doesn’t shy away from wily politics: in 2006, on receiving the RIBA Stirling Prize, he denounced the British system of procurement as “a dysfunctional relationship between client and architect.” Vicky Richardson, Director of Architecture, Fashion and Design at the British Council said: “Chipperfield has always emphasized the role of the architect as a public intellectual. He has been a brave critic…and does not shy away from controversy or from confronting difficult issues.” If appointed, Chipperfield will be the third Brit to curate the Architecture Biennale in the past six festivals, following Deyan Sudjic, currently director of London’s Design Museum, in 2002, and Ricky Burdett, Professor of Urban Studies at the London School of Economics in 2006. All three were roommates in the 80s at the fledgling Blueprint magazine and 9H gallery office. Though Chipperfield lacks the accoutrements that are the stuff of current-day stararchitects, his contribution to the international architecture scene is undeniable.

Chipperfield’s long-standing concern for historical context and specificity—evident in projects from the Neues Museum to the Stirling Prize-winning Museum of Modern Literature in Germany—will likely take the festival in a wholly different direction from last year’s theme People Meet in August, the eighth month—and for the pleasing graphic symmetry built into a palindrome.

“It’s a very tailored, very tight roster. We have an elite bunch,” said Vaughan of OTTO’s photographers, who in addition to Frances include Richard Barnes, Ty Cole, and Michael Moran, to name a few in a hand-picked group that Vaughan guessed might grow to 20 but no more than 25. OTTO’s emphasis will be on presenting curated portfolios of work developed through the duo’s hands-on approach. If photographers who join OTTO have archival images already licensed by other agencies, say ESTO, OTTO plans to acquire selected images as those contracts expire.

New York-based OTTO Archive, a new photo licensing agency specializing in architecture and design, takes the photographer’s mantra “You are what you shoot” seriously.

Eight well-established photographers have signed on with OTTO, launched in October by Bill Hannigan and Thea Vaughan. The partners, both veterans of the syndicating superpower Corbis Images, founded their first licensing agency, AUGUST Image in 2007 to represent the work of portrait and lifestyle photographers. The same year, they also started Vaughan Hannigan, a small artists management agency through which they met Scott Frances, an architectural photographer of works by Richard Meier, Thomas Phifer, and Kengo Kuma, among other well-known architects. It was by managing Frances’ career that the duo identified what they felt was an underserved market in licensing archival architectural photography. Soon after, Hannigan and Vaughan created OTTO, a name chosen both for its connection to their first company—
MIND THE GAP continued from front page

East River Esplanade languishes.

The esplanade runs approximately two miles between the Upper East Side and East Harlem gradually shifting from lush and refined at Gracie Mansion to rough and tumble at the 96th Street divide, long a psychological demarcation between the haves and have-nots.

In late October, citizen action group CIVITAS announced its Reimagining the Waterfront ideas competition charging architects, planners, and landscape designers to develop concepts for the entire esplanade, or in sections. According to executive director Hunter Armstrong, key challenges are social challenges, but the promenade infrastructure is just as bad. John Natoli, chief engineer at Parks, said that every few hundred feet the support systems change from traditional pile supports, to log-cabin cribbed wood pilings, and concrete blocks sitting atop landfill.

For years, the esplanade’s jurisdiction remained convoluted, with Parks, the DOT, and DEP randomly dashing in to make repairs. Upper East Side Council Member Jessica Lappin credited Parks for “graciously accepting responsibility.” Natoli described the problem: “In some cases, we’re doing fixes that wouldn’t be right, but we have limited funds. We know it needs tens of millions but we only have thousands.”

Based on $86 million worth of comparable work at the East River Park below 14th Street, Natoli estimated that an uptown revamp could exceed $100 million. CIVITAS hopes the competition will help jumpstart some financing once the ideas start to flow, and the community gets excited.

Council Member Lappin’s office has already allocated $1.4 million toward renovation and repair, of which $500,000 went toward studying the infrastructure. There are bright spots. “Con Edison owns a building in the 70s and they may be willing to give that land over to the city,” said Lappin. To the north, the CIVITAS competition has the support of Council Member Melissa Mark-Viverito, who also happens to chair City Council’s Parks and Recreation Committee. Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney is also on board. The deadline for the competition is January 16, 2012.

The charming 107th Street Pier with its cast and rusted railings sat on decaying concrete. Smoked pot near the Wards Island Bridge, but the promenade itself was bleak. Teens shot at the 96th Street overpass, a fistfight threatened the tour, and Armstrong quickly redirected attention to the subject to the new CUNY buildings by SLCE, snazzy condos, a convent, and the original Patsy’s pizza parlor.

The lower section of the promenade below 96th Street may not face the same social challenges, but the promenade infrastructure is just as bad. John Natoli, chief engineer at Parks, said that every few hundred feet the support systems change from traditional pile supports, to log-cabin cribbed wood pilings, and concrete blocks sitting atop landfill.

On exiting the esplanade at the 120th Street overpass, a fistfight threatened the tour as Armstrong quickly redirected attention to the subject to the new CUNY buildings by SLCE, snazzy condos, a convent, and the original Patsy’s pizza parlor.

UNVEILED

ATLANTIC YARDS APARTMENTS

From the twisting titanium forms of Frank Gehry’s Brooklyn to a tower of prefabricated modules, the residential towers at Atlantic Yards have run the gamut of the architectural spectrum. On November 17, Forest City Ratner and SHoP Architects confirmed rumors that the 22-acre project is now going forward with the world’s tallest prefabricated buildings, beginning with the 32-story B2 tower nestled alongside SHoP’s Barclay’s Center on Flatbush Avenue and Dean Street. SHoP chose to break down the visual mass of the building by forming three distinct stacked and setback volumes in accordance with project guidelines set out by the Empire State Development Corporation. Even though the facade will be comprised of hundreds of identical pieces, Chris Sharples, a SHoP principal, said the tower is designed to hide its modularity. “It won’t be obvious that this is a modular building,” he said. “We looked at how to create variation in window sizes, color, and setbacks. The facade will create a tactile sense when you look at the building” thanks to deep reveals, dramatic shadow lines, and perforated metal panels.

Each of the 17 unique modules in use will measure 13 by 30 by 10 feet and will be built from a steel chassis at an off-site facility, and reconfigurable in many ways with up to three modules for a room. Not only the facade but also light fixtures and even the refrigerator will be installed at the factory, accounting for about 60 percent of construction work, before the units are trucked to the site and lifted into place. “The goal is to have as much as possible of the finished work done by the time the modules arrive on site,” said Sharples. Off-site fabrication could account for up to a 20 percent savings over traditional construction. Construction is expected to begin in early 2012 and the building could open as soon as 18 months later.

BRANDEN KLAYKO
Allied Works’ newly completed Clyfford Still Museum in Denver backs up to Daniel Libeskind’s 2006 addition to the Denver Art Museum, and it’s hard to imagine a more dramatic collision of architectural strategies. The Libeskind is all about show and self-expression: a spiky, silvery billboard that is ill-suited to the display of art despite the curators’ best efforts to utilize sharp angles and tilted walls. The museum’s richly varied collection feels marginalized and diminished. In contrast, Brad Cloepfil has crafted galleries to exploit the full potential of the Abstract Expressionist Still’s surging canvases, calibrating the proportions of each space and weaving them together as components of a single volume. The ribbed concrete block that contains the art hugs the earth and opens to the sky but wisely makes no effort to compete with its flamboyant neighbor. This block of Denver’s Cultural District should become a mandatory stop for the building committees of museums searching for an architect to create or extend their institutions. While there, they should check out David Adjaye’s restrained yet versatile contemporary art museum, a mile to the north, completed in 2007. Cloepfil had the huge advantage of knowing exactly what art would be displayed: a rotating selection from a bequest of 2,400 paintings and sketches by a single artist. Clyfford Still moved to New York in 1950 as a leading proponent of Abstract Expressionism and almost immediately withdrew his work from dealers and museum shows. Like Donald Judd, he wanted to set his own terms. He made a few donations but sold little, and held on to 94 percent of his work. When he died, in 1980, he willed his trove to an American city that would install it in a permanent home. Cloepfil was selected as architect for his ideas, not a design, and he collaborated closely with the museum director, Dean Sobell, who wanted a chronological installation, and spaces without natural light for works on paper. Fundraising fell short during the recession, and the building was reduced in size to a two-story block set back from the street, with room to show about 70 works of varied size. “I love the idea of limits,” said Cloepfil in a recent interview, “that acts of making, discerning, deciding things are different and you can place something in the world that becomes a register for distinguishing one thing from another.” He found inspiration in the elemental forms and radiant lighting of Kahn’s Kimbell, the intimacy of Piano’s Cy Twombly Gallery (at the Menil Collection Museum) in Houston, and the idiosyncratic character of the Picasso Museum in Paris, with its interweaving of galleries and circulation routes. As the concept sketches show, blocky forms and a grid plan were there from the start. Over two years and a huge number of variations, the proportions and divisions were refined without losing their toughness. Paintings are stored and conserved on the first floor in shadowy spaces that suggest a cave. A staircase leads up from the foyer to the second floor galleries with a beam of natural light prompting visitors to ascend without recourse to signs. Twelve-foot-high galleries for smaller works and sketches are topped with diagonally boarded concrete ceilings. These open into the principal galleries where canvases fill the 14-foot display walls, lit from 18-foot perforated concrete ceilings that diffuse the light filtered through roof lanterns. Walls are placed like sliding screens and cut-out openings frame canvases on a far wall, allowing visitors to approach until they are swallowed up in the painter’s jagged forms and vibrant colors. Each of the galleries is conceived as a room, proportioned to the work it contains, flowing easily into the next and opening vistas across the entire floor. Shifts in height and intensity of lighting make this a sensory experience that “offers an inescapable immediacy with the work of Clyfford Still,” as Cloepfil notes. To frame this experience, the architects wanted to create a single mass that would grow from the land. After repeated tests, they settled on poured concrete that would bleed from narrow openings in the formwork to produce a rough-textured surface of broken fins. Outside and in, this relief is animated by shifts of natural light; the tactility is a counterpoint to the brushstrokes that may not be touched. The ribs give way to plain, boarded concrete and drywall where art is displayed. The ceiling is comprised of white concrete screens with elongated oval openings that were cast on site; the gallery floors are white oak. A limited palette of materials and neutral tones combines with richly varied textures to turn this simple rectilinear block into a subtle work of art, which defers to and enriches the painter’s expression. Rarely has there been such a seamless pairing of art and architecture.
Moody Greens continued from front page

open on Saturdays and Sundays; work is expected to be completed by October 2013. New key features, from transparent signage to curbs that morph into seating and customized lighting provide a distinct identity. The most immediate change that visitors will notice is a new arrival pier at Soissons Landing. Koch said that Yankee Pier to the south would accommodate visitors from Brooklyn. Historic areas will be left pretty much alone, though nearly $27 million has already been spent to stabilize historic structures. The project will also bring much needed infrastructure such as telecommunications and a potable water connection from Brooklyn.

On arrival at Soissons Landing, a transparent Welcome Wall developed by Pentagram will greet visitors. Partner Michael Bierut said the designers knew that if the signage was too large it would become intrusive, too small and it would become useless. So the group explored ways to dematerialize the wayfinding. The firm created a trellis-like gate to hold cutout letters (a redesigned version of the font Agency), making the background for the letters the park itself. “The more they get smothered by the landscape the better,” said Bierut.

The terrace in front of McKim, Mead and White’s Liggett Hall seems set to become the island’s social heart. West 8’s Adriaan Geuze described a “micro typography of much-ballyhooed Hammock Grove where play areas that don’t quarantine the kids. “No boxwoods weave in shallow fountains and composition. Here a swirling labyrinth ofings and fountains found there as a “baroque” described the paisley-like interplay of plant-island’s social heart. West 8’s Adriaan Geuze Was too large it would become intrusive, too small and it would become useless. So the group explored ways to dematerialize the wayfinding. The firm created a trellis-like gate to hold cutout letters (a redesigned version of the font Agency), making the background for the letters the park itself. “The more they get smothered by the landscape the better,” said Bierut.

The terrace in front of McKim, Mead and White’s Liggett Hall seems set to become the island’s social heart. West 8’s Adriaan Geuze described the paisley-like interplay of plantings and fountains found there as a “baroque” composition. Here a swirling labyrinth of boxwoods weave in shallow fountains and play areas that don’t quarantine the kids. “No fences around this play area,” said Koch. The Liggett Terrace swirls give way to the much-ballyhooed Hammock Grove where Geuze described a “micro typography of oak trees” leading toward baseball fields overlooking the Statue of Liberty. From the terrace to the playground and on through the southernmost tip of the island, generous white precast concrete curbing undulates with grade changes to form seating in certain areas. The curbs delineate the landscape, allowing visitors to read the typographic changes from flush with the lawn in some areas to 18-inch ledges in other areas. The petal-like swirls that are writ large in the site plan and scaled down in the boxwood hedges translate into an even smaller whorl pattern in the curb’s pre-cast concrete.

At night, lighting by Suzan Tillotson is moody. Again, Liggett Hall takes center stage with the façade washed from below with LEDs. Nearby, discreet fixtures, tucked under the boxwood and with a pale green gel, bounce soft light off one side of the hedges. Tillotson explained that in order to preserve off-site views, the light levels taper off closer to the water’s edge. Twelve-foot high lampposts use only 40 watts. The West 8-designed fixtures resemble asymmetric Calla lilies whose light spill along the walkway. As the island’s perimeter is not included in the first phase, elsewhere the familiar orange-hued street light bulbs will be used to differentiate old from new, but the closer you get to Liggett, the cooler it gets. T

Below: The Hammock Grove swings among full-grown oaks.

Moody Greens continued from front page

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Below: The Hammock Grove swings among full-grown oaks.

Shopping for a Cause

The Occupy Wall Street (OWS) crew has set their sites on some of New York’s biggest real estate players and are obviously reading their zoning manual. With their tussle with Brookfield at Zuccotti Park effectively squashed (though we recently spotted one lone protester with a sign reading, “We’re still here. Where are you?”), OWS shifted their spotlight to a Trinity Church-owned plot at the corner of Sixth Avenue and Canal Street, site of a future SHoP-designed multi-use tower. A press release from the group shows they know a thing or two about ULURP, noting that Trinity’s zoning application “will not be approved until October 2012.” The site is currently home to a temporary park designed by Interboro. In some ways the group is biting a hand that fed them. The Village Voice reported that the church has provided OWS with services during the Zucotti occupation. No matter, as this particular occupation includes hunger strike component that began on December 3.

Chelsea Horror Hotel

With regards to Dee Dee Ramone’s book title, renovations at the Chelsea Hotel really have descended into a horror for at least 30 residents who’ve decided to stay on during construction. The website DNA reported that the group has taken their new landlord, the reclusive Joseph Chetrit, to court, citing dangerous conditions. The clouds of lead-laden dust shouldn’t have come as a surprise to anyone. Architect Gene Kaufman told AN, and plenty of others who would listen, that the shabby interiors were getting a total overhaul. “There’s a fine line between that kind of [shabby] feel and that which a hotel customer is willing to accept,” he said. If those walls could talk, they’d scream under the weight of line between that kind of [shabby] feel and that which a hotel customer is willing to accept,” he said. If those walls could talk, they’d scream under the weight of

Apple Gets a Slice

With Apple set to open their Grand Central store at press time, state comptroller Thomas Di Napoli is howling foul. The New York Post reported that the store’s $60 per square foot deal doesn’t jibe with rates charged to other tenants, which can jump as high as $200 per square foot for some. The comptroller is planning an investigation.

Transforming design into reality

For help achieving the goals of your next project, contact the Ornamental Metal Institute of New York.

Architect: Platt Byard Dovell White Architects
Photo: Frederick Charles
Last month in Dublin, some of the most promising cleantech companies across the globe were lauded by the first batch of the Global Cleantech Later Stage Awards. The Global Cleantech Cluster Association (GCCA), a non-profit formed a year ago, hopes to not only highlight the energy companies that are providing them with investment exposure (the judges have collectively invested over $3.5 billion in global cleantech) and business support to accelerate the development and adoption of these new technologies.

Selected from 4,000 qualifying companies, narrowed down to 185, finalists competed in 10 categories, including solar, energy efficiency, new material, waste, and more. Best in Biofuels went to Imperative Energy, an Ireland and UK-based bioenergy project developer noted for its rapid turnover and profitability; Albeo Technologies, a Colorado-based manufacturer of white-LED lighting systems, whose developments include high-bay LED lighting for Apple’s iCloud data center, took Best in Energy Efficiency/Green Buildings. Best of New Materials recognized Beneq, a Finnish supplier of equipment and coating technology whose developments range from glass, solar, and emerging thin film technologies to coatings in optics, barriers, and passivation layers; OpenHydro, an Irish tidal energy technology company, was awarded Best of Renewable Energy for its efforts in deploying tidal turbines underwater for generating renewable electricity without incurring environmental costs. Best of Solar and Energy Solutions, a Chicago-based firm noted for its contribution in water-space heating, ventilation systems, and pv electricity generation. San Diego-based PowerGenix, a leading developer of Nickel-Zinc batteries, won Best of Storage/Smart Grid; Best of Transportation went to SAM Group from Zurich, noted for its lightweight, energy efficient, and affordable electric vehicles; Quebec’s industrial waste management and environmental services company, Newalta, was awarded Best of Waste. Finnish Moventas, one of the world’s largest manufacturers of wind turbine gear sets, took home Best of Wind. Finally, New York’s Renticity, an eight-year-old renewable energy company, won in the Best of Water category. Its innovative Flow-to-Wire configuration converts ubiquitous excess pressure in water mains into clean electric power and represents a new stage of clean: applying higher resourcefulness to resources.

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   - Imperative Energy

5. **BEST OF WASTE**
   - Newalta

6. **BEST OF RENEWABLE ENERGY**
   - OpenHydro

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**Senior Faculty Positions**

The following appointments will be made at the level of either tenured Professor, part-time tenured Professor in Practice or part-time Adjunct Professor, with responsibilities for teaching, research, and administration.

**Architectural Design**

One or more senior faculty positions are available for highly qualified individuals to offer graduate-level instruction in architectural design with a secondary specialty. Teaching responsibilities will involve instruction in design studios and, possibly, lecture and seminar courses in the secondary specialty. Candidates should be actively engaged in an advanced experimental design practice. Conducting design and/or scholarly creative activities within the school is an important responsibility of the position. Senior faculty are expected to seek support and lead scholarly activities that include advanced students and junior faculty. Publication and/or exhibition of creative work is expected. Candidates should hold a professional master’s degree in architecture, and be qualified through advanced scholastic preparation, innovative design investigation and exploration, and/or professional practice. An interest in high-level administrative duties is desirable.

**Environmental Technologies and Sustainable Design in Architecture**

The GSD is committed to enhancing its research and pedagogy in the area of sustainability and is seeking one or more individuals at the senior professorial level whose work focuses on environmental technologies, materials, and sustainable design in architecture. Placed in the department of architecture, the successful candidate will have the interest and ability to address issues of their field and design across the departments at the GSD (architecture, landscape architecture, and urban planning & design). S/He will be expected to play an important role in the school’s advanced studio and doctoral programs, and serve as a liaison to related groups across Harvard. We are particularly interested in individuals who have the capacity to bridge between technology and the design culture. Candidates should have a PhD or equivalent, have an internationally respected record of research and publication, and should be able to interact with related disciplines such as ecology, engineering, public health, and public policy. Prior teaching experience in the context of a graduate school is preferable.

Further information on the above (and other) positions and on the application process for each can be found at http://www.gsd.harvard.edu/faculty-openings.html

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ARCHITECTS KNOW THAT BUILDING INFORMATION MODELING IS CHANGING THE WAY THAT BUILDINGS ARE DESIGNED, CONSTRUCTED, AND MANAGED POST-OCCUPANCY—but are they really taking advantage of how much it can do? AARON SEWARD CONSIDERS THREE PROJECTS AT THE FOREFRONT OF WHAT’S POSSIBLE.

A designer stares at a 3-D model on a computer screen that depicts what looks like a negative of an exposed root system. In reality, it’s the interior of a new museum, and it needs a structure to support its organic form, which will be rendered entirely in cast stone. With a single mouse click, the designer sets the software to work, rationalizing and analyzing a steel framework.

Elsewhere, an architect is biding his time in an airport lounge and is curious about the status of a batch of cladding panels for a project currently under construction half a world away. Taking out his smartphone, he punches up an app that streams real-time updates and even provides a 3-D representation of the project showing all of the panels that have been installed to date.

These are not science fiction scenarios but real life tales of how the architectural profession is changing as Building Information Modeling, better known by its acronym, BIM, grows ever more sophisticated across an expanding array of applications. The first thing that anyone familiar with the subject will tell you about BIM is that it’s not a software, or a technology, but a process—a way of conceiving and executing architecture at the heart of which is a three dimensional, information-rich digital model. That much is well known, but over the past decade, this process has accelerated exponentially as everyone from design professionals, to contractors, to facilities managers are exploring even newer ways to put the tools of BIM to work, forcing software companies to come out with ever more specialized products to further enable their user’s needs.

“If you look at the historical arch of how this thing has unfolded, it’s pretty legible,” said Phil Bernstein, vice president of industry strategy and relations at Autodesk. “Nicholas Negroponte once said that the adoption of technology follows distinct phases. The first use of a new technology is to repeat a process you were doing before. In this case, BIM was originally in service of productivity and more accurate drawings. In the last stage, technology transforms the underlying processes into something new. Now we’re in that last, transformative stage.”

Today a project can be designed,
Opposite page, left: BIM processes were used in every aspect in the design and construction of USC’s School of Cinematic Arts. The integration was so thorough that the design team was able to deliver the client an information-rich 3-D model of the building specially designed for the use of facilities management.

Opposite page, below: The school’s Spanish mission stylings belie the 21st century technology that underpins the project.

Below and right: SHoP Construction has developed an iPhone app to track progress on fabrication and installation for Atlantic Yards.

Both consultants explained that without BIM, the project would not have been possible, at least not within its current time frame (the design schedule was 20 months) and budget of $12.6 million. "In this project, the sheer complexity of geometry requires 3-D," said Case partner, Federico Negro. "There are more than 1,000 panels, all of them different, and there are four to 15 connections per panel, shooting out in all different angles. If you don’t have a good way to find objects, get to them quickly, and understand how relationships work, then you don’t have a way to manage the design. You can’t draw an elevation of this skin. It’s never orthogonal."

The geometrical form-finding capabilities of certain BIM software make it easy to develop and rationalize complex shapes. It also makes it easier to guide those forms through fabrication and construction. Case took Trahan’s Maya and Rhino design files and used Digital Project to panelize the geometry. Once the panelization was complete, the structural engineers got their turn at the model, using Rhino and Grasshopper to do structural form finding and analysis, and to design the connections. The software’s parametric modeling capabilities allowed Method Design to find 80 percent of the project’s load paths and connection points with the click of a button, leaving the remainder to be puzzled out manually. Doing that work by hand in 2-D drawings would have taken enough man-hours to make the project unfeasible. "The technology allows you to minimize the thinking you have to do," said Reese Campbell of Method. "All of the steel goes through a series of algorithms that read the connections, rationalize intersections, and conduct structural analysis."

After the structural work was done, the model went back to Case, which took the panels—now outfitted with the necessary connections—and sent them out for automated fabrication. The BIM model also helped during installation. Method printed out a 72-page connection catalogue that construction workers used on site to understand how each panel connects to the steel structure.

In addition to providing tools for designers who want to create projects of great geometrical complexity, BIM is helping the profession keep track of a project’s budget. SHoP Architects, who has been working with BIM since its very first project, an environment for P.S. 1 Contemporary Art Center in New York, used the process to address both form and finance at the Barclay’s Center in Brooklyn. "When we were developing the facade design for the arena, we used BIM to understand the geometry and the material, how each material fed into the cost matrix, and to share information with the client and the facade manufacturers," said Jonathan Mallie of SHoP.

continued on page 15
Above: The rectilinear exterior of the Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame and Regional History Museum gives way to a complex and organic interior geometry.

Below: BIM’s parametric capabilities allowed designers to quickly develop a structural system. The software itself found and analyzed 80 percent of the connections between the steel frame and the cast stone cladding.

Opposite page, top to bottom: The high level of detail in the BIM model allowed the design team to give the construction team a book of connection details that facilitated installation of the exterior and interior cladding system.
“During the design phase the real key for us was to manage the form and link it to a definable budget.”

SHoP worked with Rhino and CATIA during initial form finding, then with CATIA to link the design of the facade’s panels to seamlessly flow into fabrication. Once the form was found, the model was brought back into Revit for the coordination of the base building structure, the HVAC, and MEP.

SHoP chose weathered steel panels for the exterior, and developed an iPhone application that allowed the architects and the client to track the weathering process of the panels, as well as their installation. “Having the technology enables us to push design further,” said Mallie. “It takes a lot of ambiguity and gets it out of the way, and because it’s a model, it’s something people can see, and we can get everyone on the same page.”

It would be a mistake, however, to think of BIM as merely enabling unconventional form-making. While advanced geometric modeling tools like Rhino and CATIA get a lot of attention for the designs that they are used to produce, 3-D modeling software within the BIM process is more often used and valued for the sheer level of information (and thus the high degree of detail) that can be programmed into models. At the University of Southern California’s new School of Cinematic Arts Complex, the potentialities of these models have not only been used for the design and construction of the three-phase project, but also are being used for post-completion management of the building.

The university’s approach is unusual for academia according to Ray Kahl of Urban Design Group (UDG), the architect on the project: “Their facilities and capital development people work together. You rarely see that. When that happens you get a situation where you can justify what may not be the lowest upfront cost for a project but will be lower over the lifecycle of the building.”

UDG delivered a model for the arts school embedded with all of the data points necessary for the university’s facilities group to maintain the structure, including data relating to materials, machine names, and model numbers. While the model is replete with information for building management, it allows the facilities team to develop personas that filter the data to only show information that applies to certain functions, such as cleaning, or repairs. The architects also worked with Honeywell to integrate the BIM model with a building monitor system that gives facilities managers a visual representation of the building showing every room, whether the lights are on or not, and what the temperature is at different times of day. The feature has led to 20 percent greater efficiency in the building’s energy usage than originally expected.

While BIM has yet to become the industry standard for project delivery—in part because it’s still too expensive for smaller firms to use—its influence is growing with each success story. The process is still evolving as players compete with Darwinian energy to see what works best and fastest. Software companies in particular are trying to figure out what complementary systems will prove most advantageous. “People are saying, I can use BIM to look at different business models of how I deliver my project, I can use it to drive digital fabrication, I can use it to help me take on a much stronger sustainability agenda,” said Bernstein. “It’s in the process of changing roles and relationships.” Architects are still discovering the implications of these different uses and the transformative effect it may have on the profession. Bernstein continued, “I believe in ten years people will be working in fundamentally different ways than they are now.” And clearly those who best anticipate the range of transformations possible will be in the best position to control the new shape of building.

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6:00 p.m.
Architecture in Spain
Preserving the Aura:
Camilla Mileto
Lopez-Manzanares, Fernando Rey
Fernando Vegas
Van Alen Institute
30 West 22nd St.
www.vanalen.org
MONDAY 12 LECTURE
Gregory Wessner, Ana Andreades, Ken Smith, Mark Robbins
The Unfinished Grid:
www.moma.org
The City of New York
1200 Fifth Ave.
www.moma.org
EVENT
Abby Hamlin and
Charles Randri
Holiday Brunch and
Design Speed Dating
12:00 p.m.
www.mca.org
TUESDAY 14 EXHIBITION OPENING
Sanoj Irokica
Sweet Violence
MoMA
11 West 53rd St.
www.moma.org
MONDAY 15 EXHIBITION OPENING
Black Box: All Kinds
Hirshhorn Museum & Sculpture Garden,
Smithsonian
Independence Ave. & 7th St.
Washington, D.C.
www.hirshhorn.si.edu
TUESDAY 16 EXHIBITION OPENINGS
Police Work: Photographs by
Leonard Freed, 1972–1979
Metropolitan Museum of Art
New York
1220 Fifth Ave.
www.metmuseum.org
FRIDAY 13 EXHIBITION OPENING
From the Land of the Immortals:
Chinese Taoist Robes of the Immortals
MoMA
11 West 53rd St.
www.moma.org
SUNDAY 14 EXHIBITION OPENING
Zoe Strauss:
The Artist as Jeweler
MAD
Philadelphia Museum of Art
26th St.
Benjamin Franklin Pkwy.
Philadelphia, PA
www.madmuseum.org
THURSDAY 15 EXHIBITION OPENING
Design with the Other 90%:
CITIES
Cooper Hewitt
National Design Museum
At the United Nations
400 East 42nd St.
www.cooperhewitt.org
EXHIBITION CLOSING
Crafting Modernism:
Midcentury American Art and Design
www.maduseum.org
SATURDAY 17 LECTURE
Freedom of Assembly:
Public Space Today
3:00 p.m.
Center for Architecture
536 LaGuardia Pl.
www.cfa.aiam.org
THURSDAY 19 EXHIBITION OPENING
Sanja Ivekovic:
www.momaps1.org
MoMA
11 West 53rd St.
www.moma.org
MONDAY 19 EXHIBITION OPENING
Sweet Violence
MoMA
11 West 53rd St.
www.moma.org
MONDAY 20 EXHIBITION CLOSING
Leonard Freed, 1972–1979
MoMA
11 West 53rd St.
www.moma.org
TUESDAY 21 EXHIBITION CLOSING
From the Land of the Immortals:
Chinese Taoist Robes of the Immortals
MoMA
11 West 53rd St.
www.moma.org
THURSDAY 22 EXHIBITION OPENING
The Renaissance Portrait
www.metmuseum.org
THE MATERIAL PLAN OF MANHATTAN, 1811–2011
THE GREATEST GRID:
www.mcny.org
City of New York
1220 Fifth Ave.
www.mcny.org
Mobilier National
Demisch Danant
542 West 22nd St.
Through February 11, 2012
Dating back to the 17th century, Mobilier National is the
institution specifically dedicated to decorating the French
Republic’s official palaces and residences, at home and
abroad. For the first time in America, Demisch Danant
presents more than 20 rare commissions realized in the
1960s by the Atelier de Recherche et Création (ARC), a pro-
gram launched by Mobilier National to promote a distinctly
French contemporary style in decorative arts and design.
With research and design development subsidized, these
pieces were meant to be commercially produced in limited
quantities. Many of the ARC creations have become icons
of modernity, including Pierre Paulin’s famous designs
for President Georges Pompidou’s private apartments at
the Palais de l’Elysée and the President’s Desk (1968) by Henri
Lesnra (above).

In 1807, to head off health threats and a growing lack of habit-
able space, New York City’s Common Council commissioned
a three-year project to organize massive land development
north of Houston Street. The Museum of the City of New
York presents The Greatest Grid: The Master Plan of
Manhattan, 1811–2011 in honor of the bicentennial of the
1811 Commissioners’ Plan for New York, which established
the iconic street grid from Houston to 155th Street. Along with
the original, hand-drawn map of New York’s grid plan, other
historic documents demonstrate the city’s physical develop-
ment due to the grid’s application and evolution over time.
Co-presented by the Museum of the City of New York, the
New York Public Library, and The Architectural League of
New York, and sponsored by the Office of the Manhattan Borough
President, The Greatest Grid will be on display until April 4.
Museum but on view at the United Cooper-Hewitt National Design interventions organized by the Landscrapers of 2002 and Anita Berrizbeitia architecture. Beginning with Aaron Betsky’s ceding territory in the urban realm, a new For the last decade, with landscape architecture. Though covering much of the same thematic territory as MoMA’s urbanization around the world. Their optimism is infectious. publicly and as a consequence architecture and landscape, designers need to see them as a testament to the problem-solving powers of design and a bracing reminder of the stakes of rapid urbanization around the world. Though covering much of the same thematic territory as MoMA’s recent show Small Scale, Big Change, Design with the Other 90% is a show devoted to practical solutions, not high design. What prevents the show from being too dreary—and elevates it above better-looking exhibitions—are the voices of the residents and end-users dispersed throughout. In Bangladesh, a simple bamboo platform built over the edge of a 17.6-meter-wide death zone, a. a series of projects. The projects range in scale from small built components—the aggregative blocks of Aranda/Lasch’s Grotto or the floating sensors of Amphibious Architecture, a project by Columbia University’s Living Architecture Lab—to large urban interventions—Weiss/Manfredi’s Olympic Sculpture Park in Seattle or the Parque Atlántico by Batlle i Roig Arquitectes in Santander, Spain. In between stretches a broad spectrum of buildings and landscapes. Included in the compilation are a wide variety of unbuilt competition entries, research projects, and built projects, spanning from the relatively unknown to the iconic. If this appealing volume suffers from one thing, it’s its very inclusiveness. The three categories are so open-ended as to become almost meaningless, particularly in that topography clearly underlies the vast majority of them. The selection process is similarly broad and uneven. Some projects, like Peter Eisenman’s City of Culture in Santiago de Compostela, Spain, ongoing since 1999, appear at this point like relics of a pre-Landscape Urbanism era of form-making. Meanwhile, many of the unbuilt projects, such as Höweiler + Yoon Architects’ Eco-Pod and Balmori and Sanders’ own NYC 2012 Olympic Equestrian Facility, remain firmly within the realm of the fanciful without approaching the depth and nuance that evolve out of grappling with the realities of constructing such spaces. At the same time, some of the built projects are so colossally the voices of the residents and end-users dispersed throughout. In Bangladesh, a simple bamboo platform built over the edge of a 17.6-meter-wide death zone, a. a series of projects. 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This messy assemblage is, for those of us who are used to tidier design exhibitions, initially off-putting, a bit like taking necessary medicine. Pushing past this resistance offers great rewards, however. While not groundbreaking, Design with the Other 90% is a testament to the problem-solving powers of design and a bracing reminder of the stakes of rapid urbanization around the world. Though covering much of the same thematic territory as MoMA’s recent show Small Scale, Big Change, Design with the Other 90% is a show devoted to practical solutions, not high design. What prevents the show from being too dreary—and elevates it above better-looking exhibitions—are the voices of the residents and end-users dispersed throughout. In Bangladesh, a simple bamboo platform built over the edge of a 17.6-meter-wide death zone, a. a series of projects. 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graphic and typographic identities. The discussions are differentiated by strong machine or, indeed, any creature. This awareness of the environment as a complex system puts architecture and landscape on equivalent terms and will encourage practitioners to create designs that approach the efficiency and performance standards of a living being.

One might argue that the focus on ecology is part and parcel with the integration of systems—and disciplines—put forward in the book, and in fact should underscore all of the projects within its pages, as opposed to being just one of three categories. The handbook that do not fit this description—the vast shadeless surfaces of Eisenman’s City of Culture are, again, a striking example—perhaps do not belong in the book at all.

In contrast, Landform Building puts forth a far more singular and strongly grounded premise. In many ways, the book follows conventions first introduced by S. M. L. XL back in 1995: low-res, full-bleed photographic images interspersed throughout the volume packed a punch, providing a sort of unifying ground within which essays, projects, and discussions are differentiated by strong graphic and typographic identities. The hypothesis of the conference and this ensuing volume is outlined in a series of compelling essays written by Stan Allen, and supported by projects, texts, and debates culled from both architectural history (essays by Kenneth Frampton and Reyner Banham) and the conference itself.

The book includes a wide selection of projects, broken into chapters on Form, Scale, Atmosphere, and Process, and often accompanied by text or conversations with the designers. In the Form chapter, at last, we find BIG, represented by their housing project “The Mountain”: a heap of parking in a developing area of Copenhagen, with terraced housing piled on top. Also included are several crystalline projects by Mansilla+Tuñón. Within the Scale category, we find the even more overtly crystalline Spina Tower by Ábalos and Sentkiewicz, as well as buildings by Steven Holl and a seemingly out of place park by Stan Allen himself. The Atmosphere section brings us, among others, the incomparable Kanagawa Institute of Technology by Junya Ishigami. Finally, Process focuses on innovation in fabrication and structural solutions, depicted through projects by Office d’a, Toyo Ito, SANAA, and Michael Maltzan.

Building from the theoretical underpinnings of Kenneth Frampton’s essay, “Megaf orm as Urban Landscape,” which was first presented at the University of Michigan in 1999 and was reformulated for this publication, Allen makes an impassioned argument not for the disciplinary integration of architecture and landscape, but rather for the reintegration of large-scale “landform building” techniques into architectural practice. The book puts forward a sort of alternative architectural history, unearthing a trajectory of design strategies, from terraced housing to megastructures, in which built form rises from the land as a recognizable and formally organized surface, making its iconic mark upon an otherwise un differen tiated ground or urban fabric.

Indeed, as the title suggests, Landform Building focuses heavily and unabashedly on form. Nowhere is this more evident than in the images selected for the publication—spread after spread of photographs and renderings of mountain-like objects. Despite a riot of images, we do not encounter a sectional drawing until page 119; throughout the book, sections appear only a handful of times. The exploded axonometric, the preferred visual trope of Landscape Urbanists everywhere, is equally scarce.

Representational choices are telling. While the section and the exploded axonometric have the capacity to express layers of information, systems, elements in relation to one another, the photographic image and the rendering—particularly as used in this book—only depict the surface and its overall formal expression. The emphasis on the singular, outer shell of the building as object—unusual or landscape-like form not withstanding—betrays a dismissal of the very advances made possible by the contemporary landscape techniques that Allen calls out in his introductory essay. The surface of a building, however intricate, bears no capacity on its own to perform as contemporary landscapes do—to organize systems from ecological, hydrological, infrastructural, and climatic to programmatic. Indeed, although many of the buildings contained within the pages of Landform Building engage programmatic and formal complexities, most seem to stop short of addressing these other layers of information and potential influence. As for landscape itself, it generally fails to appear in anything more than its nineteenth-century incarnations: a framed view; an outdoor room; a lung for the city.

Ultimately, Landform Building presents a strong, coherent treatise on one potential direction for architecture, illustrating its points through a broad array of well-selected projects within a consistent and compelling graphic framework. But the book fails precisely in the area in which Balmori and Sanders’ Groundwork prevails. Allen and his compatriots at the Landform Building conference appear locked in the same fight for disciplinary autonomy that has pushed architecture into its current corner. Still regarding the urban realm as a disjointed jumble that can only be made intelligible by oversized architectural iconography, the proposition forges the possibilities inherent in a cross-disciplinary, performative, systems-based approach.

Figuring prominently in both text and images in not only Groundwork, but also Landform Building, the Seattle Olympic Sculpture Park, that poster child for Landscape Urbanism, remains perhaps the most concrete example of this approach thus far. The project successfully integrates landscape, architecture, infrastructure, program, and ecology on a formerly derelict site. And, yes, it also operates as a formally compelling icon within the city.
The Architect’s Newspaper introduces a new, local online resource guide for the design community, allowing users to search their city for the products and services they need.

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More and more, the National Mall is living up to its moniker “America’s front yard”: patchy turf, puddles, and cracked sidewalks give it an air of foreclosure. The National Mall Design Competition, now under way, will surely produce ambitious proposals to mend the Mall, but getting them approved and funded could take years and is far from guaranteed.

Now on display through May at the National Building Museum, “Unbuilt Washington,” reminds us that the Washington Monument was a half-finished stump for decades, until money could be found to complete it. And even then it was not done according to the original design. And that Eliel and Eero Saarinen’s daring 1939 scheme for a Smithsonian art gallery—selected out of 400 entries—fell victim to politics, like so much else in our capital.

The might-have-been monuments and cityscapes on display are beguiling, often strange, and surprisingly varied (for a city that seems married to neoclassicism). If history had tracked just a degree or two from its eventual course, our postcards of the Lincoln Memorial would depict a gleaming ziggurat; Dupont Circle would be known for a huge tower complex by Frank Lloyd Wright; and the White House would sport two additional southern wings flanking a large conservatory (this last proposal was championed by First Lady Caroline Harrison in the 1890s).

Of all the lost opportunities included in the show, the one that curator Martin Moeller most wishes had been built is the Washington Channel Bridge, designed by Chloethiel Woodard Smith in 1966. Linking Southwest D.C. to the East Potomac Park spur of the Mall, this modernist answer to the Ponte Vecchio would have been lined with shops and restaurants that beckoned strolling pedestrians. Washington, finally, would have turned toward and not away from the water all around it.

Still, lucky escapes probably outnumber missed chances. Leon Beaver’s Second-Empire-on-steroids competition entry for the Library of Congress, and an amateur’s entry for the Capitol featuring an oversized, crudely drawn eagle are proof that the competition process does sort the wheat from the obvious chaff. And that, at least, should cheer National Mall Design Competition finalists and jurors.

AMANDA KOLSON HURLEY IS A DESIGN WRITER BASED IN WASHINGTON D.C.
CREATING THE 21ST CENTURY FACADE:
EXPLORE WITH US HOW ARCHITECTS AND FABRICATORS ARE ADVANCING CURTAIN WALL DESIGN IN THE DIGITAL AGE

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KEY NOTE SPEAKER  PATRIK SCHUMACHER  Director, Zaha Hadid Architects

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SCRIPTED DESIGN  Skylar Tibbitts, SJet
REVIT DESIGN  David Fano, CASE Design
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