Every summer since 2000, the Serpentine Gallery in London has commissioned a temporary pavilion from an architect who has not built in England before. This year, to celebrate the Olympics, it selected the team that designed

continued on page 4

The Friday before Memorial Day new renderings appeared by HWKN for Fire Island Pines’ notorious Pavilion, the entertainment complex that burned down last November. In January, it was announced that Diller

continued on page 4

Just as rolling hills of green lawn have replaced the industrial waterfront at Brooklyn Bridge Park (BBP), two new buildings by Rogers Marvel Architects will soon mask the Brooklyn-Queens Expressway, which divides Brooklyn Heights from the park below. City officials announced today that the mixed-use proposal by Toll Brothers and Starwood Capital Group was selected from a list of seven proposals to be built immediately south of the Brooklyn Bridge along Furman Street at the entrance to the park’s Pier One, providing much-needed maintenance and operational funding for the new waterfront green space. Zigzagging through the site, the two new buildings are composed of three distinct masses of stone, glass, and steel, all topped with lush planted roofs and terraces. Rogers Marvel countered the horizontality that the site presented with a bold

continued on page 3

After 18 months embroiled in litigation and public controversy, a new tenant is now poised to take the stage in Brooklyn Bridge Park: St. Ann’s Warehouse. Having gotten the boot to make way for condominiums on 38 Water Street, the Dumbo theater known for its avant-garde repertoire is the conditional lessee slated to occupy a relic of Dumbo’s early industrial days: the

continued on page 2

The last major rezoning push by the Bloomberg administration in Manhattan could be upzoning the grand dames around Park, Madison, and Grand Central. On June 6, the Department of City Planning (DCP) went

continued on page 7

Curtains up

From Brooklyn Bridge Warehouse to Community Stage

Dig It!

Every summer since 2000, the Serpentine Gallery in London has commissioned a temporary pavilion from an architect who has not built in England before. This year, to celebrate the Olympics, it selected the team that designed

continued on page 4

HKN Designs New Pavilion for Fire Island Pines

New York City, NY (06/07)

18th Avenue at Still Harbor

The last major rezoning push by the Bloomberg administration in Manhattan could be upzoning the grand dames around Park, Madison, and Grand Central. On June 6, the Department of City Planning (DCP) went continued on page 7

From Brooklyn Bridge Warehouse to Community Stage

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Every summer since 2000, the Serpentine Gallery in London has commissioned a temporary pavilion from an architect who has not built in England before. This year, to celebrate the Olympics, it selected the team that designed continued on page 4

Scifidio + Renfro (DS+R) were signed on to do the master plan for the marina, of which the Pavilion serves as the social hub.

FIP Ventures had owned the property for just over two years before the fire. They had previously promised to build a temporary structure in time for summer, but as the season approached without a promised temporary Pavilion, rumors began to circulate that FIP was looking to sell. But FIP’s Matt Blesso said that permits delayed putting up the temporary structure and the group is fully committed to rebuilding.

“We

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The Architect’s Newspaper 11 07.11.2012

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If you build it they will come! Well not necessarily if you are talking about new arts facilities, claims "Set In Stone," a just released study from the Cultural Policy Center at the University of Chicago (culturalpolicy.uchicago.edu/setystone/).

"If we don’t get the state law changed, I think that it will be very difficult for us to do anything," said Terence Riley ( Главный редактор Бруклинского моста) in an interview with the Architect's Newspaper. The study makes important recommendations for civic leaders, arts organizations, donors and government officials contemplating new cultural buildings.

First, it recommends that clients focus on their organization’s mission and the public’s “demand for the project.” Before formulating final plans, leaders and donors need to understand the precise reasons for the project, as well as determine need, attendance and long-term financial support. Successful projects were driven by both the organization’s artistic mission and also by clear and definable needs. The report recommends that leadership be clear and consistent throughout the process and that a single project manager be appointed to monitor the project through to completion. Finally, they suggest the need for flexibility—both in terms of how to generate income but also in light of the fact that cultural projects can take as long as ten to twenty years to complete. It’s a cold, hard reality that the community served by the building may be different than the one that originally envisioned the building.

According to “Set in Stone,” projects usually faltered when they became enveloped by set pieces for the aspirations of donors and local community leaders. Initial cost projections for these projects were frequently both extremely and unreasonably low, making the final tab much more expensive than anticipated. More than 80 percent of the projects studied ran over budget, some by as much as 200 percent.

The study also found that cities in the South had the greatest increase in cultural building in part because it had lagged behind the rest of the country for many years. But more to the point, “increases” in cultural facilities were most common in communities that had also had increases in personal income and in education among their residents. Finally during the study period (1994-2008), New York led the country in cultural spending of $1.6 billion, while the Los Angeles area witnessed an expansion of $950 million and the Chicago area saw spending of $470 million on arts related projects.

In October, I traveled to Shenzhen, China to the opening of the Hong Kong and Shenzhen Bi-City Biennale of Urbanism and Architecture. The curator of this fascinating exhibition, Terence Riley, took the assembled journalists on a tour of Shenzhen which 20 years ago had a population of 35,000, but now has over 8 million. Riley pointed out the new Arata Isozaki-designed concert hall, a contemporary art museum by Coop Himmelblau, and a design museum by Chinese architect Pei-Zui. None of these new cultural facilities had any collections or work on their walls.

In China, it did not seem to matter whether or not the facilities had anything in them, only that Shenzhen had a cultural district with museums designed by famous architects. In the U.S., our cultural institutions have to work harder. Of course, with the still slow economy, the number of cultural projects in this country has already decreased. Going forward, it hardly needs a massive study to understand that institutions need to plan and develop only those projects the public really wants, demands, and needs.

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**Pier Pressures**

Proposed changes to the state law that restricts development within Hudson River Park have failed to get traction in Albany, leaving a big question mark over the future of one of the city’s most significant parks.

Facing overwhelming maintenance and repair costs, the City is burning through its reserve fund, the Hudson River Park Trust (HRPT). Breached regional agencies that run the park, had sent a controversial proposal to Albany seeking to change the Hudson River Park Act to remove some of the development restrictions, most notably the one against residential development.

The Trust’s proposal included a study for Pier 40 with potential redevelopment scenarios by SHoP Architects that included residential towers and a luxury hotel. The most significant threat to Pier 40 is the 15-acre Pier 40, the largest pier in Manhattan, which suffers from rusting pilings and a leaking roof that is in the midst of an $8.6 million emergency repair (д). HRPT officials estimate that it will cost about $120 million just to fix Pier 40.

“If we don’t get the state law changed, eventually we will have to start shutting down sections of Pier 40,” HRPT president Madelyn Wils said.

Some in Albany supported HRPT’s proposal, such as State Assemblymember Richard Gottfried, who introduced a bill to change the Hudson River Park Act in the assembly session that ended June 21. Gottfried says the proposed legislation was a compromise that did not go far enough because it did not include the complete menu of development scenarios.

"Until about three months ago, I was fully committed to the language that I helped to write in the Hudson River Park Act 14 years ago that prohibited residential development within the park," Gottfried said. "It has now become clear to me that all of the possible uses that you might put on Pier 40 and Pier 76, housing has about the lowest traffic impact with the highest level of reliable revenue.”

HRPT’s proposal faced opposition from some community activists and legislators. “The Trust is misrepresenting the degree of the crisis. The immediate need of Pier 40 and Pier 54 are not beyond the ability of the city and state to address,” said New York State Assemblymember Deborah Glick.

Wils says that the current state of capital maintenance costs, HRPT will run out of money by the end of 2015.

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**Curtains Up**

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Facing overwhelming maintenance and repair costs, the City is burning through its reserve fund, the Hudson River Park Trust (HRPT). Breached regional agencies that run the park, had sent a controversial proposal to Albany seeking **Tobacco Warehouse on Water Street.** The move has been an embattled process, pitting community groups against local government in both federal and state law-suits. But in early June, the plaintiffs (the park and the city) agreed on a plan green-lighting the next steps for the adaptive reuse of the Tobacco Warehouse as a theater and, for the adjacent Empire Stores, future conservation and conversion into mixed-use retail, including converted parkland to compensate for the development.

“The agreement starts a process to secure regulatory approval for reuse of that structure as a cultural and community-use venue,” explained Regina Myer, president of Brooklyn Bridge Park Corporation. The organization now awaits the passage of state legislation to approve development as well as a go-ahead from the National Park Service, implicated because of a Land and Water Conservation Grant given to what was then Fulton Ferry State Park.

Working with St. Ann’s is H3 Hardy Collaboration Architecture. The theater-savvy firm has designed what will essentially be a building within a building, featuring the beloved ruin. The intervention is an infill structure that will be “clean, minimal, and modern—complementing and not mimicking the historic building,” stated principal architect Geoff Lynch. For H3 the task was to preserve a historic, scenic space while creating a flexible staging area for the theater’s diverse programming. The triangular wedge beneath the Brooklyn Bridge will become a forested garden open for public use accessed from the park esplanade. Outdoor seating and a cafe would provide a gathering space as well as public amenities for park users and theatergoers alike, who will enter the theater itself through a small pavilion. Simple plate glass windows will offer sightlines to the park and water, while a roof, likely of a material like Cor-ten steel, will rise in complementary contrast to the preserved brick facade, according to Lynch.

Jane McGroarty, president of the Brooklyn Heights Association (BHA), points out that currently the empty warehouse is a porous entryway into the park. She voiced a concern that the evening draw of a theater will leave the building dormant for much of the day. BHA was plaintiff in the case, but overall McGroarty said the group feels satisfied. Referring to the less-than-an-acre parcel underneath the Manhattan Bridge (now a painting facility) that will be knitted into the park, she said, “Brooklyn Bridge Park Corporation has agreed it will follow the law and provide substitute parkland, making the park bigger and better in exchange for the park land they will be taking away.”

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**Setting the Stones Right**

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**THE ARCHITECT’S NEWSPAPER JULY 11, 2012**

**Volume 10, Issue 11**
Evidence of a hardworking history remains visible in the renovation of the 43,000-square foot Wythe Hotel by Morris Adjmi Architects. A clue to this industrial past may be built right into the hotel’s corner entrance, a curvy sliver of glass that follows the unusual contours of the facade—the expected right angle has been scooped away, leaving a concave hollow that runs the height of the building.

According to local lore, this quirky indentation supported a kind of external conveyor-belt for barrels. Adjmi transformed the former factory into a series of inviting public spaces, including a tiled-floor restaurant, a barrel-vaulted banquet hall, a screening room, and a rooftop bar with spectacular city views.

But it’s the private spaces that set the hotel apart. The guestrooms are notably light on sound-absorbing textiles, but thanks to the layers of concrete, cork tiles in the hallways, and new insulated glass in the windows, serenity reigns.

Adjmi’s biggest intervention was on the western side of the building, which became an all-windows façade designed to reflect sunlight. "We tried to design a facade that drew on the factory window aesthetic," Adjmi said. "The western side of the building, which became all windows, is the part of the building that I think is most interesting."

The public-private funding model at BBP calling for about 10 percent of the park to be developed to cover maintenance costs has drawn criticism from some in the community who have charged that turning the park into a lawn for expensive residences—"as the backyards of several ground-level residences back directly up to the park—but CB2 largely accepted the proposed building program as the best way to raise the most income for the park on the smallest footprint," said Ferris. "Boundaries between public and private space, whatever is the park and what is someone’s backyard need to be established in a meaningful way, he said." Toll Brothers and Starwood hope to break ground on the new buildings by summer 2013 with the hotel and residences opening in the fall of 2015.

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DIG IT! continued from front page

the Bird’s Nest stadium for the 2008 Olympics in Beijing. While Herzog & De Meuron have worked in London before, this is their first collaboration in the city with Ai Weiwei. The Chinese artist, who is still under house arrest and was unable to attend the opening, upstaged the architects in the local press coverage, and his poetic imagination infused the concept of a pavilion that is half sunken shelter, half archeological dig.

Herzog & De Meuron and Ai Weiwei took a different approach from the signature architects in the local press coverage, and his poetic imagination infused the concept of a pavilion that is half sunken shelter, half archeological dig.

To discover traces of the eleven structures that briefly occupied the gallery’s front lawn, the architects excavated a large circle down to the water table. They uncovered fragments of foundations and backfills, which they selectively referenced in low walls and 11 slender steel columns. They added a 12th column to represent their own intervention; the columns together support a circular steel roof that doubles as a reflecting pool, flattened on one side and elevated about 5 feet above the ground. The water mirrors the sky and the neo-Georgian gallery, and can be drained to create a dance floor.

All the supports and surfaces below the canopy are clad in dark brown cork, a material that is also used for mushroom stools. Steps and ramps lead 4 feet down into a gathering pit that will host a variety of events before it closes on October 14. Thanks to the efforts of director Julia Peyton-Jones, the Serpentine Gallery has become one of the most adventurous and best attended in the capital. It is open every day, admission is free, and plans are afoot to build a second facility, designed by Zaha Hadid.

The current project is less dramatic than many of its predecessors, but it offers a deeply satisfying, hap tic experience, recalling childhood games beneath the dining table. Its apparent simplicity conceals the complexity of the preparatory plans, in which the footprints of earlier pavilions and their foundations were overlaid. The physical challenge was daunting for, as excavation began, April showers turned to torrential rains. More time was spent pumping than digging. And yet, as in every year but one (the over-ambitious 2004 design of MVRDV went unrealized), the pavilion was completed on time with Arup providing engineering services as in most previous years. The lead supporter—Indian steel magnate Lakshmi N. Mittal and his wife, Usha—will purchase the pavilion when it is dismantled and add it to their collection, ensuring that this Sino-Swiss collaboration will enjoy a long second life.

MICHAEL WEBB

FROM THE ASHES continued from front page have a full contract with HWKN and they’re working on construction documents,” he said, adding that an engineer was also hired.

When asked why the group chose the young firm HWKN to design the new structure over Diller Sachs, Blesso was frank. “We wouldn’t have been able to afford that,” he said. Renfru, a familiar face on the island, charged only for his staff’s time for the designing the master plan and offered his services for free. FIP owns 80 percent of the commercial property on the island, but the DS+R plan will encompass the entire marina.

Architect and historian Christopher Rawlins, whose upcoming book on architect Horace Gifford highlights several houses in the Pines, said that since the 1960s the marina was always well used, if utilitarian. The new complex would represent a definitive shift. “It would be the first instance of distinguished commercial architecture in a place that up to now has only had distinguished residential architecture,” said Rawlins. In addition to Gifford, Andrew Geller, Harry Bates, and Earl Combs all built on the island. Rawlin’s book captures not just Gifford’s sensibilities but that of the pre-AIDS Pines as well, a place where sheepskin-lined conversation pits and “makeout lofts” were common. And while the island today is hardly a dance floor, the new normal requires stroller parking.

“It was a mistake to think that the Pines was not in the eyes of the world,” said Renfru. “Why not take advantage of this moment; we’re in the cross hairs of history.” At the moment, zones of use are being defined, similar to those employed by DS+R and Field Operations at the High Line. The circulation and movement of the marina has an hourly rhythm in which marquee events like the July 4 drag queen invasion give way to quieter events like marriage ceremonies.

“We’re not trying to Bilbao the island,” said Renfru. “What we’re seeking to do is tap into the history and ritual that already existed and bring in architecture that is commensurate with the Pines as a place that’s inven tive, kooky, and fun loving.”

A typical Pines home is more summer camp than Hamptons show palace. The challenge for HWKN was to keep the tone casual while also providing enough panache for wedding ceremonies. HWKN decided to stick with the cedar cladding, a material used throughout the island. The pressure-treat ed pine boardwalk would continue as flooring through much of the building, “so it feels like it’s a part of the infrastructure,” explained HWKN’s Matthias Hollwich. The facade is not just functional and faceted to allow the largest frontage to drop toward the marina docks to permit incoming ferries. A series of steps will lead up to the opening on the first floor. A generous ceiling height of 14 feet will be reserved for second-floor terraces, where the 28-foot-high building will offer its best views. Openings will make the building visually permeable from most angles. “We used every kind of architectural tool we have to break down boundaries,” Hollwich said.

TOM STOELKER

In Brandywine Valley, PA, Longwood Gardens, one of America’s most historic botanical cases, has commissioned the British light artist Bruce Munro to present a debut, garden-wide exhibition. Light: Installations by Bruce Munro, running through September 1, is Munro’s first garden installation in the United States. The installation allows visitors to stroll through the gardens at night—an illuminated perspective that’s never been seen before at Longwood.

The bucolic setting of Kennett Square, Pennsylvania, and the size and meticulous maintenance of the 1,077-acre garden are already enough to inspire awe. Munro’s additional dimension of artificial light will delight visitors further, “with their beauty and ingenuity,” said Paul Redman, director of the gardens.

Installation highlights include Forest of Light, which invites guests to wander through a serene forest of 20,000 illuminated stems reminiscent of blooming flowers. Longwood’s undulating Meadow plays host to the Water Towers, a collection of 69 symmetric towers made of plastic bottles creating a glowing maze of light that changes hues to music. In Water Lilies in Bloom, Munro pays homage to Longwood’s iconic water lily platters and sets his shimmering interpretations to float on the Large Lake. Nearby, the 6,000-stem installation Field of Light beckons visitors toward its glowing ambiance.

TYLER SILVESTRO

To the architect’s newspaper July 11, 2012

ILLUMINATED INSTALLATIONS TRANSFORM BOTANICAL CENTER

Garden Alight

In Brandywine Valley, PA, Longwood Gardens, one of America’s most historic botanical cases, has commissioned the British light artist Bruce Munro to present a debut, garden-wide exhibition. Light: Installations by Bruce Munro, running through September 1, is Munro’s first garden installation in the United States. The installation allows visitors to stroll through the gardens at night—an illuminated perspective that’s never been seen before at Longwood.

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TYLER SILVESTRO
A new controversy is brewing over the fate of an award-winning master plan by Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates for the Lower Don Lands, an underutilized 308-acre industrial section of Toronto’s waterfront. The 2007 Van Valkenburgh master plan calls for flood-proofing the Lower Don Lands, and transforming it with new sustainable parks and mixed-use communities. A key aspect of the plan is to reroute the Don River and restore wildlife habitat and wetlands that were lost more than 100 years ago. The master plan for the Lower Don Lands is part of a larger redevelopment project underway in Toronto’s 988-acre Port Lands district, which city officials say is the largest urban renewal project in North America. Currently, armies of construction workers and hundreds of cranes are building two neighborhoods, each one about the size of Battery Park City, in waterfront neighborhoods adjacent to the Lower Don Lands. However, work has yet to start on the Van Valkenburgh plan for the Lower Don Lands, which could take years to build out because of the plan’s ecological goals and because of tightening government budgets. Toronto Mayor Rob Ford, elected in December 2010, and his influential brother, Toronto City Councillor Doug Ford, have advocated for a revised master plan with elements that could be built on a faster timeline.

Last September, after a public backlash, Mayor Ford and the city agency that owns large stretches of the waterfront backed away from a plan to seize a section of the Don Lands from Waterfront Toronto, the joint federal, provincial and municipal development agency charged with developing the city’s waterfront. Instead of the mixed-use community built upon the 21st-century ecological goals emphasized in the Van Valkenburgh plan, the mayor and his brother reportedly wanted to build a tourist-oriented development on the site that would have featured a megamall and a Ferris wheel. Now critics charge that the Ford administration is working on another attempt to gut the 2007 Van Valkenburgh master plan, this time in conjunction with Waterfront Toronto. Early this summer, Waterfront Toronto was chosen as one of 16 founding projects of a federal, provincial and municipal development agency charged with developing the parks. Reached by email, Michael van Valkenburgh did not want to comment at this time.

“This is a natural evolution,” said Michelle Noble, director of communications for Waterfront Toronto. “The cold hard reality is that there are less public dollars available for everyone.”
In 2006, the City University of New York kicked off an effort to double its number of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics graduates by 2016, dubbing the ten years to follow its “Decade of Science.” Pursuing this ambition, the university tapped KPF and Flad Architects to design a new multidisciplinary research facility with laboratories, classrooms, faculty and administrative offices, and a cafe on its south campus in Harlem. Now nearing completion, the Advanced Science Research Center (ASRC) features two glass-clad facing towers connected by a below-grade space that is topped by an intensive green roof. Altogether, the complex comprises 400,000 square feet. A future phase of construction will add another 200,000 square feet.

KPF, which also designed the master plan of CUNY’s south campus, arranged the two towers on a north-south axis, maintaining the college’s main circulation corridor and maximizing the ridgeline site’s spectacular views of Manhattan. This arrangement also allowed the designers to orient the buildings toward St. Nicholas Boulevard and keep a 200-foot distance from the existing structural biology building—a necessary step considering that excavating and driving piles for the new structures threatened to disrupt the sensitive equipment involved in that program’s ongoing experiments. As it was, digging out the foundation, an operation that involved carving through bedrock, took an entire year to complete.

The structural steel-framed towers themselves are each laid out on two distinct plans: rectangular volumes based around an ideal flexible module for lab spaces and more fluid, curvy volumes that house social spaces, offices, and meeting and break rooms. The curvy volumes, which are expressed by the building’s facade, look out onto the complex’s central green. The shared space below the green contains the facility’s more sensitive, vibration-prone equipment, including a vivarium, imaging facilities, and a loading dock.

Materially, the two towers relate to each other. Each building’s base is clad in rusticated gneiss stone. Though it comes all the way from China, the designers picked this material because it most closely resembles the Manhattan schist that makes up the majority of City College’s historic Gothic Revival campus. Manhattan schist itself is no longer available as a building material. Above this green-gray-white stone base, the towers are clad with a unitized low-e glass, structurally glazed curtain wall. The curtain wall has three distinct expressive zones. The curving sections that shelter the offices are made up of modules, 2 feet 6 inches wide by 16 feet high (the buildings’ average floor-to-floor height is 16 feet), that simulate the sinuous form without requiring the cost-prohibitive measure of curving the glass itself. Half the height of each module is vision glass, while the remainder is a medium gray shadow box spandrel. The vision sections feature 10-inch-deep vertical glass fins that protrude from the wall’s 4-inch aluminum Mullions. The fins feature vertical white line fritting that helps cut down on glare and heat loading. The tips of the fins are cut like prisms to catch the light and create a rainbow effect across the facade.

The orthogonal lab blocks are clad with 5-foot-wide modules that feature a gradient of white line fritting that goes up the vision panel from 30 percent to 50 percent to 80 percent. These sections of wall also feature the shadow box spandrel with a reveal expressing the floor line. At the north and south ends of the towers, the cladding shelters meeting rooms and vertical circulation spaces. Here the curtain wall features a 50 percent white line frit. The architects designed the glazing in close collaboration with the engineers, Cosentini (MEP) and LERA (structural). Lab buildings are notorious energy hogs, and the ASRC is no exception. The solar heat gain. Their efforts were not in vain, as the facility is now on track for LEED Gold. At the top of the towers yet another facade system takes over, a painted aluminum louvered cladding system. It conceals the buildings’ robust exhaust fans and features acoustical properties that cut down on the noise produced by these workhorses, a neighborly gesture that will help the residents of the campus’ nearby dormitory catch some much-needed shut-eye, whether by day or night.

AARON SEWARD

Clockwise, from top left: Recent construction shot of the two slabs; View of atrium of west building; Third floor plan; rendering of ASRC complex with green roofs on connector.

SOURCES

Curtain Wall
Permastrella Group
permastrella-agroup.com

Exterior Acoustical Louvers
Construction Specialties
c-agroup.com

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Lab Planner
Jacobs Consultancy
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SMW

IN CONSTRUCTION>
CUNY ADVANCED SCIENCE RESEARCH CENTER

KPF WITH FLAD ARCHITECTS
PARK AVE PUSH continued from front page
to Community Boards 5 and 6 to open the
discussion on East Midtown, a yet-to-be
defined business district surrounding Grand
Central. While Midtown is hardly a tabula
rasa along the lines of Hudson Yards or the
World Trade Center, rezoning has the poten-
tial, according to Edith Hsu-Chen, director of
city’s largest commercial property owners
and between Madison and Lexington
Avenue has already rehabbed several old
buildings in East Midtown, including 62-year-
old 100 Park Avenue.
Addressing the developer-felt imperative,
Mary Ann Tighe, the powerful broker and
CBRE chief officer, has said, “If we don’t
do something now, in the fullness of time
we might find these areas have become
orphans.”
Edward V. Piccinich, SL Green’s executive
vice president of property management and
construction, appears to be in it for the long
haul, but not without concern about the next
Planning Commission. “Whoever goes in
to Midtown is going to have to work in a
very strategic way, whether it’s coordinating
with the MTA, mixed-use development, or
phasing and circulation,” he said. “It’s not
just about creating a plaza.”
The applicable zoning codes in the area
are a paralyzing mess of contradictory
allowances. The 1961 zoning law-implement-
ed floor area ratios, or FARs, in many cases
tighter than what was already built. In 1982
a Special Midtown District was created to
restrict FAR in an attempt to shift development
west to help Times Square. The plan worked
all too well and development in eastern
Midtown slowed. Then in 1992 the Grand
Central Subdistrict—from 41st to 48th streets
and between Madison and Lexington
avenues—was created to allow for air-right
transfers from Grand Central Terminal and
other area landmarks to new developments
nearby.
The average permitted FAR in East
Midtown is 12 to 15, but in the Grand Central
Subdistrict can be as much as 21.6 FAR.
The problem for developers is if they want
to tear down an obsolete pre-1961 tower of,
say, 21 FAR, they can only build it back up to a
post-1961 zoning allowance of about 15 FAR.
And yet, in spite of the failed 1992
incentives, the 1982 disincentives, which
are still in place, and the added turn-offs of
subway improvement requirements,
mandated plazas, and a very public review
process, the area still commands top dollar,
although the study (don’t call it a plan yet)
presented at Community Board 5 noted
that there’s been just 0.06 percent annual
growth rate in the past decade.
The new zoning will likely allow a 21.6
FAR without any of the current constraints.
It will also likely allow a massing cluster near
Grand Central—where the taller buildings
already exist, but are considered by many
developers to be outdated and beyond
renovation. Piccinich notes that many of
today’s office tenants are looking for column-
free continuous office floor plates, which are
rare in buildings built before 1960.
Upzoning has its champions, but the
concerns are many. But even Simeon
Bankoff, executive director of the Historic
District Council, acknowledged the area
needs help. “They’ve always had tall
buildings around Grand Central,” he said,
adding that the real problems have to do
with infrastructure and pedestrian circulation.
The planning department’s study also
pays extensive attention to pedestrian
circulation and mass transit below grade.
Any changes there would require intense
coordination with the MTA. By 2019, Long
Island Rail Road’s East Side Access project
will be funneling hordes of LIRR commuters
through the same MTA tunnels that Metro
North passengers use. Hsu-Chen said
an already existing bottleneck at the subway
turnstiles has got to be part of any new
zoning conversations.
With extensive congestion below grade,
it’s almost perverse to note the desolate
quality of Vanderbilt Avenue. This dank
but grand old side street was left adrift when
9/11 put a stop to the taxi drop-offs at the
Vanderbilt Entrance to Grand Central. The
site has obvious potential for a DOT plaza.
The main objection voiced at CBS and by
opponents is that there are millions of square
feet of brand-new office space to be leased
at the World Trade Center and at Hudson
Yards. In response, planning’s Hsu-Chen
stated the obvious: Planning’s job is to
plan. The implication was that Bloomberg’s
time is running out and the Commission
cannot wait until Hudson Yards and World
Trade Center are leased before taking action
on Midtown. TS
1 KAMANI
KNOLL LUXE

Named after the Kamani flower and inspired by Hindu patterns, Knoll creative director Dorothy Cosonas combines a modern, almost mid-century floral with old-world screen-printing techniques in a 100 percent cotton fabric.

knoll.com

2 REFORESTATION
BLIK

As with their online-sold T-shirts, these self-adhesive fabric wall tiles by Threadless are based on user-submitted designs. Nontoxic and free of PVC and phthalates, they come two per pack and are easy to apply to walls or customisable to fit almost any surface.

whatablik.com

3 BROOKLYN MUSEUM
BENTLEY PRINCE STREET

Adhering to the company’s “7 Fronts of Sustainability” credo that includes conducting life cycle assessments on all products, this digitally printed nylon flooring, depicting sea glass and river rocks, achieves climate neutrality with carbon credits purchased to offset emissions.

bentleypinestreet.com

4 BAVARIA
MAHARAM

Known for design work that “explores the macabre, the bizarre, the historical, and the everyday,” Antwerp-based Studio Job used traditional farmland scenery of livestock, tools, and crops with a flattened perspective in a complex woven jacquard construction for a quirky upholstery touch.

maharam.com

5 EXCURSION
CF STINSON

One of six new patterns for the Voyages collection by Michael Graves, Excursion is inspired by the architect’s love of travel and his commitment to designing high-performance upholstery for environments that require durable, easy-to-clean surfaces.

cfstinson.com

6 PATCHWORK GARDEN
DOMESTIC CONSTRUCTION

The pattern for Patchwork Garden comes from an antique sewing sampler found in an old chest in a farmhouse that “the girls,” as they call themselves, at Brooklyn-based Domestic Construction collaged with paper. The image is then digitally printed on a polyester textile fused to a foam-rubber backing that is skid resistant and machine washable.

domesticconstruction.
bigcartel.com

ALL NATURAL
FLOORING AND FABRIC BRANDS PUT DOWN ROOTS WITH THESE TRIBUTES TO MOTHER EARTH. BY PERRIN DRUMM
To a greater degree than any of the other islands dotting the waterways around Manhattan, Roosevelt Island represents a place whose history divides neatly into eras that mirror the social and economic growth of New York City. Over the years, this bit of land just two miles long and 600 yards wide has served as a proving ground to test civic-minded and architectural ideas proposed in a spirit of experimentation. A quirky scrap of the city, Roosevelt Island boasts such amenities as an underground pneumatic tube system for transporting garbage and the first commissioned aerial tramway in the United States. In the 19th century, the island was home to an insane asylum, an almshouse, a prison, a charity hospital, and a smallpox hospital—warehouses for the human unwanted, kept safely segregated from the rest of the population by the treacherous currents of the East River. By the 1970s, as New York slid toward bankruptcy, city planners were looking for new uses for Roosevelt Island, including a proposal to turn it into a massive amusement park. Today, the insane asylum has been converted to luxury rental residences, the smallpox hospital lies in picturesque gothic ruins, the prisoners now reside on Riker’s Island, the amusement park never happened, and Roosevelt Island is poised to enter a new phase of development that embraces it as a vital component of 21st-century New York City. A compelling feature of its pending renaissance will be Cornell University’s 2-million-square-foot applied science and engineering campus, scheduled for completion by 2037. Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM) is developing a master plan for the parcel of land where Goldwater Hospital now stands, to prepare the site for university buildings to be designed by individual architects. The campus will incorporate a multistory pedestrian network, extensive public gardens and amphitheaters, and a 150,000-square-foot photovoltaic array powering one of the country’s largest net-zero energy structures. Thom Mayne of the architectural firm Morphosis was recently selected to design and build the first of three academic buildings on the site.

Roosevelt Island has known many names and identities throughout recorded history—it was called Minnahanonck or “It’s Nice To Be Here” by the Native Americans, Varcken Eylandt by the 17th-century Dutch, then Hog’s, Blackwell’s, Welfare, and finally Roosevelt Island, after FDR. The city bought the land in 1828 from Robert Blackwell, whose family’s farmhouse still stands just south of the Queensboro Bridge. Soon 107 acres of farmland were developed and put to correctional and humanitarian institutional use, immediately establishing an identity for the island as a place for the unwell, the insane, the destitute, and the criminal. The penitentiary, a forbidding gray arced structure with castle-like crenellations, was completed in 1832, and boasted a staff of 24, including a quarry master and a coxswain to pilot the island’s boat. The lunatic asylum, designed by Alexander Jackson Davis, went up next in 1839, followed by the Hospital for Incurables—those suffering from smallpox or tuberculosis—designed by James Renwick Jr. (designer of the Smithsonian Institution. Despite its proximity to Manhattan and Queen, Roosevelt Island has always been something of a mystery and a world unto itself. Home to a prison, an asylum, a hospital, and assorted housing plans, it is now the site of an ambitious new tech campus underway and a major new memorial park set to open this fall. Angela Riechers looks at the history and AN’s editors report on the evolving aspirations for this fast-evolving city sliver.
and the original facade of the New York Stock Exchange) and completed in 1857. The island also supported an almshouse for indigent adults and orphaned children. Living conditions were grim for residents at all of these massive stone structures. Social reformer Jacob Riis described the almshouse at Blackwell’s as “the hell-box, rather than the repair-shop, of the city.” Nearly all of the City’s orphans were entrusted to the care of the poor women living in the almshouse, even though ledger books show that most children sent there soon died from diarrhea or malnutrition. One doctor wrote of an infant “regarded as a prodigy because it has managed to attain the age of two months.”

Reflecting its status as the location where the city took care of its poorest citizens, Blackwell’s became known as Welfare Island in 1921. It kept that name until 1973 when the city’s newly created Urban Development Committee (UDC) rechristened it Roosevelt Island, envisioning a new residential haven for the middle class. The UDC even came up with a catchy name for the rebranded island: the “New Town in Town.” Architect Rem Koolhaas projected his provocative urban fantasies here—including an elevated “travelator” to move pedestrians around and a park with a so-called Chinese swimming pool carved out of the island’s rock and extending into the river. In his words, Roosevelt Island could become “a civilized escape zone, a kind of resort that offers, from a safe distance, the spectacle of Manhattan burning.”

The comprehensive master plan that the city approved, drafted by Philip Johnson and John Burgee, called for a car-free island where vehicles could only enter from the Queens side. Residences and stores would be connected by a central Main Street running past restored historic buildings and leading to parks at each end of the island. The streets were to flow north from the subway stop, and a bus system would link the main Motorgate parking garage to the north with the tramway and subway to the south.

The first phase of development, known as Northtown, consisted of four housing complexes, including two designed by noted architect Josep Lluís Sert, then dean of the Harvard Graduate School of Design. Sert took an innovative approach to high-rise multiple-dwelling residential buildings, creating duplex units with public corridors and elevators only on every third floor. When the city’s worsening fiscal crisis forced a near-collapse of the UDC in 1975, only 2,138 units of rental housing were built—less than half of the original proposal. Since then, residential construction has been architecturally mixed: buildings in the Starrett Corporation’s Northtown Phase II, completed in 1989, are designed in an undistinguished pseudo-historical postmodern style, and in 2006 the blue stone Octagon tower (the only piece of the old lunatic asylum still standing) was converted into an imposing entrance rotunda for a 500-unit luxury rental complex. Roosevelt Island’s day-to-day operations are administered by the Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation (RIOC) rather than falling under New York City jurisdiction. RIOC, established in 1984, oversees everything on the island from transit to trash pickup to security and parks, and historically has been controlled by the New York State governor, who approves its board members and appoints its president. Over the years, relations between locals and RIOC have sometimes been contentious, with accusations that too many board members tend to be hand-picked Albany favorites—amounting to governance by a group of outsiders and unqualified political cronies. In the 1990s, residents even staged what they called a Roosevelt Island Tea Party, dumping tea into the East River to protest Governor George E. Pataki’s management, including the appointment of one of ex-Senator Alfonse M. D’Amato’s staff members as president of the RIOC board. The State of New York’s 99-year lease on the island expires in 2068, and control will revert once again to New York City. New parks abound in Roosevelt Island’s future. The old Renwick smallpox hospital (New York City’s only landmarked ruins) became the centerpiece for the 7.6-acre Southpoint Park, designed by WRT, which opened in the summer 2011. Just beyond the reimagined ruins, stretching to the southernmost tip of the island, will be the 14-acre Franklin Delano Roosevelt Four Freedoms Park by architect Louis Kahn (who was working on construction drawings at the time of his death in 1974). Set to open in 2012, its focal point will be a “granite room,” an open-air plaza with twelve-foot-high walls made from 36-ton blocks of granite, set just one inch apart. Visitors will be able to access the history of the FOR years on their smart phones, technology unimaginable when New York City Mayor John Lindsay first announced the project nearly 40 years ago.

As city planners tried again and again to figure out best uses for this strip of land so close to Manhattan yet so far removed from its everyday hustle and push, Roosevelt Island became densely layered with projects reflecting the social ideals of each subsequent era. Today, Roosevelt Island has been recast as a gleaming modern hub for tech and research, trimmed with new parks and green spaces. Colin Koop, architect and senior designer at SOM, said, “At one time, Roosevelt Island was about prison, then it was about the health and welfare of the underprivileged, then it became about the middle class, and you could argue that now it’s about engagement in tech and education.”

In a sense, the island is once again providing a solution to an issue facing the entire city: how to stay competitive in an increasingly tech-based economy. Perhaps the best part of the story is that the new plans still honor Roosevelt Island’s singular history as a place where the underprivileged, then it became about the middle class, and you could argue that now it’s about engagement in tech and education.”
the competition to develop the
with a masterplan by SOM won
The Cornell Technion team
trees narrows in perspective to a
Above, from top: A placolding photograph in the granite
developed the new tech campus south of the
the Queensboro Bridge. Kahn designed the granite embankment
with the stoility of an Egyptian monument; the granite was
the Queesnboro Bridge. Kahn designed the granite embankment
with the stoility of an Egyptian monument; the granite was
stationed in Mount Airy, North Carolina, as specified by the
architect. Rip rap roots around the edge were handplaced.

FOUR FREEDOMS PARK
At the tip of Roosevelt Island, known as
Southpoint, the Franklin D. Roosevelt Four
Freedoms Park is set to open in mid-October.
The much-anticipated park was designed by
Louis Kahn before his 1974 death but is
just being completed this year. The only Kahn
structure realized to date in New York City,
it sits atop a former landfill just south of
the remains of a smallpox hospital nicknamed the
“Remewick Ruin.” But the four-acre site’s rath
insubstantial history is now eclipsed by stately
allies of linear trees that flank a grass lawn
and lead to Kahn’s austere white “room,” a
memorial to President Roosevelt and what is
now known as his Four Freedoms speech, part
of his State of the Union address in January
1941—the year the United States entered the
World War II.
Kahn did not have to compete to win
the park project but was handpicked in 1972
by the New York State Urban Development
Corporation; this followed a federal commis-
sion’s recommendation that a memorial to
President Roosevelt be located on what was
then known as Welfare Island. “Whatever
is done, must be done to outlast everything
else on the island,” architect James Piotrk
said of the proposed memorial in The New
York Times in 1973, the year the island
was named. “This memorial must look
permanent and beautiful.”
But just as Kahn’s design was completed,
New York City sunk into a financial crisis.
Gina Pollara, the executive director of Four
Freedoms Park, explained that Roosevelt
Island’s unusual status contributed to the delay
in getting built. “It’s jurisdictional purgatory,”
she said. “The island is owned by the city,
but was leased to New York State’s Urban
Development Corporation in 1969 in a 99-year,
 replaced Four Freedoms, technically a New
York State park, languished until gaining
new momentum in the late 1980s under the
Cuomo administration only then to be stymied
by Governor Pataki, who cut funding for
the island’s capital projects. The park began
moving forward again in 2005 thanks to
an $11 million grant from the Chicago-based
Alphawood Foundation, and this April the
project received $500,000 of federal funding
for the completion of the landscaping. Pollara
said that the Park will likely fund future
maintenance through a conservation. The rest
of new trees, including the 120 lindens and
five copper beech trees that mark the park’s
entrance, come courtesy of MillionTreesNYC.
“The beeches give way to a grand staircase
of poured concrete risers that lead to the
lawn. At its end stands a granite wall contain-
ing a monumental bronze bust of Roosevelt
created in 1933 by sculptor Jo Davidson. On
the opposite side facing the room, Roosevelt’s
famous speech is inscribed, calling for freedom
of speech and worship and freedom from war
drear to worldwide. Fittingly, the memorial
offers an unparalleled view of the United
Nations building.

MOLLY HEINTZ
ISLAND INFRASTRUCTURE
The last major assessment of the Roosevelt
Island’s infrastructure was carried out in 2009
by Hunter College. “The issue now is that the
planned growth is unprecedented and no one
has taken a critical look at the infrastructure
and the impacts on the residents,” wrote
Dr. Laxmi Ramasubramanian, leader of that
study. As an email. A spokesperson from
NYCEDC said that the agency is in the process
of conducting an Environmental Impact
Statement for the planned new development
which will address all environmental issues,
including the need for a ConEd makeover
to bring gas lines to the island.
Traffic congestion is a primary concern.
Yvonne Prazybyla, RIOC’s transportation planner,
said that as Main Street is the only street,
one stopped car impacts the entire transportation
network. Short-term street parking and long-term garage parking will be
needed. The island’s sidewalks are already too
narrow for rush hour and the breathtaking
views of Manhattan are hobbled by an
inefficient promenade. A pedestrian bridge
to Manhattan hasn’t been ruled out, but fear
and concerns about shipping on the East
River could become stumbling blocks. The
Hunter report suggested cantilevering a
walkway from the Queensborough Bridge.
RIOC officials are also hoping for increased
ferry service, but without subsidies the fare
will be too high. The island is now a hub for
the Alphatrain, which runs every hour and
serves the west side of the island. It is
scheduled to be replaced by the “Alphatrain
2010” in the next few years.

JULIE V. IOVINE
ISLAND HOUSING
Half built and awaiting funds from co-
developers Hudson and Related companies,
Southtown, the last remaining housing
development planned for Roosevelt Island,
haves already brought needed density to this
isolated sliver of land. Six buildings and
ten residential buildings will add an additional
million square feet total space. Planned and
designed by Gruzen Samton, Southtown
supplements the more experimental housing
of Northtown, designed by Joseph Louis Sert
and others, in the 1970s. Gruzen Samton
also designed Northtown phase II. “The
island has always been a challenge, and
residents have often felt underserved by
amenities like shopping,” said Jordan
Samton, principal at Gruzen Samton. “With
increased density and a flood of tourists
for the Roosevelt memorial, will there
be a different spirit on the island.” There’s
a new retail mall to plan to spiff up the
downtown, 7,000 square foot of retail
space. The mall is expected to open
in 2014.

ALAN G. BRAKE
WATCH WHAT WE CAN DO

GKD Mediamesh® transformed one of New York’s most forgettable buildings into a model of modern technology.

Port Authority Bus Terminal
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We can’t just show you a picture. GKD Mediamesh® is best seen in action. Watch what we can do.
Architects are using facades to push the green building revolution. Advances in technologies like glass fabrication and performance-modeling software have been a key to making this happen. But now that the first wave of high-performance buildings have been in play for a number of years, the industry has new post-occupancy data applicable to the next generation of energy-efficient buildings. Software is also helping people collaborate in unforeseen ways, allowing architects to do productive, real-time work with fabricators and facade consultants no matter their geographic location.

And with improvements in digital design software, architects are not just creating building enclosures that passively reduce a building’s energy consumption. Facades are now active participants in their interior and exterior environments, with operable components and energy-collecting systems that can power many of the functions within. Photovoltaics continue to grow in popularity; one report from NanoMarkets, an industry analyst, estimated the total market for BIPV glass will reach $6.4 billion in revenues in 2016, compared with $1.5 billion in 2012.

Material advances, too, are making building skins more efficient. Architectural products are slimming down: long a staple of European rainscreen design, thin-form ceramics only a few millimeters thick are taking their place on building exteriors as a lightweight, high-design option for a range of projects in the United States. Concrete is also having a revolution as a facade material, with new advances in ultra high-performance mixes that are lightweight and can be manufactured almost anywhere in the world. Glass-fabrication technology is allowing fabrication of larger panels, reducing material consumption for many projects. Metal, too, is being modeled in new and exciting ways. While structural steel systems continue to bend, twist, and conform innovatively, the world’s most cutting-edge architects are showing that their fascination with bending, perforating, and finishing metal continues.

Ultimately today’s facades are more than the sum of their parts, allowing not only these buildings but our cities as a whole to function more efficiently than ever. JENNIFER K. GORSCH
New Solarban® R100 solar control, low-e glass.  
A better glass for a better environment.

Clean lines. Clean look. Clean conscience. It's a lot to expect from an ordinary piece of glass. Then again, Solarban® R100 solar control, low-e glass is about as far from ordinary as you get – thanks to a Solar Heat Gain Coefficient of .23 and a neutral-reflective appearance that lets your building put its best face forward. And you'll really be surprised by the extraordinary energy savings you can expect with Solarban R100 glass. To get your copy of the white paper, go to ppgideascapes.com/SBr100.
Long scattered over several Manhattan buildings, the John Jay College of Criminal Justice decided several years ago to unite its facilities with one vertical campus. Designed by SOM, the new 625,000-square-foot building doubles the size of the school’s facilities, adding classrooms, labs, auditoriums, offices, and student spaces to meet increasing enrollment. The building’s stacked, cascading layout allows students to collaborate across disciplines, and the architects wanted this function to be visible from the exterior as well. Framed glass setbacks for the cafeteria, labs, a 250-seat classroom, and large lounge area highlight the building’s diversity from the street and emphasize the “transparency of justice,” said the architects. The rest of the building has a skin of aluminum panels and fritted and transparent low-e-coated insulated glass units, all fabricated by Viracon, which are arranged in a staggered pattern on all four sides (every third panel is transparent). The typical panel dimension is 6 feet, 8 inches by 15 feet. Baker Metal Products provided extrusion fabrication and subassembly services, and units were later assembled at the Eprata, Pennsylvania, facility of facade design/build consultant Enclos. Enclos conducted two laboratory performance mock-ups to confirm each curtain wall system’s performance, with validation including on-site water chamber and hose testing. Because of the college’s urban location, installers used three methods to install 240,000 square feet of facade: hydraulic crane, pallet stacker, and monorail systems. Enclos also provided installation services for the building’s metal panels, canopy and soffits, louvers with steel supports, and glass and aluminum doors. Depending on how it is approached, the facade presents a different effect. Vertical fins with depths of 3 to 11 inches encircle the building in bands. Finished with silver mica-flake paint on one side and silk-screened with red dots on the other, the fins make the building look red when seen from the east and approached counterclockwise. The effect connects the building with the brick facade of nearby Haaren Hall, the college’s main location previously, and with North Hall, a former shoe factory building. From the other direction, aluminum and glass materials fit with the school’s newer glass-clad neighbors on 11th Avenue.
This year, Nashville-based Bridgestone Americas celebrated the opening of its new 265,000-square-foot technical center in Akron, Ohio. Designed by Ohio-based Sol Harris/Day Architecture, the facility is one of the company’s three technical centers worldwide; the others are in Rome and Tokyo. The project houses a research laboratory that the tire maker uses to test new tire compounds, as well as prototype and quality-control engineering offices and additional office space for almost 450 employees. A pedestrian bridge with custom ceramic-frit glass spans Akron’s South Main Street to connect to a new 400-car parking structure on the nearly 25-acre campus.

Built to LEED Gold specifications, the technical center does not rely on just one enclosure system to function efficiently. Instead, it incorporates a range of efficiency-enhancing products from Bridgestone’s Firestone Building Products division, including the S-4500 Aluminum Panel Rainscreen System, Flat-Lock Stainless Steel Wall Panels, UC-600 Aluminum Exposed Fastener Panels, UC 500 Aluminum Soffit Panels, S-200 Aluminum Column Covers, Aluminum Sun Screens, and LS-1 Light Shelves. Using the company’s suite of products also helped the project stay on a tight schedule—from its February 2010 groundbreaking to its official opening in April 2012.

In addition to the light shelves and screens, reflective roofing and a vegetative roof reduce the building’s cooling requirements, while an on-site cistern collects water for irrigation. A high-performance, triple-glazed facade system uses United Architectural Metals UAM 275-325 TRIPLE, a thermally broken unitized curtain wall system designed to accommodate Viracon’s 1-3/4-inch triple-glazed units across 50,000 square feet of curtain wall.
In an arid climate like Dubai’s, a building’s enclosure system is its most important protection against days that average a high of 108 degrees in summer. This is especially true for the world’s tallest building, the Burj Khalifa, whose 2,650-foot height is clad in more than 1.8 million square feet of Guardian SunGuard Solar Silver 20 and Guardian ClimaGuard NLT Low-E glass. The project’s glass provides an anti-glare shield for the strong desert sun, and a high light reflectance to keep the interior from overheating. It also withstands extreme desert temperature swings and strong winds, all while meeting the SOM architects’ vision of a matte silver reflective color for the building without use of tinted glass or ceramic frit.

Guardian’s first conversations with the architects included discussions about glass thickness calculations based on wind loads, as well as calculations that took into consideration glass movement and temperature differences between the ground floor and the top of the tower during each season. Stress on the glass caused by the temperature difference between production and installation conditions was another important consideration in determining glass thickness. The glass is positioned vertically in the facade frame and segmented around the tower to avoid the visibility of small distortions that occur during the heat-strengthening process of glassmaking. (In a completely flat facade, the high reflective glass would show more distortions.) Heat-strengthened glass has been subjected to a heating and cooling cycle and is typically twice as strong as annealed glass of the same thickness and configuration. Throughout the manufacturing and installation process, Guardian instituted tight quality control to ensure that the building’s nearly 26,000 panels would live up to the standard of the record-breaking structure.
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New TESL8 panels allow for the production of unique facade systems available at a standard VECTR panel price, enabling large-scale facade patterns. taktl-llc.com

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VE-45, a new low-emissivity coating, improves the balance between visible light transmittance, solar control, and enhanced U-values. viracon.com

YKK AP AMERICA
The architectural product manufacturer has introduced the YUVW 760 XT utilized wall system for low- to mid-rise commercial buildings to its energyGlacade product line. ykkap.com

GLASS
GUARDIAN INDUSTRIES
Guardian and Pythagoras Solar now manufacture and market SunGuard Photovoltaic Glass Units (PVGU) for commercial buildings. sunguardglass.com

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From a major supplier of architectural glass systems and custom curtain and glass window walls, Old Castle has evolved to providing entire integrated building systems. oldcastle.com

PPG
New commercial building products include a passive-solar, low-e glass for cool climates and a self-cleaning glass for skylights, canopies, and other sloped glazing. ppg.com

SAGE
This spring the French glass giant Saint-Gobain acquired Sage, makers of electrochromic smart windows that can tint and block light using only 0.28 watts per square foot of glass. sageglass.com

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Based in Milpitas, CA, Soladigm specializes in green building products, including the introduction of a new energy-efficient dynamic glass manufactured in collaboration with Guardian Industries. soladigm.com

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Prospect Park Lakeside Center
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CALENDAR
JULY 2012

WEDNESDAY 11
LECTURE
Michaela Marcella and Claire Weiss
Urban Design Talks: The Sixth Borough—Visions for New York City's Waterfront
12:30 p.m.
Avery Hall
1172 Amsterdam Ave.
events.gsap.org

THURSDAY 12
LECTURE
Elisabeth A. Schiller
Rodin's Partiality
Fragmentary Bodies and the Amazing of Sculpture
7:00 p.m.
Brooklyn Museum
200 Eastern Parkway.
brooklynmuseum.org

EXHIBITION OPENINGS
Yayoi Kusama
Whitney Museum
945 Madison Ave.
whitney.org

dashaus: Innovation in Renewables and Energy Efficiency
dashaus pavilion
parking lot at 125 Court Street
White Plains, NY
ny.dashaustour.com

The Harlem Edge:
Cultivation Connections
The Center for Architecture
536 LaGuardia Pl.
cfa.aiany.org

INC ONGR UOUS: Other Means
Museum of Art and Design
2 Columbus Circle
madmuseum.org

EVENT
A Celestial Angle on the Greatest Grid
5:00 p.m.
Museum of The City of New York
1220 5th Ave.
mcy.org

SATURDAY 14
LECTURE
Richard Guy Wilson
Architecture 101: Richard Guy Wilson
4:00 p.m.
Museum of The City of New York
1220 5th Ave.
mcy.org

EXHIBITION OPENING
Jerome Hader
and K. Brandt Knapp
Curator and director of Storefront Eva Franch writes in a statement, “An image (and its after-image) carries movement or green surfaces conveying ecologic awareness...” There has been a resurgence of certain representational devices, and clichés that operate almost as placeholders or decorative devices to an architecture unable to draw itself.”

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Design: Now in Production

Education has long been the object of much discussion among architects, yet this present volume constitutes the first comprehensive history of North American architectural education. Whereas most scholarship has focused on a particular school, pedagogy, era, or curricular component, Ockman’s book—while making no claims to be all encompassing—aims, in her words, “to open up as many avenues as possible for future inquiry and, in doing so, to work against the tendency to produce a canonical history.” By and large, the book achieves this objective, partly owing to its binary structure, which combines telescopic breadth with more microscopic glimpses into particular themes. Part one comprises a broad chronological account from “Before 1860” to the year 2012, with chapters written by Dell Upton, Michael J. Lewis, Ockman, Mary McLeod, and Stan Allen. Part two is encyclopedic in structure, containing short topical essays by different scholars. By thus adopting both a chronological and a thematic approach, this compendium is able to trace changes in broad trends over time while including more focused investigations into particular components of architectural education.

Despite the profession’s long-standing interest in education, it is not so surprising that this book is the first of its kind, given the daunting challenges of such a project: first of all, there is the quandary of how to broach the staggering number of schools, each with their diverse casts of characters—educators as well as students. Perhaps in view of this difficulty, Ockman solicits contributions from an institutionally diverse roster, including educators from no fewer than 30 schools with the U.S. and Canada. The book maps key tendencies and events across an impressively wide range of schools, both public and private, with the possible exception of the final chapter, “1990 to 2012,” which chronicles an educational discourse occurring mostly within the Ivy League. As for how student activities are integrated into the book, numerous illustrations of student work provide some evidence of material practices occurring in design studios. Another challenge for such a book lies in the work of contextualizing architectural education—already a broad field—vis-a-vis other histories. McLeod’s chapter, for example, presents a history of feminist, civil rights, and countercultural movements. Ockman opens her chapter with the United States’ Cold War investments in scientific research at universities. If there is, however, one contextual link which remains less explored than we might wish, it is the connection between histories and theories of architectural education and those of general education, which might have helped contributors avoid citing familiar discourses of the architectural profession to account for practices within architecture schools. Of course, there exists no hard line segregating professional discourse from educational discourse (since educators are usually practitioners), but one distinguishing function of education is its reliance on underlying assumptions about epistemology and psychology. One could argue that theories of how human beings learn have had a remarkable impact on changes within the profession itself, given that educational architecture requires a teacher to translate an otherwise personal and inarticulate process of design into a communicable system. Such pedagogical systems (as clearly demonstrated two centuries ago by Jean-Nicolas-Louis Durand’s Précis, and again with the 1970’s turn towards digital systems of design) have had the effect of reorienting the profession towards established protocols, toolkits, and systematic techniques of creative production. Arguably, architecture’s educational methods have had impacts on design and technologies reaching far beyond the walls of the university or the discipline. The book’s contributors certainly do discuss the systematization of design processes, but these cases are treated as indicative of the professional preoccupations of people who happen to be educators, rather than as processes indebted to an educational interest in epistemological systems. To put this more simply, the development of teaching methods driving the profession towards technologization is not a possibility covered in this book. Overall, Ockman’s book provides a rich, dense, and macroscopic treatment of 19th- and 20th-century architectural education, and its high-quality writing renders it a great pleasure to read. Yet there remains the difficult challenge of accounting for architecture schools’ increasing global spread, digital embrace, and reliance on privately funded research. Seemingly to accept “technology” and “globalism” as having swept architecture schools along in their inexorable tides, the book’s treatment of the 21st Century does not provide great insight into how methods of architecture education may have actually helped instigate such tendencies, e.g., not only through the recent tradition of sending design studios on trips to the Global South, but, more broadly, through a long tradition of treating processes of the imagination as codifiable, communicative, and therefore reproducible through systems of global and technological exchange.

BLUE BOOK

Architecture School: Three Centuries of Educating Architects in North America
ed. Joan Ockman Rebecca Wilson, Research Editor, MIT Press, $50.00

Education has long been the object of much discussion among architects, yet this present volume constitutes the first comprehensive history of North American architectural education. Whereas most scholarship has focused on a particular school, pedagogy, era, or curricular component, Ockman’s book—while making no claims to be all encompassing—aims, in her words, “to open up as many avenues as possible for future inquiry and, in doing so, to work against the tendency to produce a canonical history.” By and large, the book achieves this objective, partly owing to its binary structure, which combines telescopic breadth with more microscopic glimpses into particular themes. Part one comprises a broad chronological account from “Before 1860” to the year 2012, with chapters written by Dell Upton, Michael J. Lewis, Ockman, Mary McLeod, and Stan Allen. Part two is encyclopedic in structure, containing short topical essays by different scholars. By thus adopting both a chronological and a thematic approach, this compendium is able to trace changes in broad trends over time while including more focused investigations into particular components of architectural education.

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TAKING THE PULSE

Graphic Design: Now in Production
Building 110, Governors Island, New York
Through September 3
Kickstarter projects, and book titles dealing with the lack of graphic designers activities like finessing typography and solving other peoples’ problems, and more concerned with rethinking the very contexts in which graphic design is produced. 

In seeking a thematic characterization for the first decade of the 21st century, New in Production’s lead curators, Andrew Blauvelt and Ellen Lupton, have identified the amorphous concept of “openness,” writing in the catalogue that, “it is the increasingly open nature of design practices and the open access to tools that reign supreme.” If such a concept sounds broad, intangible, and difficult to make manifest in an exhibition, that’s because it is. 

The exhibition contains very few specimens that they represent start to feel slight, as it has been termed, from across the high-low cultural divide. The past decade began with a post-Millennial-hangover-induced sobriety that has been an era of anti-design in which many graphic designers have given up the responsibil

end users. Innovative practice in this period has been less concerned with traditionally graphic designers activities like finessing typography and solving other peoples’ problems, and more concerned with rethinking the very contexts in which graphic design is produced. 

resist and critique.

The past decade began with a post-Millennial-hangover-induced sobriety that has been an era of anti-design in which many graphic designers have given up the responsib

outcomes and for the active participation of designers in which their role is to set the conditions for the world’s problems and lots of the work on display here is utterly seductive—the wax sculpture, the Magic Marker print, and the nerve-jarring glass shard poster image included are actually quite stunning—but the mini rebellions against corporate graphic design, clear communication, and modernist ideology that they represent start to feel slight, especially when the jokes are too inside and when visitors to the exhibition are not familiar with the entities and traditions they resist and critique.

As a major museum exhibition on graphic design, New in Production’s closest precedent are the Walker Art Center’s Graphic Design in America from 1988, which looked back at the profession’s own history and the Cooper Hewitt’s Mising Messages from 1996 that examined how graphic language of the 1980s and 1990s sampled its references and dialects from across the high-low cultural divide. 

The past decade began with a post-Millennial-hangover-induced sobriety that merged into a recession-induced austerity. It has been an era of anti-design in which many graphic designers have given up the responsibility of having a point of view, a visual style, or any direct control over form. Instead, through making tools, establishing default systems, and coding algorithms that determine output, they favor a more remote practice, in which their role is to set the conditions for outcomes and for the active participation of
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In Magic City, the lobby staircase aims for a Lapidus’s “stairway to nowhere” look, while the cast channel Mr. James Bond.

figure of Miami Beach history. The Miramar Playa hotel is the Fontainebleau’s more or less, with elements from other hotels literally thrown in, making the result a slightly odd mash-up. In addition to bits of the Fontainebleau and Eden Roc hotels, there are also elements of Melvin Grossman’s slightly more subdued Deauville Hotel farther north on the beach and the smaller DiLido (now a Ritz Carlton) designed by Lapidus and Grossman together. The curve of the Miramar tower is a play on the Fontainebleau’s famous arc, but here it is a less elegant freeform curve to the Fontainebleau’s pure semicircle. The pool deck used for exterior shots is literally that of the current Deauville, one of the most boring lidos on the beach, and a far cry from the glory of the Fontainebleau’s grounds.

The lobby is the heart of the mess. To the left is the Eden Roc’s rotunda, with a tray ceiling hanging from skyhooks. To the right is Lapidus’s famous “staircase to nowhere,” a motif he used at many hotels. This one is most like the Fontainebleau’s, with clunkier details. The check-in counter is straight from the Eden Roc, but it is recessed into a wall from the DiLido. Perhaps most jarring of all is the Miramar’s color scheme: its blast browns and golds are copied from the contemporary DiLido, going for a restrained luxury that wasn’t at all Lapidus’ taste. Any Lapidus original would have burst with brightly colored designs and patterns, often simultaneously.

Past the premiere, the locations in Magic City feel more comfortably natural, and less obvious in their boldness. There’s also more of Miami. The first episode said loudly, “We are at the Miramar Playa. Wish you were here.” By the third episode, Evans and his family move out into the city, where they have dinner at a stand-in for the Wreck Bar at the Castaways, a long-gone classic Miami dive.

The broad base of Miami’s architectural evolution also emerges, and the city’s various styles lend some symbolic power to the plot’s themes. The real life Mediterranean Revival estates of Carl Fisher’s island developments contain an older, prewar, generation of Miami Beach wealth populated by white Gentiles with names like Firestone and Honeywell. They exclude Jews from their domains, like the classic Miami Beach Bath Club, just as they were excluded from Palm Beach society. We see this side of Miami Beach in the character of Meg Bannock, whose oceanfront estate was sold to Evans to become the site of the Miramar. Again, fiction mirrors the real story: the Fontainebleau was built on the site of the 15-bedroom Firestone estate. As Miami’s old gentle popula-

fication fades out, the nouveau mobsters move into Med Revival palazzos. Not incidentally, the house used as mobster character Ben Diamond’s house happens to be next door to the one used as Bannock’s new place.

Other Miami sites have made cameos. South Beach is a sleepy land of retired Jews from New York, and the Ocean Drive is one giant shuffleboard court. The Beaux Art Dade County Courthouse in downtown Miami is the DA’s office in the show. The University of Miami campus, a beautifully Pan-American composition by Marion Manley, Miami’s first female architect, isn’t literally in the show, but an interesting substitute for its sleek subtropical look is. Magic City uses the Bacardi Building on Biscayne Boulevard as a convincing stand-in, providing a rare, fortuitous glimpse inside the building, an icing tower floating over a sunny plaza that does a good job of copying Manley’s architectural work.

Magic City is not a Miamian Mad Men, a show that uses the advertising industry as a way to analyze a fantastized historical American past. Magic City is about a city that could possibly not have happened anywhere else. Magic City is about the sudden growth of a new Miami, more specifically, a new Miami Beach in the decades after World War II. It is about that new city and its growing pains, where a lot of strange things were allowed to happen, as if the Floridian peninsula was another country and not quite the U.S.A.

Strongly rooted in the history of Miami, Magic City straddles the line between straight-up historical documentary (as ridiculous as that sounds for a sexed-up drama) and surrealist vacation fantasy. The strong architectural identity of the Fontainebleau, and every other notable building used in the show, makes historical inaccuracies all the more keenly felt to those who know what to look for. As for Lapidus, it almost seems strange that, for his epic architectural influence, and his influence on the look of the show, he hasn’t been bestowed with the honor of a character. If only, when the show returns next season, Lapidus could have a walk-on part, perhaps, as the designer of a hotel to rival Miramar Playa in all its patterned fineness, as he did at the Eden Roc in real life.

SEAN MCCAAUHAN IS THE EDITOR OF CURBED MIAMI.
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