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COURTESY AKRIDGE, SBA

CAP-ITAL IMPROVEMENTS

This week officials from Amtrak and developer Akridge unveiled plans for an ambitious development atop tracks leading into Union Station in Washington, D.C. The 3-million-square-foot project promises to unite the neighborhoods of Capitol

Hill and NoMa, a former industrial area transformed from a manufacturing district into a leafy residential neighborhood.

"The gash in the urban fabric will be closed," said Mark Gilliland, a principal at Shalom Baranes Associates,

Akridge's master planners for the project.

But with nearly nine billion dollars in public/private investment needed, questions remain as to whether a public-private partnership, similar in scope, if not **continued on page 9**

AN UNDERGROUND GREEN SPACE MAY SEE THE LIGHT

HIGH TIME FOR THE LOWLINE



COURTESY RAAD STUDIO

Well aware that the areas of greatest density often have the least public space, James Ramsey, the principal of RAAD Studio, set out to

tap into New York City's infrastructure for an exciting alternative to the above ground park. Instead of looking skyward à la the High

Line, Ramsey ventured down into what he calls "the historical bowels of the city." On the site of a 1.5-acre **continued on page 3**

Passive House in Orient, NY.



TY COLE/OTTO

FIRST BUILDING IN REGION TO MEET TOUGH ENERGY STANDARDS

Actively Passive

The boxy artist studio at the end of a dirt path in the town of Orient, Long Island is the first structure in the New York metropolitan region, and one of about a dozen in the United States, to be meet the stringent environmental standards of the Passivhaus Institute, based in Darmstadt, Germany. **continued on page 4**

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The U.S. Embassy in London will be a model for the overseas Design Excellence program.



COURTESY KIERANTIMBERLAKE

KIERANTIMBERLAKE REFINES LONDON'S U.S. EMBASSY DESIGNS

London Fine-Tuned

The Department of State's Overseas Building Operations (OBO) released new renderings by KieranTimberlake of the United States Embassy to be located near London's Vauxhall neighborhood. The project has acted as something of a petri dish for the development of OBO's Design Excellence program, which was modeled on a similar program at the GSA. The London project has been watch closely by other federally commissioned architects who must comply with design requirements that combine energy efficiency, sustainability, intense security, and **continued on page 2**



COURTESY SOM

SHOWING SOME SERIOUS SKIN AT THE NEW SCHOOL. SEE PAGE 6.

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UNDER CONSULTATION

In the United States we have developed a unique public/private model of organization that reaches into nearly every corner of how we construct our cities and practice architecture. Projects get built, but the terms and protocols—and therefore, the results—vary widely. Elsewhere, it's done differently. For example, Vienna, Austria, which may have the most successful program of affordable housing of any city in the world, has a defined process known as the “the four pillars,” a set of guidelines that every RFP in a competitive process and every submitted proposal must follow and be judged by if they are to be chosen by city officials.

With our myriad of overlapping municipal and governmental regulations, standards, and authorities, this country may never adapt a universal set of criteria for selecting memorials and major buildings. Given all the variables, it should be no surprise that even architectural competitions have become a mini-business in this country. This issue's feature focuses on a growing industry of consultants who work almost exclusively on creating and staging competitions. Further, these consultants do more than simply stage competitions—they seem to hold the hands of the client(s) and sometimes even the architects to ensure the success of the process and the resulting design. It's a valuable service for many clients, since “architecture” may be defined as everything in excess of basic program requirements like toilets and a roof that does not leak.

Too often architects are guilty as charged of being elitists or unconcerned about the bottom-up input of the clients and the public. But one can see what Bill Lacey, former executive director of the Pritzker Prize means when he says, “I worry about the long-range effects of the public being to involved in a matter that they're not equipped to deal with.” We cannot help but think of the banal sculpture of fighting soldiers that was placed beside Maya Lin's powerful Vietnam Veterans Memorial project or the input that September 11 victims' families have had over the construction of the complex surrounding Larry Silverstein's towers. In fact, the most important role these competition specialists can perform is, as competition consultant Karen Stein says, to “establish a process that mirrors the core values of the institution” commissioning the project.

It is a worry that these competition insiders could become powerful architecture brokers, trading on their friendships and connections. But legitimately used, their knowledge of the process may allow them to be the only arbiters between the top-down excess that makes great architecture and the legitimate demand by the public to be part of the design process. **WILLIAM MENKING**



COURTESY KIERANTIMBERLAKE

Top: Photovoltaics create a slightly convex facade in KieranTimberlake's embassy design; bottom: Landscaped barriers act as ram deterrents.

LONDON FINE-TUNED continued from front page high design. “They continue to use this project as a test case for sorting that stuff out and to continue to achieve really high levels of refinement and design excellence,” concurred James Timberlake.

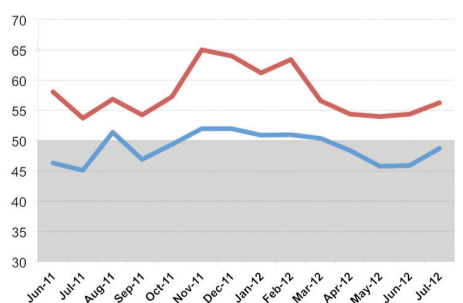
In a forerunner of efficient practices espoused by the policy, OBO sold their Saarinen-designed building in swanky Grosvenor Square, which in turn paid for the new building on the up-and-coming south side of the Thames. An OLIN-designed multi-leveled perimeter, reflecting ponds, and landscape barriers creates anti-ram deterrents that the OBO guidelines officially dub “Embassy Perimeter Improvement Concepts” or EPIC. “I wouldn't call them barriers,” said Timberlake, who noted that despite offset and security setback requirements, 40 percent of the compound remains accessible to pedestrian traffic. If anything, he said, many of the major refinements are through the building's engagement with landscape, including water management in ponds that collect runoff for irrigational reuse, as well as for security.

Certain technological advancements have insured that the highly efficient envelope incorporating photovoltaic technology will indeed go forward largely as planned. The rooftops of three entrance pavilions will also hold photovoltaic panels. But it is the envelope that has gone through the most rigorous analysis. An open outer structure, made of ETFE polymer with a fritted layer that includes 6-by-12 inch photovoltaic patches, acts as a shading element. Cast struts hold the cable-stayed system apart from the glass box, bowing slightly at the midsection, giving the building a slight protrusion, like a proud, swollen chest.

TOM STOELKERINDEX STILL IN NEGATIVE
TERRITORY BUT BOUNCING BACKBILLINGS
BEGINNING
REBOUND?

The AIA's monthly Architecture Billings Index (ABI) for July came in with a disappointing 48.7 (any score below 50 indicates a decline in billings for design activity). The news was not all bad though. The ABI was up significantly from last month's score of 45.9. “Even though architecture firm billings nationally were down again in July, the downturn moderated substantially,” said AIA Chief Economist Kermit Baker. “As long as overall economic conditions continue to show improvement, modest declines should shift over to growth in design activity over the coming months.”

At the regional level, the South, a region battered by the Great Recession, was the only area in positive territory, skyrocketing up to a score of 52.7 from the previous month's 47.6. The Midwest clocked in at 46.7, the West lagged with 45.3, and the Northeast continued its steady decline to 44.3, the lowest score for that region since February 2010. By sector, multi-family residential (51.4) outpaced mixed-practice (49.1), commercial/industrial (48.4), and institutional (46.6). Inquiries rebounded to 56.3, up from last month's 54.4. **ALAN G. BRAKE**



EAT MY DUST

Former *New York Times* architecture critic **Nicolai Ouroussoff** reemerged recently in an unexpected location: the pages of *Smithsonian* magazine, where Ouroussoff profiled **Rem Koolhaas** for the venerable publication. Those who read the piece online may not realize that Ouroussoff is one of the writers featured in *Smithsonian's* September issue, which marks the debut of the magazine's sleek redesign initiated by editor-in-chief **Michael Caruso**. "The main idea was to rev it up," Caruso told *Adweek* of his changes to the staid cover, layout, and contributor's list. *Smithsonian's* monthly print circulation has already risen under Caruso—it currently sits at 2.1 million, giving Ouroussoff's feature almost twice the reach that it would have had in the *Sunday Times*.

FINE FEATHERS?

Between glass curtain walls and art installations, birds just can't catch a break. For their Venice Architecture Biennale project *Pigeon Safari* Swiss artist **Julian Charrière** and German photographer **Julius von Bismark** captured, airbrushed, then released the pigeons of St. Mark's Square. The resulting rainbow-colored flock has caused Biennale-goers and tourists alike to do a double take. Charrière told the Italian newspaper *Corriere della Sera*, "Pigeons make up part of our urban landscape, but we view them as though they are an unrecognizable mass, whereas each one has its own identity." While a newly teal pigeon may imagine itself a peacock, conservationists expressed concern that the birds' unusual colors would deter mating.

SEND FOSSILS AND BIRDBATHS TO EAVESDROP@ARCHPAPER.COM

IT'S HIGH TIME FOR THE LOW LINE continued from front page abandoned trolley terminal that lies under Delancey Street on the Lower East Side, the Lowline is poised to be New York's most radical park project yet.

Here, remote skylights will not only transmit enough sunlight underground to see by, but enough to grow a wide variety of plants. "It was almost a philosophy on how you could get light down into places that wouldn't normally get it," said Ramsey. "When you start thinking about that you realize how much potential there would be for something that could bring natural daylight into dark spaces."

In March, Ramsey and the Lowline's co-founder, Dan Barasch, launched a Kickstarter campaign that raised \$155,000 to fund the development of the remote skylights and construct a fully functional life-size installation to show to the community and prove to the MTA that not only is their idea popular, but it's feasible as well. On September 13th, Ramsey, Barasch, and R. Boykin Curry IV, the project's first major donor, will present a "mini" Lowline, a 30-foot-by-30 foot-by-20-foot canopy and green space installed inside the Essex Street Market. The event will include Vin Cipolla, president of the Municipal Arts Society, Mark Wigley, dean of Columbia University's GSAPP, Scott Keough, president of Audi America, and John Alschuler, the chairman of the High Line, who will be announcing the results of the project's financial and engineering studies.

Edward Jacobs, a former high-performance motorcycle designer at Confederate Motors, who Ramsey describes as "a visionary and pretty much the most talented guy I've ever met," is overseeing the fabrication and installation of the canopy. In brief, Jacobs designed a system of 600 laser-cut hexagonal and triangular anodized aluminum panels that form a tessellated curve designed to reflect the light gathered by the remote skylights down into the underground space. Because the curved ceiling-scape is so specialized, no two panels are exactly alike. Each have slight differences in length or width that allow Jacobs to create a form that maximizes the reflectivity of the natural sunlight directed into the park—and he did it in less than two months.

The public will have its chance to swoon

at the installation in the two weeks following its unveiling. Then the hard work really begins. Apart from creating a convincing proposal for the MTA that outlines all aspects of the project and addresses their needs and concerns, Ramsey and Barasch must focus on fundraising, a task made somewhat less daunting by the project's widespread support as well as claims that the Lowline will require only a fraction of what the High Line cost to construct. State Senator Daniel Squadron, Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver, and Congresswoman Nydia Velasquez are all already singing the Lowline's praises, and even Turkey has expressed interest in a Lowline of their own.

Unlike the High Line, the Lowline isn't a long stretch of landscaped walkway, but a wide expanse the size of Gramercy Square Park. One of Ramsey's goals is to encourage the sense of discovery and exploration he feels when he visits his favorite part of Central Park, the seemingly uncared-for Ramble, which he calls "the beating heart of Central Park itself."

"You can walk through there and actually forage for strange, wild edibles," he gushed. "You get a little bit lost. You don't know what's around the corner or over the next hill. I think that it's one of the more successful landscape designs not only in the city, but in the world."

In tribute, Ramsey is designing a Ramble of his very own for the Lowline that will capitalize on the elements that drew him to subterranean Delancey Street in the first place. "We've got this found archeological space that no one knows about. There's this component of mystery to it that New York still *does* have all these secrets you can explore that you can't find on Yelp. Going down into [the Lowline] invokes that sense of discovery and mystery as well as this element of archeological adventure, like you're exploring a ruin. I want to capture the idea that you can explore not just horizontally but vertically. It should be a jungle gym for adults where you can do a little Rambling," said Ramsey, brimming with Olmstedian spirit. If everything goes according to plan, Ramsey estimates that the earliest possible date of completion is 2016. "That's a really ambitious date, but this project is really ambitious, and look how far we've come in a year." **PERRIN DRUMM**



> **THE ROUNDHOUSE AT BEACON FALLS**
2 East Main Street
Beacon, NY
Tel: 845-440-3327
Architect: Rockwell Group

Drive down Main Street in Beacon, NY, away from the train station for exactly one mile, past the Shangri-La nail salon, BJ's Chicken and Ribs and Augie's Texas Lunch, to the unassuming location of The Roundhouse at Beacon Falls, a new hotel and restaurant designed by David Rockwell.

Developed by Robert A. McAlpine, The Roundhouse is located in one of the city's few remaining historic industrial buildings, a renovated 200-year-old mill that once made industrial grade felt, fur hats, and lawnmowers. The site has prime views of the gentle falls on Fishkill Creek and Rockwell made sure to give diners an eyeful through the large windows in the restaurant, Swift. The hotel has 14 guest rooms in The Roundhouse and will be opening 42 more across the creek at The Mill in early 2013.

Original bricks have been salvaged for the exterior walls and rough wooden beams still support The Mill's roof. Look up in The Roundhouse and you'll see raw cement beams bearing marks of the original joinery, as well as panels of thick grey felt inset into the ceiling itself. Every interior design element—tables, chairs, lighting—is sourced from designers working no further than a mile or two around the site. McAlpine has even gone to the great trouble of restoring the turbine from the site's former hydroelectric plant, which will supply around 60 percent of the hotel's energy when it's completed. **PD**

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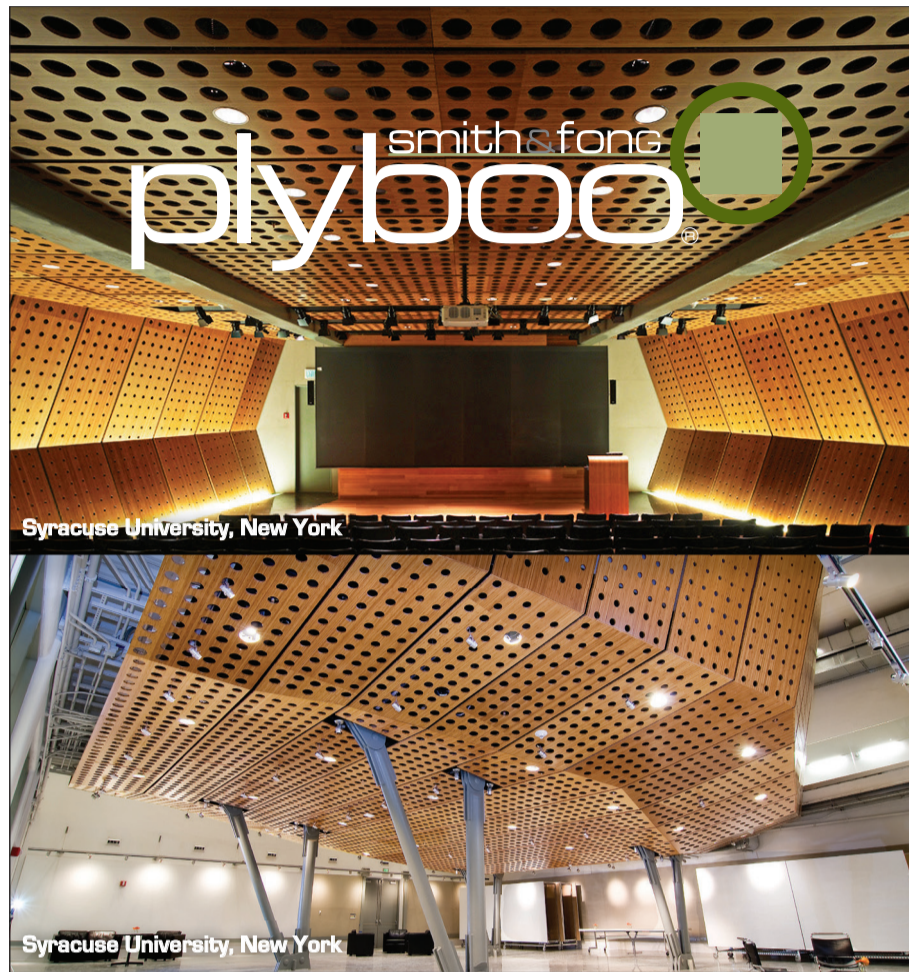
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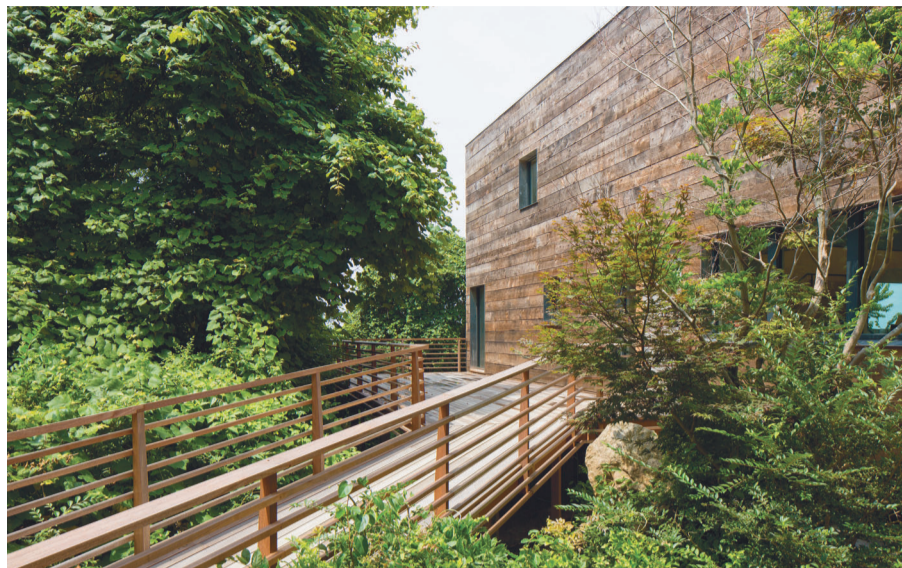
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TY COLE/OTTO

ACTIVELY PASSIVE
continued from front page

With its rough-hewn dark brown wood cladding, the studio does not advertise its high tech features. However it uses 90 percent less heating energy than does a typical house in this country. Compare that with the average house built to the U.S. Green Building Council's LEED rating system: Studies show that LEED-certified homes generally save less than 25 percent in heating energy over typical U.S. construction.

Lower energy bills are only one of the selling points of *Passivhaus*, or Passive House, construction, which is becoming widespread in German speaking countries and in Scandinavia. "The principal reason that people get these houses in Europe is that they are so incredibly comfortable," says the studio's architect, William Ryall, principal in Ryall Porter Sheridan Architects. "You have fresh air and humidity control all of the time and because of all the insulation, they are extraordinarily quiet in urban settings," says Ryall.

The fresh air in the artist studio comes from a compact energy recovery ventilator (ERV) made by Zehnder that is used in conjunction with a small split-system unit for heating and cooling. The ventilator changes the studio's air at the rate of 0.6 changes an hour by sucking outside air inside, filtering it and removing the humidity. In addition, the unit recovers heat from the interior air that is discharged in winter and it recovers cold from the air that is discharged in the summer.

The studio's key energy saving features include a highly airtight building envelope and super thick

walls, which help keep the building cool in the summer and reduce heat loads during winter. Ryall collaborated with building envelope consultant David White, of Right Environments, on the project. Orienting the building to maximize solar heat gain in the winter and reduce it in the summer is also a major part of the strategy.

The adjacent house, which was gutted and rebuilt using the same Passive House methods, achieved an extremely high degree of energy efficiency, but it does not qualify for Passive House certification largely due to solar heat gain from the expansive windows on its northern exposure, which were installed to capitalize on the stunning views of the Long Island Sound.

The artist studio cost about \$500 per square foot. Ryall says that much of the expense came from imported

Top to bottom: The building is oriented for maximum solar efficiency in all seasons; an energy recover ventilator (ERV) cools, heats and dehumidifies the interior; Passive House uses 90 percent less heating energy than the average U.S. house.

materials unavailable in the United States such as the insulated Pazen windows from Germany that come with an R-value, a measure of thermal resistance, close to 11.

It is challenging to attain Passive House certification, which evaluates a building holistically rather than on the basis of a point system such as the one used by LEED. "With LEED you could put in worse windows and make it up with a bicycle stand in the basement," Ryall says, "Here there is no room for negotiation—this is about absolute standards—how much energy is needed for the building." **ALEX ULAM**





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SOM WITH TISHMAN
AND DESIMONE

COURTESY SOM

Like many urban universities, The New School is without a campus in the traditional sense of the word. Rather, the school's many colleges are sprinkled throughout Greenwich Village and further afield across Manhattan in multiple buildings that have little relation to one another. To bring a sense of cohesion, The New School recently hired SOM to design a new facility to serve as a university center. Currently under construction on Fifth Avenue and 14th Street, the 364,000-square-foot, 16-story multi-use project includes a 700-seat auditorium, the main university library, lecture halls, classrooms, a 600-bed dormitory, and other critical amenities.

SOM worked diligently to arrange this varied program in a rational layout that would be intuitive to navigate, create spaces for random interaction between students and faculty, and comply with New York City's stringent code requirements, while at the same time earning a Gold rating under LEED 2012. The architects began by dividing the academic program from the dormitory apartments, placing the former in the building's first seven stories and basement and the latter in the upper eight stories. The two sections are joined in the middle by the library, which occupies floors six and seven

at a setback that further divides the building into a podium and tower. The fourth and fifth stories are entirely occupied by classrooms, while the third down to the basement levels accommodate the massive volume of the auditorium around which is arranged additional classrooms, the lecture hall, the cafeteria and café, as well as a faculty lounge and the building's lobby.

The trick to making a university center work in the middle of Manhattan, as more than one architect has learned in the past, is to develop a scheme for vertical circulation that creates a sense of community while still efficiently handling the deluge of traffic that occurs every time the bell rings and classrooms disgorge. SOM addressed this challenge deftly in the academic portion of the building by moving the stairs out from the core to the perimeter. On the building's three street faces—14th Street, 5th Avenue, and 13th Street—glass-clad stairs slash diagonally through the otherwise orthogonal elevation. On the exterior, the stairs animate the building, broadcasting this hive of activity onto the grand stage of urban theater. On the interior, the stairs descend through a series of interlocking double-height spaces, visually

orienting building users and furnishing large landings for congregation and serendipitous encounters.

Each of the stairs is actually two stairs, an open stair bundled with an enclosed fire stair running beneath. The fire stairs on the 14th Street and 13th Street faces link up with the traditional vertical fire stairs coming down from the dormitory, creating direct access to the street. The architects thought of this arrangement as analogous to a subway line, with the open stair acting as the local line and the fire stair providing express service out of the building. They also made ample use of fire-rated glass—120-minute walls and 90-minute doors—making the fire stairs visually display-worthy and reminding students that they are there to be used.

Moving the stairs to the perimeter gave rise to an innovative structural solution

that informed the design of the rest of the building. Working closely with construction company Tishman and engineers at DeSimone, SOM used a composite structural system of primarily poured-in-place concrete, with structural steel handling select tasks, including supporting the stairs. The team designed three diagonal perimeter trusses, built up of 12-inch-by-8-inch-by-5/8-inch horizontal HSS steel tubing and 8-inch-by-8-inch-by-3/8-inch vertical HSS steel tubing, from which the stairs are cantilevered into the building. This solution allowed the stairs to flow through the interior without creating a sea of columns that would disrupt the double-height spaces. Lateral bracing was similarly moved to the perimeter, removing the need for concrete shear walls in the core and opening up more interior space for flexible

programming. The other task handled by structural steel is transferring the load of the column grid 80 feet over the auditorium, a job done by four massive steel trusses, 9 feet, 8 inches in depth and built up of jumbo sections.

The center's facade is only 30 percent glass, in keeping with LEED 2012 Gold rating requirements. In the classrooms, windows are arranged in two horizontal bands, one for vision, the other a clerestory with a light shelf that bounces daylight onto the ceiling. Limiting the amount of glass also allowed the architects to select a clear product with minimum low-e coating, creating an unfiltered experience of natural light uncommon in contemporary buildings. The rest of the facade is a rain screen system made of Muntz metal—a sort of brass containing about 60 percent copper and 40 percent zinc. Cheaper than

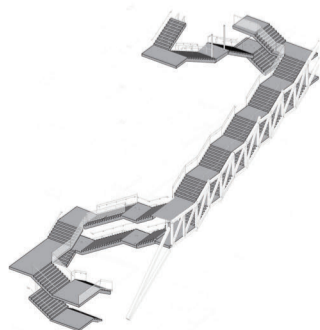
SOM located tandem pairs of processional and fire stairs on the University Center's street faces. Clad in glass, they slash diagonally through the Muntz metal curtain wall, animating the building on the exterior and providing intuitive vertical circulation on the interior.

copper, Muntz is extremely corrosion resistant and, pre-patinated, it has a mottled dark brown appearance that helps the building blend in with the brick that predominates in Greenwich Village.

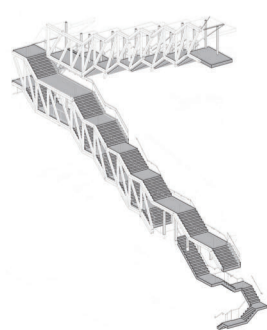
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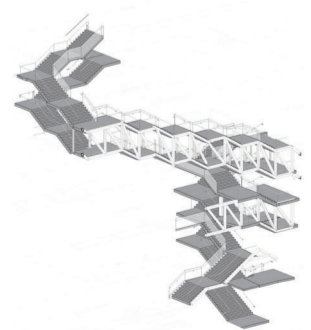
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14th STREET



5th AVENUE



13th STREET



A neglected median on 11th Avenue would be part of a Neighborhood Improvement District.

AN/STOELKER

FRIENDS OF HUDSON RIVER PARK PUSHING FOR NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

HUDSON CALLING

Over the summer, Friends of Hudson River Park (FOHRP) began community outreach to establish a Neighborhood Improvement District intended to help pay for maintenance at the beleaguered park. The FOHRP plan includes a tax for nearby residences and businesses located from the waterfront to approximately two blocks inland, from Chambers Street to 59th Street. The proposed district is the latest of several attempts to secure new funding sources for the much-used park.

Of New York's 33 Business Improvement Districts (BID) 13 include residential areas, but commercial businesses foot most of the bill. The proposed plan for the Neighborhood Improvement District would be the first improvement district that would require payments from residents as well. Residents would be charged about 7.5 cents per square foot, meaning that a snug West Village condo measuring 500 square feet will pay \$37.50 per year.

The park's financial troubles began rearing their head as another park, the High Line, also running parallel to the river, was stealing hearts and minds—and gathering the attention of donors—up and down the West Side. Hudson River Park Trust, the entity that runs the park, cast an envious eye on the High Line's flush public/private model, so much so that they went to the State Legislature to loosen up the trust's charter to make ends meet. As with so many of the city's newer parks, Hudson River Park is required to be self-sustaining. But unlike most recent high-profile new parks, the trust's charter strictly limits development. Meanwhile, the largest commercial operation intended to generate cash for the park, Chelsea Piers, is locked in legal battle with the state over maintenance and repair funding worth about \$37.5 million.

The changes introduced in the legislature might have allowed a residential or hotel complex to rise on Pier 40, among other provisions, but it was defeated in the State Assembly in July. There is slim possibility that the measure may be taken up again in December, but administrators at FOHRP aren't counting on any single silver bullet to save the day. The Neighborhood

Improvement District is one of many efforts, including philanthropy.

Several other charter arrangements intended to generate funding are being contested. The state has also backed away from their responsibility of maintaining the median that runs down the middle of the West Side Highway. The once lush plantings are now choked with weeds. The state wants to hand maintenance of the medians over to the city. The city's position is that the state must complete the road (Interstate 9A) before the city's Department of Transportation can take over. In the past, FOHRP maintained the medians under contract from the state. The trust is prohibited from spending money outside park boundaries, so it falls to FOHRP to raise the cash to spruce up what is essentially their front lawn. "I'm sure the state would be happy for any private funding sources," said A.J. Pietrantone, FOHRP's executive director.

Another income source that never found its way to the park was the balance from a 15 percent fee once charged to incoming cruise ships. Whatever leftover money not used for pier improvements was supposed to go back to park maintenance. But most of that money went to maintaining the cruise ship piers and the portion for the park was never allocated. "There was nothing left over and that has to be clarified," said David Gruber, chair of Community Board 2. Gruber said that the pier fees along the Hudson should also be reexamined as income for the park.

FOHRP continues to work with the trust to amend the act, attract donors, and will reach out to the three community boards that boarder the park throughout the fall to build support for the Neighborhood Improvement District. "The proposal can't go forward if there isn't any support," Pietrantone said.

So far the reaction has been somewhat muted, though major commercial interests are lined up behind the proposal, with representatives from the Durst Organization, Tishman Speyer, REBNY, and Two Trees sitting on the FOHRP steering committee. Gruber thinks the tax can be justified easily. "It's a dinner out," he said of the cost.

TS

LAWN AND ORDER



Colleges today are rethinking not only the structure of their curriculum, but also that of their classrooms. With **John Jay College of Criminal Justice** outgrowing its widely scattered facilities, school officials asked **Skidmore, Owings & Merrill** to design a new vertical campus consolidating all social and academic functions, including a **65,000-square-foot roof terrace**, within a single city block. Using steel girders to span a network of Amtrak tunnels running beneath the prominent Midtown site made the design possible. Now, John Jay students are better able to collaborate across disciplines and enhance their legal research—proving it's easy to build a case for choosing structural steel.

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Outdoor furniture fashionably tailored to work outside and in.
By Perrin Drumm

1 NEST DE LA ESPADA

Made of high-density fiberboard (HDF), the unique slatted hood of this lounge highlights Autoban, an Istanbul-based design firm's modern take on traditional Turkish weaving. Built by De La Espada, Nest can be used alone or in a group to make a statement without overstating. delaespada.com

2 URCHIN POUF & FLAX OTTOMAN THOMAS EYCK

Sourcing raw and local materials is a major part of Christien Meindertsma's practice—as well as the subject of her recent TED Talk. For these two casual seating options she went out of her way to use flax grown locally in the Netherlands. thomaseyck.com

3 NESTREST DEDON

Sit it on the ground or hang it from a tree branch, Daniel Pouzet and Frad Frety's Nestrest makes for an elegant perch. Woven with supersized strands of an especially strong fiber that's 4 centimeters wide, Nestrest can support a full brood. dedon.de

4 DINING TABLE 00219 USONA

Shown here in tinted black oak, this open weave table base also comes in natural and birch. Like all of Usona's products, it's made to order and can be customized in a variety of sizes, finishes, and materials. usonahome.com

5 CORACLE MATTER

Inspired by the small, woven half-shell coracle boats used in Wales since the Bronze Age, Benjamin Hubert updated the traditional vessel with a lounge chair made with a basket seat made from automotive suede and a steel frame wrapped in a suede tri-weave recalling bicycle handlebars. mattermatters.com

6 SPOOL RODA

Rodolfo Dordoni's Spool collection is, as the name suggests, inspired by weaving spools. The varnished stainless steel frame stands up to all weather conditions and the backrest is wrapped with double-polyester twisted thread to provide flexibility and durability. rodaonline.com



COURTESY AKRIDGE, SBA

CAP-ITAL IMPROVEMENTS continued from front page scale, to New York City's Hudson Yards project, can muster the political will at the federal level. Union Station is owned and operated by the United States government. But despite high-speed trains and mass transit becoming a political football in states like Florida, Ohio, and Wisconsin—and even New Jersey—most agree that the Northeast corridor is at capacity and needs expansion. "It serves as the only existing high-speed rail, and people on both sides of the aisle believe in that for the Northeast corridor, whether you're from California or Florida," said Akridge vice president of development David Tuchmann.

As the southern anchor to the corridor, Union Station's significance goes beyond its importance as a hub (D.C. train delays ripple as far north as Boston). The project is a key component of a \$151 billion investment to region's rails and stations to be completed over the next several decades. The proposed renovation was framed as a "Gateway Project" in an updated masterplan for the region released earlier this month. And unlike the oft-delayed Moynihan Station in New York, Union sits literally within view of the legislators on the Hill. "We like our prospects here," said Bob LaCroix, Amtrak's senior director for business and high-speed rail development. "Through this process, a bunch of players from the city, Maryland, Virginia, and the federal government generated a consensus that this is the vision that we all need to heed."

While the project holds regional as well as national significance, it breaks down into a very urban plan, integrating long-divided D.C. neighborhoods and incorporating the capital's bicycle network. As Union Station was built on landfill, the terrain to the east and the west of the station slopes down beside the tracks, with the rail lines shored

up with a giant stone wall, affectionately referred to as the Burnham Wall, for architect Daniel Burnham, the station's original architect.

The station's new masterplan, engineered by Parsons Brinckerhoff and designed with HOK, maintains the integrity of the terrain and track levels while burrowing east-west passageways beneath the tracks and creating a north-south corridor above them. Side-street entryways will be cut into the Burnham Wall to allow pedestrians to cross between neighborhoods. Escalators from the passageways will take visitors up onto the developer's new deck, where Akridge hopes to build a multiuse neighborhood. The H Street Bridge will meet the platform above the tracks, transforming the now-desolate overpass into a main street, as well as home to the station's new north entrance.

The undulating green rooftops of the entrance recall the individual tracks below and dispel the impression that the north entrance is a back door. "We wanted to design a train shed that supports movement and a vegetative roof that you can see from the street," said Bill Hellmuth, president and design chief of HOK. Hellmuth noted that the overall design underscores the inherent sustainability of mass transit.

Clearly, the developers, architects, and planners kept a keen eye on recent developments in New York. The project's expansive integration of public space recalls Hudson Yards, but without the developer's massive floor-area payoff hovering some 40 stories above the site. The buildings maintain D.C.'s 1910 height limit, making the public space seem that much more generous. Instead of gobbling up every square foot, the north-south promenade becomes a symbolic, if not literal, extension of the L'Enfant plan, reclaiming for Delaware Avenue a bit of what the railways gobbled up a century ago. But perhaps the most generous aspect of the plan occurs on the west side of the site, where the new buildings atop the platform step back to make way for another promenade on the Burnham Wall. This High Line-esque gesture incorporates an existing city greenway, bike path, and pedestrian walkway. The gentle arc begins nearly a mile north of the project and culminates at the recently restored Columbus Circle in front of Daniel Burnham's 1908 masterpiece. **TS**

AT DEADLINE

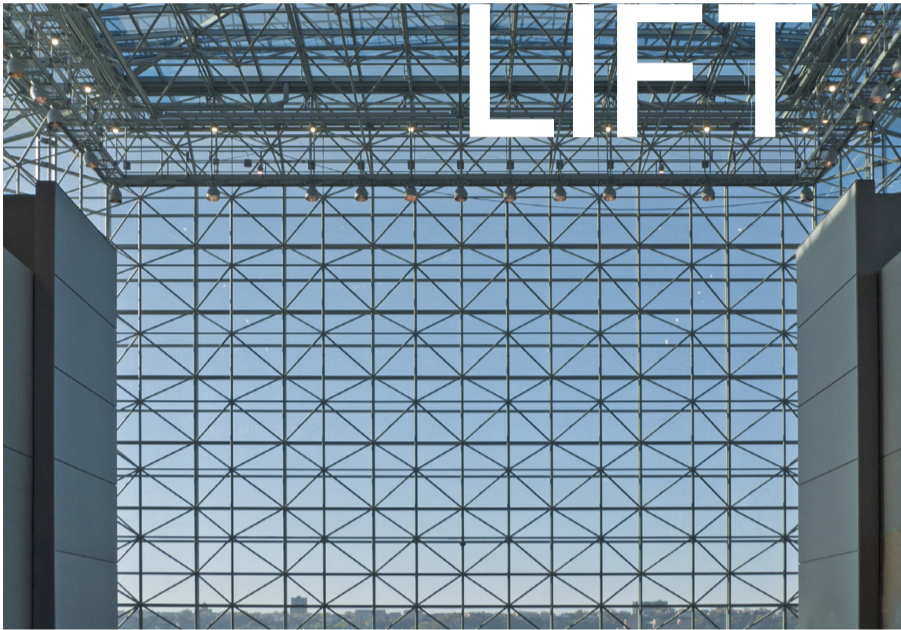
AFTER HOURS, SOHO WEST

Community Board 2's September 6 town hall meeting will focus on Hudson Square. The little-known moniker was bestowed on the old printing district by Trinity Church, the neighborhood's major landholder for the past three centuries. Situated south of Houston, north of Canal, east of the Hudson, and west of Sixth Avenue, the warehouse-filled area has always been thought of as the workaday offshoot of SoHo. Not anymore. On August 20 City Planning certified a rezoning proposal, pushed by Trinity's real estate arm, that would allow for a multi-use residential complex designed by SHoP to rise at Sixth Avenue just north of Canal. Other major players in the area include Extell and Edison, with Edison already gearing up for 230-unit residential tower on Dominick Street. With a daytime workforce of 50,000 that dwindles to a mere 2,000 residents each weeknight, the area's rezoning could transform the area into a loft-lovers paradise.

SPURA'S MOMENT

On August 22 City Planning approved the planned 1.65 million-square-foot redevelopment of two blocks of the Lower East Side. The Seward Park Urban Renewal Area (SPURA) is a Moses-era slum clearance project that has stood vacant since the 1960s. The redevelopment would include 900 apartments, 500 of which would be designated as permanently affordable housing, as well as retail, community, and green spaces. The plan now needs approval from City Council to proceed.

SPACE



Since its construction in 1982, the **Jacob K. Javits Center** has been one of the world's leading examples of space-frame design. But the **I.M. Pei & Partners**-designed exhibit space needed updating to put its best face forward for the 3.5 million visitors it receives each year. So owners engaged **Epstein Global** and **FXFowle Architects**, who developed the recladding program that is dramatically increasing the building's transparency and energy efficiency. Targeting LEED Silver with a glazing system that will enable the building to exceed energy code requirements by 25 percent, the new face of Javits proves that being old doesn't have to mean retiring.

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THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER SEPTEMBER 5, 2012

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Sculpture: Gyre, Thomas H. Sayre, N.C. Museum of Art

FIRST ROUND OF DATA ON BUILDING ENERGY CONSUMPTION IS IN NUMBERS CRUNCH

Last month, one of the major measuring devices of the master plan PlaNYC yielded its first set of data. The Local Law 84 benchmarking ordinance was pegged to a suite of laws operating under the catchier banner of the Greener, Greater Buildings Plan (GGBP). The ordinance required all New York City buildings over 50,000 square feet to report energy consumption. With more than 75 percent compliance, the first report was able to cull information from more than 1.7 billion square feet, making it the largest data collection of its kind for a single jurisdiction.

While a single year's worth of information isn't enough to track trends, it does provide a few surprising revelations. For example, one particular finding showed that early 20th-century buildings tend to be more efficient than later generations. The report gives the credit to smaller floor plates, efficient envelopes, and smaller ventilation systems. But the report was careful to make the pro-development observation that the energy "measurement per square foot does not necessarily reflect efficiency in terms of energy per unit of economic activity happening in buildings."

Despite the very positive participation numbers, there are a few kinks that have yet to be ironed out. The Environmental Protection Agency's Portfolio Manager, the benchmarking tool used to collect the data, should be able to flag obvious mistakes, like a building square footage entry of zero, but it can't. Also, building owners often entered square footage based on information they gave to the Department of Finance, meaning they entered square footage for space that had taxable revenue and left out the square footage for space that wasn't rented.

Nevertheless, spotting mistakes will help fine tune the process for the years to come when the data becomes even richer, and not just because there will be several years of benchmarking under the city's belt. Other laws in the suite mandate audits and require retrofits. Information from auditors will add detail, such as whether a building has punched windows or a curtain wall. "Within two to three years we're going to have a really nuanced data set," said Laurie Kerr, a senior policy advisor to the mayor. "We'll be able to see if buildings are changing."

The U.S. Department of Energy is also working with the city to incorporate the information into a national database. Austin, Seattle, Philadelphia, San Francisco, and Washington, D.C. have all recently adopted benchmarking laws. The data will allow decision makers to compare policy and results.

Buildings that are less than 50,000 square feet may also find their way into the mix. Though Kerr acknowledged that smaller building owners might not have the resources to track data, the city is looking at a less demanding program, perhaps a point-of-sale ordinance rather than an annual requirement.

Though some of the GGBP laws dictate specific retrofits, the main thrust of the suite is to provide building owners with information—as well as tax incentives—to make their buildings more energy efficient, which in the long run will save money. "Information drives change," Kerr said, repeating a Bloomberg mantra. "Providing building owners with information should cause them to make the right decisions." **TS**

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THE GATEKEEPERS

Whether a high-profile memorial or small museum addition, institutions have become increasingly cautious when it comes time to identify the right architect for the job. Stepping in to guide and shape the process is an expanding corps of elite advisors. **Jonathan Lerner** profiles today's top consultants and finds out what an architect needs to do to catch their eye—and get the job.



Choosing the design for a major commission is complicated under the best of circumstances: Emotions run high, costs can spiral, stakeholders proliferate, and that's all before the public weighs in.

When the curving walkway and wind-chime tower of Paul Murdoch Architects' plan for the Flight 93 Memorial in Pennsylvania was revealed in 2005 following a competition that attracted over 1,000 entries by both professionals and amateurs, it was rabidly denounced as an Islamic crescent and minaret. In his current proposal for the Eisenhower Memorial in Washington, D.C., Frank Gehry's 80-foot-high metal tapestries, with imagery best viewed from passing cars, are provoking similarly intense outrage. Negative public response—here focusing on the opacity of the process that zeroed in on Gehry, arguably the world's most renowned architect, from an invitation-only list of just 44 contenders—is just one hazard a choice of design and designer can pose. No wonder those who commission architects often look for help to guide the selection process.

Increasingly, it is specialized consultants who help clients—and architects—navigate the selection process. These facilitators may be little known, and often keep themselves deliberately in the background, but they play a significant role in directing, and even shaping, many large commissions. What do these gatekeepers say about the choices that arise, the contributions they make, and what you have to do to be in the running?

Though many are trained architects, they tend to have pursued careers as academics, editors or writers instead and are among the usual suspects on prize and commission juries. Thus they gain familiarity with many practitioners. That's certainly true of Reed Kroloff, former editor-in-chief of *Architecture* magazine, principal of Jones/Kroloff Design Services and director of the Cranbrook Academy of Art. He sees his consultant role as helping "ensure that better architecture results," and helping clients "learn about architects, planners, landscape architects, and designers that they might not know about." His typical engagement with a client runs from program development to selection of the designer.

Karen Stein, whose primary experience is as a writer and editor, prefers to stay with a project longer. "It's not just about anointing someone, although who designs the project is a central decision. It's also about understanding what the client's responsibilities are and how the process will unfold." She defines herself as "an advocate that makes sure that dialogue is as constructive as possible."

A central issue consultants advise on is the type of search. Kroloff said, "Some clients are working on projects that are very much in the public arena, some very much not. There are different strategies for each type. An open competition is more appropriate for large-scale public projects." The openness can help elicit public buy-in, and raise a project's profile, becoming a marketing tool for the institution and its new building, explained Kroloff. "But you can have a competition between two or three people for a private commission. We would never urge one methodology over another without first assessing with the client their goals and intentions."

Stanley Collyer has a journalism background and has consulted on only a few selections, but has edited *Competitions* since 1990. He favors open competitions especially for potentially touchy projects like memorials. Those for the Vietnam Veterans Memorial and the Flight 93 Memorial, he said, were "very well run and came out with a good result," in contrast to the much-disdained selection process used for the Eisenhower Memorial. "Why wouldn't you do everything like that?"

But not all agree. "I worry about the long range effects of the public being too involved in a matter that they're not equipped to deal with," countered Bill Lacy, former executive director of the Pritzker Prize, who founded a selection consultancy in 1988 after having overseen many competitions as director of the National Endowment for the Arts' architecture and environmental arts program. He argues that an invited competition with "a jury that's put together thoughtfully" runs less risk of ending up with a problematic winning design. And he goes further: "I prefer by far the process of going to see the work" with a client who is knowledgeable about design and empowered to make a choice, holding no



COURTESY ANDRADE MORETTIN ARCHITECTS



COURTESY FRANK O. GEHRY ARCHITECTS

Opposite page, top: At the United 93 Memorial in Shanksville, Pennsylvania, Paul Murdoch Associates'

design includes a wall inscribed with the names of victims; **Bottom:** the entry gate to the memorial site.

This page, top: Andrade Morettin Architects' design for the Instituto Moreira Salles museum in Sao Paulo;

Bottom: the controversial Eisenhower Memorial proposal designed by Frank O. Gehry.



Just winning a competition can be a boost for architects, even if the projects are never realized, such as the unbuilt extension of the Weston Performing Art Center in Connecticut by ARO.

COURTESY ARO

competition at all. Lacy has been doing just that with the CEO of pharmaceuticals giant Novartis for its campuses in Switzerland and New Jersey, tapping Gehry, Chipperfield, Ando, Koolhaas, and other architects, both famous and less so.

Whether open or invited, “having a design competition can enlighten the client, and present a series of options that might not otherwise have been considered,” Kroloff said. “We try and structure our competitions to help our client understand how the designers are thinking, not so much to find a specific solution for that project.”

Establishing a process that mirrors the core values of the institution is a growing trend. Stein is working with a foundation in Sao Paulo dedicated to showcasing Brazilian arts that needed a museum building. There, the process itself illustrates the client’s mission. They decided to “do the architectural search in a way similar to how the foun-

dation runs itself,” she said. “I spent a lot of time interviewing younger Brazilian architects and then we had an invited competition, and chose a firm that’s not well known.” Andrade Morettin Arquitetos had won numerous ideas and design competitions, but their built portfolio was small, mainly residential with a few institutional projects. Stein’s process also defused a legitimate fear clients can have, that less experienced firms might prove unable to deliver. “That was the advantage of me going in advance to all the offices. You had some confidence that the participants in the competition had the ability to actually do the project,” Stein said.

Vetting candidate firms for the competence to fulfill the commissions is an essential part of the consultant’s job. Donald Stastny, author of the General Service Administration’s *Design Excellence Program Guide*, has managed major open

competitions, including for the Flight 93 Memorial. “We put into the process that after the finalists were selected, if they didn’t have the capacity to complete the project, they would engage a team that did,” he said. Thus Paul Murdoch brought in experienced landscape architect Warren Byrd from Nelson Byrd Woltz for the memorial to develop the concept and give it a more coherent landscape presence. Stastny indicates that qualifications-based selection processes are more appropriate for “very complex projects. You have to have people who can take on that complexity.”

The cost to a client of hiring a consultant to run a competition or a search can vary enormously. “There’s no set rate,” said Collyer. “If they’re helping out with the program and the jury and more or less coordinating the competition you’d probably have to start with around \$20,000. But for some of these

GSA competitions I’m sure it runs into maybe \$50,000 or \$100,000. Those programs tend to get pretty detailed because they’re so budget conscious.”

Can younger and smaller firms get considered for invited competitions or qualifications-based searches? Several consultants suggest that, when restricting searches to boldface-name firms, clients may shortchange themselves; the work may be handed off to second-tier teams while the principals handle sexier projects.

David Resnicow, principal of Resnicow Schroeder, which consults mainly with arts institutions on strategic planning, is also noticing “greater concern on the part of institutions about hiring a starchitect. A lot of trustees feel that it means having added cost, and dealing with a prima donna. I do see interest in working with younger firms, and in urban context and planning” as opposed to heroic structures.

This trend away from grandiosity may get a push forward by the recent University of Chicago report, *Set in Stone*, which found that many organizations had undertaken expensive, high-profile building projects only to find themselves unable to pay for and sustain them.

“We seek out emerging practices on a regular basis,” said Kroloff, “and bring those forward to clients” when the fit seems promising. He named several once relatively unknown firms he has included in searches, including SHoP and Architecture Research Office (ARO). “We won two projects that [Jones/Kroloff] ran,” said ARO principal Stephen Cassell. “Neither ended up going forward,” but the resulting attention was a boost, “without question.”

Open, anonymous competitions give smaller firms a chance. But in preparing submissions Stastny urges entrants to consider “a jury walking into a room with 600 entries. You have to have something that’s engaging, that’s easy to get at. A juror may be looking, on his first run-through, only 30 seconds or a minute at each one. A jury will bring it down very quickly to those they understand.”

“Firms need to find a way to speak about their work that stays away from encoded architectural jargon. Understand your audience. Sell to their needs and interests and in their language,” said Resnicow. “I have found the websites of firms to be

overloaded and some even difficult to read—literally read—and navigate.”

“Competitions take a lot of thought and work,” said Stein. “Younger firms who haven’t done it before might not have had the chance to see what works well. But sometimes just experiencing going through the process can be a great advantage.”

Architect Ira Keer, of Minneapolis design collaborative what!worx would concur. They won a design competition for infill housing, along with first crack at negotiating to develop it. It was an open competition, but personal connection played a role: Keer wasn’t aware of it until urged to enter by its managing consultant, a former classmate. Recession—and a tornado that blasted the neighborhood—derailed the project. Still, it brought “quite a bit of notoriety,” including an exhibition and numerous articles.

So being known, or known about, by the gatekeepers is crucial. Although he is constantly on the look out, Kroloff also urges younger firms to approach him cold. “Invite us for a site visit. Send a portfolio,” he suggested. ARO has a high profile now, and “a lot of times we don’t know who puts us on a list,” said Cassell. In the competition’s game, knowing the key players makes all the difference. **JONATHAN LERNER IS A NEW YORK-BASED WRITER AND COMMUNICATIONS CONSULTANT.**

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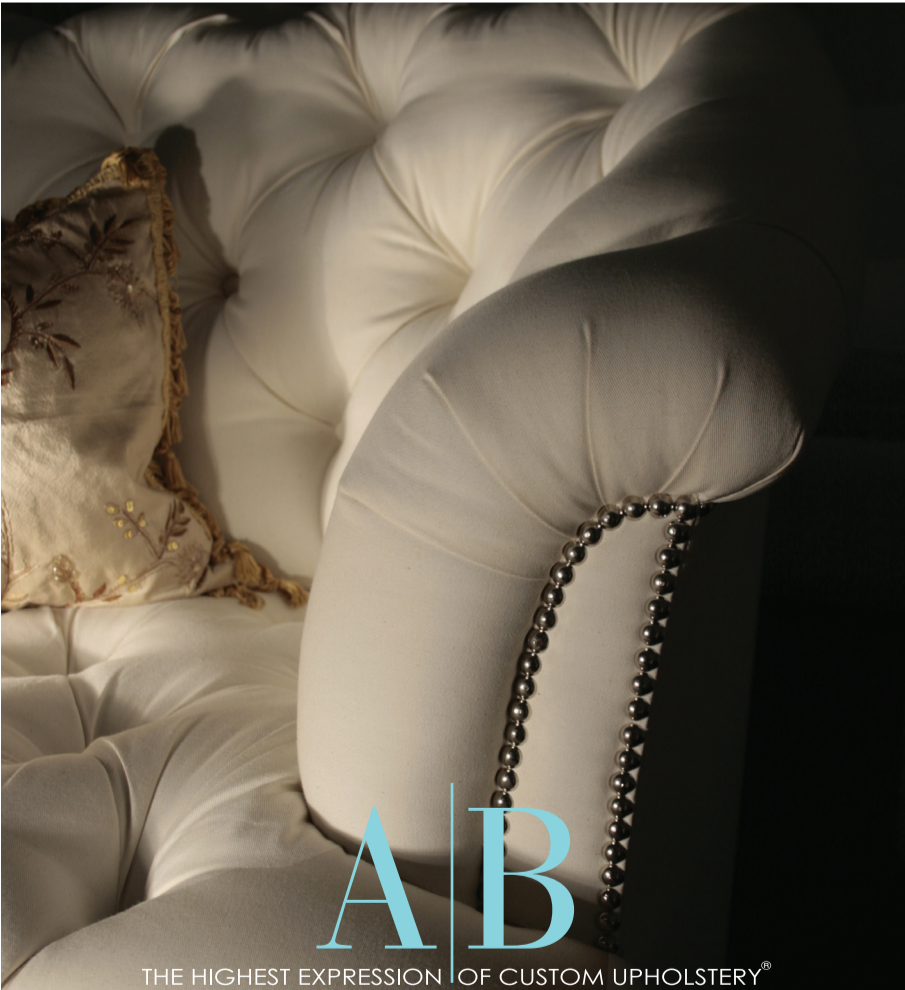
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SEPTEMBER

WEDNESDAY 5

LECTURES

Big City Adventures in Building Science: Materials—What Works and What Doesn't
8:00 a.m.
Center for Architecture
536 LaGuardia Pl.
cfa.aiany.org

Evening of Learning: Energy Efficiency in Historic Buildings
4:00 p.m.
Preservation Alliance of Greater Philadelphia
1616 Walnut St.
Philadelphia, PA
preservationalliance.com

EXHIBITION OPENING

Gerhard Friedl and Laura Horelli: Shedding Details
6:00 p.m.
MINI/Goethe-Institute
Curatorial Residencies
Ludlow 38
38 Ludlow St.
goeth.de

EVENT

Connected Designers Roundtable
6:00 p.m.
Oficio
30 Newbury St.
Boston, MA
boston.aiga.org

THURSDAY 6

LECTURES

Trade Press: An Evolving Role (Architecture and the Media #3)
6:00 p.m.
Center for Architecture
536 LaGuardia Pl.
cfa.aiany.org

Amale Andraos and Dan Wood Nature-City
6:30 p.m.
Yale School of Architecture
Paul Rudolph Hall
180 York St.
New Haven, CT
architecture.yale.edu

Charles D. Warren Saving the Lions' Cage: NYPL's Multi-Story Stacks
6:30 p.m.
The Skyscraper Museum
39 Battery Pl.
skyscraper.org

EXHIBITION OPENING Beyond Zuccotti Park
The Center for Architecture
536 LaGuardia Pl.
cfa.aiany.org

TOURS

Mill Tour: Amoskeag Woodworking, Inc.
2:00 p.m.
293 Fletcher Rd.
Fairfax, VT
aiavt.org

Behind the Scenes Tour with the New Hampshire Furniture Masters
5:30 p.m.
New Hampshire Historical Society
30 Park St., Concord, NH
aianh.org

FRIDAY 7

LECTURE

Johanna Drucker Speaking Signs: Writing on the Urban Landscape
7:00 p.m.
Load of Fun
120 West North Ave.
Baltimore, MD
baltimore.aiga.org

EXHIBITION OPENING

Doris Duke's Shangri La: Architecture, Landscape, and Islamic Art
Museum of Art and Design
2 Columbus Circle
madmuseum.org

SATURDAY 8

EXHIBITION OPENING

Gesture: Judith Godwin and Abstract Expressionism
Virginia Museum of Fine Arts
200 North Blvd.
Richmond, VA
vmfa.state.va.us

CONFERENCE

Comradely Objects: Art Against Reification
12:00 p.m.
Theresa Lang Community and Student Center
Arnhold Hall
55 West 13th St.
newschool.edu

TOURS

NYC's Civic Center
10:30 a.m.
Meets at the Fountain in City Hall Park
cfa.aiany.org

Urban Garden Guided Tour

3:00 p.m.
Brooklyn Botanic Garden
150 Eastern Pkwy.
Brooklyn, NY
bbg.org

WITH THE KIDS

Family Fun Saturday: Making Your Mark
10:30 a.m.
North Carolina Museum of Art
2110 Blue Ridge Rd.
Raleigh, NC
ncartmuseum.org

Family Program: Living and Working in the Sky
10:30 a.m.
The Skyscraper Museum
39 Battery Pl.
skyscraper.org

FamilyDay@theCenter: Urban Moves

11:00 a.m.
Center for Architecture
536 LaGuardia Pl.
cfa.aiany.org

SUNDAY 9

EXHIBITION OPENING

The Drawing Lesson
6:00 p.m.
On Stellar Rays
133 Orchard St.
onstellarrays.com

LECTURE

Kristina Wilson Josiah McElheny: Some Pictures of the Infinite
The Institute of Contemporary Art
100 Northern Ave.
Boston, MA
icaboston.org

MONDAY 10

LECTURE

Oculus Book Talk: Beyond Zuccotti Park
6:00 p.m.
Center for Architecture
536 LaGuardia Pl.
cfa.aiany.org

SYMPOSIUM

Collaborative Project Delivery—A Responsible Approach for the Design and Construction Industry
3:30 p.m.
Center For Architecture
1218 Arch St.
Philadelphia, PA
aiaphiladelphia.org

WEDNESDAY 12

LECTURES

Donna Farrugia Creative Team of the Future
11:00 a.m.
Hudson Grille Midtown
942 Peachtree St.
Atlanta, GA
aiga-al.org

Michael Bierut and Massimo Vignelli with Beatriz Cifuentes and Yoshi Waterhouse Mapping Vignelli
6:00 p.m.
New York Transit Museum
Boerum Pl. and Schermerhorn St.,
Brooklyn, NY
mta.info/mta/museum/

SYMPOSIUM

Breathing Freely: Natural Ventilation in Tall Buildings—Case Study of Manitoba Hydro Place
6:00 p.m.
Center for Architecture
536 LaGuardia Pl.
cfa.aiany.org

EXHIBITION OPENING

The Critical Moment: Architecture in the Expanded Field MArch II Advanced Design Studio
6:30 p.m.
The Cooper Union
7 East 7th St.
cooper.edu

Immensity + Intimacy: Brooklyn Bridge Park
7:00 p.m.
Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates
16 Court St.
Brooklyn, NY
vanalen.org

THURSDAY 13

SYMPOSIUM

Obsess, Create, and Repeat: Obsession and the Creative Process
7:00 p.m.
The Whitney Museum of American Art
945 Madison Ave.
whitney.org

EXHIBITION OPENING BUILDING

Nicole Klagsbrun Gallery
532 West 24th St.
nicoleklagsbrun.com

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EVENT

AEC-NYC Professionals Circle Meeting
6:00 pm
GE Monogram Design Center
A&D Building
150 East 58th St.
adbldg.com

The Green-Wood Historic Fund Honors Nicholas Quenell Award-Winning Landscape Architect
6:00 p.m.
Green-Wood Cemetary
25th St. at 5th Ave.
Brooklyn, NY
green-wood.com

FRIDAY 14

LECTURE

Chris O'Dea The Evolution of Radiant Heating
12:30 p.m.
AIA Connecticut
370 James St.
New Haven, CT
aiact.org

EVENT

AIARI Presents Frank Costantino Sketching Workshop
Through September 16th
Location TBA
aia-ri.com

SATURDAY 15

SYMPOSIUM

Wendy Ashmore, David Carrasco et. al. The World Around Them: How Pre-Columbian Societies Created Their Cultural Landscapes
9:00 a.m.
U.S. Navy Memorial and Naval Heritage Center
701 Pennsylvania Ave. NW
Washington, D.C.
pcswdc.org

TOUR

Livable Neighborhoods Series: Progressive-Era Public Schools on the Lower East Side
11:00 a.m.
Manhattan
Specific location available upon purchase of ticket
cfa.aiany.org

TUESDAY 18

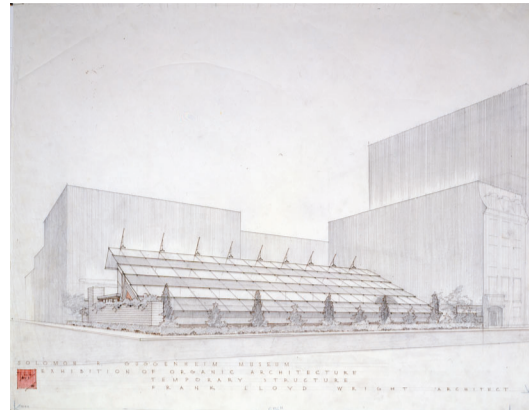
EXHIBITION OPENING

Foundation Faculty Exhibition
4:00 p.m.
Rubelle & Norman Schaffer Gallery
Pratt University
200 Willoughby Ave.
Brooklyn, NY
pratt.edu

TOUR

Gensler Atlanta
2:00 p.m.
999 Peachtree St.
Atlanta, GA
aiaatl.org

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COURTESY GUGGENHEIM/FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT FOUNDATION

A LONG-AWAITED TRIBUTE: FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT'S USONIAN HOUSE AND PAVILION
Guggenheim Museum
1071 Fifth Avenue
Through February 13, 2012

In the years just before Frank Lloyd Wright's Guggenheim Museum forever altered the face Fifth Avenue, the directors of the museum went on a charm offensive. In 1953, they presented the exhibition *Sixty Years of Living Architecture: The Work of Frank Lloyd Wright*. The show introduced Wright's Usonian House to New Yorkers by building the Prairie-style home on the construction site of where the architect's tour de force museum would soon rise. Now through February 13 the museum presents a scaled-down version of the exhibition, which originally included the Usonian and a dramatic Wright-designed pavilion holding models, drawings, and watercolors by the master. This exhibition, *A Long-Awaited Tribute: Frank Lloyd Wright's Usonian House and Pavilion*, celebrates the two structures that won over a somewhat skeptical New York audience to the work of America's modern master.



COURTESY MCNY

FROM FARM TO CITY: STATEN ISLAND 1616-2012
Museum of the City of New York
1220 Fifth Avenue
September 13 to January 21

From Farm to City: Staten Island 1616-2012 explores the history, evolution, and future of New York's often overlooked fifth borough. The island has served as the city's breadbasket, a pastoral escape for the city's elite, an industrial center, an international port, and a toehold for new immigrant communities. Divided into four sections—Farms, Pleasure Grounds, Suburbs, and City—the exhibition examines the major forces that have shaped land use on the island, including the development of the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge. The exhibition includes historic photographs, maps, and other ephemera and objects, as well as an online mapping component tracing the chronology of major developments on the island.



Il bimbo cattivo
("The bad child")
bedroom panel,
c. 1924 by
Antonio Rubino.

COURTESY MOMA

"Czech children obviously had the most fun," noted a viewer of *Century of the Child: Growing by Design 1900–2000*. Many of that country's mid-century toys would look as good on a mantle as they would in a nursery. MoMA's latest design exhibition, put on by architecture and design curator Juliet Kinchin with curatorial associate Aidan O'Connor, takes a sweeping view of 20th-century design through the lens of childhood. "There can be no

keener revelation of a society's soul than the way in which it treats its children," Nelson Mandela remarked in 1995. Book-ended by the publication in 1900 of *Century of the Child*, a manifesto positing the universal rights and well-being of children as the defining mission for the century, and the first child-themed Aspen International Design Conference, *Growing by Design*, in 1990, the ambitious survey charts the confluence of modern design

thinking and childhood into seven nodes. Underpinning all of these, notes Kinchin, "is the faith among designers in the power of aesthetic activity to shape everyday life." Above all, *Century of the Child* reveals that our attempts to shape the world for children speak volumes about how we want to see it ourselves.

First there was Froebel. "New Century, New Child, New Art," the exhibition's first section, begins with a soft landing. Amidst films of dancing children and cases of colorful objects, educational theorists Friedrich Froebel, Rudolf Steiner, and Maria Montessori emerge as the architects of a significant shift from a world of straight lines, sharp corners, and stiff yardsticks to a free-form embrace of intuitive exploration and a distinctly tactile approach to education. While Montessori promoted child-directed, activity-based learning, the "gifts" and "occupations," of Froebel's kindergarten foregrounded creativity and fostered an appreciation of natural harmony.

As the room entitled "Avant-Garde Playtime" reveals, the child's viewpoint, valued and encouraged

by artists and educators in the first decade of the century, became actively sought out following World War I. "Making the simple complicated is commonplace," American Jazz giant Charles Mingus once remarked, concluding, "making the complicated simple, awesomely simple, that's creativity." Longing to recapture the "innocent eye" of the child in the postwar years, artists and designers such as Giacomo Balla, Bruno Taut, Gerrit Rietveld, Paul Klee, Lyonel Feininger, and Antonio Rubino, turned to childhood as a way to both access the purest forms of expression and recapture an unmediated attitude towards the world. With the Czech childhood-envy-inducing toys of Ladislav Sutnar, as well as those of Uruguay's Joaquín Torres García, and Lotte Reiniger's exquisitely sophisticated animated feature of 1926, *The Adventures of Prince Achmed*, this room alone is worth the price of admission.

While the majority of Sutnar's so-called "mental vitamins" with which avant-garde design has nourished youth is commendable, the exhibition's sections "Light, Air, Health" and "Children of the Body

Politic" expose a darker side to design's persuasive power. Here utopian and dystopian models reveal how closely designers have danced with socio-political agendas. Just as the interwar period's determination to transform society into a beacon of light and health freed young bodies to move unencumbered by the prior confines of apparel and architecture, the onset of World War II also saw pliable young minds willfully molded to the propaganda of place. From Russia, Germany, Italy, Spain, and Japan to Britain, Austria, and the United States, one cannot help but acknowledge that the story of modern design is not entirely a benevolent one.

In "Regeneration," the viewer steps into the more familiar territory of the Baby Boom era. Once again a postwar exuberance and optimism is expressed through more color and a seemingly more carefree approach. Child-centered design, informed by the likes of Charles and Ray Eames, the Dutch playground pioneer Aldo Van Eyck, LEGO, Tinker Toys, and the Slinky, increasingly celebrated objects that embodied timelessness and simple discovery. Noticeably absent, however, is any discussion of gender-specific play and the ways in which toy design may have reinforced associated stereotypes.

The pressure of the challenge to neatly box a century into a tidy progression of objects and attitudes is most clearly felt within the final two sections, **continued on page 18**

THE SUBURBAN AVANT-GARDES

Long Island Modernism 1930–1980
Caroline Rob Zaleski
W.W. Norton, \$80.00

Architecturally many people assume nothing happened on Long Island, New York, between the Gold Coast era of the North Shore—the Gatsbyesque mansions that strung the coast of Long Island Sound—and its current state of sprawl: the endless suburb, served by the Long Island Expressway and the Long Island Railroad, shading up or down to white or blue collar, ranging in building style from tract mediocre to pretentious pastiche. There were the pretty, expensive parts—the beach communities on the South Fork, like the Hamptons—where you found architectural experimentation, or at least architects building for themselves, but the rest of Long Island was a punchline delivered in a commuter-train conductor's voice: "Freeport, Merrick, Bellmore, Wantagh, Massapequa, Massapequa Park!"

Long Island Modernism 1930–1980, by Caroline Rob Zaleski, has arrived to prove that notion impressively wrong. The 25 architects under discussion are not names you would readily associate with Long Island—Frank Lloyd Wright, Richard Neutra, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe. Some of the names, like William Lescaze, Wallace Harrison, and Edward Durell Stone are only slightly less prominent. And some, like Jane Yu and A. Lawrence Kocher, deserve more attention.

The book is a result of a field study of modern buildings being conducted for the Society for the Preservation of Long Island Antiquities. Zaleski, an architectural preservationist and historian, is the director of that survey and an important advocate for Long Island's modernist heritage.

Many of the projects detailed

here were responses to the two great showcases of modern ideas in Flushing Meadows, Queens: the World's Fair of 1939 with its theme of the "World of Tomorrow" and the World's Fair of 1964 built in reflection of our nascent Space Age.

The A. Conger Goodyear House, designed in 1939 by Edward Durell Stone, is an important transition piece from the European mansion mentality of the North Shore, "Newport on the Sound," to European modernism. (Zaleski fought successfully to save it from demolition in 2002.) Goodyear, heir to a timber and railroad fortune, left his wife and four children back in Buffalo in 1938, moved to New York, and made his entrance into North Shore society by buying 110 acres on the highest hill in Old Westbury and putting a generously fenestrated, white brick house there. An art collector, patron of the avant-garde, and self-declared Futurist, Goodyear was also the first president of the Museum of Modern Art in New York. His architect, Stone, making his entrance into modernism, had lately worked on the art deco-fication of the Waldorf Astoria, and Radio City Music Hall.

Stone had a long affluent run on Long Island, which paralleled his public career as the architect of note

on commissions like embassies and performing arts centers. His Lloyd Harbor house for Gabriele Lagerwall looks like a literal cross between his embassy in New Delhi and the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C.

Zaleski rises to the occasion, as architectural writers so often don't, when pressed into play to give social context to builders and their buildings. The book is a fascinating history as well as field study. Gabriele Lagerwall, later to become "the Baroness," is, in Zaleski's description, "the sometime companion of numerous very rich men." (And you thought people moved to Long Island because the schools were good.) In 1961, she buys 32 acres from the Colgates, and hires Stone, himself a member of her own international set, to design the perfect house: "a gilded getaway for a high-toned, insouciant crowd." He does. The Villa Rielle, as it is known, has a central atrium with a large reflecting pool, where Miss Lagerwall entertains guests during the cocktail hour by taking a swim with them, the Holly Golightly of Long Island.

Smaller, adventurous architectural outings are also important chapters of their own. There are several early attempts at prefabricated homes included: Albert Frey and A. Lawrence Kocher's Aluminaire

House, which Wallace Harrison and his wife Ellen purchased to live in while they put up their own house in Huntington in 1932. Frey had worked in Le Corbusier's studio; Kocher was the managing editor of *Architectural Record*. The Aluminaire House, sleek on paper, was difficult to construct, leaked, and the Harrisons, after eight years in it, dubbed it the "Tin House," for its quintessential ramshackle quality. Kocher, personally, was interested in starting an "American Bauhaus," on Long Island, and corresponded pleadingly with Gropius about it, introducing him to deans **continued on page 18**

Below: The Levitt and Sons office building in Lake Success, NY, designed by Edward Durell Stone.



EZRA STOLLER/ESTO

THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER SEPTEMBER 5, 2012



COURTESY MOMA

CHILD'S POWER PLAY continued from page 17 where the exhibition's lid suddenly seems to pop open with Jack-in-the-Box force. In "Power Play," Andreas Gursky's monumental color print *Toys "R" Us* compellingly conveys the extent to which childhood is now circumscribed by commercialism. However, this section's curation seems more noteworthy for its exclusions than for the objects on display. *Pee-wee's Playhouse*—whose video projection and original set props dominate the room—draws attention to the absence of *Sesame Street*, a noteworthy presage to the now multi-million dollar "edutainment" industry. Similarly, the absence of postmodern giants like Barbie and McDonald's, the second of which thankfully receives attention in the catalog, seem oddly conspicuous oversights.

The ultimate section, "Designing Better Worlds," uncharacteristically abandons the exhibition's heretofore chronological progression. As with "Power Play," this exploration is fraught by its exclusions, often displaying the utopic visions of social design without any apparent discussion of their dystopic dangers. To wit, the featured *One Laptop per Child*, Nicholas

Personifications of Childhood Misdeeds, 1930, by Minka Podhájská.

Negroponte's \$100 laptop project of 2005, projected to serve two billion children around the world and change education as we know it, is now widely acknowledged as a failure, though no mention of this is made within the gallery. The complexities of the impact of technological toys also receives short shrift, given the implications that it has on the ways in which children play, interact, and imagine. Indeed it could be presented as a much more thought-provoking endnote than the seemingly misplaced playground examination. If the century of the child began with a newly active exploration of the world through objects and a hands-on approach to education, it can be seen to have ended with a shift from a manual involvement with objects to a symbolic relationship with information, images, and amusement.

In July of 2010 a *Newsweek* feature story entitled "The Creativity Crisis" revealed that American creativity scores have been in steady decline since 1990, with the trend most pronounced for children in kindergarten through sixth grade. "The development of the child," reads the manifesto *The Century of the Child*, from which the exhibition draws its name, "answers in miniature to the development of mankind as a whole." MoMA's exhibition, a monumental and—by and large—masterful undertaking, raises fundamental questions about how we are designing our present and defining our future.

KIMBERLIE BIRKS IS A NEW YORK-BASED WRITER.

THE SUBURBAN AVANT-GARDES continued from page 17 stateside until he inadvertently landed him a job at Harvard, not Columbia. The Fort Salonga Colony, 20 acres Kocher purchased near Northport, became the site for his own weekend house, the Canvas Weekend House (this time, cotton duck for walls, not aluminum), and in lieu of a school, he talked three other families into purchasing lots and putting up "experimental" houses. The Canvas House, one room on stilts, got lots of press understandably—it looked like a toy-train version of the Villa Savoye—but without electricity, it was basically a modernist lean-to.

David L. Leavitt's Box Kite House was a more successful adventure. Designed for an advertising executive, Bill Miller, on Fire Island in 1956, Leavitt (who was the architect on Russel and Mary Wright's Dragon Rock; the self-promoting Wrights cut him out of the credits as the years went by) engineered a stacked structure of unfolding balconies which doubled as protective shutters off-season and Mylar walls braced in a lattice of outrigger cables that made it look like a box kite. The defiant little house—which looked like it might take off—stood bravely until it burned down from a stove fire.

And Jane Yu's house for Bert and Phyllis Geller III in Lawrence, designed in 1978, was not only a model of innovation, but a telling architectural-world morality tale. The Gellers had already built two houses on Long Island and a showroom for their shoe company in Manhattan with Marcel Breuer. Yu, who worked in Breuer's office as an interior designer, oversaw the showroom. When the Gellers decided they needed a new house, something smaller as they were closing in on

retirement, they asked Yu, not the Great Man, to give them something simple, and quickly. Perhaps the Gellers suspected, like many who have worked with famous architects, that Breuer couldn't do simple and quick.

Yu came up with an elegant off-the-rack house: stock cedar siding, concrete blocks to suggest passages of stonework, factory-made windows. And she specified solar panels on the roof for the hot-water heater.

It is a very sweet, economical, livable design. Yu got no attention for it. The Gellers encouraged her to keep quiet about it, so as not to offend Breuer. When the mayor of Lawrence admired the house and suggested she submit it for an AIA Long Island award, Herbert Beckhard, who was responsible for the house commissions in Breuer's office, and who was a member of the AIA award committee, refused to consider it.

Zalenski has acknowledged that her book is a kind of sequel to *Long Island Country Houses and their Architects, 1860–1940* by Robert B. Mackay, Anthony Baker, Carol A. Traynor, and Brendan Gill. Mackay is the director of the Society for the Preservation of Long Island Antiquities, which sponsored Zalenski's initial study.

One doubts there will be a sequel to Zalenski's book. Most of Long Island—if not the rest of suburban America—has become a postmodern mash-up now. We could easily have been learning from Long Island, as well as Las Vegas, when modernism failed at home. Zalenski's examples are like ruins in a park. It's sad, but heartening, to see them restored to freshness in these pages.

WILLIAM L. HAMILTON WRITES FOR THE WALL STREET JOURNAL AND OTHER PUBLICATIONS.

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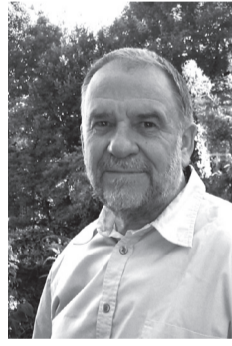
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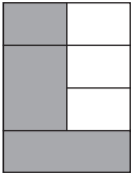


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EXPANDED FIELD EXPANDED

Architecture in the Expanded Field exhibit at the Wattis Institute of Contemporary Art, California College of the Arts in Oakland.

the map of the expanded field and the plan of the construct within the gallery are conflated into one thickened projective surface.

Operating simultaneously as an architectural frame, interior space, sculptural object, and topological surface, this floating translucent installation negotiates between these four distinct disciplinary domains while enfolding them within a singular spatial and material manifestation. It is a full-scale immersive environment constituted by 96 unique yet continuous interlocking acrylic bands that snake through the space of the gallery, guiding bodies to haptically follow their undulating surfaces. Within this highly interiorized and suspended architectural labyrinth, made up of aggregated cells each no larger than the dimensions of a single body, space is compressed and filled to establish an equivalence between body, space, and object so that the serpentine movements

of acrylic strands and visitors, and the pixelated fields of occupants and data, might generate a new thickened atmosphere within the space of viewing.

The surface of the panels themselves, a series of drawings generated for this exhibition which expose the techniques through which architects describe and analyze spatial production, are indices of the architectural that oscillate between material texture, graphic description, and diagrammatic information, their translucency highlighting the challenge that matter and its immersion pose to legibility and vice versa. Perhaps we have now come full circle, where the proliferation of data, image, and text and the impermanence of cultural construction, is no longer the threat to architecture that Victor Hugo had once claimed in his famous proclamation: "*ceci tuera cela*," or "this will kill that". Rather, as in this installation and those that it attempts to collect and categorically re-situate, we might imagine that this work not only constitutes the new expanded field of contemporary architectural practice, but is also the matter out of which our architectural future will be built.

ILA BERMAN AND DOUGLAS BURNHAM CURATED AND DESIGNED THE INSTALLATION, ARCHITECTURE IN THE EXPANDED FIELD WHICH RAN AT CCA'S WATTIS INSTITUTE FROM MARCH 5 THROUGH APRIL 7. ILA BERMAN IS THE DIRECTOR OF ARCHITECTURE AT CCA. ARCHITECT DOUGLAS BURNHAM IS ON THE FACULTY AND PRINCIPAL OF ENVELOPE A+D.

At the end of the 1970s, art theorist and critic Rosalind Krauss wrote a seminal text entitled "Sculpture in the Expanded Field." It was an attempt to both locate and analyze vanguard sculptural practices of the time, such as the work of Richard Serra, Robert Smithson, Mary Miss, and Donald Judd whose artistic output had moved beyond the limits of traditional sculpture and entered the realms of architecture and landscape. She classified these works as site constructions, marked sites, and axiomatic structures. Krauss developed a new classification strategy that recognized the expansive terrain that sculpture was beginning to occupy and its malleability as a medium, while also appreciating the difficulty of defining contemporary artistic practices whose most innovative moments seemingly demanded the transgression of traditional disciplinary boundaries.

Over the past three decades, the boundaries between art and architecture have continued to blur, giving rise to a series of works known as installations whose conceptual, spatial, and material trajectories have generated a new and expanding network of relations between the domains of architecture, interiors, sculpture, and landscape. At the same time, the range of institutional venues advancing architectural installation practices, such as the PS1 program spawned by MoMA in New York and the Serpentine Gallery's annual architectural pavilion in London,

for example, have provided platforms to intensify the production and reach of contemporary installations. By contextually bracketing out architecture's typical economic, functional, and scalar constraints, they have also enabled installation practices to occur within an experimental laboratory that has provided fertile ground in support of architecture's own evolution. Operating at the margins of normative practice, installations have contributed to the redefinition and progressive development of architecture's disciplinary territory allowing architects to explore spatial and tectonic ideas, experiment with emerging technological strategies, and distill perceptual and experiential conditions without the limitations traditionally imposed by the permanence and utility of building.

The show that we designed and co-curated, *Architecture in the Expanded Field*, the third installment in *The Way Beyond Art* series put on by the Wattis Institute of Contemporary Art at the California College of the Arts, is simultaneously an immersive installation and a didactic exhibition. It is a response to the question of how to exhibit architecture within the space of contemporary art, while also revealing a territory within architectural practice that, despite its exuberance and proliferation, has been historically defined as a negativity: the progeny of which is both *not-architecture* and *not-art*. Following the legacy of

Krauss, we therefore set out to explore the realm of art and architecture across a broad terrain of installation practices while mapping these as constellations within a newly expanded field suspended between Architecture, Interiors, Sculpture, and Landscape. Within the exhibition, these terms become the initial reference points that are used to elaborate a more extensive taxonomical framework defining twelve distinct zones where the analytical drawings and photographic indexes of seventy-five installation projects are situated.

As one moves within the exhibition along the trajectory from interiors to sculpture, for example, one finds the immersive chromatic environments of Carlos Cruz-Diez and Olafur Eliasson, the thermal and radiant atmospheres of Philippe Rahm, the intensely graphic patterned surfaces of Jürgen Mayer and Yayoi Kusama, and the interactive mediated light landscapes of Ryoji Ikeda and Julio Le Parc. These installations foreground immersive atmospheric spaces rather than sculptural objects, collectively they define *Chromatic/Graphic Immersion*, one of the twelve installation typologies organizing this exhibition. In a slight shift of direction, located along the trajectory from interiors toward landscape, are a different series of installation projects including the undulating orange strata of *Bamscape* and the pink spongy terrain of *Mute Room*, two works by Thom Faulders both of which redefine ground

as a programmed surface and occupiable topography. Here, the concept of landscape enables new continuities to exist between architecture and the body eliminating the need for furniture while imbuing space with thickened geological attributes that reassess the conditions of inhabitation.

The expanded field diagram is a conceptual framework that operates on many levels. It acts as a lens through which to theorize and classify the trajectories of current installation practices. It serves as an infrastructure to organize the didactic surface content of the exhibition. And, it forms the invisible structural matrix that is physically realized in the configuration of the installation itself. The four vertices marking the peripheral points of the expanded field are therefore mapped directly onto four of the eight corners of the gallery, literally inscribing the new expanded field diagram within the space. These points define the virtual surface of a tetrahedral envelope within which the actual frame of the architectural installation is embedded. The curatorial diagram is thus projected into space and stretched like a suspended landscape across the gallery. Physically inscribing the expanded field within the space ensures that the visitor concurrently experiences the architecture of the installation and navigates the exhibition content by literally occupying the space of the three-dimensional diagram, whereby

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D.C. MEGA-PROJECT ATOP UNION STATION RAIL YARDS WILL CONNECT DIVIDED NEIGHBORHOODS



CAP-ITAL IMPROVEMENTS

This week officials from Amtrak and developer Akridge unveiled plans for an ambitious development atop tracks leading into Union Station in Washington, D.C. The 3-million-square-foot project promises to unite the neighborhoods of Capitol

Hill and NoMa, a former industrial area transformed from a manufacturing district into a leafy residential neighborhood.

"The gash in the urban fabric will be closed," said Mark Gilliland, a principal at Shalom Baranes Associates,

Akridge's master planners for the project.

But with nearly nine billion dollars in public/private investment needed, questions remain as to whether a public-private partnership, similar in scope, if not **continued on page 9**

AN UNDERGROUND GREEN SPACE MAY SEE THE LIGHT

HIGH TIME FOR THE LOWLINE



Well aware that the areas of greatest density often have the least public space, James Ramsey, the principal of RAAD Studio, set out to

tap into New York City's infrastructure for an exciting alternative to the above ground park. Instead of looking skyward à la the High

Line, Ramsey ventured down into what he calls "the historical bowels of the city." On the site of a 1.5-acre **continued on page 3**

Passive House in Orient, NY.



FIRST BUILDING IN REGION TO MEET TOUGH ENERGY STANDARDS

Actively Passive

The boxy artist studio at the end of a dirt path in the town of Orient, Long Island is the first structure in the New York metropolitan region, and one of about a dozen in the United States, to be meet the stringent environmental standards of the Passivhaus Institute, based in Darmstadt, Germany. **continued on page 4**

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The U.S. Embassy in London will be a model for the overseas Design Excellence program.



KIERANTIMBERLAKE REFINES LONDON'S U.S. EMBASSY DESIGNS

London Fine-Tuned

The Department of State's Overseas Building Operations (OBO) released new renderings by KieranTimberlake of the United States Embassy to be located near London's Vauxhall neighborhood. The project has acted as something of a petri dish for the development of OBO's Design Excellence program, which was modeled on a similar program at the GSA. The London project has been watch closely by other federally commissioned architects who must comply with design requirements that combine energy efficiency, sustainability, intense security, and **continued on page 2**



SHOWING SOME SERIOUS SKIN AT THE NEW SCHOOL. SEE PAGE 6.

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UNDER CONSULTATION

In the United States we have developed a unique public/private model of organization that reaches into nearly every corner of how we construct our cities and practice architecture. Projects get built, but the terms and protocols—and therefore, the results—vary widely. Elsewhere, it's done differently. For example, Vienna, Austria, which may have the most successful program of affordable housing of any city in the world, has a defined process known as the “the four pillars,” a set of guidelines that every RFP in a competitive process and every submitted proposal must follow and be judged by if they are to be chosen by city officials.

With our myriad of overlapping municipal and governmental regulations, standards, and authorities, this country may never adapt a universal set of criteria for selecting memorials and major buildings. Given all the variables, it should be no surprise that even architectural competitions have become a mini-business in this country. This issue's feature focuses on a growing industry of consultants who work almost exclusively on creating and staging competitions. Further, these consultants do more than simply stage competitions—they seem to hold the hands of the client(s) and sometimes even the architects to ensure the success of the process and the resulting design. It's a valuable service for many clients, since “architecture” may be defined as everything in excess of basic program requirements like toilets and a roof that does not leak.

Too often architects are guilty as charged of being elitists or unconcerned about the bottom-up input of the clients and the public. But one can see what Bill Lacey, former executive director of the Pritzker Prize means when he says, “I worry about the long-range effects of the public being to involved in a matter that they're not equipped to deal with.” We cannot help but think of the banal sculpture of fighting soldiers that was placed beside Maya Lin's powerful Vietnam Veterans Memorial project or the input that September 11 victims' families have had over the construction of the complex surrounding Larry Silverstein's towers. In fact, the most important role these competition specialists can perform is, as competition consultant Karen Stein says, to “establish a process that mirrors the core values of the institution” commissioning the project.

It is a worry that these competition insiders could become powerful architecture brokers, trading on their friendships and connections. But legitimately used, their knowledge of the process may allow them to be the only arbiters between the top-down excess that makes great architecture and the legitimate demand by the public to be part of the design process. **WILLIAM MENKING**



COURTESY KIERAN TIMBERLAKE

Top: Photovoltaics create a slightly convex facade in Kieran Timberlake's embassy design; bottom: Landscaped barriers act as ram deterrents.

LONDON FINE-TUNED continued from front page high design. “They continue to use this project as a test case for sorting that stuff out and to continue to achieve really high levels of refinement and design excellence,” concurred James Timberlake.

In a forerunner of efficient practices espoused by the policy, OBO sold their Saarinen-designed building in swanky Grosvenor Square, which in turn paid for the new building on the up-and-coming south side of the Thames. An OLIN-designed multi-leveled perimeter, reflecting ponds, and landscape barriers creates anti-ram deterrents that the OBO guidelines officiously dub “Embassy Perimeter Improvement Concepts” or EPIC. “I wouldn't call them barriers,” said Timberlake, who noted that despite offset and security setback requirements, 40 percent of the compound remains accessible to pedestrian traffic. If anything, he said, many of the major refinements are through the building's engagement with landscape, including water management in ponds that collect runoff for irrigational reuse, as well as for security.

Certain technological advancements have insured that the highly efficient envelope incorporating photovoltaic technology will indeed go forward largely as planned. The rooftops of three entrance pavilions will also hold photovoltaic panels. But it is the envelope that has gone through the most rigorous analysis. An open outer structure, made of ETFE polymer with a fritted layer that includes 6-by-12 inch photovoltaic patches, acts as a shading element. Cast struts hold the cable-stayed system apart from the glass box, bowing slightly at the midsection, giving the building a slight protrusion, like a proud, swollen chest.

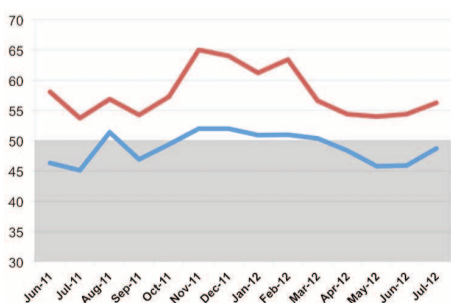
TOM STOELKER

INDEX STILL IN NEGATIVE TERRITORY BUT BOUNCING BACK

BILLINGS BEGINNING REBOUND?

The AIA's monthly Architecture Billings Index (ABI) for July came in with a disappointing 48.7 (any score below 50 indicates a decline in billings for design activity). The news was not all bad though. The ABI was up significantly from last month's score of 45.9. “Even though architecture firm billings nationally were down again in July, the downturn moderated substantially,” said AIA Chief Economist Kermit Baker. “As long as overall economic conditions continue to show improvement, modest declines should shift over to growth in design activity over the coming months.”

At the regional level, the South, a region battered by the Great Recession, was the only area in positive territory, skyrocketing up to a score of 52.7 from the previous month's 47.6. The Midwest clocked in at 46.7, the West lagged with 45.3, and the Northeast continued its steady decline to 44.3, the lowest score for that region since February 2010. By sector, multi-family residential (51.4) outpaced mixed-practice (49.1), commercial/industrial (48.4), and institutional (46.6). Inquiries rebounded to 56.3, up from last month's 54.4. **ALAN G. BRAKE**



EAT MY DUST

Former *New York Times* architecture critic **Nicolai Ouroussoff** reemerged recently in an unexpected location: the pages of *Smithsonian* magazine, where Ouroussoff profiled **Rem Koolhaas** for the venerable publication. Those who read the piece online may not realize that Ouroussoff is one of the writers featured in *Smithsonian's* September issue, which marks the debut of the magazine's sleek redesign initiated by editor-in-chief **Michael Caruso**. "The main idea was to rev it up," Caruso told *Adweek* of his changes to the staid cover, layout, and contributor's list. *Smithsonian's* monthly print circulation has already risen under Caruso—it currently sits at 2.1 million, giving Ouroussoff's feature almost twice the reach that it would have had in the *Sunday Times*.

FINE FEATHERS?

Between glass curtain walls and art installations, birds just can't catch a break. For their Venice Architecture Biennale project *Pigeon Safari* Swiss artist **Julian Charrière** and German photographer **Julius von Bismark** captured, airbrushed, then released the pigeons of St. Mark's Square. The resulting rainbow-colored flock has caused Biennale-goers and tourists alike to do a double take. Charrière told the Italian newspaper *Corriere della Sera*, "Pigeons make up part of our urban landscape, but we view them as though they are an unrecognizable mass, whereas each one has its own identity." While a newly teal pigeon may imagine itself a peacock, conservationists expressed concern that the birds' unusual colors would deter mating.

SEND FOSSILS AND BIRDBATHS TO EAVESDROP@ARCHPAPER.COM

IT'S HIGH TIME FOR THE LOW LINE continued from front page abandoned trolley terminal that lies under Delancey Street on the Lower East Side, the Lowline is poised to be New York's most radical park project yet.

Here, remote skylights will not only transmit enough sunlight underground to see by, but enough to grow a wide variety of plants. "It was almost a philosophy on how you could get light down into places that wouldn't normally get it," said Ramsey. "When you start thinking about that you realize how much potential there would be for something that could bring natural daylight into dark spaces."

In March, Ramsey and the Lowline's co-founder, Dan Barasch, launched a Kickstarter campaign that raised \$155,000 to fund the development of the remote skylights and construct a fully functional life-size installation to show to the community and prove to the MTA that not only is their idea popular, but it's feasible as well. On September 13th, Ramsey, Barasch, and R. Boykin Curry IV, the project's first major donor, will present a "mini" Lowline, a 30-foot-by-30 foot-by-20-foot canopy and green space installed inside the Essex Street Market. The event will include Vin Cipolla, president of the Municipal Arts Society, Mark Wigley, dean of Columbia University's GSAPP, Scott Keough, president of Audi America, and John Alschuler, the chairman of the High Line, who will be announcing the results of the project's financial and engineering studies.

Edward Jacobs, a former high-performance motorcycle designer at Confederate Motors, who Ramsey describes as "a visionary and pretty much the most talented guy I've ever met," is overseeing the fabrication and installation of the canopy. In brief, Jacobs designed a system of 600 laser-cut hexagonal and triangular anodized aluminum panels that form a tessellated curve designed to reflect the light gathered by the remote skylights down into the underground space. Because the curved ceiling-scape is so specialized, no two panels are exactly alike. Each have slight differences in length or width that allow Jacobs to create a form that maximizes the reflectivity of the natural sunlight directed into the park—and he did it in less than two months.

The public will have its chance to swoon

at the installation in the two weeks following its unveiling. Then the hard work really begins. Apart from creating a convincing proposal for the MTA that outlines all aspects of the project and addresses their needs and concerns, Ramsey and Barasch must focus on fundraising, a task made somewhat less daunting by the project's widespread support as well as claims that the Lowline will require only a fraction of what the High Line cost to construct. State Senator Daniel Squadron, Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver, and Congresswoman Nydia Velasquez are all already singing the Lowline's praises, and even Turkey has expressed interest in a Lowline of their own.

Unlike the High Line, the Lowline isn't a long stretch of landscaped walkway, but a wide expanse the size of Gramercy Square Park. One of Ramsey's goals is to encourage the sense of discovery and exploration he feels when he visits his favorite part of Central Park, the seemingly uncared-for Ramble, which he calls "the beating heart of Central Park itself."

"You can walk through there and actually forage for strange, wild edibles," he gushed. "You get a little bit lost. You don't know what's around the corner or over the next hill. I think that it's one of the more successful landscape designs not only in the city, but in the world."

In tribute, Ramsey is designing a Ramble of his very own for the Lowline that will capitalize on the elements that drew him to subterranean Delancey Street in the first place. "We've got this found archeological space that no one knows about. There's this component of mystery to it that New York still *does* have all these secrets you can explore that you can't find on Yelp. Going down into [the Lowline] invokes that sense of discovery and mystery as well as this element of archeological adventure, like you're exploring a ruin. I want to capture the idea that you can explore not just horizontally but vertically. It should be a jungle gym for adults where you can do a little Rambling," said Ramsey, brimming with Olmstedian spirit. If everything goes according to plan, Ramsey estimates that the earliest possible date of completion is 2016. "That's a really ambitious date, but this project is really ambitious, and look how far we've come in a year." **PERRIN DRUMM**



> **THE ROUNDHOUSE AT BEACON FALLS**
2 East Main Street
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Tel: 845-440-3327
Architect: Rockwell Group

Drive down Main Street in Beacon, NY, away from the train station for exactly one mile, past the Shangri-La nail salon, BJ's Chicken and Ribs and Augie's Texas Lunch, to the unassuming location of The Roundhouse at Beacon Falls, a new hotel and restaurant designed by David Rockwell.

Developed by Robert A. McAlpine, The Roundhouse is located in one of the city's few remaining historic industrial buildings, a renovated 200-year-old mill that once made industrial grade felt, fur hats, and lawnmowers. The site has prime views of the gentle falls on Fishkill Creek and Rockwell made sure to give diners an eyeful through the large windows in the restaurant, Swift. The hotel has 14 guest rooms in The Roundhouse and will be opening 42 more across the creek at The Mill in early 2013.

Original bricks have been salvaged for the exterior walls and rough wooden beams still support The Mill's roof. Look up in The Roundhouse and you'll see raw cement beams bearing marks of the original joinery, as well as panels of thick grey felt inset into the ceiling itself. Every interior design element—tables, chairs, lighting—is sourced from designers working no further than a mile or two around the site. McAlpine has even gone to the great trouble of restoring the turbine from the site's former hydroelectric plant, which will supply around 60 percent of the hotel's energy when it's completed. **PD**

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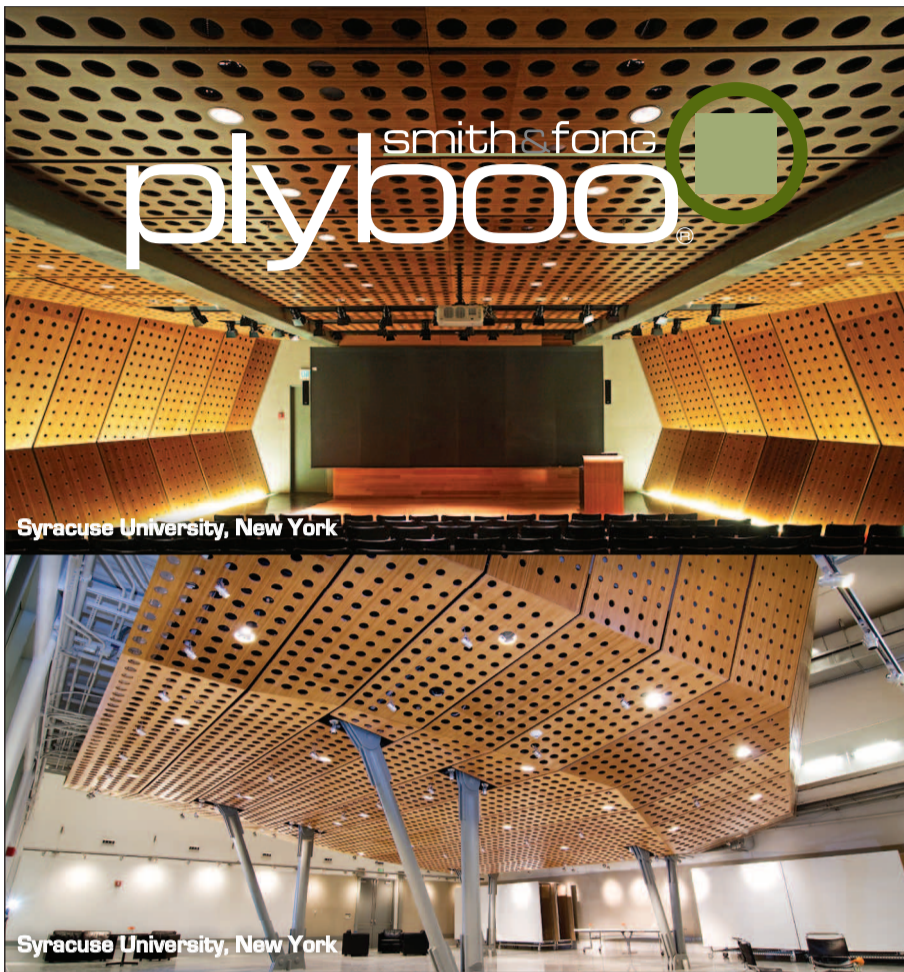
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TY COLE/OTTO

ACTIVELY PASSIVE
continued from front page

With its rough-hewn dark brown wood cladding, the studio does not advertise its high tech features. However it uses 90 percent less heating energy than does a typical house in this country. Compare that with the average house built to the U.S. Green Building Council's LEED rating system: Studies show that LEED-certified homes generally save less than 25 percent in heating energy over typical U.S. construction.

Lower energy bills are only one of the selling points of *Passivhaus*, or Passive House, construction, which is becoming widespread in German speaking countries and in Scandinavia. "The principal reason that people get these houses in Europe is that they are so incredibly comfortable," says the studio's architect, William Ryall, principal in Ryall Porter Sheridan Architects. "You have fresh air and humidity control all of the time and because of all the insulation, they are extraordinarily quiet in urban settings," says Ryall.

The fresh air in the artist studio comes from a compact energy recovery ventilator (ERV) made by Zehnder that is used in conjunction with a small split-system unit for heating and cooling. The ventilator changes the studio's air at the rate of 0.6 changes an hour by sucking outside air inside, filtering it and removing the humidity. In addition, the unit recovers heat from the interior air that is discharged in winter and it recovers cold from the air that is discharged in the summer.

The studio's key energy saving features include a highly airtight building envelope and super thick

walls, which help keep the building cool in the summer and reduce heat loads during winter. Ryall collaborated with building envelope consultant David White, of Right Environments, on the project. Orienting the building to maximize solar heat gain in the winter and reduce it in the summer is also a major part of the strategy.

The adjacent house, which was gutted and rebuilt using the same Passive House methods, achieved an extremely high degree of energy efficiency, but it does not qualify for Passive House certification largely due to solar heat gain from the expansive windows on its northern exposure, which were installed to capitalize on the stunning views of the Long Island Sound.

The artist studio cost about \$500 per square foot. Ryall says that much of the expense came from imported

Top to bottom: The building is oriented for maximum solar efficiency in all seasons; an energy recover ventilator (ERV) cools, heats and dehumidifies the interior; Passive House uses 90 percent less heating energy than the average U.S. house.

materials unavailable in the United States such as the insulated Pazen windows from Germany that come with an R-value, a measure of thermal resistance, close to 11.

It is challenging to attain Passive House certification, which evaluates a building holistically rather than on the basis of a point system such as the one used by LEED. "With LEED you could put in worse windows and make it up with a bicycle stand in the basement," Ryall says, "Here there is no room for negotiation—this is about absolute standards—how much energy is needed for the building." **ALEX ULAM**





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SOM WITH TISHMAN
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COURTESY SOM

Like many urban universities, The New School is without a campus in the traditional sense of the word. Rather, the school's many colleges are sprinkled throughout Greenwich Village and further afield across Manhattan in multiple buildings that have little relation to one another. To bring a sense of cohesion, The New School recently hired SOM to design a new facility to serve as a university center. Currently under construction on Fifth Avenue and 14th Street, the 364,000-square-foot, 16-story multi-use project includes a 700-seat auditorium, the main university library, lecture halls, classrooms, a 600-bed dormitory, and other critical amenities.

SOM worked diligently to arrange this varied program in a rational layout that would be intuitive to navigate, create spaces for random interaction between students and faculty, and comply with New York City's stringent code requirements, while at the same time earning a Gold rating under LEED 2012. The architects began by dividing the academic program from the dormitory apartments, placing the former in the building's first seven stories and basement and the latter in the upper eight stories. The two sections are joined in the middle by the library, which occupies floors six and seven

at a setback that further divides the building into a podium and tower. The fourth and fifth stories are entirely occupied by classrooms, while the third down to the basement levels accommodate the massive volume of the auditorium around which is arranged additional classrooms, the lecture hall, the cafeteria and café, as well as a faculty lounge and the building's lobby.

The trick to making a university center work in the middle of Manhattan, as more than one architect has learned in the past, is to develop a scheme for vertical circulation that creates a sense of community while still efficiently handling the deluge of traffic that occurs every time the bell rings and classrooms disgorge. SOM addressed this challenge deftly in the academic portion of the building by moving the stairs out from the core to the perimeter. On the building's three street faces—14th Street, 5th Avenue, and 13th Street—glass-clad stairs slash diagonally through the otherwise orthogonal elevation. On the exterior, the stairs animate the building, broadcasting this hive of activity onto the grand stage of urban theater. On the interior, the stairs descend through a series of interlocking double-height spaces, visually

orienting building users and furnishing large landings for congregation and serendipitous encounters.

Each of the stairs is actually two stairs, an open stair bundled with an enclosed fire stair running beneath. The fire stairs on the 14th Street and 13th Street faces link up with the traditional vertical fire stairs coming down from the dormitory, creating direct access to the street. The architects thought of this arrangement as analogous to a subway line, with the open stair acting as the local line and the fire stair providing express service out of the building. They also made ample use of fire-rated glass—120-minute walls and 90-minute doors—making the fire stairs visually display-worthy and reminding students that they are there to be used.

Moving the stairs to the perimeter gave rise to an innovative structural solution

that informed the design of the rest of the building. Working closely with construction company Tishman and engineers at DeSimone, SOM used a composite structural system of primarily poured-in-place concrete, with structural steel handling select tasks, including supporting the stairs. The team designed three diagonal perimeter trusses, built up of 12-inch-by-8-inch-by-5/8-inch horizontal HSS steel tubing and 8-inch-by-8-inch-by-3/8-inch vertical HSS steel tubing, from which the stairs are cantilevered into the building. This solution allowed the stairs to flow through the interior without creating a sea of columns that would disrupt the double-height spaces. Lateral bracing was similarly moved to the perimeter, removing the need for concrete shear walls in the core and opening up more interior space for flexible

programming. The other task handled by structural steel is transferring the load of the column grid 80 feet over the auditorium, a job done by four massive steel trusses, 9 feet, 8 inches in depth and built up of jumbo sections.

The center's facade is only 30 percent glass, in keeping with LEED 2012 Gold rating requirements. In the classrooms, windows are arranged in two horizontal bands, one for vision, the other a clerestory with a light shelf that bounces daylight onto the ceiling. Limiting the amount of glass also allowed the architects to select a clear product with minimum low-e coating, creating an unfiltered experience of natural light uncommon in contemporary buildings. The rest of the facade is a rain screen system made of Muntz metal—a sort of brass containing about 60 percent copper and 40 percent zinc. Cheaper than

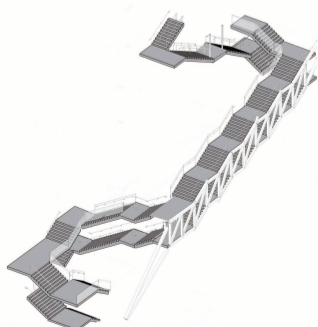
SOM located tandem pairs of processional and fire stairs on the University Center's street faces. Clad in glass, they slash diagonally through the Muntz metal curtain wall, animating the building on the exterior and providing intuitive vertical circulation on the interior.

copper, Muntz is extremely corrosion resistant, and, pre-patinated, it has a mottled dark brown appearance that helps the building blend in with the brick that predominates in Greenwich Village.

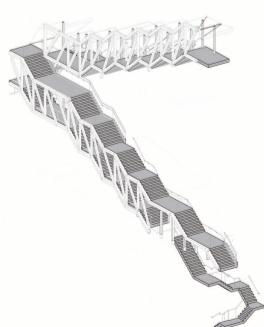
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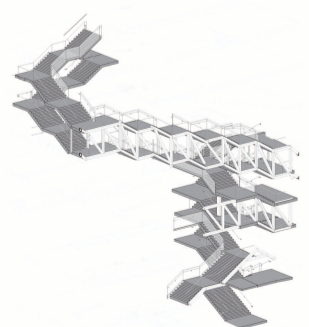
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14th STREET



5th AVENUE



13th STREET



A neglected median on 11th Avenue would be part of a Neighborhood Improvement District.

AN/STOELKER

FRIENDS OF HUDSON RIVER PARK PUSHING FOR NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

HUDSON CALLING

Over the summer, Friends of Hudson River Park (FOHRP) began community outreach to establish a Neighborhood Improvement District intended to help pay for maintenance at the beleaguered park. The FOHRP plan includes a tax for nearby residences and businesses located from the waterfront to approximately two blocks inland, from Chambers Street to 59th Street. The proposed district is the latest of several attempts to secure new funding sources for the much-used park.

Of New York's 33 Business Improvement Districts (BID) 13 include residential areas, but commercial businesses foot most of the bill. The proposed plan for the Neighborhood Improvement District would be the first improvement district that would require payments from residents as well. Residents would be charged about 7.5 cents per square foot, meaning that a snug West Village condo measuring 500 square feet will pay \$37.50 per year.

The park's financial troubles began rearing their head as another park, the High Line, also running parallel to the river, was stealing hearts and minds—and gathering the attention of donors—up and down the West Side. Hudson River Park Trust, the entity that runs the park, cast an envious eye on the High Line's flush public/private model, so much so that they went to the State Legislature to loosen up the trust's charter to make ends meet. As with so many of the city's newer parks, Hudson River Park is required to be self-sustaining. But unlike most recent high-profile new parks, the trust's charter strictly limits development. Meanwhile, the largest commercial operation intended to generate cash for the park, Chelsea Piers, is locked in legal battle with the state over maintenance and repair funding worth about \$37.5 million.

The changes introduced in the legislature might have allowed a residential or hotel complex to rise on Pier 40, among other provisions, but it was defeated in the State Assembly in July. There is slim possibility that the measure may be taken up again in December, but administrators at FOHRP aren't counting on any single silver bullet to save the day. The Neighborhood

Improvement District is one of many efforts, including philanthropy.

Several other charter arrangements intended to generate funding are being contested. The state has also backed away from their responsibility of maintaining the median that runs down the middle of the West Side Highway. The once lush plantings are now choked with weeds. The state wants to hand maintenance of the medians over to the city. The city's position is that the state must complete the road (Interstate 9A) before the city's Department of Transportation can take over. In the past, FOHRP maintained the medians under contract from the state. The trust is prohibited from spending money outside park boundaries, so it falls to FOHRP to raise the cash to spruce up what is essentially their front lawn. "I'm sure the state would be happy for any private funding sources," said A.J. Pietrantone, FOHRP's executive director.

Another income source that never found its way to the park was the balance from a 15 percent fee once charged to incoming cruise ships. Whatever leftover money not used for pier improvements was supposed to go back to park maintenance. But most of that money went to maintaining the cruise ship piers and the portion for the park was never allocated. "There was nothing left over and that has to be clarified," said David Gruber, chair of Community Board 2. Gruber said that the pier fees along the Hudson should also be reexamined as income for the park.

FOHRP continues to work with the trust to amend the act, attract donors, and will reach out to the three community boards that border the park throughout the fall to build support for the Neighborhood Improvement District. "The proposal can't go forward if there isn't any support," Pietrantone said.

So far the reaction has been somewhat muted, though major commercial interests are lined up behind the proposal, with representatives from the Durst Organization, Tishman Speyer, REBNY, and Two Trees sitting on the FOHRP steering committee. Gruber thinks the tax can be justified easily. "It's a dinner out," he said of the cost.

TS

LAWN AND ORDER



Colleges today are rethinking not only the structure of their curriculum, but also that of their classrooms. With **John Jay College of Criminal Justice** outgrowing its widely scattered facilities, school officials asked **Skidmore, Owings & Merrill** to design a new vertical campus consolidating all social and academic functions, including a **65,000-square-foot roof terrace**, within a single city block. Using steel girders to span a network of Amtrak tunnels running beneath the prominent Midtown site made the design possible. Now, John Jay students are better able to collaborate across disciplines and enhance their legal research—proving it's easy to build a case for choosing structural steel.

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1 NEST DE LA ESPADA

Made of high-density fiberboard (HDF), the unique slatted hood of this lounge highlights Autoban, an Istanbul-based design firm's modern take on traditional Turkish weaving. Built by De La Espada, Nest can be used alone or in a group to make a statement without overstating. delaespada.com

2 URCHIN POUF & FLAX OTTOMAN THOMAS EYCK

Sourcing raw and local materials is a major part of Christien Meindertsma's practice—as well as the subject of her recent TED Talk. For these two casual seating options she went out of her way to use flax grown locally in the Netherlands. thomaseyck.com

3 NESTREST DEDON

Sit it on the ground or hang it from a tree branch, Daniel Pouzet and Frad Frety's Nestrest makes for an elegant perch. Woven with supersized strands of an especially strong fiber that's 4 centimeters wide, Nestrest can support a full brood. dedon.de

4 DINING TABLE 00219 USONA

Shown here in tinted black oak, this open weave table base also comes in natural and birch. Like all of Usona's products, it's made to order and can be customized in a variety of sizes, finishes, and materials. usonahome.com

5 CORACLE MATTER

Inspired by the small, woven half-shell coracle boats used in Wales since the Bronze Age, Benjamin Hubert updated the traditional vessel with a lounge chair made with a basket seat made from automotive suede and a steel frame wrapped in a suede tri-weave recalling bicycle handlebars. mattermatters.com

6 SPOOL RODA

Rodolfo Dordoni's Spool collection is, as the name suggests, inspired by weaving spools. The varnished stainless steel frame stands up to all weather conditions and the backrest is wrapped with double-polyester twisted thread to provide flexibility and durability. rodaonline.com



An existing greenway and bikepath are integrated into the plan for Union Station.

CAP-ITAL IMPROVEMENTS continued from front page scale, to New York City’s Hudson Yards project, can muster the political will at the federal level. Union Station is owned and operated by the United States government. But despite high-speed trains and mass transit becoming a political football in states like Florida, Ohio, and Wisconsin—and even New Jersey—most agree that the Northeast corridor is at capacity and needs expansion. “It serves as the only existing high-speed rail, and people on both sides of the aisle believe in that for the Northeast corridor, whether you’re from California or Florida,” said Akridge vice president of development David Tuchmann.

As the southern anchor to the corridor, Union Station’s significance goes beyond its importance as a hub (D.C. train delays ripple as far north as Boston). The project is a key component of a \$151 billion investment to region’s rails and stations to be completed over the next several decades. The proposed renovation was framed as a “Gateway Project” in an updated masterplan for the region released earlier this month. And unlike the oft-delayed Moynihan Station in New York, Union sits literally within view of the legislators on the Hill. “We like our prospects here,” said Bob LaCroix, Amtrak’s senior director for business and high-speed rail development. “Through this process, a bunch of players from the city, Maryland, Virginia, and the federal government generated a consensus that this is the vision that we all need to heed.”

While the project holds regional as well as national significance, it breaks down into a very urban plan, integrating long-divided D.C. neighborhoods and incorporating the capital’s bicycle network. As Union Station was built on landfill, the terrain to the east and the west of the station slopes down beside the tracks, with the rail lines shored

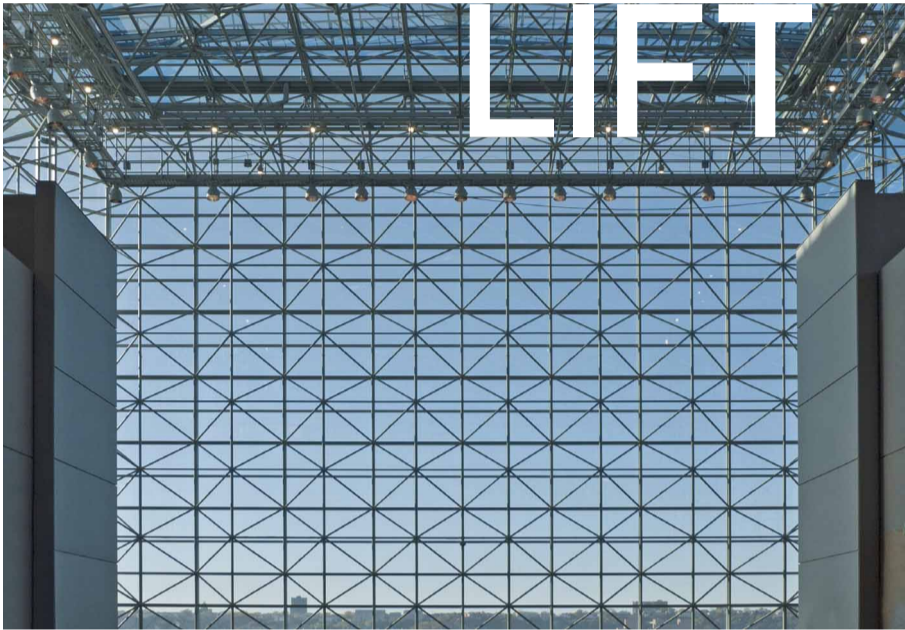
up with a giant stone wall, affectionately referred to as the Burnham Wall, for architect Daniel Burnham, the station’s original architect.

The station’s new masterplan, engineered by Parsons Brinckerhoff and designed with HOK, maintains the integrity of the terrain and track levels while burrowing east-west passageways beneath the tracks and creating a north-south corridor above them. Side-street entryways will be cut into the Burnham Wall to allow pedestrians to cross between neighborhoods. Escalators from the passageways will take visitors up onto the developer’s new deck, where Akridge hopes to build a multiuse neighborhood. The H Street Bridge will meet the platform above the tracks, transforming the now-desolate overpass into a main street, as well as home to the station’s new north entrance.

The undulating green rooftops of the entrance recall the individual tracks below and dispel the impression that the north entrance is a back door. “We wanted to design a train shed that supports movement and a vegetative roof that you can see from the street,” said Bill Hellmuth, president and design chief of HOK. Hellmuth noted that the overall design underscores the inherent sustainability of mass transit.

Clearly, the developers, architects, and planners kept a keen eye on recent developments in New York. The project’s expansive integration of public space recalls Hudson Yards, but without the developer’s massive floor-area payoff hovering some 40 stories above the site. The buildings maintain D.C.’s 1910 height limit, making the public space seem that much more generous. Instead of gobbling up every square foot, the north-south promenade becomes a symbolic, if not literal, extension of the L’Enfant plan, reclaiming for Delaware Avenue a bit of what the railways gobbled up a century ago. But perhaps the most generous aspect of the plan occurs on the west side of the site, where the new buildings atop the platform step back to make way for another promenade on the Burnham Wall. This High Line-esque gesture incorporates an existing city greenway, bike path, and pedestrian walkway. The gentle arc begins nearly a mile north of the project and culminates at the recently restored Columbus Circle in front of Daniel Burnham’s 1908 masterpiece. **TS**

SPACE



Since its construction in 1982, the **Jacob K. Javits Center** has been one of the world’s leading examples of space-frame design. But the **I.M. Pei & Partners**-designed exhibit space needed updating to put its best face forward for the 3.5 million visitors it receives each year. So owners engaged **Epstein Global** and **FXFowle Architects**, who developed the recladding program that is dramatically increasing the building’s transparency and energy efficiency. Targeting LEED Silver with a glazing system that will enable the building to exceed energy code requirements by 25 percent, the new face of Javits proves that being old doesn’t have to mean retiring.

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Architect: Epstein Global, FXFowle Architects
Photographer: Enclos

AT DEADLINE

AFTER HOURS, SOHO WEST

Community Board 2’s September 6 town hall meeting will focus on Hudson Square. The little-known moniker was bestowed on the old printing district by Trinity Church, the neighborhood’s major landholder for the past three centuries. Situated south of Houston, north of Canal, east of the Hudson, and west of Sixth Avenue, the warehouse-filled area has always been thought of as the workaday offshoot of SoHo. Not anymore. On August 20 City Planning certified a rezoning proposal, pushed by Trinity’s real estate arm, that would allow for a multi-use residential complex designed by SHoP to rise at Sixth Avenue just north of Canal. Other major players in the area include Extell and Edison, with Edison already gearing up for 230-unit residential tower on Dominick Street. With a daytime workforce of 50,000 that dwindles to a mere 2,000 residents each weeknight, the area’s rezoning could transform the area into a loft-lovers paradise.

SPURA'S MOMENT

On August 22 City Planning approved the planned 1.65 million-square-foot redevelopment of two blocks of the Lower East Side. The Seward Park Urban Renewal Area (SPURA) is a Moses-era slum clearance project that has stood vacant since the 1960s. The redevelopment would include 900 apartments, 500 of which would be designated as permanently affordable housing, as well as retail, community, and green spaces. The plan now needs approval from City Council to proceed.

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FIRST ROUND OF DATA ON BUILDING ENERGY CONSUMPTION IS IN NUMBERS CRUNCH

Last month, one of the major measuring devices of the master plan PlaNYC yielded its first set of data. The Local Law 84 benchmarking ordinance was pegged to a suite of laws operating under the catchier banner of the Greener, Greater Buildings Plan (GGBP). The ordinance required all New York City buildings over 50,000 square feet to report energy consumption. With more than 75 percent compliance, the first report was able to cull information from more than 1.7 billion square feet, making it the largest data collection of its kind for a single jurisdiction.

While a single year's worth of information isn't enough to track trends, it does provide a few surprising revelations. For example, one particular finding showed that early 20th-century buildings tend to be more efficient than later generations. The report gives the credit to smaller floor plates, efficient envelopes, and smaller ventilation systems. But the report was careful to make the pro-development observation that the energy "measurement per square foot does not necessarily reflect efficiency in terms of energy per unit of economic activity happening in buildings."

Despite the very positive participation numbers, there are a few kinks that have yet to be ironed out. The Environmental Protection Agency's Portfolio Manager, the benchmarking tool used to collect the data, should be able to flag obvious mistakes, like a building square footage entry of zero, but it can't. Also, building owners often entered square footage based on information they gave to the Department of Finance, meaning they entered square footage for space that had taxable revenue and left out the square footage for space that wasn't rented.

Nevertheless, spotting mistakes will help fine tune the process for the years to come when the data becomes even richer, and not just because there will be several years of benchmarking under the city's belt. Other laws in the suite mandate audits and require retrofits. Information from auditors will add detail, such as whether a building has punched windows or a curtain wall. "Within two to three years we're going to have a really nuanced data set," said Laurie Kerr, a senior policy advisor to the mayor. "We'll be able to see if buildings are changing."

The U.S. Department of Energy is also working with the city to incorporate the information into a national database. Austin, Seattle, Philadelphia, San Francisco, and Washington, D.C. have all recently adopted benchmarking laws. The data will allow decision makers to compare policy and results.

Buildings that are less than 50,000 square feet may also find their way into the mix. Though Kerr acknowledged that smaller building owners might not have the resources to track data, the city is looking at a less demanding program, perhaps a point-of-sale ordinance rather than an annual requirement.

Though some of the GGBP laws dictate specific retrofits, the main thrust of the suite is to provide building owners with information—as well as tax incentives—to make their buildings more energy efficient, which in the long run will save money. "Information drives change," Kerr said, repeating a Bloomberg mantra. "Providing building owners with information should cause them to make the right decisions." **TS**

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