

THE ARCHITECTS NEWSPAPER

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DS+R'S U.S. OLYMPIC MUSEUM IN COLORADO SPRINGS IS HOPING TO CAUSE A BILBAO EFFECT

U.S.A! U.S.A!

DS+R's design for the 60,000-square-foot U.S. Olympic Museum will convey the strength of Olympians and Paralympians while also spurring urban development.

In May, Diller Scofidio + Renfro (DS+R) unveiled initial concept renderings of its design for the United States Olympic Museum in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

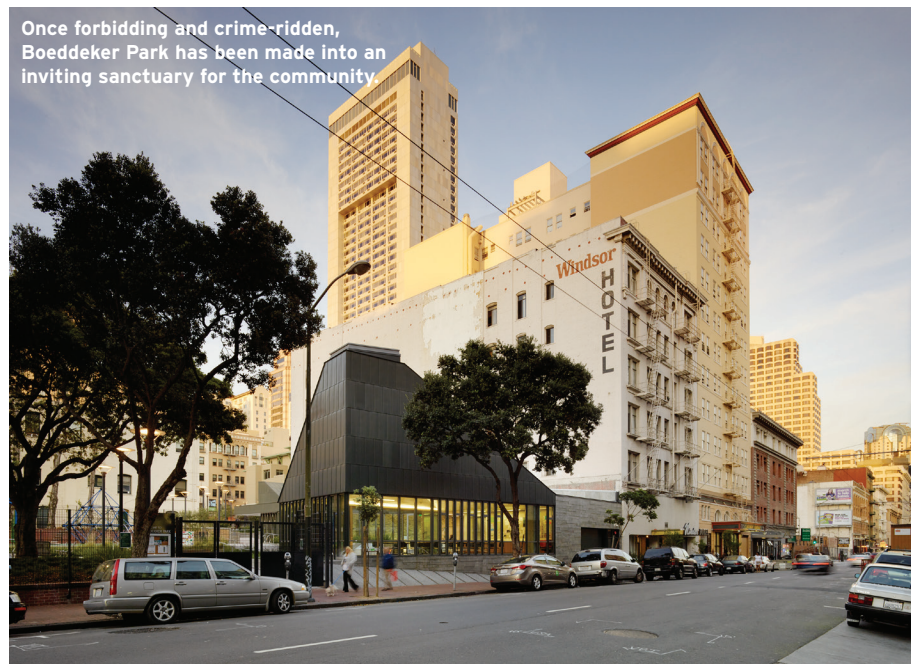
The 60,000-square-foot facility will join the headquarters of the U.S. Olympic Committee and the U.S. Olympic Training Center, which also call Colorado Springs home, further

cementing the city as a destination for Olympic enthusiasts both foreign and domestic.

The museum will tell the stories of great American Olympians **continued on page 8**

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Once forbidding and crime-ridden, Boeddeker Park has been made into an inviting sanctuary for the community

SAN FRANCISCO'S BOEDDEKER PARK IS A GREEN REFUGE

PARK REFORM

A few blocks from San Francisco's Financial District and the tech wealth of SOMA is the Tenderloin, the city's densest neighborhood, where the homeless line up for free meals, and many low-income tenants live in windowless rooms. Boeddeker Park,

redesigned by WRNS Studio, serves as a desperately needed escape valve for the neighborhood. The one-acre square of greenery is flanked by SROs, a mission, and a school. Named for a respected pastor, Father Alfred E. Boeddeker, it was known colloquially as "Prison Park" for its maze of fences, which provided cover for drug deals and muggings. Dead bodies were found there and locals were fearful of venturing inside.

As with Bryant Park **continued on page 25**



GENERAL MOTORS REHABS A LONG-OVERLOOKED TOUCHSTONE OF MIDCENTURY DESIGN

BACK TO THE FUTURE

In the mid-1940s, General Motors (GM) wanted to expand its research and design operations, but needed more space than downtown Detroit could accommodate. Led

by Harley Earl—the first automotive executive to hold the title of Vice President of Design—the company laid out ambitious plans for its new Technical Center, **continued on page 10**

BALTIMORE CONSIDERS REPLACING A BRUTALIST PLAZA WITH A SOFTER LANDSCAPE



Harbor from a rat-infested cesspool of rotting piers and banana boats to the vibrant tourist, business, and residential district it is today. Fifty years later, local architects and landscape architects are trying to continue this tradition by creating a more welcoming gateway to downtown and continue the revitalization along the waterfront. In the process, they have found themselves caught up in Baltimore's biggest preservation and urban **continued on page 26**

FOUNTAIN OF AGE

In the 1960s, then-Baltimore Mayor Theodore McKeldin launched a visionary effort to transform the city's Inner

SPECIAL SECTION: DEVELOPERS

AN INVESTIGATES AFFORDABLE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT IN FOUR URBAN AREAS ACROSS AMERICA: NEW YORK CITY; CHICAGO, ILLINOIS; AUSTIN, TEXAS; AND SILICON VALLEY, CALIFORNIA. SEE PAGE 28. ALSO SEE THE WINNERS OF OUR FIRST ANNUAL BEST OF PRODUCTS AWARDS. SEE PAGE 46.

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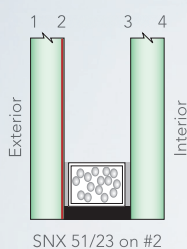
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DENSE AND UNAFFORDABLE

offFor this year’s developer’s feature (p. 28), we selected a topic that is very close to the hearts of AN’s editors: affordability. The price of housing—the focus of our inquiry—has become so ridiculously high in New York City where we live that many of us are wondering how much longer we’ll be able to make ends meet, and some of us (this editor specifically) have decided to pick up and leave for more comfortably arranged and financially feasible pastures (a.k.a. Texas).

As an illustration, here’s a nutshell history of the rent I’ve paid during my time in The Big Apple: In 1998, when I first moved to Williamsburg, Brooklyn, my rent was \$300 per month. I continue to live in that neighborhood, and while I now am able to enjoy good restaurants and not fear racially motivated violence, I pay \$1,700 per month for a 400-square-foot apartment with sagging floors and ceilings, leaky plumbing, mold, limited closet space, periodic roach and rat infestations, and loud/nosy neighbors—and I consider myself lucky. When I depart in August, my landlord, after gussying the place up with a coat of paint, will raise the rent to \$2,500 per month, which, believe it or not, is still below market for the area.

Meanwhile, the development of so-called “luxury” housing in Williamsburg continues with gleeful abandon. It’s hard to find a street in the vicinity without a construction site. And unlike the super luxury housing going up all over Manhattan—which is reportedly being bought up as investment property by billionaires who won’t be living there—folks are actually moving in: startup entrepreneurs, financial advisors, sales reps, advertising “creatives,” the children of the rich; in short, people who make or have more money than architectural editors.

It’s getting more and more crowded and the already overburdened subway lines are becoming more and more sardine-esque. Mayor Bill de Blasio’s decision to allow Two Trees to build even higher towers on its Domino Sugar Factory mega-development in exchange for more affordable units isn’t going to help the transit situation (neither will the mayor’s plan to subsidize increased ferry service, except perhaps for those who live and work by the water). Nor is it going to make an appreciable difference in the lack of reasonably priced apartments. As Alex Ulam reported in his article for this issue on the South Bronx (p. 29), a 2014 tenant lottery for 2,500 subsidized apartments in New York City drew 1.5 million applications. This disparity between supply and demand is providing the bottom pressure to keep rents climbing, and the government’s subsidization of housing and incentivizing to encourage private developers to build below-market units isn’t closing the gap.

So what’s the solution? Well, my answer is leave, or don’t move here. But that’s hardly constructive. And, in any case, the market is teaching us all right now that there’s seemingly no end to the amount of people who want to live in the city and can afford to do so at the going rate. Consequently, there appears to be no limit to the quantity of new housing that the market will support, meaning that building more, even with a quotient of subsidized affordable units, won’t necessarily bring prices down. What it will do is increase density, overwhelm existing transportation options, crowd-out precious public amenity space, and ensure that each and every person who pays more gets less.

As Michael Sorkin said in our “Voices of Architecture” feature (AN 05_04.01.2015), “We must also question the idea of density as unmitigated good.” I’m inclined to agree with him. In this instance, while density does not necessarily result in unaffordability—Pruitt-Igoe, whose demolition pictures open our feature on affordable housing, illustrates another kind of problematic density—in the current mode of urbanization they tend to go hand-in-hand. At Pruitt-Igoe the highly concentrated poverty of HUD’s scheme created unbearable living conditions. We are now creating ever more densely packed concentrations of wealth, a trend that could turn out to be no less enervating to the vitality of our cities. **AARON SEWARD**



CHICAGO ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION HOTEL

Back in the Game

After a meticulous two-year restoration effort, a Chicago architectural icon is ready for another bout. The Chicago Athletic Association Hotel (CAA) first opened in 1893 on Michigan Avenue where it served the city’s elite as a private sports and leisure club before closing in 2007.

Designed by Henry Ives Cobb, the 250-foot tower was intended to dazzle visitors in town for the 1893 World’s Fair. Made of stone and red brick, the building was a pioneer in adapting the vertical lines of Venetian Gothic to steel-framed skyscrapers. In its heyday the CAA boasted member names like Spalding and even Wrigley, who adapted the club’s logo for the Chicago Cubs.

The vintage building has been reimagined as a 241-room luxury hotel through a partnership among AJ Capital Partners, Geolo Capital, Agman Partners, Commune Hotels + Resorts, Roman and Williams Buildings and Interiors, and Chicago-based Hartshorne Plunkard Architecture (HPA). The Chicago Athletic Association Hotel’s 17,000 square feet features event space, a restored gymnasium, a game room inspired by classic recreational activities, multiple restaurants, retail space, and a rooftop lounge.

Reviving a historic site, which had been continually modified throughout its 114-year existence, involved tackling the layers of additive work. “The historic material that we started with represented every era from 1893 to 2007,” said Paul Alessandro, partner at Hartshorne Plunkard Architecture.

In the White City Ballroom, ceiling tiles forming a stalactite with an Edison light bulb at the tip were reproduced to match historic photographs of the space. HPA’s master plasterer worked with the company responsible for the original plasterwork to mold new tiles onsite. The suspended ceiling leaves access for modern equipment below the original structural deck. “The ceiling is essentially the most expensive lay-in ceiling ever built,” said Alessandro.

“From an architectural perspective, no detail was overlooked in the restoration project,” said Lynn Osmond, president and CEO of Chicago Architecture Foundation. Even the guest room furniture was custom designed to reference CAA’s athletic past, with leather-clad benches in each room fashioned after pommel horses.

Yet the greatest architectural triumph at CAA might be a completely new addition. The rooftop bar, Cindy’s, provides guests with a spectacular view of the city; it also provided the development team with unique structural challenges. HPA’s structural engineer cantilevered trusses to support the bar’s exterior walls.

Stepping into the building’s lustrous marble entry from the rush of Michigan Avenue feels like entering a hallowed space. The Chicago Athletic Association Hotel still caters to guests of privilege—witness its rarified Millennium Park vistas and an original Andy Warhol portrait of Cindy Pritzker—but thanks to the efforts of its dedicated development team those of more modest means can find in its spaces a taste of leisure and luxury. **JESSICA MLINARIC**

Gores Group Headquarters



BENNY CHAN

CORRECTIONS

In our story on the history of the Whitney Museum of American Art, “Vestiges of Bohemian New York” (AN 07_05.20.2015), we stated that the Noel & Miller Architects—designed 54th Street Whitney stood on the site of MOMA’s Lewis B. and Dorothy Cullman Education and Research Center, which is to the east of the museum’s Philip Johnson—designed sculpture garden. In fact, it was sited at 22 West 54th Street on the west side of the garden. In addition, the euro-centric museum

mentioned in the article was in fact the Museum of Modern Art, not the Museum of American Art.

In our story “Surprises Under the Skin” on Belzberg Architects’ Beverly Hills office building for the Gores Group (AN 07_05.20.2015), we incorrectly listed Wiretech as the manufacturer who produced the glass. In reality, Pulp Studio worked on the project.

We regret the errors.



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THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER JULY 22, 2015



U.S.A! U.S.A! continued from front page and Paralympians through a series of narrative exhibition spaces. The U.S. Olympic Committee selected DS+R as part of a national RFQ/RFP Process. "They felt like we had the aspirational quality in our design work to take on the challenge," said DS+R Principal-in-Charge of the project, Ben Gilmartin.

With majestic Pikes Peak serving as a backdrop, the museum is sited beside historic train tracks on the edge of downtown Colorado Springs. About a 10-minute walk from the center of the city, it is in part intended to act as a catalyst for urban development. A pedestrian bridge will cross the train tracks and connect the museum to America The Beautiful Park and the residential areas beyond.

Architecturally, the design is meant to embody the ambition and drive of Olympians and Paralympians. "We don't deal with much symbolism in our work," said Gilmartin. "But we think about this project capturing the aspiration toward performance, if you will." The building

emerges out of the landscape, representing an athlete in repose, and culminates in a soaring atrium space with galleries positioned around it, like petals on a flower. These two parts of the building, the low and the high, bracket a plaza that welcomes visitors coming from downtown, while framing a view of the mountains beyond. Museumgoers are drawn to the top of the atrium first, and then descend down through the gallery spaces, which step down in a spiral formation. A stainless steel shingle cladding system will react to sunlight, creating a sense of movement on the facade. DS+R is working on the project with Denver firm Anderson Mason Dale Architects and D.C.-based exhibit designers Gallagher and Associates. Pacific Studio is the exhibit fabricator and Barrie Projects of Cleveland is providing museum consultation services. The general contractor is GE Johnson of Colorado Springs. Construction is slated to begin in Spring 2016 with completion expected in time for the 2018 Winter Olympics, which are to be held in Pyeongchang, South Korea. **AS**

COURTESY DILLER SCOFIDIO + RENFRO

EAVESDROP> THE EDITORS

DRUM ROLL ...

The 15th annual Venice Architecture Biennale kicks off in less than a year, but we still do not know who will be its director. Sure, the 56th International Art Exhibition is underway right now in Venice, and we have plenty of time before next year's architecture festivities, but these announcements usually come about a year-and-a-half before the festival, and we're waiting with bated breath! Take the 2014 festival, for example. **Rem Koolhaas** was announced as the director for that year's exhibition all the way back in January 2013. We got the word in June that **Cynthia Davidson** and **Monica Ponce de Leon** are curating the U.S. Pavilion, but the overall show is still shrouded in mystery. Some have speculated that the radio silence could mean that the Biennale will have **Rem** give it another shot, as a follow-up to 2014. This would not be uncharted territory as this was standard practice in the 1970s and 1980s.

AN reached out to the Venice Biennale to see what the hold up was with the naming of this year's director, and to see when a name might be revealed. As of press time, we had not heard back. The suspense continues!

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La Casa seeks to change the pattern of homelessness through design, a central location, and onsite amenities.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA EXPERIMENTS WITH NEW HOUSING MODEL FOR THE HOMELESS

UPWARD MOBILITY

The District of Columbia is experimenting with an innovative antidote to chronic homelessness. The city has built its first permanent supportive housing featuring single-occupancy units and facilities on par with the surrounding market-rate condominiums in the middle-class neighborhood of Columbia Heights. The La Casa Supportive Housing project, designed by Studio Twenty Seven Architecture and Leo A Daly for the Department of Human Services, is being eyed as a potential prototype for a housing model that aims

to de-stigmatize homelessness.

Stemming from the ethos that quality design inspires pride of ownership, the concept as a whole presupposes that once base survival and shelter needs are met, the homeless can concentrate on achieving upward mobility. "Those who live in La Casa have jobs, they have things that they do—they just aren't making enough money to afford housing. Now they can devote their attention to other aspects of living," said John Burke, a principal at Studio Twenty Seven Architecture.

The goal of the design was to avoid an institutional look while distinguishing the building among the area's high-density residential developments. On the facade, the architects used a solid-void pattern of concrete and Trespa panels to create warmth, while adding economical yet on-trend design flourishes such as offbeat storefront-glass fenestration, a green roof, and a double-height glass-enclosed lobby. The 29,129-square-foot building is seeking LEED Gold certification.

"Very specifically, we attempted to address the street by doing a glass lobby that would glow like a lantern," said Burke. "The fenestration is an attempt to pick up on some of the energy of the street and define a prototype that's not really in existence right now. So it's not really an apartment building but it's not really a dormitory." At seven stories high, the project features 40 residential units at 400 square feet each, equipped with a bedroom, living room, bathroom, kitchen, and dining area.

There are seven units per floor—including one ADA-accessible unit—interspersed with offices where residents can seek employment and housing placement, substance abuse counseling, case management, and financial management assistance. A community room on the second floor opens to an outdoor terrace, while the basement is equipped with laundry and storage spaces. "It's a very vibrant area of DC, it's a block from the Columbia Heights Metro Station and so there's a tremendous amount of street life and diversity," said Burke. "For that reason we wanted the building to blend in and become part of what enhances that neighborhood." **KINDRA COOPER**



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BAR LUCE

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Designer: Wes Anderson

The characters in Wes Anderson's films occupy an otherworldly realm, a hybrid of fantastical imaginings and vintage, time-capsule-like environments. These places are at once familiar and enchantingly dreamlike. Now the filmmaker's ethereal sets have come to life in the recently opened Bar Luce located within the OMA-designed Fondazione Prada in Milan.

The new rambling foundation is housed in a former 1910 distillery and consists of seven existing structures and three new ones. Located in a historic building within the complex, the space was designed by Anderson to be reminiscent of a typical Milanese café. Restoration work was required for much of the interior's architectural details, including the arched ceiling which mimics the iconic vaulted glass roof of the Galleria Vittorio Emanuele. The bar's patterned decoration

is also evocative of the Milan landmark. "There is no ideal angle for this space. It is for real life, and ought to have numerous good spots for eating, drinking, talking, reading, etc.," explained Anderson in a statement.

Not surprisingly, Anderson looked to Italian cinema for inspiration—specifically, Vittorio De Sica's *Miracle in Milan* and *Rocco and His Brothers* by Luchino Visconti—which gave way to the 1950s and 60s-esque touches, such as formica furniture, chairs, terrazzo floor, and veneered wood wall panels. A mostly subdued color palette is juxtaposed with a few bright pops of pink and neon green, calling to mind a certain style of decor that was popular at the time in Italy. Design components from Anderson's short film *Castello Cavalcanti* resurface in the café.

"While I do think it would make a pretty good movie set, I think it would be an even better place to write a movie. I tried to make it a bar I would want to spend my own non-fictional afternoons in," explained Anderson.

But even in those non-fictional moments at Café Luce, visitors can sip on a caffè macchiato, play a song on the jukebox, and enter into Anderson's fictitious world through a game on a Steve Zissou pinball machine.

NICOLE ANDERSON



ATTILIO MARANZANO/FONDAZIONE PRADA



Photograph: Tom Jernigan

Sub Culture

Every day 300,000 subway riders stream through Manhattan's **Fulton Center**, their underground trek now brightened by entertainment venues and daylight reflected from its skylit cable-net overhead. An integrated artwork by **James Carpenter Design Associates**, **Grimshaw Architects**, and **Arup**, this marvel of collaboration is a new bright spot beneath city streets. Read more about it in **Metals in Construction** online.

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Just as Eero Saarinen's midcentury campus for GM is granted landmark status, the company embarks on a renovation of the iconic Technical Center and plans for a new IT facility.

BACK TO THE FUTURE continued from front page purchasing 710 acres of farmland in the Detroit suburb of Warren, Michigan.

They hired the firm lead by Finnish-American architect Eero Saarinen to design the campus. When he died before the design was complete, GM decided to stick with the relatively small firm, now under the leadership of Eero's son, the young and unproven Eero Saarinen.

Earl wanted a designer that would represent GM as a forward-thinking company. He got that and more with Saarinen, who designed the 1.1-square-mile campus in the International Style, distinguished by rectilinear buildings, smooth surfaces, and more than 19,000 employees.

The campus is an architectural masterpiece, and it was designated a National Historic Landmark in 2014 by the U.S. Department of the Interior. Since the grand opening in 1956, however, the campus has remained largely closed to the public due to the secretive nature of researching and designing the next generation of GM automobiles.

"When you consider the enormity of this campus and its importance to architectural history, it's not a very well-told story," said Susan Skarsgard, design manager at GM.

In May, GM began a \$1 billion dollar renovation of the Technical Center, rescuing architecturally significant features from flood damage from



COURTESY GENERAL MOTORS

2014—the very year that the campus was designated a national landmark. GM will also build a new IT center to accommodate 2,600 new employees, among other upgrades, over the next three years.

Saarinen believed in total design cohesion, that everything should be built for its next larger context—a chair for a room, a room for a building, a building for a complex. This concept is elegantly instituted through modular design around the campus, resulting in a geometry that every space and object abides to or at least acknowledges. Buildings, offices, windows, desks, the steps of a staircase, ceiling panels, and even the main lake all conform to a five-foot module.

Beautiful irregularities stand out against the hard geometry of rectangles. Many of the complex's walls are made out of eye-catching glazed brick, which has both a machine-like sheen and a handmade

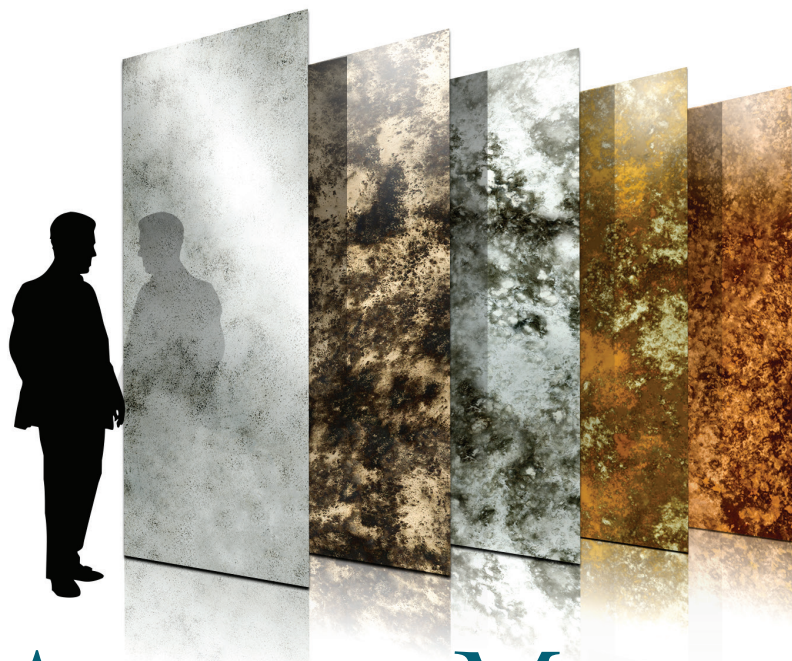
touch as countless small blemishes create variations in color. Saarinen also commissioned numerous works of art, such as Harry Bertoia's *Textured Screen*, made of bronzed sheet metal, and Gwen Lux's *Power and Direction*, an abstract sculpture reminiscent of the Buick Y-Job, designed by Earl as the industry's first concept car. Kevin Roche's spiral staircase in the Research & Design Administration Building is a wonder of physics. Built from Norwegian granite slabs totaling over 25 tons, the staircase appears suspended, somehow held together by the tension of thin, stainless steel spokes connected at its base.

The eye never tires at the Technical Center, whether it settles on any of the inviting lobbies with canopies extending over plazas or the Design Dome, an auditorium whose aluminum exterior is thinner than an eggshell.

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A NEW RESIDENTIAL TOWER IN RIVER NORTH BOASTS AN OREGONIAN SENSIBILITY



CAROL MOY/HPA

The Portlandia-fication of Downtown Chicago

Downtown Chicago is in the midst of a rental boom, with more than 3,000 apartments expected to come online by the end of the year—a record that may last only until 2016, when another 5,000 apartments are on track to arrive.

Among the hot neighborhoods is River North, where Portland, Oregon-based Gerding Edlen teamed up with Chicago's Structure Management Midwest to help the West Coast developer make its local debut: a \$68 million, 25-story tower with 188 luxury apartments. Dubbed Jones Chicago, the building first appeared in renderings by Hartshorne Plunkard Architects (HPA) in 2007. The recession "halted those plans, preserving a surface parking lot at 220 W. Illinois Street for another seven years. General contractors Lend Lease topped out in December, and the building finally opened for tenants in March.

The project returned to find a different River North than when it first planned to build in the area. Although the developer's motto—"people, planet, prosperity"—has drawn the inevitable references to *Portlandia*, its Chicago offering is decidedly luxe for many denizens of that fictionalized Pacific Northwest. Studios start at \$1,825, while a one bedroom with a den costs \$2,675 per month.

Still, The Jones boasts some unique flourishes that its developers hope will bring a Portland touch to "the design-forward, entrepreneurial values" of the neighborhood, which has in recent years replaced rundown warehouses with high-tech offices and upscale lofts. Smart thermostats from Google-owned Nest regulate the exposed-concrete

units, while an integrated building HVAC system diverts heat pump condensation to irrigate native plants on the third-floor pool deck. A hybrid window-wall system conceals massive shear walls behind a glassy street frontage, helping the energy-efficient building on its way to achieving LEED Gold certification.

A veritable parking garage for cyclists can hold 135 bikes while a standard parking structure contains spots for 154 cars, as well as 1,700 square feet of ground-level retail space. Dog owners are invited to a private dog parklet on the sixth floor, complete with a dog wash, astroturf, and heat lamps for year-round use.

Though the building in a sense tells the story of the new River North—pricey, post-industrial, in-demand—its development also includes the rehabilitation of a local landmark. An 1887 firehouse abuts the new tower, awaiting a new tenant now that HPA and the Jones team have stabilized it, reaping historic preservation incentives in the process. The handsome 19th century facade inspired an abstract pattern on the new building: Metal patterns concealing concrete panels on the parking deck are perforated with shapes adapted from the firehouse.

Gerding Edlen also hopes to open a 240-unit, \$76 million rental building at 625 W. Division Street in the fall. That building will be LEED Gold certified, according to the developers, and will also create 48 units of affordable housing (only half are required to be on site).

CB

A new luxury tower in Chicago's River North neighborhood offers Oregon-like amenities, including a dog parklet and pool deck.



STEVE SOMEN/COURTESY GERDING EDLEN



Architect: Skidmore, Owings & Merrill
Structural Engineer: WSP Cantor Seinuk
Photograph: Tex Jernigan

World View

While the world watched, **One World Trade Center** grew in both height and symbolism, its 1,776-foot crystalline form bringing unmatched views back to Lower Manhattan. A redundant structural steel frame, the result of creative collaboration between **Skidmore, Owings & Merrill** and **WSP Cantor Seinuk**, ensures that its safety is as substantial as its stature. Read more about it in **Metals in Construction** online.

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THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER JULY 22, 2015

CINCINNATI'S CAROUSEL IS PART OF A RECENT WAVE OF CONTEMPORARY URBAN WHIRLIGIGS

MERRY-GO-ROUND-UP

KZF's Carol Ann's Carousel features figures inspired by Cincinnati landmarks.

The carousel game is changing dramatically as cities look to revitalize their downtowns with family-oriented urban activity. This spring has seen two brand new carousels open, both of which are housed in contemporary architectural pavilions. Carol Ann's Carousel opened in April at Smale Riverfront Park on the banks of the Ohio River. The 44-character, \$1 million carousel sits inside of a \$4.5 million glass pavilion designed by Cincinnati architects KZF Design. It is situated alongside a public fountain plaza.

"The whole 30-acre park along the river is designed by Sasaki to be contemporary, and has really brought the downtown back to life. We wanted

the carousel to add one more attraction. We already have the world's largest [outdoor] foot piano," said Steve Schuckman, superintendent of Cincinnati's Division of Planning and Design/Program Services. "The glass box allows it to be an attraction year-round, as well as capitalizes on the stunning views of the Roebling Bridge."

The all-custom carousel itself draws upon the history and culture of Cincinnati, including the architecture of what was once the epicenter of the pre-railroad Midwest. The figures were hand-carved by artisans at Carousel Works in Mansfield, Ohio, the world's largest maker of wooden carousels.

The characters and landmarks

were decided upon through a survey of the community. Final carousel figures include an elephant wearing the Cincinnati Zoo Elephant House as a hat, a giraffe wearing the "tiara" from Cincinnati's tallest building, the iconic Great American Tower, and a gorilla that pays homage to the city's former tallest building, the historic Carew Tower.

"Cincinnati buildings just have so much unique architecture, there was just a huge abundance of elements for us to look at and work with," said Kate Blakley of Carousel Works.

"We tried to take the concept and instead of doing a literal interpretation, we worked each building into a design. There are little details of architectural

elements hidden in there, and there are Easter Eggs once you look closer. Even if you don't know anything about Cincinnati."

The building is a "jewel box" style design that is based loosely on Jean Nouvel's Jane's Carousel pavilion in Brooklyn. However, Schuckman explained that Cincinnati's new building will have more amenities, including restrooms, support services for parties, and a conference space on the floor below. It is also built above the 100-year flood line.

Cincinnati is not the only city to be jumping on the contemporary spinning jinny bandwagon. Heading east, to Manhattan's downtown tip, families can enjoy the SeaGlass Carousel at The Battery, an unconventional carousel that will feature a school of fiberglass fish that will bounce up and down on hydraulics, while glowing from inside. The carousel and modern pavilion were designed by WXY Architects, and will be an immersive environment that will feature integrated music as well.

Both of these carousel pavilions point toward a larger trend of carousels as urban landmarks embedded within urban revitalization schemes. Many older carousels have been refurbished and relocated to modern buildings. Jane's Carousel sets the standard, and is cited as inspiration for both the Cincinnati pavilion

and Cleveland's new merry-go-round, the Euclid Beach Carousel, encased in a glass building by Richard Fleischman + Partners Architects of Cleveland, which opened in 2014.

Bette Largent, president of the National Carousel Association and publisher of the carousel trade magazine the *Merry-Go-Roundup*, explained the importance of the buildings, whether for wooden carousels or for fiberglass renditions. "New or old, the carousel is becoming more profitable if it is climate controlled. Many owners of old signature style buildings are understanding this and are adding air-conditioning for summer operations and have seen significant ridership and profit due to this. It also is more comfortable for the public and protects the wooden figures."

Although many new air-conditioned spaces have opened for a variety of carousels old and new, the Ohio pavilions along with New York's are setting the standard for modern carousel design. The Ohio-New York axis is nothing new in urban design, as Cincinnati's Roebling Bridge (1867), served as a prototype for the Brooklyn Bridge, completed in 1883. While bridges and large infrastructure were a defining feature of cities in the industrializing 19th century, the advent of small-scale urban interventions, such as parks, improved landscaping,



COURTESY ROBERT A. FLISCHEL

and of course, carousels, are playing integral roles in shaping today's urban experience.

We have rounded up some of our favorite new carousel pavilions below. **MATT SHAW**

- 1 **JANE'S CAROUSEL**
BROOKLYN, NY
JEAN NOUVEL
2011
- 2 **CAROL ANN'S CAROUSEL**
CINCINNATI, OH
KZF
2015
- 3 **SEAGLASS CAROUSEL**
AT THE BATTERY
NEW YORK
WXY ARCHITECTURE
2015 (PLANNED)
- 4 **EUCLID BEACH CAROUSEL**
CLEVELAND, OH
RICHARD FLEISCHMAN + PARTNERS ARCHITECTS
2014



COURTESY JEAN NOUVEL



ROBERT A. FLISCHEL



THE BATTERY



COURTESY RICHARD FLEISCHMAN



CHARLES ROUSSEL/MOMA

COSMO is amazing. The spectacular water-filtering monstrosity that looms over MoMA PS1's courtyard is an exercise in

making beautiful form that reifies the political forces behind global networks. The tropical blue and orange character

evokes everything from Lapidus to Archigram to Gaudi. The brilliance and execution of its design is undeniable.

I was sitting underneath COSMO—designed by Andres Jaque / Office for Political Innovation—when the music and other activities started to take hold. The large tires that connect the pavilion to the ground felt a little smoother, like the feet of a slippery swamp being. It was now coming to life, like a fluorescent, flora-haired demon. The ground became wobbly and wheat grew up from the ground. Was the monster harvesting the grain?

Where I once saw tubs of algae and plants, I now saw vats of beer being brewed. The clear tubes were full of amber-hued liquid. The DJ said something about cooling off and the rings at the top of the monster began to spin, disconnecting the tubes and spraying beer all over the crowd. I felt good that the monster was shading me from the sun, and spraying

water on me. It felt good to be engaged with a structure like this.

As I stood there, I came to the realization that COSMO doesn't even exist in the PS1 courtyard. Its site is the Internet, Instagram, and Facebook. Its message of sustainability doesn't need a physical site. It is just another piece in MoMA's self-indulgent, publicity-obsessed curatorial stance. Unfortunately, much architecture is this way now—designed for publicity, branding, and raising awareness, rather than physical experience of space. COSMO is brilliant in so many ways, but MoMA has turned YAP into a green-washed farce that makes it impossible for young architects to make truly architecturally engaging work. Though detached in many ways from the practice of architecture, COSMO, for its enterprising purpose and for the visual spectacle in itself, is worth the trek on the G train.

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THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER JULY 22, 2015



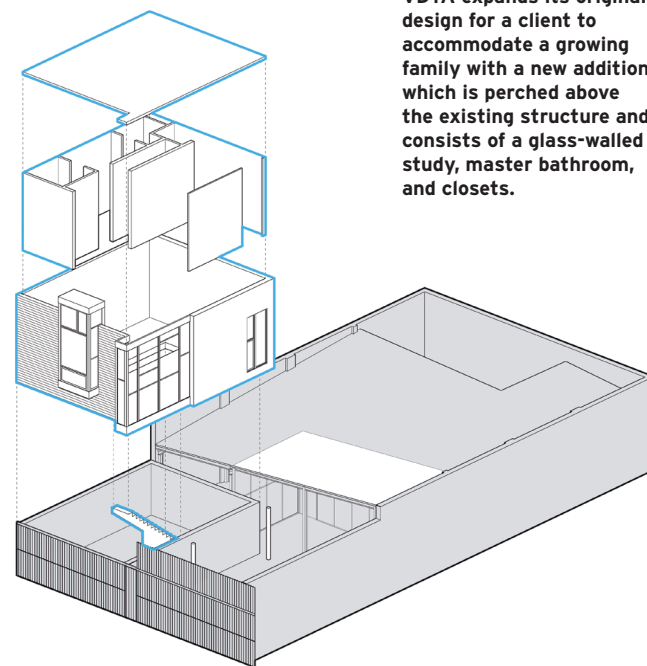
Before Bruce Doblin found a defunct T-shirt factory suitable for a single-family build-out, he had been shopping for outmoded structures in Chicago's Wicker Park. When an otherwise alluring space there revealed prohibitive environmental problems, he turned his attention to another North Side neighborhood: Ravenswood. His architect, Joe Valerio of Valerio Dewalt Train Associates (VDTA), got a challenging commission with shifting ground rules. Straight away, they discovered that non-structural partitions were all that held up the bow-trussed wooden roof, and that the failed trusses were pushing out the masonry walls.

It was significantly cheaper to insert a new steel frame roof instead of repairing the trusses. This also allowed the use of jacks to slowly pull the walls back to vertical. And so, by creative response to calamity, the home got a defining feature: a parabolic metal roofline

perforated by tiny acoustic dampening holes and large skylights. During the build-out, the entire front facade fell onto the sidewalk. This incident, however, led to the one-of-a-kind windowless corrugated steel facade with scissoring doors to the garden and garage.

Another wrench in Valerio's

design scheme came a decade after he thought his work was done. "Bruce emailed me to say he was dating one of my clients [Lisa Wainwright, who, as Dean of Faculty at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, was the point person for VDTA's work on the new student center]. Then, four or five



VDTA expands its original design for a client to accommodate a growing family with a new addition, which is perched above the existing structure and consists of a glass-walled study, master bathroom, and closets.

VALERIO DEWALT TRAIN ASSOCIATES

months later I hear Lisa's moving in and that they were getting married. Not only that, but she was bringing her son."

Wainwright moved from a highly structured classicism to spare modernism, using art to warm the space. "I'm a control freak and I have a very specific aesthetic sensibility," she said. "In this instance, I decided to let go. Bruce and I made a deal. I curated the space and he worked on the design side. I love how the garden spills into the home, and how it's a walled-in oasis. I understand Le Corbusier much better now."

The original house, finished in 2002, typifies Mies Van Der Rohe's concept of universal space, one room with limitless possibilities for partitioning. It is the sum of an L-shaped glass curtain wall, steel frame, concrete floors, and masonry walls. "I warned Bruce that he was doing a very unusual house," said Valerio, "and he said 'No problem Joe, I'm never going to get married.'" Valerio wasn't convinced his complete home concept would stand up to adaptation, but it did, and magically so.

The idea was to make the addition part of the house but avoid any encroachment on the main

space. It vaults above the masonry walls as a periscope to the world—a space that takes in a slice of the neighborhood and passing trains. As in the original space, one refers primarily to the courtyard gardens for awareness of the changing seasons. "It's the extroverted part of the house, designed with Lisa in mind," said Valerio. "She's the big-thinking extrovert and Bruce is the calm and collected doctor."

Wainwright eventually took over the addition. Initially, it was meant for her son but once the plans were drawn up, she said, it was too good to hand over to a teenager. Her glass-walled study is the centerpiece, and the new master bathroom with granite shower, clerestory windows, and his-and-hers walk-in closets are off to the side.

For her son, Wainwright gutted the original master bathroom with its sculpture garden frontage and made it the second bedroom. With unprecedented physical separation in the home came greater privacy and tranquility.

"The best question Joe asked me was 'How many shoes do you own?'" Said Wainwright. "And I thought, I like this guy. I had always liked his designs." **IAN SPULA**



PHOTOS: STEVE HALL

INSIDE OUTSIDE LIVING.

The frameless insulated sliding doors by Sky-Frame blend naturally into their surroundings.
So it is hard to say where the living room ends and where the view starts: **SKY-FRAME.NET**

SKY-FRAME



Pioneer architect and urbanist Charles Correa practiced in Bombay from 1958 to 2015. While drawing freely from diverse sources in style and ideology, he remained independent in crafting an oeuvre that remains both monumental and accessible. His architecture evokes vibrant impressions of the sun and shadows, of color and theater, within projects simultaneously reflective and aspirational. The memorial to Mahatma Gandhi in Ahmedabad (1958–1963), at once intimate and boundless; the Champalimaud Cancer Centre in Lisbon (2007–2010), a heroic call to arms for an engagement with new horizons yet to be explored. In between are

projects diverse in scale and significance, but always probing interdependencies between places and people.

An appraisal of Correa's work demands a sensibility for "sun cultures," as he and the post-independence Indian architects that dominated our attention, often referred to building in warm climates. Here, as he often said, "space is a resource, and man, its measure." Charles's articulation of beauty was one built around endurance and rootedness. This didn't mean immobility, or resistance to adaptation. Rather the opposite; within a bounded space, meaning was ascribed through movement: a nomadic occupation

of a building, a public space, or a mythical landscape that responded to the climate and culture.

For every iconic project—a high-rise in Mumbai (Kanchenjunga), a state capitol building (Madhya Pradesh's Vidhan Bhavan), or a headquarters for the British Council in New Delhi—there were numerous housing and urban propositions designed within more modest means. Elements of architecture became the means to overcome limitations of budgets, resources, and technology. They became the "connective tissue" between the deeply embedded traditions and the changes occurring in the aspirations of an emerging

nation. Courtyards and verandahs were active agents, swelling towards and retreating from the sun during seasonal cycles. Colors, murals, visual motifs, and diagrams became tools to extend the perceptions of space to fold in deeper structures of the cultural psyche. His application of these actively resisted the modernist urge towards abstraction. And yet, they were carefully calibrated and composed with the eye of an auteur.

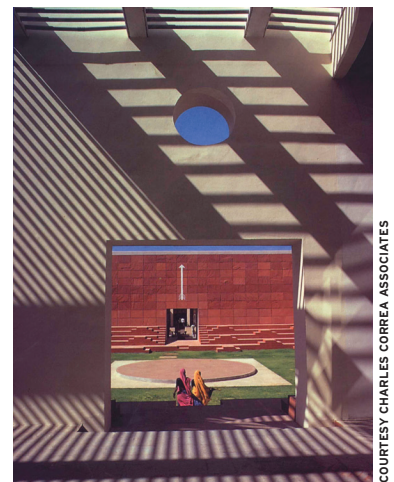
Charles was part of the heroic generation of architects in India, negotiating traditions and modernity in a recently independent nation. But he maintained an ambiguous relationship with institutions, unlike many of his contemporaries who were more intensely involved with students at schools of architecture across India and abroad. Instead, Charles wrote about his concerns, curated architectural exhibitions in collaboration with national cultural councils, and was an urban activist, seeking a wider audience beyond the architectural community. There was clarity and courage in tackling the complexities of sub-continental identity, urbanity, and social justice, coupled with levity and exuberance though humor and wit. His manner was immediately positioned through the prism of everyday middle class concerns.

Charles' studio was small for the scale and significance of the projects that came out of it. This compactness encouraged a collegial environment.

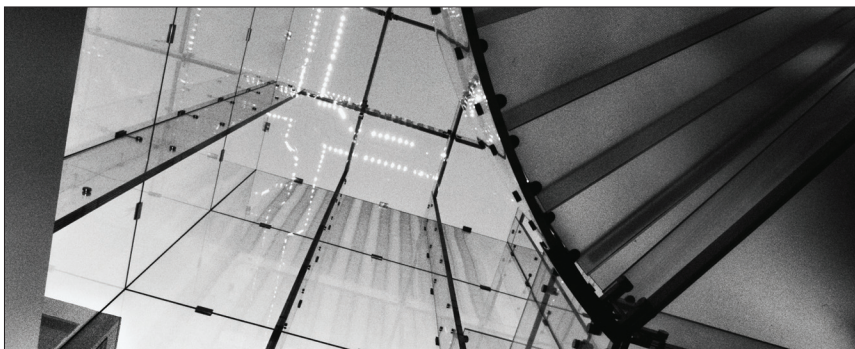
Hard labor was expected, as it often is when working in a master studio, but so was an egalitarian attitude toward learning. In the context of the hierarchical social milieu around us, this was remarkable—being encouraged to speak up, debate the work we were engaged in, regardless of one's pecking order in an office structure. For Charles, the teacher was to be trusted, and through our trust in him, we taught ourselves.

He often asked me who my, and by extension, my generation's heroes were, probably wondering if we even had heroes in the midst of contemporary skepticism. He was mine. **SHUBHRA RAJE**

Below: Charles Correa's Jawahar Kala Kendra, an arts center, in Jaipur was completed in the early 1990s.



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An advertisement for DeSimone Consulting Engineers. The background is a photograph of a tall, modern skyscraper (50 West) in New York City at dusk, with its lights reflecting on the surrounding buildings and the water. The text "DESIMONE" is prominently displayed at the top in a large, serif font. Below the image, the text reads: "DeSimone Consulting Engineers is an award-winning global leader in providing high-quality structural engineering services. Celebrating 45 years of excellence." At the bottom, the website "www.de-simone.com" is listed.

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Taking advantage of the Small Lot Ordinance, Bestor Architecture balances Angelenos' desire for the single-family home with the city's growing need for density.

in the city have often been mediocre and formulaic, which has led to local resistance. But in response to those trying to do away with the small lots measure, she is hoping to show how the projects can mesh with and improve a neighborhood, and that if small lot developers invest in design they will be able to turn healthy profits.

Considering the team's design ambition, managing the restrictions and conflicts posed by both the ordinance and the local zoning required a lot of extra effort, added Local Construct cofounder Casey Lynch.

"It required going back and forth between the various departments to get approvals for things they're not used to seeing," he said.

The arrangement of tightly-packed housing around common space is not unprecedented, but the contemporary mix of sizes and shapes as well as the interaction with the hilly landscape makes it uniquely Los Angeles. It could become a new model for those Angelenos who are looking for greater density and community, but are not quite ready to give up on the quirky, outdoor, and spacious lifestyle they've grown accustomed to. **SAM LUBELL**

BLACKBIRDS PROVES THAT GOOD, DENSE HOUSING ISN'T A FLIGHT OF FANCY

FLOCK TOGETHER

As space runs out and prices surge, the single-family house becomes less and less practical in Los Angeles. Yet residents are loath to abandon this staple of Southern California living.

Into the void steps Blackbirds, a new community in the Echo Park Hills designed by Bestor Architecture and developed by Local Construct. Essentially, the project is a hybrid between a cluster of single-family homes and a courtyard apartment complex. Architect Barbara Bestor calls it "stealth density": clusters of duplex and triplex townhouses and single-family residences centered around a rectangular, planted street. Some structures are dug deep into the ground to create more space and fit into the hillside landscape.

Bestor's team overlaid several studies of the neighborhood's local housing and topology to fit the project into its relatively tight site.

"Once you're in it, it definitely feels like you're in a courtyard housing situation, but from the outside it looks like it could be part of the neighborhood context," said Bestor.

Outside, each home is clad in horizontal black hardy siding or vertical white standing seam metal. The living spaces take advantage of the California climate and feature vaulted ceilings thanks to shed and gabled roofs, skylights, rooftop decks, private patios (and in some cases yards), and cantilevered balconies. The interiors feature open floor plans, and industrial-sized windows with city and mountain views. Spaces flow from one to the next, and verticality makes them seem much larger than they are.

In essence Bestor has created a new type of village, embedded into the topography and dotted with fir trees, grass, and other colorful and inventive landscaping designed by Mia Lehrer + Associates. Interaction

with neighbors is inevitable, from the kitchens that face the courtyard to the common parking area to the community garden.

This type of density was made possible by LA's 2005 Small Lot Ordinance, which encourages infill development on smaller, subdivided city lots. Houses here are bought separately, not as condos. A little-used section of that ordinance also allowed the team to pursue landscaping, land carving, and gardens within the parking area, rather than creating covered garages. By removing cars, the inner courtyard can also be used for large events and community gatherings.

"We were trying to create density but maintain a high level of quality," said Bestor. Small lot developments

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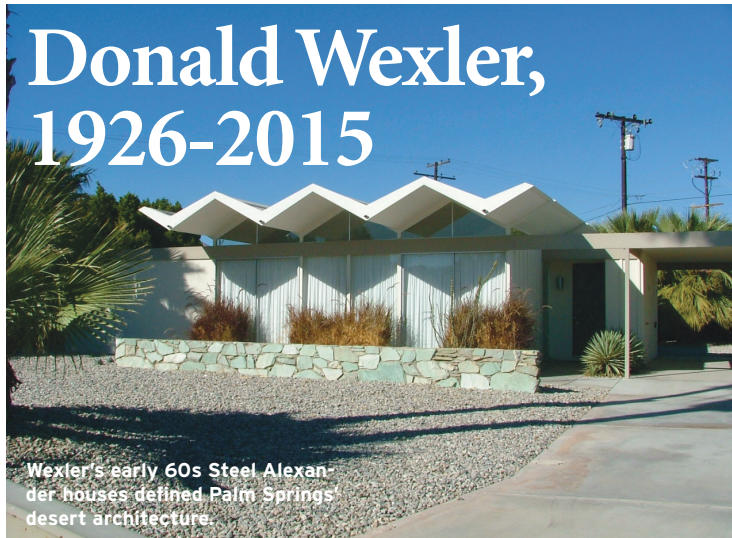


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Wexler's early 60s Steel Alexander houses defined Palm Springs' desert architecture.

COURTESY ALAN HESS

Donald Wexler, 1926-2015

No one realized it at the time, but midcentury Palm Springs was a golden age of modern architecture. Donald Wexler, one of its leading figures, died June 26 at age 89. He and his remarkably talented local colleagues (William Francis Cody, Albert Frey, E. Stewart Williams, Richard Harrison, John Porter Clark, Hugh Kaptur, and others) were committed to modern principles, but each brought originality to their designs.

Wexler's designs were straightforward, clean, never excessive, and turned the essence of their structural systems into elegant, creative buildings. When he moved to Palm Springs in 1951, it was the

right place to practice that kind of architecture.

He seemed to have a knack for being in the right place at the right time. On a 1950 trip to Los Angeles after graduating from the University of Minnesota School of Architecture, he concocted a way to meet his hero, Richard Neutra: Pretending he wanted a job, he asked for an interview. When Neutra actually offered him a job, his plan to return to Minnesota vanished. The next year he moved to the desert to work for Cody, and in 1953 he and another Cody employee, Richard Harrison, formed their own partnership.

The desert community turned out to be an ideal place for a young

architect: Schools, custom homes, tract homes, stores, civic buildings, country clubs, gas stations, offices, and even airports were in demand. Wexler would get opportunities to design each building type.

He remained focused on the fundamental modern ideals that he admired in Neutra: expressing modern materials and structures, as well as creating comfortable spaces that took advantage of indoor-outdoor living.

With new schools in demand in the growing area, Wexler noticed a prefabricated steel frame system developed by Calcor Corporation structural engineer Bernard Perlin. Working with Perlin, he and Harrison used it to build a series of school buildings beginning in 1957 that were both more economical than standard construction and stood up to the desert's extreme climate. Typical of Wexler, the buildings also boasted elegantly proportioned structural members.

Wexler and Perlin saw even greater possibilities for steel systems applied to housing—something of a Holy Grail that had long captivated modern architects (including Buckminster Fuller, Raphael Soriano, Craig Ellwood, and Wexler's hero, Neutra). Beginning in 1961, Wexler and Harrison developed the same system into a successful, prefabricated, all-steel mass-produced house for

the Alexander Construction Company, a large homebuilder in Palm Springs. The system combined a factory-prefabricated kitchen, a bathroom, and wall units; the walls could be erected on a concrete pad in an eight-hour day. Different steel roof configurations added visual variety.

Wexler continued to use the steel system for custom homes, and intriguingly for the prefabricated room units integrated into the 1971 Contemporary Hotel, designed by Welton Becket and Associates, for Walt Disney World.

Wexler's many residential designs ranged from a classic wood post and beam design for his own house that was modular and easily expanded as his family grew, to modern tract homes and even a luxurious steel and adobe block residence for Dinah Shore.

After he and partner Richard Harrison parted amicably in 1961, Wexler won the commission for the Palm Springs International Airport over larger and more experienced Los Angeles firms. The two-story entry hall—rotated 45 degrees—and the oblique one-story concourses evoke the swept-back wings of a jet airplane. Outdoor waiting areas gave visitors a taste of the delicious desert air. By orienting the building to the panoramic view of the mountains, the airport was a true gateway to the pleasures of the

resort town.

With a few forays to Los Angeles and the East Coast, Wexler worked primarily in the Palm Springs area until he retired. During his career he was not nationally known, and never tried to be. When Palm Springs began to be rediscovered for its treasure trove of midcentury modern architecture in the late 1990s, however, he was surprised by the attention he received. Books and magazine articles on Palm Springs architecture always spotlighted his steel houses.

In 2004 Wexler became a Fellow of the AIA, and the University of Minnesota gave him their distinguished alumnus award. A film, *Journeyman Architect: The Architecture of Donald Wexler*, was produced in 2009, and in 2011 the Palm Springs Art Museum mounted *Steel and Shade*, an exhibit of his work accompanied by a catalog. Local preservationists landmarked many of his buildings; one of the steel houses is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The 2014 demolition of the Spa Bath House (a Wexler collaboration with William Cody, Richard Harrison, and Philip Koenig), however, was widely mourned. Its delicate colonnade entry of prefabricated concrete-domes, rising from tiled pools, had become the very image of the best of Palm Springs Modernism. **ALAN HESS**



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BOSTON CONSERVATORY STUDIO BUILDING



"Everyone has either a bike or a dog," said Tim Love, founding principal at Utile, Inc., of the animals napping on the polished concrete floor in the firm's Boston studio. Designers' bikes, visible from the street through the black cast-iron storefront, form a clever advertisement for the urbanist work within.

Utile likens itself to a think tank, and the comparison seems not just promotional but simply self-aware. Give this team of architects and planners a vision and they'll make you a spreadsheet; give them some data and they'll make you a publishable color infographic. Ongoing streams of work include market-rate multifamily housing; affordable housing for community-development corporations; master plans for economically challenged cities; and new development guidelines, zoning codes, and information graphics for public agencies. A packet of research and a sense of larger issues hovers

around every project.

Love founded Utile in 2002 after eight years at Machado and Silvetti, where he was project director on the Getty Villa and several public jobs in Boston. "I thought it would be really cool," he said, "to not only focus on Boston but on a very narrow area of Boston, and become the expert, and try to get as many projects [as I could] in the smallest possible geographic area." Choosing South Boston because he lived there, he soon got both a housing commission and the on-call contract for urban planning and design review at the Massachusetts Port Authority. Specialization bore fruit, he said: "We ended up learning about the politics, the zoning, the market conditions, and which other consultants were working in the area, and that ended up being a very productive worldview for how we expanded our work."

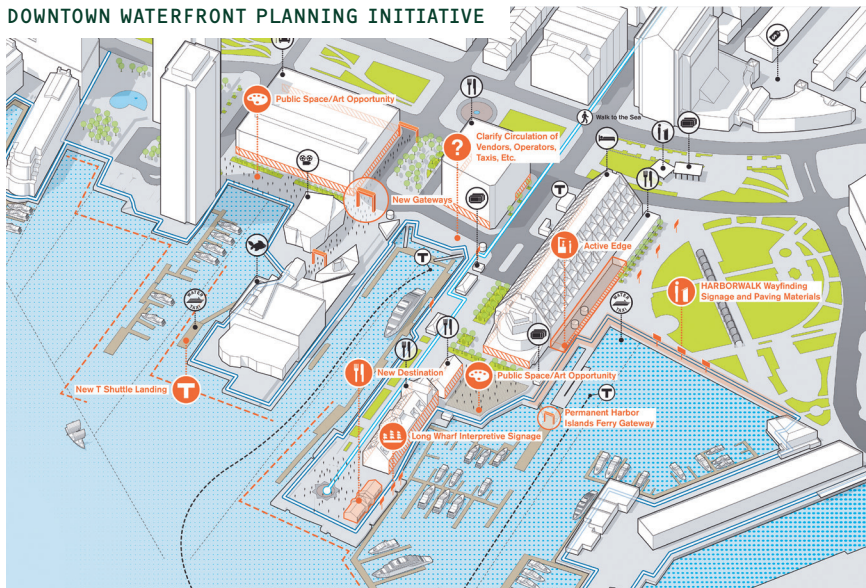
248 DORCHESTER AVENUE



The firm's most celebrated structure is the delicate Boston Harbor Islands Pavilion (2011) on the increasingly successful Rose Kennedy Greenway. Behind the scenes, however, Utile's planners have consulted on many of Boston's most important and controversial public works, including development guidelines on and around the Greenway. There is a bit of David-and-Goliath pride in the firm's fairly meteoric rise. "We tend to get the tricky projects," said Love, "where our proposal is more like a white paper, which gets at issues the client hasn't thought of yet strategically [but] that interest them... and we beat out typically the more established firms. Our work is incredibly diverse. The funny way of saying it is that we'll do anything; but the truth is that we tend to do things that have a complicated wrinkle to them."

CHRISTINE CIPRIANI

DOWNTOWN WATERFRONT PLANNING INITIATIVE



BOSTON CONSERVATORY
STUDIO BUILDING
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS

A music conservatory abutting the Massachusetts Turnpike and Fenway Park presents acoustical challenges. In this 2014 rehearsal facility codesigned with Handel Architects, a curtain wall opens the stairs and lounges to the highway, while red brick is both noise barrier and aesthetic response. "We like its relationship to Fenway and to that fantastic building next door," said Love, referring to Jillian's pool hall and nightclub, built in 1900. "But we also like the way, even though it's a very contemporary building, [brick] signals the importance and the permanence of this institution relative to the others in the neighborhood." LED signage works "as a foil to the brick" and a populist nod to the lively area.

248 DORCHESTER AVENUE
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS

With 33 units on six stories, but no hallways on floors three or five, this boutique South Boston rental project not only "defies the formulas that most developers live by," said principal-in-charge Michael LeBlanc, but is "one of the most rational buildings a client has let me design to this point." Each loft has a double-height living room with a mezzanine bedroom and bath; and every space, including the shower, is designed for maximum views toward Back Bay or the Dorchester Heights Monument. Invoking Alfred Hitchcock's *Rear Window*, LeBlanc said the building, "almost like a TV, projects a kind of image to its audience." Units are based on a 16-foot grid that breaks down into 4-foot modules, making construction surprisingly affordable.

HARTFORD CAPITOL AREA PLAN: HOUSING



DOWNTOWN WATERFRONT
PLANNING INITIATIVE
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS

Building on decades of efforts to reconnect Boston with its waterfront, Utile is working with the Boston Redevelopment Authority to improve the public experience in the now-flourishing 42-acre parcel that extends from the Greenway to the Harborwalk and the watershed beyond. Priorities, developed with public input, include creating more views to the water; improving signage and wayfinding; clarifying pedestrian and auto zones; animating inactive edges; and accommodating growing crowds of both commuter and leisure water-transit passengers. Following the public-realm plan, Utile will draft a corresponding state regulatory plan (including building heights and massing) and zoning recommendations.

HARTFORD CAPITOL AREA PLAN:
HOUSING
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT

As part of its district-wide planning strategy for the City of Hartford, Utile designed three townhouse prototypes for a 20-by-50-foot lot, and drafted guidelines that allow no more than five homes of each type in a row. Then "we had a facade party in the office one day," said Love, "and followed the guidelines we invented, and different people designed a couple of each version, and we just played our own game and created, you know, the Netherlands." Developers can modify the plan for economy, he said, but "We'll work with you to deploy it in a way that you don't get a boring run of the same thing."

IN THE WAKE OF HURRICANE SANDY, AIGA SOUGHT TO HELP COMMUNITIES THROUGH GRAPHIC DESIGN MAKING THE CITY

The development of social communities in the contemporary city pivots between the powerful forces of top-down financial capital and bottom-up collective citizen action. These top-down forces move through space as an algorithm with little concern for people or community. Bottom-up forces, on the other hand, focus explicitly on local needs but sometimes at the expense of a greater urban vision or the larger city. In this current age of hyper capitalism in New York City it often seems that it is the top-down development that almost always gains the upper hand in defining “community” unless there is a local issue, grievance, or extreme condition that brings people together to fight for community based concepts of “neighborhood.”

Hurricane Sandy in 2012 was one of those extreme conditions that brought residents of affected communities together to think about a different future and

a communal way forward. But when communities—particularly poor and underserved ones—attempt to come together for the sake of local identity they often struggle to find a voice for their concerns, let alone communicate with their neighbors.

But an innovative new initiative created by the American Institute of Graphic Arts (AIGA) came to the aid of three areas affected by the hurricane: the Rockaways, Queens; Red Hook, Brooklyn; and Lower Manhattan near the old Fulton Fish Market. AIGA, through a program they created called Making the City, has for some time been trying “to open up and expand graphic designers’ portfolios, professional experiences, and practice by pulling them out of the studio and into the city.”

It is common for graphic designers to be called into the design process at the end of a project to help create a “branded” identity. But the Making the City initiative

hoped to encourage graphic designers to become part of the bottom-up planning process. AIGA believes its members’ design skills should be used to tackle local challenges in need of local solutions.

Design, they argue, is a communication-driven skill and practice that should be used to help communities in the planning process, not just assign an identity to what others decide and plan. The project’s director, Laetitia Wolff, wanted the group to have “a chance to provide constant feedback and be involved in [the] co-design process.”

Under a project titled Design/Relief the AIGA helped young designers to engage with local community groups, listen to their complaints and hopes, and then design bespoke initiatives for each of the communities. In the Rockaway peninsula, which has long had diverse ethnic communities of varying wealth and background separated by expanses of sand, they heard the plea to keep the togetherness of purpose that developed just after the hurricane. The AIGA

group created bold colorful inserts in The Wave, the Rockaway’s most important local newspaper. These two-color centerfolds appeared with interviews of local residents in a bold graphic style that hoped to create a distinct identity from the bottom-up.

In Red Hook, Brooklyn, the AIGA group created a physical “Hub” to act as both a place for analog and digital information gathering in curated and non-curated spaces where residents could come together over community issues. Red Hook, which is isolated from the subway system, is home to the city’s second largest public housing project and new artist and craft communities that surround it at discrete distances along its edges. These communities tend to be separated by race and class, and the Hub, situated in the local library, attempts to help these two groups forge a common community plan. Finally, in Lower Manhattan the AIGA group helped create a public tour that focused on the unheard nearly forgotten voices of residents of the area that have lived there for decades.

These three projects all



Design/Relief's *Catch & Release* pop-up installation at the South Street Seaport.



“Dear Rockaway,” insert in the Rockaway’s newspaper *The Wave*.

TOP: YEJU CHOI; DANIEL LATORRE

utilized what contemporary graphic design does best—visualize complex information in a simple format and imagine futures. If utilized correctly it also has the capacity to build a “rigorous and engaging participatory processes, and produce easily deployable solutions.” Design/Relief

has begun working in East New York, the city’s latest development focus, to help drive this changing site to consider existing residents while planning to bring in newer groups and architects. The AIA should watch this process and take notes on the project. **WILLIAM MENKING**



In place of an inhospitable clubhouse, WRNS Studio designed a glass and zinc-paneled facility in the park, which includes a meeting room, recreation space, restrooms, offices, and storage.



MATTHEW MILLMAN

PARK REFORM continued from front page in midtown Manhattan, a few simple moves transformed a menace into a magnet. The Trust for Public Land, the San Francisco Department of Recreation and Parks, and the architects of WRNS Studio consulted with neighbors and community groups to reimagine the park as an amenity for a wide spectrum of users. For WRNS Partner Bryan Shiles, the key improvement was to replace the old clubhouse—which he described as a closed and defensive bunker—with a light-filled, L-plan structure that creates a sense of place and symbolizes the uplifting spirit of the re-landscaped park. Its 4,000 square feet include a meeting room, an all-purpose recreation space, restrooms, offices, and

storage. Shiles stretched a modest budget to raise the roof—sharply angled gables provide volume and skylights while serving as a heat chimney for the naturally ventilated interior. The ground floor is expansively glazed, and the upper level is clad in zinc panels. A porch opens up to one corner of the park. Interior walls are tiled for easy maintenance, and the building achieves a high level of sustainability with its solar panels, geothermal heating, operable windows, and recycled materials that include shredded denim insulation.

The landscaping was as important as the architecture in making the park feel safe and accessible to a diversity of users. The forbidding steel of the boundary fence was

replaced by green chain-link that almost disappears from 20 feet away. A broad entry path ascends to the clubhouse, another encircles the lawn, and a third winds through an intimate garden to a sheltered corner that has become a favorite retreat for seniors. These concrete-paved paths knit the park together as a whole while demarcating its varied amenities.

On a typical day, the park is alive with tai chi classes, kids shooting hoops on the basketball court, and people of all ages using the exercise equipment. Equally important is its role as an oasis of grass and trees, a place to rest in an environment that has become safe because it is so open and intensively used. It is a model urban

intervention, shaped by and for the community, in stark contrast to the over-designed, underused Pershing Square in downtown LA, which falls short of its potential. Every city needs refuges of this kind, and the sustainable features of the park and its edible garden provide lessons for park-goers who return home to their own backyard. WRNS (which worked pro bono on Boeddeker) collaborated with the same partners to design the Hayes Valley Playground in another densely settled city neighborhood, and their success should encourage similar developments throughout San Francisco and beyond.

MICHAEL WEBB

OLSON
KUNDIG

KEVIN SCOTT

Regional building styles and construction techniques weave a complex history that reflects the qualities, cultures, and narratives of a particular place. Olson Kundig took this to another level when designing *Outpost Basel*, an architectural pavilion at the Design Miami/Basel Collectors' Lounge in Basel, Switzerland. The wood construction legacies of several places came together to create a bespoke structure that embodies the global design culture in which we operate.

The architects hail from Seattle, in the heart of the Pacific Northwest's timber country. They brought their innovative mastery of materials to Western Europe, where companies like the Austrian goliath Holzindustrie Schweighofer are pushing wood technologies forward in new ways. The two worked together in Romania to construct the pavilion out of a wood-block system that is typically used as formwork for concrete and then discarded afterwards. Instead of using the wood bricks to create forms, the architects de-

cided to give them a rich black hue by charring them with a traditional Japanese wood-burning preservation technique, completing the international mélange that makes the project unique.

In the center of the lounge is a large box made from the wood blocks provided by Schweighofer. The designers liked the raw look of the wood blocks, so they left them unfinished. The system is a series of wooden parts that are doveled together, "like IKEA furniture, avoiding screws," Olson Kundig principal Tom Kundig told *AN*. The light walls were quickly and easily constructed to form the interior volume, and a series of openings were inserted by shifting the blocks according to the Fibonacci sequence. Once the walls were erected, they were charred using "Shou Sugi Ban," an ancient technique that has been used in Japan to protect untreated wood against rot and insects. It was also an important way to fireproof villages before modernity. The process involves charring the wood and then using different

oils to achieve different effects, while changing the intensity and exposure of the torch to produce varying levels of charring. At first, Schweighofer—who has been a leader in the wood processing industry for more than four centuries—was skeptical of the unusual idea, but eventually executed it at their Romanian compound, treating the blocks before they were shipped to Basel. They used a torch to apply the burn to the surface, and after two coats of torch, they put a sealing oil on the surface which sets the finish and reduces the risk of the black soot rubbing off (on people's clothes in Basel). The inside of the space was left raw, so that it maintained the warmth of the wood blocks, while the burnt black exterior relates to the rest of the space in which the pavilion sits.

The entire construction was tested off-site at Schweighofer's facility in Romania. A full-scale mock-up collapsed, so additional structural components—such as columns and torsional support—were added. Since the project

For the Outpost Basel pavilion, Olson Kundig integrated several wood construction legacies, from a woodblock system implemented with an Austrian company in Romania to the ancient Japanese process known as Shou Sugi Ban.

was an interior build-out and not exposed to the elements, it made things a bit easier. In addition to using the industrial wood elements in innovative ways, Olson Kundig incorporated some new, interactive technologies into the final design to make the materials more glamorous. Glymmer, a Seattle-based design studio, created a system of lights derived from the shape of the wood that change based on the movements of visitors inside the pavilion. The designers embedded the subtly colored lights into the gaps in the wood system, while projectors overhead added another layer of interactive light. Large wooden X's along the perimeter of the lounge area reference Design Miami's 10th Anniversary.

Bringing this kind of construction technology to Switzerland not only ties the big timber construction of America's Pacific Northwest with cutting-edge European technology,

but the process of charring the wood also references the burned concrete of the famous Bruder Klaus Field Chapel by Swiss Pritzker Prize laureate Peter Zumthor. Both buildings use charring to create a warmth and sensuousness via the marks of the construction process. These tactile interventions at the hand-scale preserve the craft that is often not visible to today's global magazine audience. The pavilion was used as the VIP Area for the fair, and also hosted activities, including the Design Talks series. **MS**

RESOURCES

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The Inner Harbor 2.0 plan proposes replacing the Brutalist McKeldin Plaza with connected paths and greenery.

COURTESY MAHAN RYKIEL ASSOCIATES

FOUNTAIN OF AGE continued from front page design controversy of 2015, as the plan calls for the removal of a prominent Brutalist public fountain designed by Philadelphia firm of Wallace Roberts & Todd (then Wallace, McHarg, Roberts and Todd) that was dedicated to McKeldin.

Set in an oversized, triangular traffic island at Pratt and Light streets—cut off from the harbor's edge by two lanes of northbound traffic—McKeldin Plaza is an

18-foot-high concrete mountain with water cascading down on all sides and collecting in shallow pools below. Built into it are skywalks that connect the fountain to the Light Street Pavilion of Harborplace and the Hyatt Regency Baltimore hotel, by RTKL Associates. Since being completed in 1982, the fountain and its adjacent plaza have been a magnet for tourists, shoppers, and office workers on a lunch break.

In the early 2000s, seeking to

compete with other urban centers, city leaders began looking for ways to jumpstart redevelopment. They started with a plan to alter Pratt Street, the main east-west thoroughfare downtown. A master plan by Ayers Saint Gross (ASG) showed McKeldin Plaza replaced with a new sort of gathering spot, containing large video screens high above the sidewalk.

Several years later, again working with ASG, city leaders unveiled a new master plan to guide development. The resulting plan, dubbed Inner Harbor 2.0, recommended that the McKeldin Fountain be removed and that the triangular traffic island be redesigned and made part of the Inner Harbor shoreline.

Inner Harbor 2.0 has been discussed widely but has never been adopted by the city planning department as a formal planning document. It was scheduled for a hearing by the planning department

in September 2014, but was pulled off the agenda at the last minute due to protests about the proposed removal of volleyball courts on the south shore of the Inner Harbor, an area called Rash Field. The protest had nothing to do with the McKeldin area.

In the meantime, city leaders who want to see progress with redevelopment are pushing ahead with certain projects from the Inner Harbor 2.0 plan in a piecemeal fashion, including The McKeldin Plaza makeover.

The latest plan, presented July 2, shows McKeldin Plaza gone and the former traffic island connected to the Inner Harbor shoreline. A paved pathway bisects the triangular plot and serves as a gathering area for events. South of the walkway is a lawn that slopes upward to a height of 18 feet to form an amphitheater. Beneath it is a storage area for rental bikes. On the west side of the

tilted lawn is a meandering pathway filled with indigenous plants. On the north side of the central walkway is a smaller sloped lawn, rising to a height of four feet. On the north side of the main pathway is a new water feature, including a fountain, a sunken rectangular pool, and a water wall. An inscription on the fountain quotes McKeldin's 1963 speech in which he challenged the city to transform the Inner Harbor.

Baltimore's preservation commission passed on taking a stand on the issue, saying that the fountain, now 33, was not old enough to fall within its purview. Baltimore's Public Art Commission said the fountain is part of the city's official inventory of public art and that they should be consulted about any proposed changes. At the very least, they said, they would have to formally agree to take it off the city's inventory.

EDWARD GUNTS



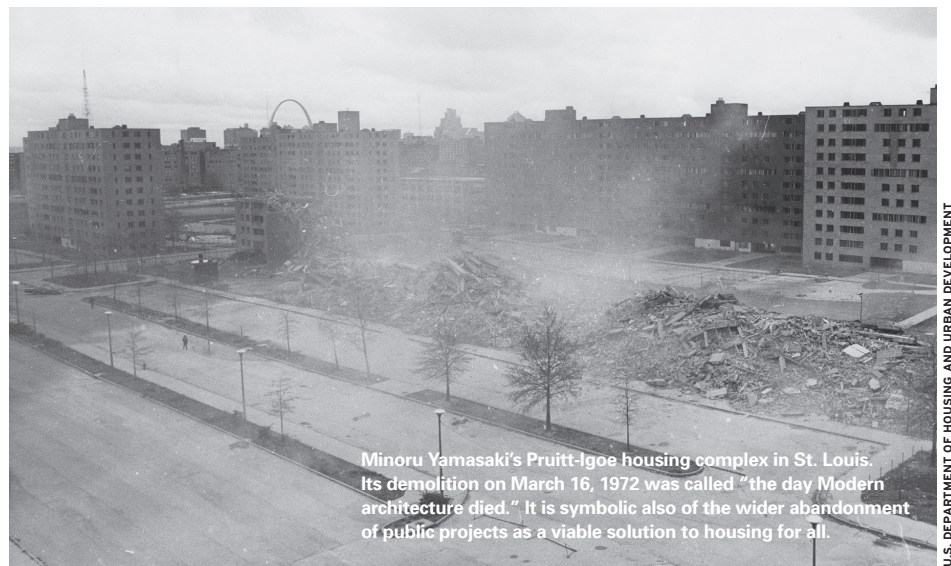
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Finding Affordability

It has been over 40 years since the demolition of Pruitt-Igoe and the decline of state-led housing initiatives. Today, a combination of public and private stakeholders are struggling to fill the void. In this year's developers feature, *The Architect's Newspaper* investigates housing development in four cities across the United States that are confronted with these issues: New York City; Chicago, Illinois; Austin, Texas; and San Jose, California. Also, Matt Shaw talks to four developers in New York about integrating design and community in their business models.



Minoru Yamasaki's Pruitt-Igoe housing complex in St. Louis. Its demolition on March 16, 1972 was called "the day Modern architecture died." It is symbolic also of the wider abandonment of public projects as a viable solution to housing for all.



Via Verde in South Bronx, by Dattner Architects and Grimshaw Architects.

Capping an Era of Urban Renewal in the South Bronx

“The Times Square of the South Bronx” is an apt moniker for a place more commonly known as “the Hub”. Situated at the crossing of subway lines, bus routes, and major thoroughfares, the Hub is one of the busiest commercial districts in New York City. The corner of East 149th Street and Third Avenue constitutes the center of this half-mile, spoke-like network of traffic arteries that radiate into the Melrose and Mott Haven neighborhoods. You cannot stand in one place here: Hordes of commuters boarding buses and entering and exiting narrow subway entrances sweep you along. Street vendors occupy much of the sidewalk selling everything from sunglasses to sodas. Salsa music blares from curbside radios and the heavy smell of food being fried at street stands wafts through the air. On a weekday afternoon in June, virtually all passersby were Hispanic or African American, and a great many were wearing jeans and sneakers. No hipsters were apparent, and no one was wearing a suit.

Throughout this bustling area there are still stately old masonry theaters from the era when the magician Harry Houdini and actors such as Lionel Barrymore performed here. Today, many of these historic buildings are bedecked in a riot of awnings and signs advertising beauty parlors, pawnshops, and electronics stores. In some cases, billboards and posters—such as a long brown one advertising Envy Nails—cover entire rows of second

story windows. Alongside the faded Beaux-Arts buildings are more recent arrivals—Lego-like cinder-block structures with plate glass windows. You can see unfulfilled potential in the dusty upper story windows of 149th Street’s sturdy old loft buildings decorated with faded “Offices for Rent” signs that might be appropriate for tenants such as tech startups or design studios.

Today’s Hub

In many ways the Hub is still recovering from the dark days of the 1970s, when the South Bronx became the most notorious symbol of urban blight in the country. Community District 1, which includes the Hub, lost 43 percent of its population during that decade. Fires and abandonment destroyed up to 97 percent of the building stock in some census tracts. Take a turn off East 149th Street, one of the Hub’s main drags, and north on Bergen Avenue and you will find trash-strewn sidewalks and fenced-off, weed-covered lots abandoned for so long that small trees have taken root. Back when the Bronx was burning, many property owners stopped paying taxes, and the city used foreclosures and eminent domain to acquire a vast inventory of such properties. However, the area as a whole has improved recently, thanks in part to better policing, say local residents such as Tanjy Davis, a former restaurant owner out for a walk with her daughter. “Brook Avenue has changed so much,” she said. “They used to have prostitution over there and young kids were shooting guns.”

There are signs that the South Bronx as a whole is reviving. In 2013, the Opera House Hotel, the Bronx’s first luxury boutique hotel

opened for business in a renovated 1913 theater on 149th Street. And in the past year there has been a tremendous amount of real estate speculation in the Bronx. According to the New York Daily News, multifamily sales rose 67 percent and sales of development sites were up by 85 percent. However in the area around the Hub virtually all the new residential buildings have been built as affordable housing, and they owe their existence to generous government subsidy programs that generally include the sale of city owned land to private developers for nominal sums of money. A case in point is Via Verde, the award-winning affordable housing development completed in 2012 at the corner of 156th Street, just beyond the empty lots on Brook Avenue. Via Verde received a slew of subsidies from the New York City Council, NYC Housing Development Corporation, The New York State Affordable Housing Corporation, the NYC Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD), and other government agencies.

Much of the new City-subsidized development in and around the Hub is targeted toward alleviating poverty. The 88,000-square-foot Triangle Plaza Hub is currently under construction on the site of a former municipal parking lot at 149th Street. The \$40 million development will provide the South Bronx with essential goods and services that most Manhattan neighborhoods take for granted, including a primary care medical center for the federally designated medically underserved community. Triangle Plaza Hub will also house a Fine Fare Supermarket, which will benefit from tax incentives under the City’s FRESH

program for grocery stores selling nutritious, affordable produce and meats in underserved communities.

La Central

The potential capstone to the Hub’s redevelopment is a proposed \$345 million project called La Central, slated for the last large assemblage of vacant city-owned land in the South Bronx. A draft proposal for the project calls for a mixed-income affordable housing development of five buildings with 992 rental

apartments, 2.2 acres of publicly accessible open space, and a host of new ground-level retail spaces. The project, which spans three existing blocks including a super-block created years ago by the de-mapping of a city street, will fill in the gaping hole between the residential developments along Brook Avenue, such as Via Verde, and the commercially-oriented areas around the Hub.

With so many government approvals and so many government subsidies required for such a large project to move forward, community support is critical. The draft proposal was presented at Bronx Community Board 1’s land use committee in June by a development team that packed the hearing room. There were representatives from La Central’s lead developer, the Hudson Companies, as well as the non-profit development partners for the project, which include Common Ground and the YMCA. In addition, there were representatives from a large design team that included FXFOWLE, MHG Architects, and Future Green Studio.

Aaron Koffman, a principal at the Hudson Companies, told the community board that La Central’s facilities and amenities were intended to provide services and recreational opportunities for the entire neighborhood. “It is about community, education, and affordable housing—those are the three pillars,” he said. One such space is a 10,000-square-foot studio and classroom space for BronxNet, a non-profit public access television



DAVID SUNDBERG/ESTO

station devoted to community-based programming and broadcast skills trainings for local residents. BronxNet would be joined by spaces for other non-profits, including music education program Music Has No Enemies, a day care center, and the South Bronx's first YMCA, home to a diabetes prevention program run by Montefiore Medical Center.

FXFOWLE partner Dan Kaplan described how the project was designed to enhance the Hub with substantial open space within the development and a public plaza on an adjacent lot. Its street walls with ground-level retail seek to connect the buildings to the existing neighborhood fabric, and a pedestrian thoroughfare will reestablish a neighborhood connection lost when a section of East 152nd Street was de-mapped years ago. The massing ranges from a 25-story tower on the northern part of the site to 12-story buildings with two-story attached maisonettes. Articulated facades with recessed sections and bands of different colored bricks are intended to break down the scale of the development into smaller elements so as not to overwhelm immediate neighbors, among them low-lying warehouses along Bergen Avenue.

Because HPD is in charge of selling the land, the critical subsidy for such developments, it is able to exact a great many concessions in return. For La Central, HPD is mandating that the developers meet special green design standards established for affordable housing, setting the terms on the affordability of the units, and even requirements that the units be larger than those currently required by the city's building code. The city's various stipulations might appear to be a difficult proposition for a private developer, except for the fact that the taxpayer will undoubtedly be picking up the tab for many of the features and amenities described in the draft development proposal. If the La Central deal goes through, the Hudson Companies and its non-profit partners will be able to buy the land for their development for a dollar per tax lot and potentially benefit from a number of subsidies that could include various government loans, tax-exempt bonds, and tax abatement programs that can last for up to 40 years.

Building state-of-the-art affordable housing can be quite profitable for private developers according to housing advocates. "The Hudson Company is certainly going to make money off of this and off of anything that is city sponsored," said Moses Gates, Director of Planning & Community Development for the Association of Neighborhood and Housing Development, "If you have all of these great design elements, it is not the developer paying for them," said Gates. "It is the public



La Central apartments in the South Bronx, by FXFOWLE and MHG Architects.

paying for them that is how it works, the developer has their return in mind and if they want to do all of this cool fancy stuff, they find funding for it and that funding is various subsidy programs."

The proposed rents for La Central are designed to be affordable for households from a wide range of the income scale: between 30 percent and 100 percent of the Area Median Income (AMI), or equivalent to an annual income of \$18,150 to \$60,500 for an individual or \$23,350 to \$77,700 for a family of three. The housing units awarded through government run lotteries that generally attract a tremendous number of applicants. In 2014, the tenant lottery for 2,500 subsidized apartments in New York City drew 1.5 million applications—a 600 applicant to unit ratio. To help preserve the neighborhood, the city is requiring the developers to fill 50 percent of the units at La Central with local residents from Community District 1.

However, despite being given preference on 50 percent of the units, for many Community

District 1 residents, the rents will be unaffordable. According to data from New York University's Furman Center for Real Estate and Urban Policy, in 2013 Community District 1 had a 16 percent unemployment rate and half of household incomes were under \$21,600. Further, close to a third of households in Community District 1 are "severely rent burdened"—which means that their rent equals at least 50 percent of their monthly pretax income.

Although his organization is focused on helping the poorest New Yorkers find housing, Anthony Winn, Chief Operating Officer of the influential local housing advocacy organization Nos Quedamos (We Stay), said that it is critical to have developments that can accommodate a variety of income ranges. "Often times you get an overemphasis on housing for the poor, which is important," said Winn. "But when you are trying to grow and develop a community, you want to keep a balance between making sure that those with the most need are served while also making sure that you are not creating a concentration

of poverty."

For La Central to move forward, the land that it is slated to occupy must be rezoned from its current manufacturing designation to allow a residential use. And because the project involves a rezoning, the sale of city owned land and other government actions, the plan must pass through the City's Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP), a lengthy process that requires approvals from various agencies and public hearings before the New York City Council and the local community board. At the CB1 hearing on La Central, residents expressed concern about the building slated to be solely owned by the non-profits Common Ground and Communal Life, which would provide 96 studios at 30 percent AMI, 60 percent of which would be set aside for veterans with mental illness and low-income elderly people with HIV/ AIDS from throughout the city. Several board members said that the proposed supportive housing should address the needs of local elderly residents rather than accommodate

populations with serious problems from across the city. Hudson's Koffman responded that government financing was not available for an alternative supportive housing program and that his company was addressing guidelines set by the City's Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD): "We are doing nothing different from what they [HPD] are doing all over the city." However, many at the hearing said that their community already bears too much of that burden. "There is and there has been a concern with an oversaturation of particular populations that cause major quality of life issues," said Bronx Community Board 1 Land Use Chair Arlene Parks, "and the burden on a police department, the 40th Precinct, who already is so overburdened that they cannot respond to all of things we have going on here."

Although the supportive housing component of the proposed La Central project remains contentious, the overall program wins praise from community members. "We are looking to have a diverse population in the district and for different persons of different incomes to be able to afford to live here," said Cedric Loftin, District Manger of Community Board 1. "Those portions are going to have to be discussed, but we feel that the project will meet those needs."

Melrose Commons

"It looks like a very exciting project in terms of what it is going to do for the community dynamic," said Winn from Nos Quedamos, although he noted that his organization has not yet taken a formal position on the project. "There is diversity in what the structures are going to look like," added Winn. "They are bringing in a diversity of formats in terms of the housing units, and it is looking at community use and community resources that go beyond the residents of the building—that YMCA, for example, is going to serve the greater Bronx community."

Community-based organizations in Melrose, especially Nos Quedamos, have a formidable track record when it comes to influencing development outcomes. In the early 1990s, city officials made plans to raze the remains of a 30-block swath of Melrose and replace it with massive new developments. Neighborhood leaders found out about the City's tabula rasa plan and formed Nos Quedamos to preserve what was left of their neighborhood. The New York City firm Magnusson Architecture and Planning (MAP) worked pro bono with the group to produce the alternative Melrose Commons Urban Renewal Plan in 1993. The plan, which included local residents in the design process and prioritized their housing needs, was



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BY RIEDER

adopted by the city the following year. "The vision was for a mixed-income neighborhood," said Magnus Magnusson, Principal of MAP. "And although it was very hard to envision middle income there originally, we felt that it was very important to make the buildings look like middle income."

The South Bronx is still one of the five poorest congressional districts in the country. But some of the government subsidized housing built in Melrose Commons over the past decade undoubtedly would attract a long line of prospective affluent tenants were they located in one of the city's pricier precincts. One such development is the MAP-designed Aurora, an eight-story, 91-unit condominium building located on a tree-lined block of Washington Avenue. The boxy, brick-faced building is a good neighbor—it features setbacks to break up the massing and a super-market and restaurant featuring Mexican food made from family recipes at ground level. The Aurora, which received subsidies from the Affordable Housing Corporation and the Bronx Borough president's office, has every amenity on a checklist for middle income housing: bamboo floors, ceramic bathroom fixtures, and a gracious landscaped terrace for residents with play equipment for children.

According to the architects and developers who designed the recently completed Melrose Commons, because city-subsidized affordable apartments are built to guidelines imposed by HPD and are generally larger, they are also often are of better quality than market-rate units under construction in wealthier neighborhoods. And as opposed to the tower-in-the-park typology prevalent in other urban renewal areas, the affordable housing developed in Melrose typically relates to the street, with ground-level retail along the avenues and lower-scale townhouse buildings

along side streets.

Although the South Bronx has not yet managed to attract much market-rate housing, the population moving into its affordable housing has become increasingly income diverse. "For many years the top income level at the typical new building in the South Bronx was 60 percent of AMI," said Ted Weinstein, HPD's Bronx director. In the case of La Central, the development proposal calls for half of the units to be between 80 percent and 100 percent AMI.

The city's development policies in the South Bronx have also won support from affordable housing advocates. "On the whole it has been an unqualified success," said Moses Gates from ANHD. "However, the availability of City-owned land has been critical to subsidizing that success," explained Gates. "When you have land that is government-owned, you can go from the ground up and say how do we make it happen, rather than everybody throwing out bids and just taking the highest one."

Sustainable Building

Over the past decade, in addition to shepherding the construction of thousands of units of rent stabilized affordable housing in the South Bronx, HPD has promoted the use of environmentally friendly designs and materials by awarding competitive points for green features in requests for proposals and by instituting minimum green building standards. "In the old days it was how many units and how cheap," said Les Bluestone, a developer who in 2009 completed the Eltona in Melrose Commons, the first LEED Platinum affordable rental building in New York State. Bluestone credits the city for raising the bar: "The Bloomberg administration started looking at quality issues that weren't studied so much in the past, and that is continuing under the present [de Blasio] administration." Melrose

Commons became the first neighborhood in the city to join the U.S. Green Building Council's LEED Neighborhood Development Pilot Program (LEED-ND) in 2010.

Sustainable design certainly provides a host of benefits for people from any socio-economic group. But in the South Bronx, green features can be critical to the physical and economic health of low- and moderate-income residents. "In affordable housing, when it is a family of three and every dollar counts, the fact that utility bills could be knocked down by a significant percentage makes a difference," said Kaplan, the architect from FxFowle. The development, which is aiming to achieve a LEED Silver rating, also includes a plethora of green features, such as solar panels to power a co-generation plant, which will reduce reliance on the city's electric grid by 50 percent. A rooftop variable refrigerant flow system will eliminate the need for wall air conditioning units, allowing for tighter sealing throughout the building.

One of the primary ways La Central will reduce energy loads is through traditional block and plank construction, which utilizes precast concrete planks for the floor system and concrete cinderblocks for bearing walls, in contrast to the steel-beamed, market-rate buildings with glass facades being built in other parts of the city. "With market-rate housing you are trying to maximize the amount of glass that you have within the confines of the energy code and that generally means 45 percent glass," said Kaplan. "La Central and other affordable housing projects we are designing are probably within 20 to 25 percent range for glass," he said, noting that despite advances in glazing, glass generally is the biggest source of heat transfer in residential buildings.

The green features at new developments like La Central also

have the potential to reduce the South Bronx's high rates of asthma, linked in part to substandard building conditions like mold infestations. At The Eltona, developer Les Bluestone prohibited smoking and installed continuous background ventilation to reduce the impact of formaldehyde off gassing from residents' furniture. In addition, non-toxic pest control systems such as non-cellulose wall structures and steel mesh termite barriers prevent the infestations like the recent ones that have been linked to repertory problems in New York City public housing projects. According to a recent Mount Sinai study, The Eltona's features appear to have substantially reduced asthma attacks among residents. "It was absolutely amazing," said Bluestone. "People who were being hospitalized multiple times a month all of a sudden weren't going to the hospital."

La Central will not be the most high-tech or environmentally sustainable building in the area around the Hub. Across Brook Avenue from the fenced off vacant lots where La Central is slated for construction is the aforementioned Via Verde, designed by Dattner Architects and Grimshaw Architects. Via Verde is the most state-of-the-art affordable housing development in New York City. With its colorful prefabricated aluminum, cement and wood panel facade, and rooftop farm, it can hold its own against the new iconic buildings along the High Line in Manhattan. Further, although it features ground-level retail and a community health center, Via Verde is a relatively self-contained development—a gated courtyard, although originally intended for public use, is generally open only to residents. And with 222-mixed income residential units, Via Verde is much smaller than the La Central development, which with its commercial spaces, public thoroughfare, and large public greensward promises to redefine

the neighborhood. "One of the reasons that we like La Central from a design point of view is that it is bigger than a single building," said Kaplan, "and we had an opportunity to create a neighborhood."

With close to half of its units slated for renters making above 80 percent AMI and 11 percent slated for renters making up to 100 percent AMI, La Central promises to alter the demographics of this poverty stricken community. However, there is no way that the proposed development with its low- and moderate-income guidelines and its supportive housing component can be construed as being an agent for the kind of gentrification that is sweeping other New York City neighborhoods. "Somebody like me, who doesn't make that much money, still makes too much money for buildings like these," said Winn from Nos Quedamos. "If you make halfway decent money, you cannot get in because you make too much for the rental requirements and the number [of units] available at 100 percent AMI usually is just a fraction of the building, and then there is competition for those units."

The developers hope to complete the ULURP process by April 2016 and purchase the property from the city the following month. Much about the project's design could change as a result of the various reviews required under the city's land review process. However, neighborhood leaders say that things are off to a good start. "Community-based organizations are aware of what will be happening on the site and I am sure that there will be interactions short-term and long-term," said Loftin from Community Board 1. "People are going to be looking at bringing educational engagement to the process and also seeing involvement long term, once the project is developed—so we are very excited."

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Reimagining NYCHA's Towers in the Park

Infill project at the Astoria Houses in Queens by Studio V.

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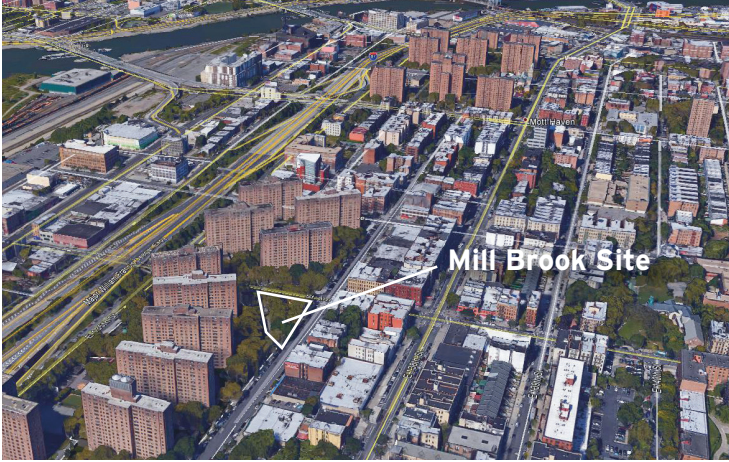
Near the end of his final term as mayor, Michael Bloomberg unveiled a proposal to shore up the finances of the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) by allowing developers to build mostly market-rate apartment towers at eight public housing campuses in Manhattan. While the plan would supposedly generate \$50 million-a-year for the cash-strapped agency, it was met with swift and stinging criticism, and a lawsuit from the New York City Council and a coalition of NYCHA residents. Bloomberg's land lease proposal was further derailed by the politics surrounding it: A billionaire mayor letting developers bulldoze grassy plots and basketball fields at public housing developments for expensive new apartments. One of the most vocal critics of the proposal was Bill

de Blasio, the progressive public advocate gunning for Bloomberg's job. But about a year-and-a-half after becoming New York City's chief executive, de Blasio has revived the proposal, albeit with some significant changes.

De Blasio's Infill Vision

For starters, Bloomberg's 80/20 model (80 percent market-rate, 20 percent affordable) has been switched for 50/50 and 100 percent affordable schemes for new infill buildings. In total, de Blasio said NYCHA infill will create 10,000 new units of affordable housing. These will count toward his larger goal of building 80,000 new units of affordable housing in a decade.

The infill scheme is part of a larger "NextGeneration NYCHA" plan that aims to stabilize and strengthen



NYCHA's first round of infill development. **Top:** Mill Brook in the Bronx. **Middle:** Ingersoll in Brooklyn. **Bottom:** Van Dyke in Brooklyn.

COURTESY NYCHA

the agency, which is saddled with \$17 billion in unmet capital needs. For NYCHA's some 400,000 residents, this means living with leaks, mold, broken elevators and lights, and long wait times on repairs. (To take some financial burdens off NYCHA's hands, the de Blasio administration is also cancelling a tax payment the agency has owed the city since 1949, taking over its call center, and

trying to secure some federal funds for the agency. Meanwhile, NYCHA is boosting its parking rates and launching some other modernization measures.)

In early July, the infill process officially got underway with NYCHA releasing an RFP for 100-percent-affordable buildings that are geared toward families and seniors making up to 60 percent of area median income. The buildings, which will

comprise about 500 units, are planned for three NYCHA campuses: the Ingersoll Houses and Van Dyke Houses in Brooklyn, and the Mill Brook Houses in the Bronx. At Ingersoll and Mill Brook, new developments will rise on grassy, fenced-in lots; at Van Dyke, new buildings will replace parking lots. NYCHA said it will negotiate with developers over how much revenue these new buildings will generate for the agency. Current NYCHA residents will also get preference for a quarter of these apartments. In August, NYCHA is expected to release an RFP for 50/50 buildings in more expensive markets that would generate between \$300 million and \$500 million in revenue over 10 years.

"There are a lot of NYCHA developments that are towers in the park and have a lot of empty space and FAR that is available" said Andrew Bernheimer, principal of Bernheimer Architecture. Bernheimer is doing pro bono site testing and documentation for NextGeneration NYCHA through his studio at Parsons. "They have an asset in a city where land is valuable so it certainly seems like a reasonable opportunity to build new things, especially in a place where we need new housing."

The RFP for the first three sites comes out of "Community Vision Plans" that NYCHA created in coordination with its residents in an attempt to gauge their housing needs and desires for future development. This type of community outreach was notably absent in Bloomberg's proposal.

Despite the push to engage with public housing residents and create new affordable housing, the very idea of building new towers on NYCHA land remains contentious. "I am not crazy about infill," said Victor Bach, senior housing policy analyst for the Community Service Society of New York. "I think a lot of residents may resist the idea, but right now, I think it is NYCHA's only hope for generating the revenue it needs to survive into the next generation." His organization's official stance on the proposal is "neutral."

But as Bach, and a host of other stakeholders note, if done correctly, infill at NYCHA sites has the potential to deliver more than

revenue and affordable apartments—it could lead to new public amenities, better retail, improved streetscapes, and the reknitting of public housing campuses into the larger New York City fabric.

The Design Opportunities of Infill

Last fall, NYCHA tapped Kohn Pedersen Fox Associates (KPF), which worked alongside ARUP and OLIN, to find ways to achieve these goals while boosting the agency's sustainability and resiliency measures. Jill Lerner, a principal at KPF, said she was surprised to learn that well over half of the so-called "open space" on NYCHA's campuses is actually fenced-off or used for parking. "There is a real opportunity to take these big sites that have tremendous amounts of beautiful open space and find a way to organize and improve it for the residents and surrounding communities," she said. This could include incorporating new landscaping, reorienting pathways, and constructing new buildings on the edges of NYCHA campuses to create dynamic streetwalls with amenities like retail and supermarkets.

These are the types of strategies that STUDIO V is incorporating into an upcoming NYCHA infill project at the Astoria Houses in Queens. The firm has designed two buildings that are both 100 percent affordable and will include ground-floor retail or community spaces that face 27th Avenue. This project was approved under the Bloomberg administration as part of the Durst Organization's Halletts Point mega-development that will transform an adjacent, industrial stretch of waterfront into a mixed-use community and park. As part of the rezoning, a school will also rise on NYCHA property. The STUDIO V-designed affordable towers are slated to break ground this fall, along with the first phase of the larger development.

Jay Valgora, founder of STUDIO V, said the infill project comes with other design interventions to integrate the Astoria Houses into the surrounding community, as well as the future James Corner Field Operations-designed park and esplanade along the water. New pathways are cut through the

NYCHA complex that lead toward the river, and Astoria Boulevard is extended through the development creating a continuous connection between the upcoming public space and eastern Queens. "This was really about looking at combining different interests," said Valgora. "It was about improving the neighborhood, restoring streets because there was not sufficient access through the whole peninsula, providing more affordable housing, and space for schools, and other amenities."

This community-based ethos is imbued in a hypothetical—and highly ambitious—infill strategy proposed for NYCHA's Robert Fulton Houses in Chelsea by the non-profit Friends of Fulton Houses. The project includes some expected infill moves like street-facing housing towers with ground-floor commercial space, but also presents ideas far beyond what is currently being discussed by developers and planners.

The non-profit envisions a three-story structure that snakes through the development and is topped with a continuous public park system complete with grassy lawns and sports fields. "The entire neighborhood is being upgraded, but the Fulton Houses is essentially the same as it was when it was created 55 years ago," said Galia Solomonoff, an architect and founding member of the group who is known for her work on Dia:Beacon. "When we started thinking about how to upgrade it, we realized there was a lot of potential to increase the amenities, density, and to create more housing."

Fulfilling the Vision

For now, NYCHA has a less ambitious architectural vision, only making some fairly broad design suggestions in its RFP like "architectural design should blend, complement, or sensitively contrast with the existing structures and/or salient neighborhood features." The agency is also encouraging the incorporation of Active Design elements to promote healthy lifestyles at NYCHA campuses.

To Bernheimer, pulling this whole thing off will take more than thoughtful architecture. He said that new buildings should not be "dropped like gold teeth into the jaws of NYCHA." Instead, he explained, successful infill will require input from a range of stakeholders, and planning that considers the day-to-day experiences and needs of NYCHA residents.

After all, it was a lack of comprehensive community planning that helped tank Bloomberg's plan. Now, Mayor de Blasio and NYCHA leadership are pushing forward with their own proposal that is very much shaped by the lessons of the past.

HENRY MELCHER IS AN'S ASSISTANT EDITOR.



FRIENDS OF THE FULTON HOUSES



Marshall Field Garden Apartments in Old Town, existing. Below: Proposal for renovation of the building.

Chicago Incentivizes Private Development of Affordable Housing

In March, after months of debate behind closed doors, Chicago's City Council voted overwhelmingly to overhaul the city's Affordable Requirements Ordinance (ARO), a key tool meant to encourage the private development of affordable housing in a city where the waitlist for public housing continues to grow.

On the Horizon

But with the changes scheduled to take effect in October, some local developers warn the ARO's new fees and requirements are too onerous. Representatives of the development and construction industries voiced such concerns to powerful Aldermen like Brendan Reilly, whose downtown 42nd Ward has more than a dozen high-profile projects pending or already under construction. Reilly had expressed his concern about the ARO's potential chilling effect on development, but voted for the measure in March, citing last-minute improvements to the ordinance.

Enacted in 2003 and amended in 2007, the existing ordinance requires developers of private residential projects to make 10 percent of their units affordable, or pay \$100,000 to a city-run affordable housing trust fund for every unit they do not build. It applies to any new or rehabbed development with more than 10 units that seeks a zoning change, a planned development designation, city

land, or a city subsidy.

The new ARO raises that fee to \$175,000 and \$125,000 for downtown developers and those who build in higher-income census tracts, respectively, while slashing that price to \$50,000 per unit in areas home to mostly low- and moderate-income residents. It also requires developers of projects downtown and in high-income areas to keep at least a quarter of the required affordable units either on site or within two miles of the new project.

Mayor Rahm Emanuel said the new ARO will add 1,200 affordable housing units and generate \$90 million to build more over the next five years. That would still leave a ways to go for Emanuel to meet his stated "goal to create, improve, and preserve more than 41,000 units of housing in the city by 2018." Asked about plans to close that gap, the Chicago Housing Authority deferred to the Mayor's office, who did not reply to repeated requests for comment by press time.

Precedents

Historically most developers have avoided building new affordable units when faced with the choice presented by the ARO. The existing ordinance brought in \$4.7 million through in-lieu fees in 2013 alone, but fewer than 200 actual units in profitable markets after more than a decade on the books, according to an analysis from the Metropolitan Planning Council.

Emanuel's push to encourage more affordable housing in dense, downtown areas comes after a hotly contested reelection race in which his liberal challenger, Jesús "Chuy" García, labeled him "Mayor 1 percent."

But some developers, whose business has picked up substantially since the recession, worry the new rule will squeeze out new projects that require complex financing.

"It's going to have an impact on either our margins—which are slim to start with—or land prices," said Alan Lev, president of the Home Builders Association of Greater

Chicago and CEO of the development firm Belgravia Group. Lev said he has already tried to rush a deal for a new condo building downtown to get the landowners on board before the October 12 deadline to file for a zoning change under the old rules. He said the new ARO would add about \$1 million to the total project cost.

"I'm all in favor of affordable housing," said Lev, who sat on Mayor Emanuel's task force to help draft the ordinance. "I've always thought there were better ways to go about it. Why is it on the backs of new development instead of spread amongst all sorts of projects?"

Incentives vs. Requirements

Lev suggested the city instead offer more incentives, such as tax breaks, to developers that include affordable housing.

A four-percent tax credit on bonds from the Illinois Housing Development Authority recently helped tie together one of the single biggest affordable housing

investments in Chicago in years: Related Companies bought Illinois affordable property management company Metroplex, scooping up more than 1,500 units in Chicago. Of those units, 628 are in the Marshall Field Garden Apartments complex, a historic development in the affluent Old Town neighborhood due to lose its affordable housing designation in 2017. Related hired NIA Architects to lead a \$175 million renovation of the six-acre property, and has pledged to keep the units affordable for 30 more years.

Presiding over multi-billion dollar deals like Manhattan's Hudson Yards and the Chicago-record-breaking sale of a 504-unit luxury tower at 111 West Wacker Drive, Related seemed to some an unlikely candidate to preserve affordability in the Section 8 units at Marshall Field.

State bond money and historic tax credits sweetened Related's redevelopment of the property, which is on the National Register of Historic Places. But affordable units also offer steady income for private developers, who can count on the subsidized rents of their tenants even during dips in the rental market.

"Chicago has been a place where the private development community has really taken the lead on affordable housing," said Jacques Sandberg, who heads up affordable housing for Related Midwest. "[The Chicago Housing Authority] years ago concluded that it made sense for them to look to the private sector to carry out development, and we've been happy to step into that role."

As for the ARO, Related Midwest president Curt R. Bailey said it may help shift the development of affordable housing back toward downtown and away from "the fringes of the city."

"It's the law now, and we're going to figure out a way to build within those plans," said Bailey. "It's going to make the bar a little higher to build in downtown, but at the end of the day it should produce a better city for us if we have affordable housing downtown."

CHRIS BENTLEY IS AM'S MIDWEST EDITOR.



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Austin is booming. Previously an academic and legislative backwater, the Violet Crown is now consumed by a tidal wave of condominiums and hotels. Fueled by tech companies, tourism, and annual events like SXSW, the city is overflowing with newness. Each week sees the opening of a new restaurant, the announcement of a new development, or, worse, the shuttering of a longtime local institution. An economic frenzy is exciting, but also presents serious issues of affordability. With over 900,000 residents—and a metropolitan population nearing 2 million—Austin welcomes an estimated 70 new residents daily. Where will these new citizens live?

Fast growth has triggered a surge in housing price, but despite the wave of multifamily construction, the cost of housing continues to skyrocket. The city's recent Housing Market Study, released in 2014, reported a deficit of 48,000 affordable housing units for individuals earning less than \$25,000 per year. This number ignores the portion of the population that remains below the region's Median Family Income (MFI) which in 2015 is listed by the Department of Housing and Urban Development at \$53,750 for a single person household. With this expanded figure in mind, the need for affordable housing deepens into a more widespread crisis.

Downtown Visions

Development emanates from downtown Austin. Though small in area, measuring only 1.6 square miles, it is the city's strongest economic engine. Since 2011, The Downtown Austin Plan (DAP) has set the vision for Austin's core. Its

section on Housing focuses on affordability, with the generic mandate to "support the production of affordable housing," including a goal of 225 units for very low-income persons. An appendix of the plan goes further, delivering ideas for both short-term and long-term initiatives. It also explains the obvious truth that subsidized housing is simply more expensive downtown than in other neighborhoods.

Currently, about 15,000 residents live downtown, up from only 4,000 fifteen years ago. Most residents are moving here from within the city, and they fall into two demographic groups: young professional couples without children, and active empty-nesters. About 5,500 condo and apartment units have been built since 2000, with at least another 1,600 planned. Entire districts, like the Seaholm Power Plant and Greenwater Treatment Plant sites, are under construction. Nearby, at Third Street and West Avenue, The Independent, designed by Austin's Rhode Partners, is slated to include 370 units, ranging in price from \$300,000 to \$3 million. At 685 feet tall, it is advertised as the tallest residential tower west of the Mississippi. Kevin Burns, CEO of Urbanspace, a real estate company handling the tower's sales effort, said that the building is already 96 percent under reservation. These future developments are bigger and better, and their success only further highlights the need to build affordable resiliency into Austin's marketplace.

Jim Robertson, a co-project manager for the DAP and currently the manager of the Urban Design Division at the City of Austin, reviewed the mechanisms in place

for funding affordable housing with me in late June. As prescribed by the DAP, the city initiated the Density Bonus Program (DBP), which gives developers a reliable pathway to increase the FAR allotment from the base zoning, enabling them to build taller projects. A previous program was more shadowy in how it parceled out awards, leading one consultant to compare it to a "Turkish market." Through the new DBP, a residential developer gains entitlements in exchange for providing public benefits. A minimum of 50 percent of the trade must be delivered in the form of affordable housing, either to locate affordable units onsite, or to make a fee-in-lieu payment. The restraints for non-residential development are significantly less stringent, with a 50 percent increase in FAR given outright to applicants.

How has DBP fared in its first two years? To date, three projects have enrolled. Neither of the two participating residential projects have elected to build affordable housing units onsite. Their fee-in-lieu payments will total about \$1.3 million, collected when certificates of occupancy are issued. This money can be spent toward affordable housing anywhere within the city limits.

Additional data arrives from Rainey Street in southeast downtown, which became part of the CBD in 2005, prompting rapid development of the neighborhood. A similar density bonus program was offered to generate affordable units in the area. According to reporting by The Austin Monitor, the plan created 51 units, but only required them to be listed at set

affordable rates for one year. After the program was updated in early 2014 to ensure units were affordably priced for 40 years, no further units were built, meaning that developers have chosen not to seek increased density entitlements. In this case, the provision for onsite affordable units backfired, and no further funds or units have been created.

A separate, more lucrative civic mechanism to subsidize affordable housing is also in place. Since the late 1990s, the City of Austin has been selling downtown parcels for private development. The Seaholm and Greenwater sites are part of this process. A city ordinance dedicates 40 percent of the property tax revenue from these parcels to a Housing Trust Fund that underwrites affordable developments. As of 2013, the program had generated \$2.5 million in funds. The City of Austin Budget Office, according to Robertson, estimates that the program will yield between \$19 and \$51 million between 2014 and 2034, resulting in a major stimulus to the Housing Trust Fund. In their agreements, developers of The Independent, which is set to rise on a former Austin Energy site, have agreed to donate \$2.7 million to the same Housing Trust Fund, more than double what the DBP has promised to generate to date.

The parade of numbers evidences that downtown is not well suited to support affordable housing projects, but that downtown economics can be leveraged to fund affordable initiatives. Given the competition, developers, with their desired returns in mind, have demonstrated that they are willing to pay fees but are unwilling to further reduce their

profitable square footages. The city's efforts will continue to make an impact, but pale in comparison to the shortage at hand.

A Case Study

One affordable downtown project, however, has made an impact. Capital Studios, adjacent to the grounds of the Texas state capitol on 11th Street, is the first downtown affordable housing project in almost 50 years. The project, designed by Austin firm Dick Clark + Associates, contains 135 single room occupancy units for residents at or below 10 percent MFI. It is a permanent facility, meaning residents can stay as long as they qualify for the income requirements. Some tenants are disabled, or are recovering from disease or homelessness.

Foundation Communities, a non-profit affordable housing developer in Central Texas, is the project's owner/operator. Sunshine Mathon, their Design + Development Director, toured me around the complex. It was key, said Mathon, to locate supportive housing in a transit-rich area, close to jobs and services for their residents. The building, like their other developments, was principally funded by federal tax credits, with a small portion coming from state or city resources. As required by the competitive conditions of the tax credit, the building was realized on a tight construction scheme, only barely finishing in December 2014.

The massing organizes around two central courtyards, resulting in light-filled hallways and meeting rooms. The project includes sustainable features like a VRF air conditioning system, rooftop



PAUL BARDAGLEY

solar thermal energy for hot water, and 79 percent of its construction waste diverted from the landfill. Impressed with the technology, Scott Ginder, the project's architect, used some of the green strategies on his own home. With his office Forgecraft Architecture + Design, he has designed another ground-up single room occupancy facility for Foundation Communities on South Lamar, set to begin construction this summer.

Capital Studios succeeds, but it is an anomaly. The site was severely limited by multiple Capitol View Corridors, rendering it impossible to develop with a for-profit developer. As part of the agreements of its sale, the property was required to provide 120 parking spaces for an adjacent office building. It does so with two stories of structured parking below grade, but as a result there are no parking spaces for tenants. This leaves the units to be marketed as a "community with a car-free lifestyle," which works well with the target demographic of possible residents. While forward thinking, this scenario won't be possible for commercial developers for a long time.

Looking Ahead

Robertson admits that efforts for

downtown affordable housing have had "limited" progress, a predicament largely driven by the high cost of land. The number of actually developable sites in the CBD is also extremely limited. City, county, state, and federal governments own a notable percentage of sites, especially north of the Capitol. The Capitol View Corridors severely limit building height throughout the city, but are the jurisdiction of the state legislature and were expressly off-limits for the DAP. Additional historic overlay districts further limit building height and the entire northwest corner of downtown, Judge's Hill, opted out of the DBP, preferring to remain a mix of single-story structures. Without territorial expansion, the CBD has nowhere to go but up.

These are not complaints—restrictions are healthy checks on the market forces at play, and, to its credit, Austin has commendably preserved large central portions of the city. What other city is so infused with creeks, greenbelts, and parks? But the limitations of these land uses increase the cost of doing business.

Progress made by other initiatives that serve the city at large has been more encouraging. In 2006, Austin

voters approved a \$55 million bond to fund affordable housing. As of 2012, 3,055 units were created or preserved, with the majority of them serving households below 50 percent MFI. In fact, Austin's programs have delivered a total of 18,406 units of affordable housing below 80 percent MFI since 2000. These efforts earned the city a Robert C. Larson Housing Policy Leadership Award from the Urban Land Institute in 2014. Still, even with these award-winning initiatives, Austin's housing market is over-stressed.

Multiple visioning documents for Austin's future are also in play. ImagineAustin, a comprehensive plan, was released in 2012, after the DAP, but the two texts are not fully coordinated. In addition, most neighborhoods have filed their own neighborhood plans under the previous city master plan, and these will remain in place. Neighborhoods grow increasingly vigilant to prevent "unwanted" development and, with the City Council now elected by geographic district, spatial planning decisions are set to be politicized even further.

Another major opportunity is CodeNEXT, a city-led initiative to rewrite Austin's complex Land Development Code (LDC) into a

simpler, form-based code. Jim Robertson is also a project manager for this effort. Part of the work is to create strong strategies for density and to encourage a diverse range of housing options. When presented with options of how to renovate the LDC, Austin's City Council favored a muscular rework: on a scale of 1 (light retouch) to 3 (full overhaul), they settled on an impressive severity rating of 2.5. Initial findings will be presented in late Spring 2016. This revision spells big changes for zoning, an upgrade welcomed by the city's developers and architects.

Phased and Enthused

A number of solutions are available for affordable housing. Some voices call for the removal of the onsite housing option in the DBP and advocate for larger fee-in-lieu sums. One of the DAP's original proposals was for a Workforce Housing Corporation that would partially subsidize downtown units for working class residents. No such entity has been created. Pro-development camps propose opening additional tracts to tower development, notably the Statesman campus along the lake. The recent micro-unit housing buzz will be tested in future TOD developments adjacent to downtown, but tiny units require

the dependability of serious transit options—and relaxed parking requirements—to really take off. Still others think affordable issues should be solved with citywide taxes, instead of fees that developers pass on to their buyers or tenants, which in turn makes their housing more expensive. A combination of these suggestions is likely a winning mix, and a solution that makes the civic development process faster while generating serious revenue for affordable housing is best.

What remains is the hardest step: a collective acceptance of this new Austin, and serious commitment to smartly improving the city's capacity. It is no longer about keeping Austin *weird*, but rather making Austin eclectic. David Heymann, writing in *Texas Architect*, quipped that "if you're worried people no longer think you're weird, then you are no longer weird. You're just middle-aged." Austin, long out of its golden youth, now faces its mid-life crisis, complete with our own F1 racetrack. And we have many more laps to go.

JACK MURPHY IS AN AUSTIN-BASED DESIGNER AND WRITER CURRENTLY WITH BALDRIDGE ARCHITECTS.



Capital Studios by Dick Clark + Associates.

PAUL BARDAGLEY

San Jose and the future of affordable housing in Silicon Valley



BERNARD ANDRÉ

In June, the California Supreme Court ruled to uphold the City of San Jose's affordable housing ordinance. In one unanimous decision, the court underscored what Bay Area residents already know: housing is expensive and in short supply, and that scarcity puts pressure on Californians at all income levels. Developers in San Jose now must include affordable units. The case, a benchmark for citizens, architects, and developers interested in the social impact of design, dates back to 2010 when

the City of San Jose enacted an inclusionary housing ordinance that required new residential developments with more than 20 units to offer a percentage of units for sale at prices within reach of low to moderate households. Before the ordinance could take effect, California Building Industry Association (CBIA) filed a lawsuit with the Supreme Court to block it. By ruling in favor of San Jose, the court dismissed a challenge that could have impacted the 170 California municipalities with active

inclusionary zoning programs.

Golden State Planning

In San Francisco and Los Angeles, the issue of affordable housing is at peak cause célèbre. LA Mayor Eric Garcetti in his 2015 State of the City address promised \$10 million in new funding to the city's Affordable Housing Trust, a token amount based on demand, but a symbolic gesture nonetheless. In San Francisco, the mega Transbay Transit Center is slated for 35 percent overall affordable housing,

with Studio Gang's potentially 400-foot tall tower reserving 139 affordable apartments for low-income buyers. And battles rage on in SF's Mission District over community displacement and a moratorium on market rate housing.

Civic impetuosity for housing is no new issue. When the court made their decision, they cited a 1970s section of the Health and Safety Code that then acknowledged the "serious shortage of decent, safe, and sanitary housing which persons and families of low or moderate income can afford." In predictive language the code reminds us that scarcity leads to inflationary prices and an overall rise in cost. Essentially, what impacts lower income people eventually impacts everyone. This is starkly illustrated across Silicon Valley, where middle-income workers must earn 50 dollars an hour in order to live near their employment.

San Jose is the largest city in the Bay Area and the anchor of Silicon Valley, yet the tech wealth on the Peninsula—Mountain View (Google), Menlo Park (Facebook), or Cupertino (Apple)—has largely passed it by. The Envision San Jose 2040 General Plan stressed job creation, a move that reflects San Jose's attention to monetary concerns (the city declared a fiscal emergency in 2011) rather than housing. Attracting businesses to downtown brings in more tax revenue than residential projects. But for Jacky Morales-Ferrand, interim director of the City of San Jose Department of Housing, this approach is somewhat shortsighted.

"Affordable housing can help communities change, especially in areas that rarely see new construction," she explained, brushing away old myths that low-income housing leads to welfare enclaves. "A new building demonstrates that new investments can be successful."

Case Studies: Housing

Geoffrey Morgan, president and CEO of First Community Housing, knows first hand the demand for units. The developer's Japantown Senior Apartments, designed by OJK Architects + Planning, are currently under construction. The infill site is not far from downtown and close to transit and amenities. It sits next door to the Nishioka Fish Market, a historic brick building from 1929. According to Andrew Whiting, a principal at OKJ Architects, the project was originally designed as the inclusionary component of a larger development that went unbuilt. When the market-rate project stalled out as the San Jose economy dipped, the goodwill fostered between the design team and the community kept the affordable component on course.

This is OKJ Architects' largest housing project to date. The apartments are grouped around a shared courtyard, which sits on top of parking. When finished, the five-story apartment building will offer 75-units to qualified low-income residents. Morgan is already deluged with 600 applications. He can only review 300.

"We live in a very strange economy," said Morgan. "It's a place where a studio costs \$1,800 a month. The motels are full because people who can't find a home need a place to stay. Having the inclusionary ordinances will provide funding and incentives to help teachers, janitors, restaurant workers. Establishing a fact that the market is not going to create the number of units necessary. It's the right thing to do from a policy and a social equity standpoint." San Jose issued 766 multifamily residential building permits in the first quarter of 2015, according to a city housing report. Just 71 were for affordable apartments.

First Community Housing and OJK Architecture have a track record of award-winning projects. With a bit of mid-century flair, their Gish Family Apartments—35 units over a ground floor 7-Eleven and located at the Gish Light Rail Stop—took home multiple AIA awards in 2008. With deep balconies and a playful facade, the project shows that affordable housing need not be stripped of dignity or design.

As demand overwhelms supply, it's tempting to create designs that simply fill the vacuum, but First Community Housing with OJK Architecture is committed to a sustainable mission. The Japantown development, like all of the

A model of San Jose's Japantown development. Above: 1585 Studios in Mountain View by First Community Housing with OJK Architecture + Planning.

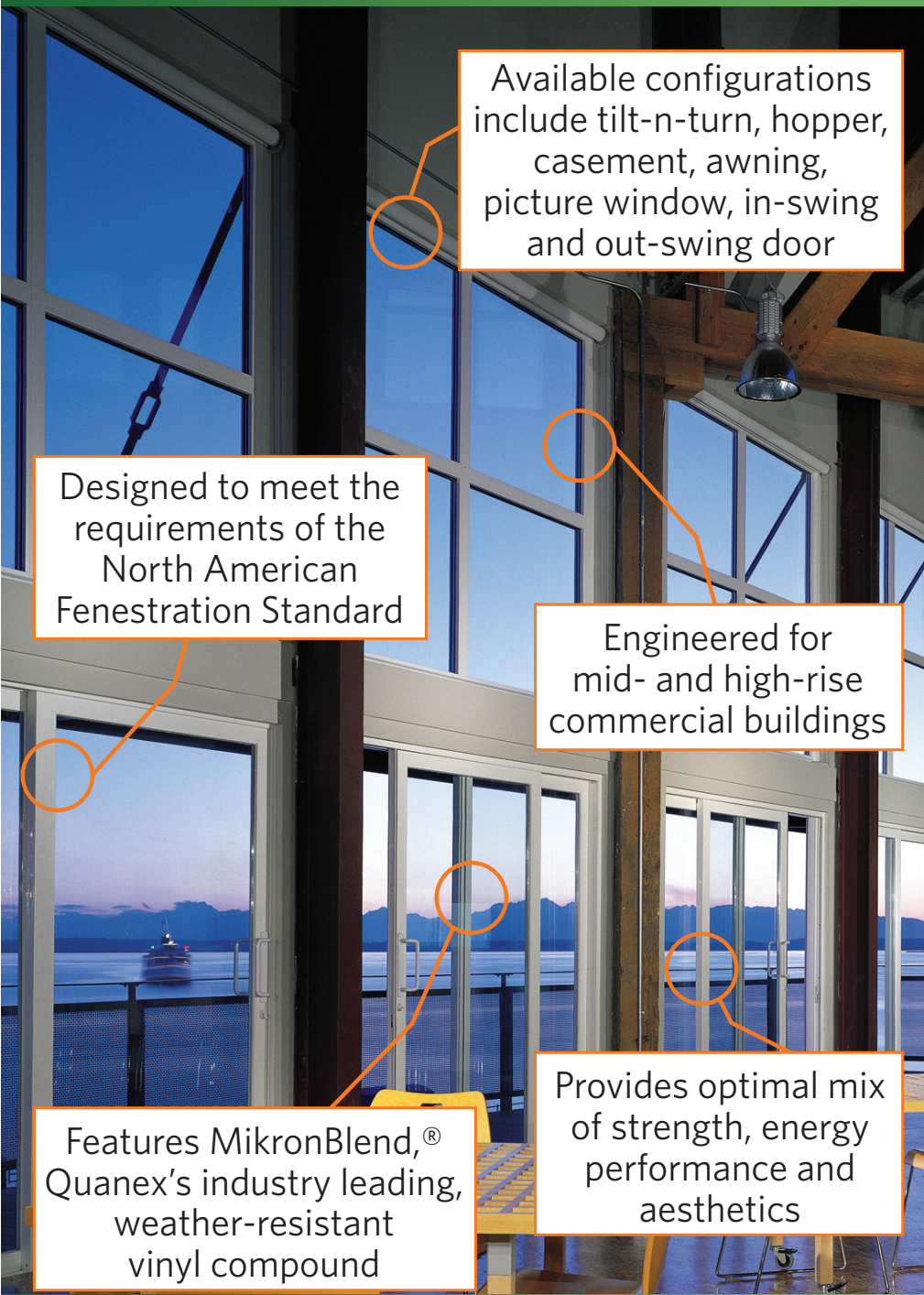


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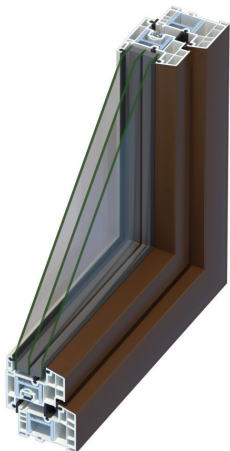
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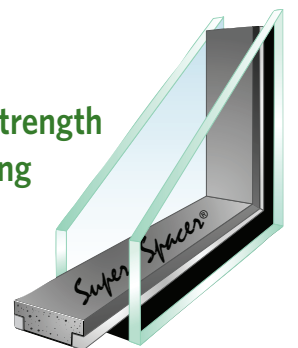
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2500 El Camino Real by David Baker Architects.



company's projects, is on track for LEED Platinum and will incorporate a host of green building features, such as low-VOC paint and drought-resistant planting in the common outdoor areas.

In nearby Mountain View, the team recently completed 1585 Studios in partnership with the non-profit Housing Choices Coalition that provides housing and services for the developmentally disabled population in Santa Clara County. OJK Architecture divided the development into two buildings, each three-stories, placing the bulk of the 27-units (26 are studios) in the rear structure for privacy. Services, such as a fitness center, offices, and a computer room are street side. Similar to Japantown, the development is located close to transit and is eco-minded in its approach to finishes and landscape, with the hopes of a LEED Gold rating.

One amenity common to both projects goes beyond architecture: all units come with a free VTA Eco Pass for unlimited transportation

on all buses and light rail lines throughout San Mateo County.

A Mixed Bag

Still, offering bus fare works best when residential buildings are located near transit and in dense, walkable neighborhoods—like downtown San Jose, which is a hub for BART, Caltrain, rapid buses, and eventually high-speed rail. While there has been some market rate development in the area, the tension between jobs and housing persists. Last spring, SPUR issued a report entitled The Future of Downtown San Jose. Its first point reaffirms the city's employment-forward position: make downtown a jobs center. This means focusing new construction on office buildings and attracting companies, which, among other things, contribute more in local taxes.

Morales-Ferrand suggests that a regional approach would take the pressure off of any one city to fulfill housing and job needs. A healthy Silicon Valley depends on

it. Smaller communities in Santa Clara County are just as behind in terms of affordable housing construction. Those that are job rich might be better equipped to take on some developments. "People don't think about the lines," she said of municipal borders and the residents looking for a place to live that near their jobs. According to Morales-Ferrand, presently each city sets their own unit target, but if the State of California endorsed regions, there could be opportunities to trade targets.

Just up the 101 Freeway, David Baker Architects (DBA) is in construction on two affordable housing projects, 2500 El Camino Real in Palo Alto and Onizuka Crossing Family Housing in Sunnyvale. Affordable housing developers MidPen Housing and Charities Housing created a partnership to take on the Sunnyvale site. DBA is working with MidPen to develop 58 units of housing for formerly homeless and low-income families. The scheme groups one-,

two-, and three-bedroom units around a series of courtyards. Strategically placed outdoor spaces break up the building's massing and help to integrate the high-density structure into a residential neighborhood.

Commissioned by Stanford Research Park in partnership with the Related Companies, 2500 El Camino Real is 7,000 square feet of ground floor retail topped by 70 multifamily one-, two-, and three-bedroom affordable apartments. The project is divided into two distinct buildings, one clad in light-colored panels and the second in dark. There's a public café and a private courtyard for residents. In addition, the design provides space for the Vista Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired. David Baker Architects considers the design a first step toward a more equitable jobs/housing balance in Palo Alto and the project may eventually demonstrate that mixed use in this context is a successful model.

Funding, of course, is the driver

that will ultimately change the future of affordable housing across Silicon Valley. First Community Housing's Geoff Morgan recalled that the statewide dissolution of redevelopment agencies stunted new affordable housing development (especially infill housing in urban areas) just at a moment when California needed it the most. "When there wasn't funding, construction dropped by two-thirds," he said.

New sources, however, are coming on line. In April, a bill by California Assembly Speaker Toni G. Atkins passed the Assembly Housing and Community Development Committee. The Building Homes and Jobs Act is designed to create a more permanent funding source for affordable housing through fees levied on real estate documents (roughly 75 dollars per transaction).

Morgan is optimistic: "Future is looking brighter and you'll see a big boom."

MIMI ZEIGER IS AN'S WEST EDITOR.

Onizuka Crossing Family Housing in Sunnyvale by David Baker Architects.





Nordstrom Building - Ottawa, Ontario (Canada) by CALLISON Architecture:
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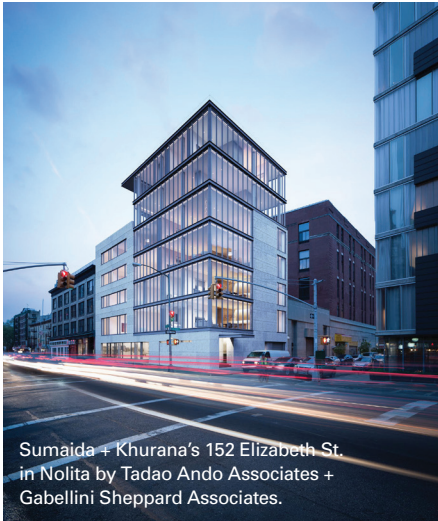


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In Conversation: Alternative Developers

As part of the *AN* developers feature, Matt Shaw interviewed representatives from four developers who are innovating in New York and elsewhere using alternative models for development. These perspectives offer new ways forward as the architecture and business communities work together to find new design, housing, and community-oriented solutions to our 21st century urban issues.



Sumaida + Khurana's 152 Elizabeth St. in Nolita by Tadao Ando Associates + Gabellini Sheppard Associates.

NOE & ASSOCIATES AND THE BOUNDARY

Sumaida + Khurana

Up-and-coming developer Sumaida + Khurana is bringing high-profile international architects to do its first buildings in New York, including NoLiTa condos by Tadao Ando and a forthcoming 400-foot midtown tower by Alvaro Siza. Amit Khurana has more than two decades of experience in the real estate industry, while Saif Sumaida holds an architecture degree from the Cooper Union. Together, they are changing how New York development is designed.

Matt Shaw: How did you end up working together as developers?

Saif Sumaida: I graduated from Cooper Union with a degree in architecture, and the education was very rich in discourse and concepts. Just by accident, I actually ended up in construction, and over the last 23 years, I've been building in New York. I like working as a developer because you have control of authorship both from a construction and architecture perspective, but also as the developer when you put the vision together.

Amit Khurana: Saif is tremendously experienced and when we met it was an interesting fit just because I love architecture and design. But I don't have artistic skills or skills in the way of trying to attempt to do architecture. I have to give Saif such credit for this but when we are in a room with an architect and we sit down, his knowledge is so fantastic, to not only think of just construction but to think of how architecture relates to construction. And I think that it was a unique situation because there was a shared vision and very complementary sets of skills.

What do you feel these projects bring to New York as a city, not just for the residents of the buildings?

AK: We see ourselves as developer/custodians of the built environment and ultimately we have a responsibility because we play a very important role that really changes the city. Small or large—it doesn't matter. It's about uplifting people, and fulfilling the dream of the city too, right? I think if you ask anyone, at the end of the day people appreciate excellence. It's not about

the asset type, it's not necessarily about who is going to live there or rent there or work there. It has something to do with a kind of purity of design and the impact it has on people.

SS: I think the problem is a lot of developers are really looking at buildings as commodities to monetize. But I think there is a legacy to be made in selecting the architect and making something that has meaning and has a place in the fabric of the city and that is something that you'll ultimately be proud of. We want to create places. We feel that we have some sort of a social responsibility to do that.

Why bring in these architects?

AK: New York is a melting pot with a lot of influence from outside. We also came from different countries although we spent so much time here. We wanted to just focus on, in a very pure fashion, this idea of bringing master architects to New York to design their very first buildings here. Especially in New York where as-of-right sites are such a tremendous opportunity to work in a specific way and to push the envelope a little bit. Looking at it and finding a site, we're actually looking for a site for Ando or for Siza. This inverted process allows us to think about things a little bit differently.

SS: A lot of developers rely on marketing people to tell them what has worked. They're following formulas because they believe that these are the formulas that will get them the profit. People find a proof of concept and just follow it. You don't have to think too much. When you bring somebody else from abroad or somebody who hasn't built anything in New York, they actually bring a certain amount of freshness. What's amazing about New York is that it allows for this diversity. You can still be visionary and make it successful.

Do you think that your experience as an architect lets you work with these architects in a different way rather than other developers?

SS: I think the one thing is, I'm very respectful of the process. I'm always able to talk to architects in their language. Instead of looking at it, again, as a commodity, I can engage them in their concepts and be able to enter that dialogue and be able to discuss it with them as opposed to always looking for an end product. I can enter the process and into a discourse with them so that once I understand what they're trying to do we can then figure how best to get there.

You mentioned affordable housing a little bit. Do you see that as a project that could be interesting to take on?

SS: Very much so. I think there's a responsibility for developers to be able to bring to the city various projects. It can't just be building for the wealthy, you have to be able to do it for all. Otherwise, you're not really making an impact in the city as you think you are. To make an impact on the city you have to touch on the various fabrics.

AK: Well I think that it's also responding to the realities of where you are in a market cycle. Currently we're in a market where land is insanely expensive. So we have to respond to that. It's always allowing yourself to be flexible with different opportunities. I mean, imagine bringing in a famous Spanish architect to New York to build a wonderful, affordable housing project or something like that. It isn't about how many dollars per foot you spend on a construction; it's about thoughtfulness. We have the ability and skillset that allows us to also control costs and control some of these variables that can get out of control.



COURTESY HFZ CAPITAL GROUP

Thorsten Kiefer, HFZ

Thorsten Kiefer is Director of Design and Development for HFZ Capital Group. In this role, he has helped initiate collaborations with architects such as David Chipperfield, BIG, Moshe Safdie, and Isay Weinfeld on projects at various scales in New York and Miami. He talked with *AN* about his background at OMA, SOM, and SHoP, and what someone in his position can bring to the firm and ultimately the city.

As an architect at OMA in Rotterdam, his job included working in collaboration with Diller Scofidio + Renfro on a master plan for Brooklyn Academy of Music in 2001. This experience at OMA also led to HFZ bringing in OMA to develop an entire empty city block in New York between Tenth and Washington streets along the High Line. However, OMA wasn't able to continue because of previous contractual commitments, so HFZ turned to another OMA alumni, Bjarke Ingels of BIG, who had worked with Thorsten 15 years ago.

Matt Shaw: You have an interesting background. How did you end up in this role as an experienced architect working directly for a developer?

Thorsten Kiefer: My time at SHoP was truly formative. At SHoP I worked on competitions in London and New York as well as the

redevelopment of the South Street Seaport, initially with General Growth and then followed by Howard Hughes. I formed a number of connections with the development side of the business and after a couple of years at SHoP I began looking for the next career challenge. This opportunity seemed interesting for myself.

What is your role at HFZ?

As Director of Design and Development, I work closely with the marketing team and our executives on the overall conceptual and programmatic framework. The team establishes a list of architects, which we believe would be a great fit for the project. In high-end residential development, the branding aspect of an interior designer or design architect can make a difference in sales.

The global desire for design is higher now than it was 20 years ago. There is money from many countries. Different cultures have different attitudes toward design, and the global market is reacting to that. A lot of global people invest in the city. HFZ tries to offer a high quality product. We do high-end residential, and without design, we wouldn't get the margins. The value added from the architecture is necessary to get the numbers. 432 Park Avenue by Viñoly has a tremendous location, so people would buy there anyway. But 432 is getting astronomical numbers. Would you get the same price per square foot without the good design? Would the Russians, Chinese, Europeans, and South Americans still choose it?

This position is more common than maybe known in the architectural community. Large developers like Related or Extell have in-house design teams. I do believe that this role is valuable. There are very different mindsets in design, construction, and development. The architect is best suited to mediate in between all of them. I also work with zoning lawyers to see if our massing is possible, and also with the construction team to make sure quality is good.

How do you see your role impacting the designs and ultimately the city?

Ziel Feldman, founder and chairman of HFZ as well as Nir Meir, Principal partner at HFZ are very keen on design and quality. Good design simply distinguishes our product within a very competitive market, and we understand this well. I'm also really interested in finding smart solutions to making the city a nice, vibrant place to be.

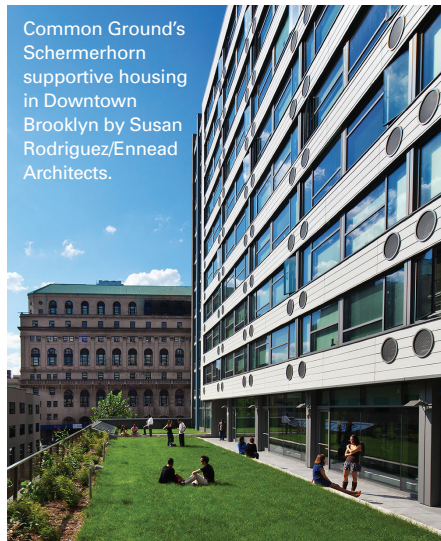
We are working with David Chipperfield on the last empty lot at Bryant Park and those units will come on the market in the next couple of months. I truly believe that it will not just be a beautiful piece of architecture completing an important urban space in New York, but also a very successful development.

What can this position bring to a company?

I believe an architect is best suited to communicate between all the different groups involved within the development process. We all know that the motivations of construction, marketing, development, or design are not always necessarily aligned, so the role we have with the position is to bring the different mindsets a little closer and hope that the end result is good design.

Do you ever push for different types of projects, like affordable housing?

I certainly have my personal opinion on "affordability" in New York and I do think that affordable housing will be a challenging component in any future residential development in this city.



Common Ground's Schermerhorn supportive housing in Downtown Brooklyn by Susan Rodriguez/Ennead Architects.

DAVID SUNDBERG/ETSO

Brenda Rosen, Common Ground

Common Ground is the largest supportive housing developer and operator in New York. The organization offers formerly homeless people quality environments and services to recover, and also works to develop more traditional affordable housing. Its non-profit status makes its work different from many other developers in the city. Brenda Rosen is the president and CEO, and she gave us some insight on how Common Ground supports its tenants and navigates the non-profit development process.

Matt Shaw: What is the mission of Common Ground?

Brenda Rosen: Supportive housing is affordable housing with onsite services so that's what is different from your cookie-cutter affordable or market rate operation. There is a percentage of the tenants that come through the lottery process like any other affordable low-income tenant. And the other part of the building is filled with formerly homeless people who oftentimes are suffering from mental illness or substance abuse issues or medical issues and often times all of the above.

So there's 50 percent or 60 percent of the building that is set aside for people coming from those circumstances and that is why we have onsite support to make sure that all of our tenants—low-income, regular working people, and those who are formerly homeless and who are coming with a lot of challenges and a lot of issues—have the support that they need to do that and to be as successful in housing as anybody else. With the exception of a few projects, one in Rochester and two in Connecticut, we are the property managers for all of our projects so we never leave the project.

We are about to break ground on our first stand-alone conventional affordable project which will be 248 units of affordable housing and that will not have a supportive housing component at all. Because our buildings are tax-credit buildings, your income has to be at 60 percent or less of the Area Median Income. We do the same marketing, advertising, and lottery like any other developer in the city for the affordable housing.

What are some of the challenges of being a non-profit? What does it mean to be a non-profit developer?

What it means is that the financing of the projects can be incredibly complicated compared to for-profits. When we finance a project we have multiple streams of support coming in for capital and for operating. We'll use bonds, we'll use tax credits, we'll use state and city subsidies. And sometimes borough presidents

or city council funds will fill a gap that we might have on the capital side. We also have government contracts that are providing operating support so we have regulatory agreements and government contracts, which means we are under intense scrutiny at all times regarding the services that we're providing and the quality of the housing.

Can you talk more about what it means to be non-profit and specifically do affordable housing?

Fortunately or unfortunately we are not in this business to make a ton of money as we develop. Any non-profit developer that builds housing—for whatever population—will be collecting a developer fee. I think that the thing that really sets a non-profit apart from a for-profit developer is that all of the development fees that we collect, all of the net proceeds of whatever we're doing, goes right back into the services and the housing that we're providing. At the end of the day, again, we're here to have a sound investment for investors that will buy our tax credits and finance a building. But we aren't here to come out with this monstrous surplus in our budget. I think that because we are a mission-driven organization, our goal is ultimately to develop and operate housing for vulnerable people in New York.

What role does design play in your mission and in your projects?

Design in all of our projects is a top priority for us. We believe that a pride in home and surroundings helps recovering people to gain stability and to really end up succeeding. Ennead [Architects] did Schermerhorn in downtown Brooklyn for us. It has a ton of green elements, is cantilevered over a subway, and it's incredibly beautiful. We have worked with COOKFOX who designed a building for us in Brownsville and is designing our next two buildings up on Webster Avenue in the Bronx—both a supportive building and an affordable building. The apartments and hallways are really flooded with natural light.

COOKFOX and Robert A.M. Stern are normally known for high-end buildings and yet they come back and work with us again and again, and bring those same design elements into an affordable project. Not many non-profits get to say that Robert A.M. Stern is going to be doing their next project and build in a low-income neighborhood in Brooklyn. We also develop mini studios, where the average apartment is between 225 to 300 square feet. We have to be really thoughtful about the design of the interior of each apartment. I've joked that we were doing micro units long before micro units were popular.

What are some of the challenges that you face when choosing sites?

Years ago when we were looking for land, we would site projects in Manhattan and in Brooklyn and in other places. Over the last several years we've done new construction in downtown Brooklyn, Brownsville, the South Bronx, and the Lower East Side, in addition to our older Manhattan sites in Midtown. But now primarily the only affordable land for us at this point is in the Bronx.

Common Ground tends to build large. Our smallest building has 72 units and our largest has 640. We prefer to have a building with 200 or more units. So you need a lot of buildable square feet for that, because in addition to the apartments we have a lot of community space in our buildings for our tenants—so we can have computer labs, a multi-purpose room, a gym, outdoor spaces, and offices for the onsite support staff.



Tom Erwin, kolonihavehus, in Brooklyn Bridge Park.

MATTHEW WILLIAMS

Lisa Kim, Two Trees

Two Trees Management Company was founded in 1968 and has developed over 3 billion dollars in real estate. It is most famous for its redevelopment of the industrial neighborhood of Dumbo, Brooklyn. The company has remained committed to fostering artistic and cultural activity in the area through subsidized spaces for arts community tenants, and more broadly, supporting art as an urban issue. Lisa Kim is the Cultural Affairs Director for Two Trees. She formerly served as Private Collection Manager and Director of Exhibitions and Operations at Gagosian Gallery.

Matt Shaw: What initiatives does Two Trees have to support arts and culture?

Lisa Kim: Just having someone in my position is different. I am not a real estate person. My entire background comes from the art world. And so they brought me in to be the liaison to the art community and to think about this notion of organizing the company's efforts of cultural philanthropy and making space for arts and artists in the neighborhood and how that integrates into our development. For Two Trees in Dumbo, it was really organic from the beginning. They own the majority of this neighborhood, and have seen it change.

It has become expensive for artists to work in Dumbo. The reason for the cultural space subsidy program is to find an organized way to create a level of support for the art community and open up space in our buildings for artists and non-profit groups. We thought an application process was the best way to do it. The space subsidy is rather dramatic. If you are granted a space subsidy here you're given a lease of up to three years at basically a dollar a foot per month.

It's tricky because there are a lot of people that certainly do want to bring artists in just to kind of spruce stuff up and then leave them when they don't need them, but that's not our case. We have 17 tenants—11 artists and six non-profit groups. With the cultural space subsidy tenants who've come in, we want to make sure that they're also an active part of the community over there.

We want them to know who else is in the neighborhood. We had a little happy hour event last month where we brought in, not just the cultural space subsidy tenants, but our other artists and arts organizations tenants.

Who are some of the tenants?

We have New York's first feminist cooperative gallery that was founded in 1972 and has been in Dumbo for eight years. On the 2nd floor of 20 Jay Street is a young theater group that goes to empower young women, to teach them how to write, direct, and perform plays about women's issues. So here you have an A.I.R. gallery, a 40-year-old institution meeting Girl Be Heard, a six-year-institution with very-like minded initiatives talking about what they do.

We've been the go-to for arts groups that need a space once they've been booted from Tribeca, or Chelsea, or Soho. So we have arts support groups such as the New York Foundation for the Arts and the Marie Walsh Sharpe Faith Program. We also have the sculpture studio for the NY Studio School. Brooklyn Arts Council has their offices here. Arcadia is another arts funding organization that has its office here. We've been very supportive, for decades, to St. Ann's Warehouse and to Smack Mellon. These are all tenants who had free to low rent. So it creates a very serious art community and a cluster in this neighborhood.

Do these cultural initiatives translate to added value for the developers? Or is this sort of a cultural, philanthropic project?

I think it's cultural and philanthropic. A lot of people want to quantify what happens when you bring culture, but you can't say when you put in X amount of dollars into arts support that you're going to affect your bottom line by another number because you can raise property values or rents are higher or various other things. I mean I think it's really anecdotal. I wish I could give you a metric. If you have cool shit for people to see they're going to come see it. So who's doing the cool shit, it's the arts groups, right?

So how are these initiatives structured financially? Are they part of a separate non-profit? How does it relate to Two Trees?

Well, we're a two-person part of the staff of Two Trees. The cultural space subsidy program is straight out of Two Trees. You get the same commercial space you would get if you were a market rate tenant. In Dumbo we have three commercial buildings—45 Main, 54 Washington, and 20 Jay Street—and our subsidy tenants are spread throughout all three buildings.

Then, separately, there is the non-profit Walentas Family Foundation with two programs as part of it. One is a neighborhood school program where grants are given for innovative school programs. The other half is the Sharpe-Walentas Studio Program that offers 17 selected artists free studio space for one year in New York.

What does someone in your role bring to the development firm?

Because I'm naive to the world of development I can really be fresh about my approach in thinking about the art first. I go create it first and then there's the reality check of is it possible to do this? On this site? Is it possible to do it in this budget? Does it make sense for this project or development?" And that's when you start to put things together.

One of the buildings is a rather significant renovation and that's the old Galapagos Art Space building at Water and Main streets. Four galleries will occupy that space. We spent the winter and spring months renovating that building from a cavernous, theater event space/bar to four beautiful sixteen-foot-ceiling white box gallery spaces.



*Brookfield Place North Entry at World Financial Center
Owner: Brookfield Properties*

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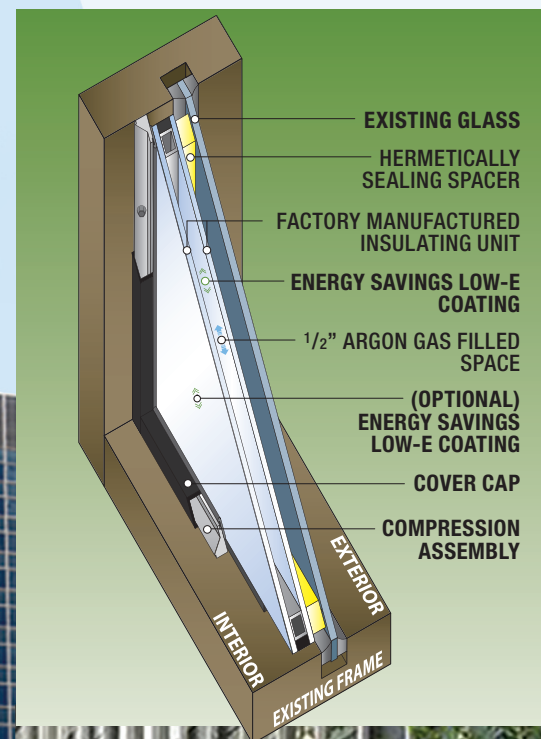
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2015 Best of Products Awards

Over the next several pages you will find the results of *The Architect's Newspaper's* first annual Best of Products competition. Nearly 400 submissions were evaluated on the basis of technical innovation and aesthetic merit—a task for which our jurors were more than a match. Thoughtful, curious, and authoritative, their deliberation was marked by insightful and honest discussion and comments. Our thanks to them and to all who entered the competition.

Leslie Clagett,
Products Editor

The Jury
Colin Brice, Mapos
Barry Goralnick, Barry
Goralnick Architects
Harshad Pillai, Fogarty
Finger Architecture
Alison Spear, AIA



WINNER

Raw Concrete 4004 Caesarstone

This surfacing material emulates the raw look and texture of concrete, while providing the durability of quartz. The non-porous slabs are heat-, stain-, and scratch-resistant and require no sealing. Suitable for use as countertops, vanities, flooring, wall paneling, furniture, and more, the 56 1/2-inch by 120-inch panels are available in three colors and in 14 edge treatments.

caesarstoneus.com

“I like this trend: the concrete look. This product makes it practical and cost-effective.”
—Barry Goralnick

HONORABLE MENTION

ViviGraphix Spectra Glass with Zoom Images Forms+Surfaces

ViviGraphix Spectra Glass consists of a graphic interlayer laminated between two panes of glass. Zoom Images, a portfolio of nature-themed photography, significantly expands the possibilities for bringing beauty to large-scale glass applications. Created using sophisticated gigapixel image-capturing equipment, Zoom Images are thousands of individual photographs that are stitched and stacked together to form a single large-scale, super high-resolution photo. Because of their extraordinary scale, the images are able to retain their clarity at very large sizes. Zoom Images are accessible through Zoom Digital Dark-room, the manufacturer’s interactive online design tool.

forms-surfaces.com



HONORABLE MENTION

Gyptone BIG Curve CertainTeed Ceilings

These perforated acoustical gypsum panels can be formed into highly curved ceilings without the cost and time associated with custom fabrication. At only 6.5-mm thick, Gyptone BIG Curve can be dry-bent to a 10-foot radius, and can achieve up to a 5-foot radius by wet bending. The panels are made of 85 percent recycled content and certified for low-VOC emissions, which contributes to sustainable building standards and helps maintain high indoor air quality. Fitted with an acoustical backing tissue, the panels are available in three perforation patterns.

certainteed.com



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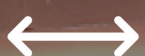
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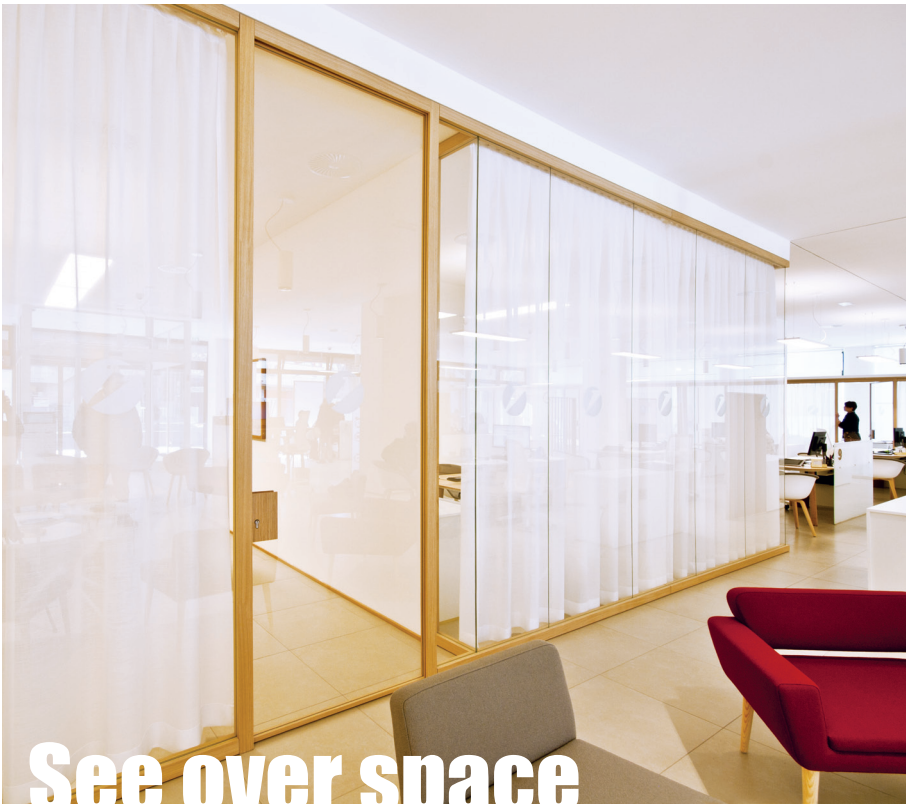


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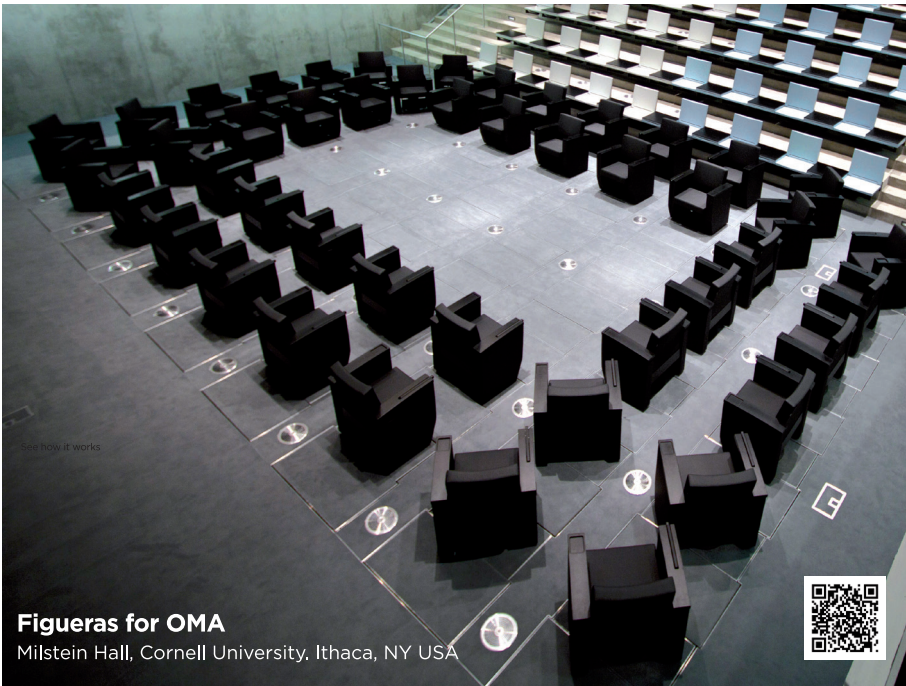
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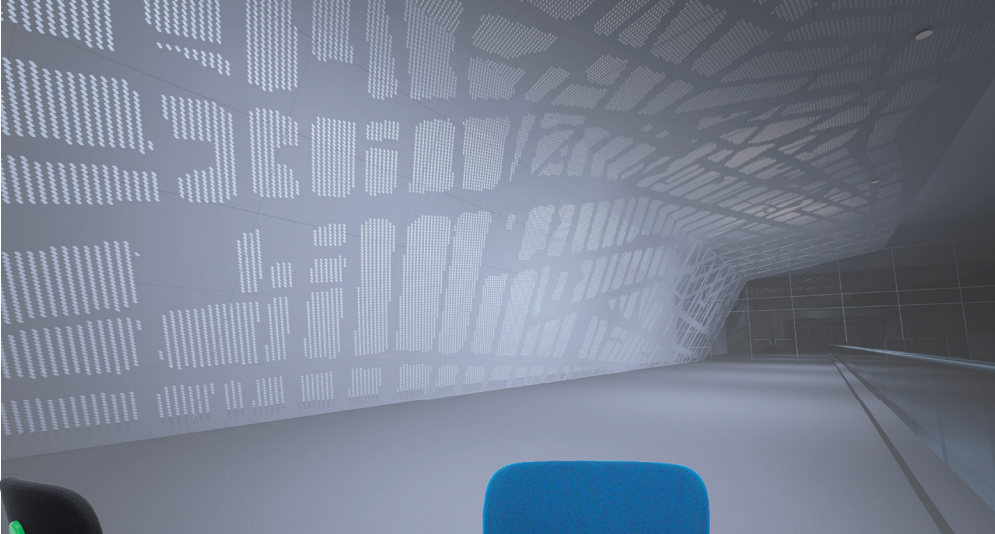
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HONORABLE MENTION

PARTI Ceilings Plus

PARTI utilizes complex, continuous perforation patterns that extend beyond the boundaries of individual ceiling and wall panels to give the illusion of depth to two-dimensional surfaces. Integrated LED lighting is optional; mechanical, electrical, plumbing, and other building systems are readily accommodated by PARTI.

ceilingsplus.com



HONORABLE MENTION

Allstar Vitra

Allstar contains all the functional features of an office chair—a synchronized mechanism with lockable positioning, seat depth and height adjustment, and an adjustable backrest—in a design that suggests a relaxed, residential feel and sense of familiarity. The chair comes in a variety of colors and fabrics; leather upholstery is available. Designed by Konstantin Grcic.

vitra.com

“Beautiful and functional
with just a simple twist.”
—Colin Brice

Interiors
+
Furnishings



WINNER

Ikaros Koleksiyon

Designed for the modern mobile worker, this sofa features cleverly designed “wings” that neatly create horizontal work surfaces on three sides of the piece. The extension off the backrest is at table height, so it can be used as a desk by a person seated in a chair behind the sofa. This aspect of the design allows Ikaros to be used simultaneously from inside and outside, providing people with an inviting and inventive locus point for collaborative work.

koleksiyon.com.tr

**BEST OF
PRODUCT
AWARDS
WINNER**





WINNER

2C Window
Weco Windows S.L.

Developed by a team of Spanish architects, this re-envisioning of the traditional wood window features a sash that combines glass and hardware in a single assembly, without a frame. The self-supporting glass becomes a sheer, transparent plane, maximizing light and transparency. Wall openings are framed in wood, the glazing fitting hermetically over the frame using advanced technology in hardware and sealants. Triple gaskets assure maximum thermal and acoustical performance. The double- or triple-glazed window is available in fixed, tilt-and-turn, sliding, and hinged versions. The sliding window allows unbroken openings up to 19 ½ feet long. The interior face of the unit is finished in baked enamel in black, white, or any RAL color.

wecowindows.com



“Up to 48-foot
openings: outstanding
design options.”
—Colin Brice



**HONORABLE
MENTION**

JELD-WEN Custom Wood Folding Window
JELD-WEN Windows & Doors

A novel solution for residential or light commercial projects, this accordion-folding window assembly folds off to the side of the opening to connect the kitchen—or any room—to a backyard, deck, or patio at counter height. The system, with up to eight panels, is available as a top-hung application and can be designed as either a flush sill that smoothly meets the stretch of counter or as a standard outswing sill. The maximum opening width is 48 feet, achieved by combining two 24-foot installations. Available in multiple configurations, the folding window is offered in 42 exterior paint finishes, three copper panel options, and a variety of wood species.

jeld-wen.com



**HONORABLE
MENTION**

Entice Series Premium Entrance System
CRL/U.S. Aluminum

While this system retains the elegant appearance of a frameless glass entrance with minimal vertical lines, it has the strength to support door handle hardware on one-inch-thick insulating glass panels. Designed for use with all high solar- and thermal-efficient glass options, including low-E coatings and tints, Entice delivers contemporary heavy-glass storefront aesthetics while satisfying energy code requirements and ASHRAE 90.1 air infiltration criteria. Patent-pending vertical stiles with ultra narrow sightlines and door rails feature thermally broken cladding that provides U-factors as low as 0.33. In addition, configurations with prewired LED lighting systems provide commercial environments with striking accent lighting that enhances the function and appearance of the facade.

crl-arch.com

Lighting

HONORABLE MENTION

LN Series Cree

The wing-like design of this sleek luminaire allows a more uniform illumination of task surfaces and ceilings, while providing exceptional efficacy of up to 110 lumens per watt. The series is modular in nature, with four-foot light engines that can be easily combined for longer runs. The color temperature is field adjustable, allowing for convenient fine-tuning of installations.

cree.com

BEST OF PRODUCT AWARDS WINNER

WINNER

The Running Magnet 2.0 FLOS Architectural

In this new track lighting system, a trimless, extruded aluminum housing is recessed into plasterboard ceilings or walls; it can even turn inside or outside corners. An electrical track is then laid into the housing. Next, LED modules—either adjustable spots or flush-mount linear strips—are attached to the track via magnets, creating a responsive and versatile lighting platform. Fixtures are easily repositionable in the field, as needs change.

usa.flos.com

“Very smart and elegant.”
—Colin Brice

HONORABLE MENTION

Antimicrobial Trim Leviton

These stainless steel wallplates and switches are made with an antimicrobial additive to help keep surfaces cleaner in conjunction with regular housekeeping procedures. Silver ions inhibit cell division and prevent bacteria—including E-coli and MRSA—from reproducing. The collection is suitable for healthcare facilities, educational institutions, hospitality venues, commercial kitchens, and other public service areas where surface contamination is a concern.

leviton.com

“This is a smart solution for awkward spaces.”
—Barry Goralnick



WINNER

Sottile 18-Inch-Deep Refrigerator
Perlick Residential

Standard undercounter refrigerators and beverage centers are 24 inches deep. Measuring just 18 inches deep and 32 inches tall, this undercounter appliance brings refrigerated storage to the slimmest of spaces. Featuring the proprietary front-vented RAPIDcool forced-air system, the fridge chills room-temperature liquids in just 30 minutes. Full-extension pullout shelves are adjustable in one-inch increments. Available with solid stainless steel doors, glass fronts, or fully integrated overlay panels. NSF rated and ADA compliant.

perlick.com



HONORABLE MENTION

VOLA Round Series Hand Shower
Hastings Tile & Bath

The Round Series hand shower takes the core elements of the VOLA design language—the circle and the cylinder—as the starting point to create an entirely new product. Subtle polymer details on the handle help users keep a grip on the fitting. Available in polished chrome, brushed chrome, natural brass, brushed stainless, and a range of colors. Designed by Aarhus Arkitekterne.

hastingstilebath.com

HONORABLE MENTION

P3 Comforts
Duravit

The P3 Comforts suite of bathroom fixtures uses a design language of simple geometry and subtle shifts in planes to create an aesthetically calming experience. The washbasin features a raised tap platform, separate from the wet area, making a generous shelf surface for bathroom essentials. The shower tray has an easy clean outlet that is seamlessly integrated into the raised base, emphasizing its pristine lines. The tray was created with a new material, DuraSolid, which provides Class B slip-resistance without additional coating. Designed by Phoenix Design.

duravit.us

HONORABLE MENTION

24-Inch Glass Door Refrigerator
Bosch

With doors finished in white glass, black glass, or glass on stainless steel, this counter-depth refrigerator brings a sleek look to a small kitchen or ancillary space. The appliance’s appearance is enhanced by its handle-less design and concealed hinges. The doors are reversible, allowing for next-to-wall placement and near-flush installation. The 10-cubic-foot capacity includes three freezer drawers, a wine rack, and a sealed crisper, all lit with LEDs. Energy Star qualified.

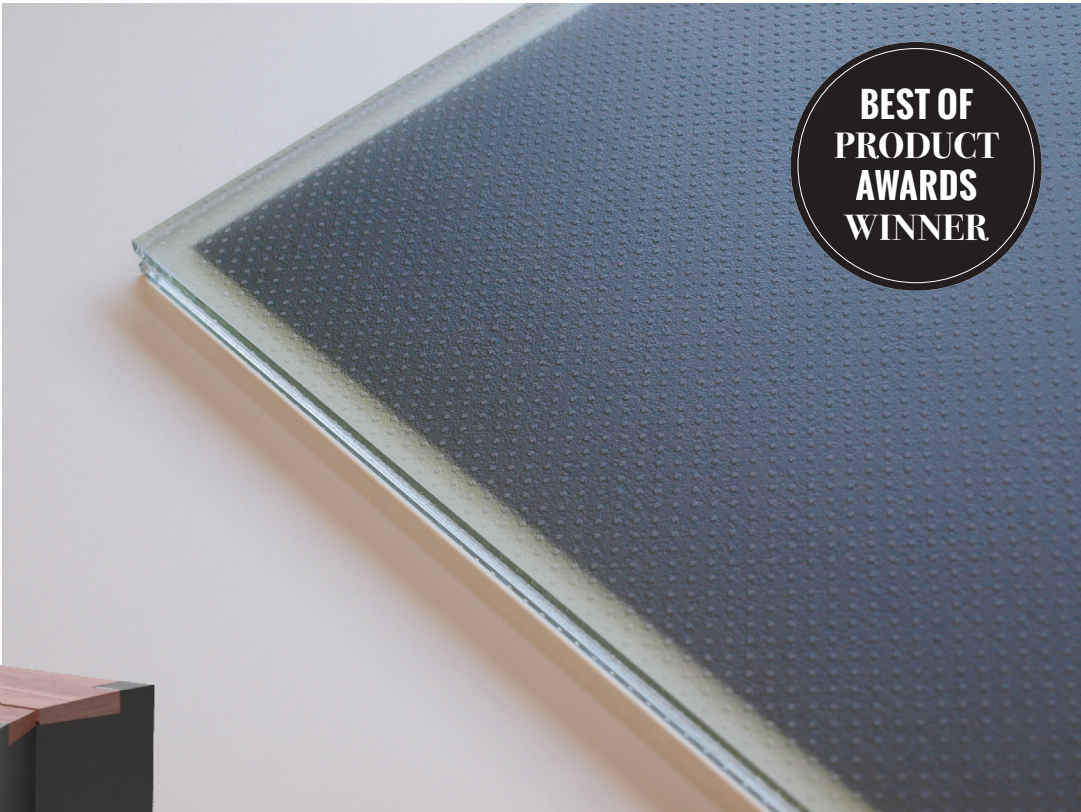
bosch-home.com

WINNER

Walkable Photovoltaic Floor
Onyx Solar

Recently patented, this walkable photovoltaic floor paver supports 400 kilograms/ 881 pounds in point-load tests, meets anti-slip standards, and reaches efficiency levels comparable to any other photovoltaic building material. It combines passive elements (its installation on a rooftop terrace, for example, improves the structure's thermal envelope) and active elements (onsite power generation) to greatly reduce a building's environmental impact while avoiding CO₂ emissions. Equally important is the appealing design of the system. It offers a wide range of colors, sizes, and transparency; it can be modified to accommodate LED backlighting.

onyxsolar.com



**BEST OF
PRODUCT
AWARDS
WINNER**



HONORABLE
MENTION

Chevron Bench
Ore Inc.

Understated in design and materials, this 54-inch by 15½-inch by 17½-inch bench complements city and suburban settings. The metal supports can be finished in any custom powder coat color. The angled wood seat is lpe wood, which is noted for its durability and strength, as well as its natural resistance to decay, wet conditions, and insect infestation.

orecontainers.com

HONORABLE
MENTION

MultipliCITY
Landscape Forms

Created and developed in partnership with designer Yves Behar and fuseproject, MultipliCITY pioneers the integration of mass production and custom materials and configurations for a global market. Structural parts are manufactured by Landscape Forms, while seating and table surfaces are produced from locally sourced hardwoods in markets outside North America. Flat shipping and local assembly to international locations support carbon-reducing sustainability. The flexible, dynamic system addresses multiple scales, applications, and artistic expressions. It includes six elements: a backed and backless bench, table, bike rack, LED pathlight, and litter receptacle.

landscapeforms.com



HVAC

HONORABLE
MENTION

Haiku with SenseME
Big Ass Fans

Made of sustainably harvested Moso bamboo or a durable matrix composite, this Energy Star-rated ceiling fan is equipped with SenseME technology, which allows it to respond to changing room conditions. An occupancy sensor turns the fan off when the room is empty; and when temperature and humidity levels change, the fan automatically adjusts its speed. The Haiku fan with SenseME can be integrated with the Nest thermostat, allowing homeowners to increase their thermostat set points to offset air conditioning or heating usage. Working together, the two technologies can save up to 30 percent on energy costs while simultaneously increasing the sustainability of home heating and cooling systems.

bigassfans.com



HONORABLE
MENTION

AquaSAFE Residential Fire Sprinkler System
Uponor

This non-stagnant fire sprinkler system is integrated with a home's cold-water plumbing using flexible PEX-a tubing. Flexible tubing can bend around corners and obstructions, which means fewer fittings—potential leak points—are required. Minimizing leaks is especially important for the system, which relies on having the necessary water flow available in case of activation. The shape memory of PEX-a tubing, combined with ProPEX expansion fittings, comprises a connection system that cannot be dry fit, thus eliminating another source of leaks. Additionally, the tubes can expand up to three times their diameter without cracking, greatly reducing potential for freeze damage.

uponor-usa.com



WINNER

Hot Art
BRZ Brands

This flat-panel heating system can double as a piece of graphic art: Customers can choose a design from a selection of stock photos (or upload an image for a custom treatment) then have it crafted into an energy-efficient, far-infrared heating panel. A 600-watt Hot Art panel will heat roughly the same area as a 1,500-watt conventional space heater, while using approximately 60 percent less energy. Available in hard-wired or corded models, the units can be controlled by switch, occupancy sensors, regular and smart thermostats, and most home-automation receivers. Installed indoors or outside, the panels can be freestanding, or mounted on walls or ceilings.

brzbrands.com

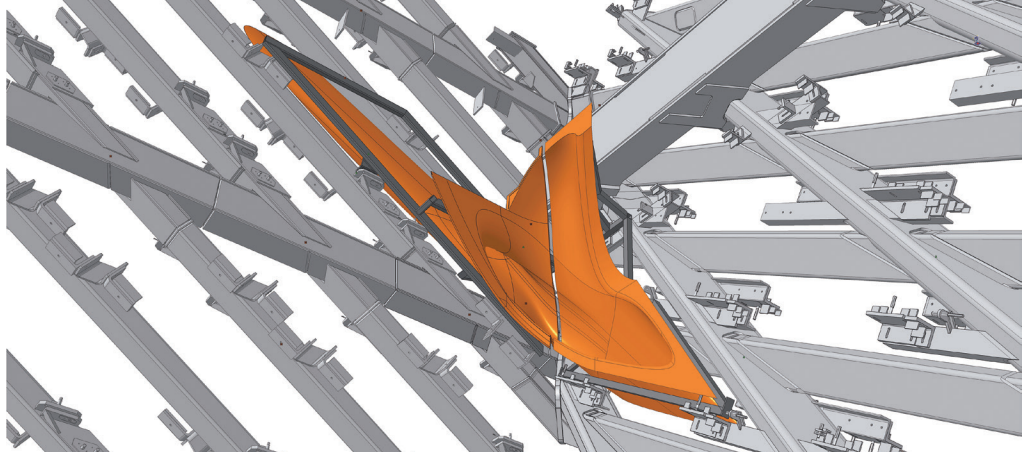


HONORABLE MENTION

Metal Composite Wall Panels Kovabond

Kovabond is a metal composite material designed to provide extensive design options for exterior cladding and wall panels. Kovabond consists of two outer skins, available in aluminum, zinc, copper, and stainless steel, that surround a solid core of low-density, fire-retarding, polyethylene compound. Available in a broad palette of colors, the lightweight panels are highly bendable, yet retain their rigidity and strength.

kovabond.com



HONORABLE MENTION

Glass Fiber-Reinforced Concrete Panel seele

A tour de force of design and fabrication, this glass fiber-reinforced concrete panel is attached to a back-up steel frame that allows for installation. With a section view slightly resembling an upside-down letter L, the soffit panel gently curves inward. The abnormally long leg of the L shape is a parallelogram with a bowl-shaped depression on the surface. It is one of 2,500 panels made from 313 different molds that will wrap the Broad Museum in Los Angeles.

seele.com



Facades + Structural

WINNER

UniQuad Unitized Daylighting System CPI Daylighting

The UniQuad system is a unitized assembly of two independent, translucent, insulated panels, joined by a mechanically interlocking structural connection that eliminates the need for vulnerable adhesives. Factory pre-fabricated for efficient installation, the panels' long-span capability (up to 12 feet) allows them to be clicked into place onsite, providing a seamless, flush look without metal seams. UniQuad features Removable Skin Technology (RST), which protects the interior panel from exterior weather conditions, UV radiation, impact, and other hazards, and provides indefinite building envelope protection. RST allows the replacement of the exterior skin while keeping the interior skin sealed and intact. As a result, building operations are uninterrupted during exterior panel replacement.

cpidaylighting.com

With the pursuit of higher design ideals, these four products captured the jury’s attention. Whether a prototype or already in production, they deserve special recognition.



Arc Light
Thislexik

A solid-state Tesla coil generates a field of electric energy that allows the individual fluorescent tubes to illuminate without wired connections. The lamps can be repositioned within the grooved walnut or mahogany panel. Designed by Vedat Ulgen.

thislexik.com



Wall Tile
Nissha Printing Company

In a life overloaded by interfaces—our homes and offices are filled with thermostats, light switches, appliances, and equipment—it has become a challenge to balance these sundry controls with the often beautiful surfaces on which they’re installed. Wall Tile seeks to resolve that situation. Utilizing “dead front” printing technology, where control panel graphics become visible only when activated by a user, surfaces are unmarred by ganged outlets and plates. Capacitive sensors would enable touch/swipe gestures and pinch functions.

nissha.com



Planar 8 Flex Semi-Professional Kitchen Faucet
Franke

The spout of this kitchen faucet rotates a full 360 degrees in either direction, allowing unfettered design flexibility. Available in two finishes, polished chrome and satin nickel, the faucet also has a dual-jet, lock-in-place spray head.

frankeksd.com



Cheval Bench/Table
HBF

Speaking about his Cheval Bench/Table, designer Wout Speyers muses, “What determines a piece of furniture’s function? Is it the environment, or its use in the environment? Cheval blurs the borders between these fixed conventions. What appears to be a bench turns out to be a side table in a different setting, or a coffee table. Its function is defined not by its environment or its prescribed purpose, but by the user and how they interact with it.” The collection comprises four size options: 20 inches, 40 inches, 60 inches, and a corner unit. Made of ash wood with polished aluminum legs, upholstery options add to the transformative power of the furniture.

hbf.com

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JULY

**WEDNESDAY 22
EVENT**
Eyes on Boston:
Urban Photo Walk
6:00 p.m.
Boston Society of
Architects/AIA
290 Congress St., Boston, MA
architects.org

**THURSDAY 23
LECTURE**
Zero Waste:
The Organics Factor
6:00 p.m.
The Mohawk Group
71 West 23rd St.
urbangreencouncil.org

**SUNDAY 26
LECTURE**
Architecture 101:
Newport Mansions
1:00 p.m.
National Building Museum
401 F St. NW
Washington D.C.
go.nbm.org

EXHIBITION CLOSING
White Towers Revisited
10:00 a.m.
220 South 34th St.
Philadelphia
design.upenn.edu

EXHIBITION/SYMPOSIUM
Gentrification Lab
6:00
Van Alen Institute
30 West 22nd St.
vanalen.org

AUGUST

**SUNDAY 2
EXHIBITION CLOSING**
Heather Roberge: En Pointe
10:00 a.m.
SCI-Arc Gallery
960 East Third St., Los Angeles
sciarc.edu

TOUR
Architecture Tour: Unique
Challenges of the Art Center
1:30 p.m.
Des Moines Art Center
4700 Grand Ave., Des Moines, IA
desmoinesartcenter.org

SCREENING
The New Rijksmuseum
5:00 p.m.
The Museum of Fine Arts,
Houston
1001 Bissonnet, Houston, TX
mfah.org

**THURSDAY 6
EVENT**
Edge Collaborations: Creative
Interdisciplinary Partnerships
6:00 p.m.
The Center for Architecture
536 LaGuardia Pl.
cfa.aiany.org

**SATURDAY 12
LECTURE**
Preserving Arkansas' Archi-
tectural and Cultural Heritage
7:00 p.m.
Crystal Bridges Museum of
American Art, Great Hall
600 Museum Way
Bentonville, AR
crystalbridges.org

**SATURDAY 25
EXHIBITION CLOSING**
Lina Bo Bardi:
Together
11:00 a.m.
Graham Foundation
Madlener House
4 West Burton Pl.
Chicago
grahamfoundation.org

**WEDNESDAY 26
TOUR**
Hunters View:
What's New and
What's Ahead
4:30 p.m.
Location: TBD
San Francisco
spur.org

**THURSDAY 27
SYMPOSIUM**
House L.A.:
Tackling Los Angeles'
Housing Crisis
7:30 a.m.
Park Plaza Hotel
607 South Park View St.
Los Angeles
aialosangeles.org

SEPTEMBER

**WEDNESDAY 2
EVENT**
National Brownfields
Conference
7:30 a.m.
Hilton Chicago
720 South Michigan Ave.
Chicago
brownfieldsconference.org

**WEDNESDAY 9
LECTURE**
Discussions Series Lecture:
M. Christine Boyer
12:00 p.m.
Washington University
in St. Louis
1 Bookings Dr., St. Louis, MO
samfoxschool.wustl.edu

**SUNDAY 13
EXHIBITION OPENING**
Frank Gehry
10:00 a.m.
Resnick Pavilion, LACMA
5905 Wilshire Blvd.
Los Angeles
lacma.org

**FRIDAY 18
EVENT**
Design Marfa Symposium +
Home Tour
The Crowley Theater
101 South Austin St., Marfa, TX
designmarfa.com

**THURSDAY 24
EXHIBITION CLOSING**
10 Years, 10 Stories
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8:00 a.m.
The Austin Convention Center
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sxsweco.com



ENDLESS HOUSE:
INTERSECTIONS OF ART AND ARCHITECTURE
Museum of Modern Art
The Robert Menschel Architecture and Design Gallery
11 West 53rd Street
New York
Through March 6, 2016

The Museum of Modern Art pays homage to the single-family home in *Endless House: Intersections of Art and Architecture*, a rich exhibition comprised of photographs, drawings, video, installations, and architectural models from MoMA's collection. It showcases the artistic endeavors of both architects and artists alike with works that span seven decades. Intriguing house designs—ranging from historical projects by Mies van der Rohe, Frank Gehry, Peter Eisenman, and Rem Koolhaas, to new acquisitions from Smiljan Radic and Asymptote Architecture—are juxtaposed with visions from artists such as Louise Bourgeois, Bruce Nauman, Mario Merz, and Rachel Whiteread. The inspiration for the exhibit's name is Frederick Kiesler's *Endless House*, shown in the 1960 MoMA show *Visionary Architecture*.

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Yiwu River Dam, Jinhua, China, 2002



CHOICES AFTER WAKING UP

Ai Weiwei: Spatial Matters: Art, Architecture, and Activism
By Ai Weiwei
MIT Press, \$60

Choices after waking up: 1. To live or to die? 2. To be true or to lie? 3. To be lively or to decay? 4. To love or to be forsaken? 5. To be wise or to be idiotic? 6. To smile or to be humiliated? 7. To denounce or to celebrate? 8. To be more courageous or to be more fearful? 9. To take action or to be brainwashed? 10. To be free or to be jailed?

Written by Ai Weiwei (@aiww) on Twitter September 5, 2009 08:50:36

On January 11th, 2011, Ai Weiwei stood in a rubble field just outside of Shanghai holding a piece of aluminum siding. Only three years prior local officials had asked—insisted even—that Weiwei design and build a new studio in the outskirts of the city. Weiwei's studio would serve as the anchor of a new arts and cultural district that sought to attract tourists and an art market while creating an area where officials could easily monitor artistic activities. Weiwei took on the commission even though his relationship with government officials had worsened following his criticism of the Olympic Games in 2008. The eventual demolition of the studio in Shanghai was not entirely shocking, but also did not make complete sense, as is often the case in the relationship between the artist and his foes in power.

As soon as officials released the demolition order, it was shared over social media and a final party

was planned—a feast of “river crab.” In Mandarin, the word for river crab sounds similar to “Harmony”—a concept used by the Chinese government to legitimize its regime of censorship. Strategically, Weiwei was placed under house arrest and prevented from attending the gathering. Hundreds of supporters, however, were not deterred by official actions and flocked from all over China to the remote site in Shanghai to enjoy the feast. A few days after the gathering, a demolition team took just forty-eight hours to bring down his studio, which had taken years to build. Weiwei, recently released, documented it all. Or as much as he was allowed.

The story of Ai Weiwei's Shanghai studio shows the complex context in which his practice operates. A seemingly simple formal experiment for the design of a courtyard typology building with an expressive roof suddenly became a larger political statement. Or at least a political symbol that revealed power structures and brought people together in a moment rife with oppositional potential.

In grappling with how to grasp work that cannot be neatly placed in any one disciplinary category, Ai Weiwei and co-editor Anthony Pins turn to *space* as the lens with the most potential to unify the complex practice. Space, they argue, allows room for both physical intervention as well as the psycho-social actions that happen within it. *Ai Weiwei: Spatial Matters: Art, Architecture,*

and Activism is the result of Weiwei and Pins' collaboration, and is a comprehensive study of Weiwei's works and ideas.

The book draws on Ai Weiwei's full catalogue of work from over twenty years of practice, organizing it into five sections of increasing scale. Each section is titled with an active verb: inhabit, build, collaborate, investigate, and engage. The book begins with Weiwei's early career installations, moving up in scale into his architectural work and research—both as an individual and as part of a collaboration. As the book progresses, the work turns to the research Weiwei has been conducting on rapid urban change in Chinese urban areas. Finally, the book concludes with some of his performances and actions—in real and digital space—that approach activist fervor as they engage with larger systems of power. It is in this last category where you will find the story of Weiwei's Shanghai studio—a form that became greater than itself through political conflict.

Woven through the over forty projects documented in the book are essays by leading art critics and historians such as Brendan McGetrick, with two entries, Daniela Janser and An Xiao Mina. Similarly to the practice, and its projects, the voices included are varied—talking about everything from light and urbanism to memes and online activism. On this latter issue, Mina looks at Ai Weiwei's online activity as showing the potential for memes and jokes to be a tool for political organization and even change. On the power of Weiwei's online presence, Mina says:

“To a citizenry regularly told by their government what they cannot do, the act of speaking

out is a powerful political act in and of itself. It is already a significant change. Ai's embrace of internet culture sends a simple, powerful message to other concerned citizens. You can get naked. You can make a silly pun. You can Photoshop a sunflower seed on a grown man's face. You can do a horsie dance against the government. You can make a short documentary about injustices you've witnessed. You can criticize your leaders. You too, can play this game.” (Page 451).

The message is simple, even if some actions seem simple or even like silly games (a middle finger risen against a banner of Mao), they can have real power within the context Weiwei operates. The book also shows that a small questioning of power can have real and brutal consequences. The book is not shy about showing some of the real, and at times violent, reactions that Weiwei's work has elicited. From the demolition of his Shanghai studio, described above, to documentation of his 2009 cerebral hemorrhage after a police attack. The crime that led to that confrontation was Weiwei's advocacy on behalf of children whom died in shoddily built structures after a magnitude 8.0 earthquake hit the Sichuan region in 2008.

The book captures the turmoil of 2009 in Ai Weiwei's own words through selected texts from his Twitter account. In that occasion, he wondered what his choices were upon waking. Weiwei's other writings on a host of issues are present in the book, which includes interviews, sections of his blog, and even selected tweets and other social media interactions. The sections taken from his blog show thoughts and opinions on many subjects, including architecture. He writes that his design creates “leeway and possibility” which gives way to freedom. Weiwei's writing always shows a sense of immediacy,



Weiwei invited 16 artists and architects to make a pavilion for a park in Jinhua, China. Herzog and de Meuron's is titled *Reading Space*.

a clamoring out to a culture he wants both to be a part of and to help change.

Ai Weiwei: Spatial Matters: Art, Architecture, and Activism serves as a roadmap and a warning at a time in which many are asking for change within traditional art and architectural practices. On the one hand, Weiwei's practice is a case study for a new way of working in space—one that easily transcends disciplines, looking holistically at complex issues, and showing flexibility in reacting to challenges. His is the type of practice in which architecture, landscape, and urbanism is one of many tools available to achieve a larger goal. Often, the larger goal for Ai Weiwei is no less than social and political change—to engage deeply in political issues. On the other hand, his practice and the official reactions it elicits serve as a warning about the price space practitioners should be willing to pay for that deep engagement. A complete project, one which advocates for change, may mean that the things you build could come crashing down.

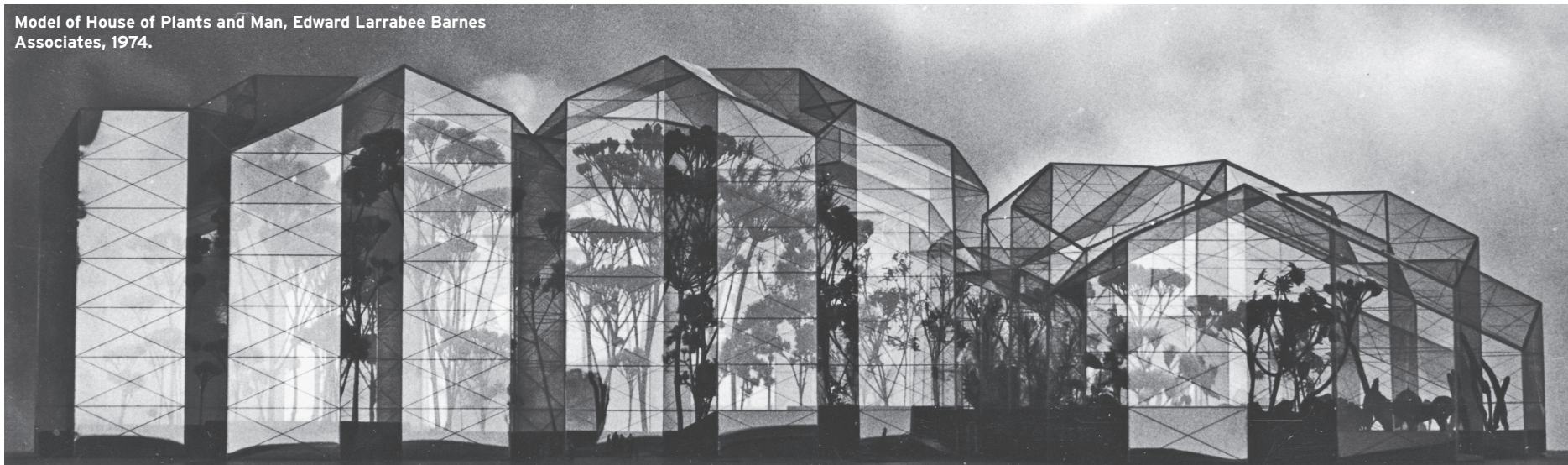
QUILIAN RIANO IS A DESIGNER, RESEARCHER, WRITER, AND EDUCATOR WORKING OUT OF BROOKLYN, NEW YORK.

Fountain of Light in Weiwei's studio, 2008



COURTESY AI WEIWEI

Model of House of Plants and Man, Edward Larrabee Barnes Associates, 1974.



COURTESY THE EDWARD LARRABEE BARNES ARCHIVE, HARVARD GSD

UNDER ONE CONDITION

Manhattan Atmospheres: Architecture, the Interior Environment, and Urban Crisis
By David Gissen
University of Minnesota Press, \$90

What does an air conditioner in Lower Manhattan have to do with global movements of capital? Can the area around Central Park provide an adequate stand-in for the banks of the Nile River? In *Manhattan Atmospheres: Architecture, the Interior Environment, and Urban Crisis*, architectural historian David Gissen offers a few possible responses to those questions by closely examining seemingly non-descript technologies

of environmental control within Manhattan's interiors. These technologies control the temperature and humidity and filter air, but rather than merely describing technological advances, Gissen explores how these interiors from high-rise apartments in Washington Heights to trading desks on Wall Street participated in broader social transformations in the city over two decades starting in the late 1960s. During the years of New

York City's major financial difficulties and urban unrest, these new forms of environmental control and maintenance provided a means to not only keep out pollution, noise, and other urban annoyances, but also contributed to a new vision of urban life.

A major feature of this new vision consisted of separating well-maintained interior environments from any sign of the exterior strife. Gissen emphasizes some of the ways that implementing technologies for environmental amelioration helped produce distinctive new ways to create physical segregation. This was the case with the Ford Foundation's headquarters in Midtown, completed in 1968 and designed by Kevin Roche John Dinkeloo and Associates, with Dan Kiley as landscape architect. The sky-lighted 200,000-cubic-foot atrium

of the Ford Foundation filled with 20,000 plants acted as the central visual representation of the foundation's primary claim to esteem: the expansion of innovative agricultural landscapes around the world, particularly in developing nations. But in Midtown, in the eyes of one planner, the atrium became a barrier "between the sealed environment of a modern office and the increasingly harsh and uncontrolled urban landscape outside." In contrast to its location near the traffic and pollution of the Queensboro Bridge and a ConEdison electrical generator, the atrium's leafy environs showed off the possibilities for an alternative through the power of environmental control.

The fact that Gissen's examples tend toward private institutions is no accident, and he underscores the

ways that focusing on technological solutions can supplant the role of public bodies. As Manhattan's cultural institutions lost their municipal support in the 1970s, private corporate backers came in as a permanent replacement. At the Metropolitan Museum of Art, financial institutions contributed heavily to its expansion plans in the 1970s. Alongside the addition of new galleries, museum administrators set their sights on acquiring the *Temper of Dendur* from Egypt.

Other American cities vying for the temple, such as Albuquerque, New Mexico argued that their climates would provide an ideal outdoor environment, while the Smithsonian in D.C. proposed a replication of the Nile on the banks of the Potomac River. In contrast, the Roche and Dinkeloo

continued on page 62

The Architecture Monograph Reinvented

REVEAL, FILTER, EVOLVE, EFFECT
By FXFOWLE Architects
ORO Editions, \$40

This surprising little book fulfills and enhances the architecture it presents. By breaking completely from the traditional monograph format and aesthetic, FXFOWLE has devised an ingenious publication that informs the reader at many levels. The monograph team that planned it did not wish to produce what they scorned as the traditional coffee table book. This consists of lavish photograph portfolios for which projects are described briefly if at all; and even site and floor plans may not appear in page layouts. Such books can be somewhat redeemed thanks to laudatory texts by respected pundits, and tend to be expensively printed and bound, if not heavy to carry. Given that architecture monographs have two essential purposes—the first to market a firm's talents and

skills and the second to document and preserve its history of achievement—more books should teach how architecture really happens. Unfortunately, most do not even try.

The FXFOWLE monograph consists of four slim paperbacks, each 7.5 inches by 9.5 inches, in a box set. Its full title will at first baffle. The name of each booklet is a single word poetically offered to suggest a particular architectural theme that governs the firm's work. *REVEAL* is a collection of five projects that exemplify the relationships between architecture and landscape. These are the subject of a text by Kent Kleinman, dean of the Cornell College of Architecture, Art and Planning, who writes, "FXFOWLE is at the forefront of a movement that is systematically dissolving the boundary between the built and the natural, deliberately embracing a new scope for the designer and inventing formal strategies that produce environments as much as they shape individual buildings." The nature and site design project to which Kleinman pays particular attention to is City Regenerative: Nordhavn in Copenhagen, Denmark. Designed in a 2008 competition for a 500 acre-site it will not be

completely developed until 2055. Kleinman observes that FXFOWLE makes use of this project to "demonstrate their commitment to, and remarkable facility with, sustainable urbanism, correctly noting that urban form is a critical dimension of sustainable design."

The four other projects presented in *REVEAL* are the Center for Global Conservation in the Bronx, New York (2009) that houses the departments for international programs, exhibition and graphic design, and information technology once scattered around the 256-acre zoo campus; the SAP Americas Headquarters Expansion in Newtown Square, Pennsylvania (2008) integrates building and landscape by way of linked building systems that respond to the surrounding woodlands and the remnants of an arboretum; the Sheikh Rashid Bin Saeed Crossing (2011) in Dubai is the winner of an invited international design competition for a bridge intended to alleviate traffic in the city of Dubai; the Qalaalti Hotel Spa (2014) in Azerbaijan relates to its immediate setting, the pleated rock of the Caucasus Mountains.

The theme of *FILTER* is context. Four completed projects display the influence of culture, local customs,



COURTESY FXFOWLE

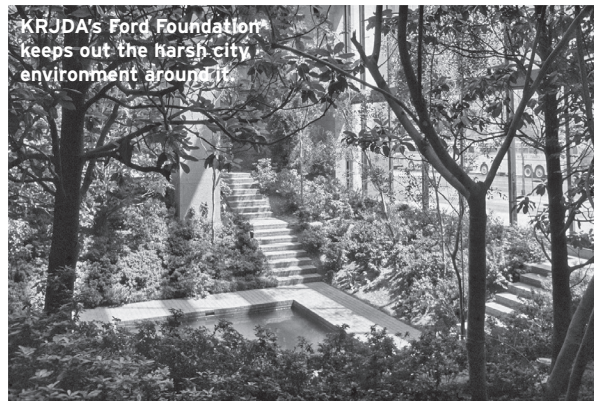
and climate. The Renaissance Tower (2014) is a 42-story office building in Istanbul; Greater Noida Housing (2008) in India accommodates 1,700 units of housing on a 47-acre site; the Museum of the Built Environment (2014) in Riyadh puts the traditionally private culture of Saudi Arabia on display; Eleven Times Square (2010), a 40-story glass clad office tower, is surrounded by significant architectural structures. Thomas Fisher, dean of the College of Design at the University of Minnesota provides the essay for this assembly. He writes: "The idea of these four buildings acting like filters

has served them well. The analogy has allowed their architects to sort through the myriad information and influences that surround every project and arrive at a distillation in four compelling and revealing works of architecture."

EVOLVE presents five projects that bond with history. The Bronx Zoo's Lion House Reconstruction in New York City (2008) now functions for animals from Madagascar, the lions long since moved elsewhere; the Richardson Memorial Hall Sustainability Study (2011) for Tulane University in New Orleans, brought about the transformation of a

continued on page 62

THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER JULY 22, 2015



UNDER ONE CONDITION

continued from page 61 design for the Metropolitan Museum consisted of a glass interior with a concourse of water, Nile reeds, and lighting that mimicked Egypt's sun. By offering an indoor environment managed through a "scientific system of architectural preservation," museum administrators claimed that the temple, which had spent two thousand years outdoors, now needed a protective shell to ensure its continued existence.

The social consequences of scientifically-advanced solutions to separate interiors from harsh exterior conditions highlight the extent to which those with money and power can minimize their exposures

to environmental risk and social unrest. So it is apt that Gissen's final chapter focuses on the air-conditioned trading rooms for financial services employees. During the 1960s and 1970s, Manhattan's workforce transformed due to the decline in industrial work and attendant rise in office employment. Though many of these new office workers were women and people of color who comprised the support staff, Gissen hones in on the world of the mostly male traders. With heat produced by computers and their own bodies (one journalist described the traders as "animals"), their offices required efficient cooling and ventilating mechanisms that supposedly used as much

electricity as Guatemala. But human comfort was an ancillary concern to finding the right temperature to optimize worker productivity. In these cool, clean spaces the workers seemed less like human beings and more like machines facilitating the global exchange of money and information.

Gissen's narrative begins with middle-class housing, but ends with the affluent, masculine space of trading rooms. In charting this course, he illuminates transformations that went beyond the updating of air conditioning and ventilating systems by encompassing the ways that Manhattan's workforce, population, and drivers of the economy have shifted. With these changes have come new ways to imagine urban life. These interiors often put forward a vision of a city where those with power and money can almost imperceptibly segregate themselves from those who bear the brunt of the environmental and social costs, and attempt to convince themselves that what goes on inside has little connection to the outside world.

POLLYANNA RHEE IS A PH.D. CANDIDATE AT COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY.

THE ARCHITECTURE MONOGRAPH

REINVENTED continued from page 61

five-story, 67,500 square feet, then 103-year-old masonry structure, to serve a contemporary use but remain intact as a building; the Multimedia Entertainment Company (2012) in New York consists of a modern insertion into an historic fabric; the Jacob K. Javits Convention Center Renovation (2013) in New York retains the character of the original design; the Water Street Redevelopment Vision Plan (2010) proposes physical changes and public programs to extend activity in this downtown New York area.

Kenneth Schwartz, dean of architecture at Tulane, was appropriately chosen to write the introduction to *EVOLVE*. Richardson Memorial Hall was the original home of the Tulane School of Medicine but since 1971 has been the School of Architecture. Schwartz includes the restoration and transformation of his own workplace when he writes, "The conception of each project involves a careful balance between old and new, a balance that is mutually reinforcing rather than a simplistic dichotomy. Tying together new and old within each project integrates and blurs distinctions, imparting to each structure a memorable strength that will last for the next 100 years."

EFFECT, the final booklet, provides an essay on the role of program by Kim Tanzer, dean of the University of Virginia School of Architecture. The five projects presented which focus on this fundamental design process are Hunter's Point Campus (2013) Queens, New York, shaped by its complex

educational purpose as well as its scenic setting; the Rockefeller Brothers Fund Offices (2009) in New York for which the architects began the design for the interior of its new location by rethinking the grant-making process; concepts of daylight directed the design program of Golisano Institute for Sustainability (2013) in Rochester; the Columbia University School of Nursing (2016) in New York required a programming effort that favorably affected the buildings volume, mass, and height; FXFOWLE was able to program a complex building for the Clinical Science Center (2014) in Buffalo that met the requirements for clinical work and research in spite of its highly constrained site.

Tanzer writes, "A new approach to program suggests a new kind of architect. FXFOWLE's efforts center less on controlling or manipulating behavior and more on suggesting actions. The firm's attention to the organization and pliability of spatial relationships serves local context, community goals, and changing uses and users. An effective implementation of program is the smart approach. Architecture is at best a partner in a dance; the building only rarely plays the leading role."

The texts of these four booklets are well supported by the clarity and beauty of the drawings. By hand or computer they reveal the various stages of the design process for each of the nineteen projects chosen, and are handsomely arranged in the page layouts. The power and strength of these drawings have much to teach.

MILDRED F. SCHMERTZ IS A FREQUENT CONTRIBUTOR TO AN.

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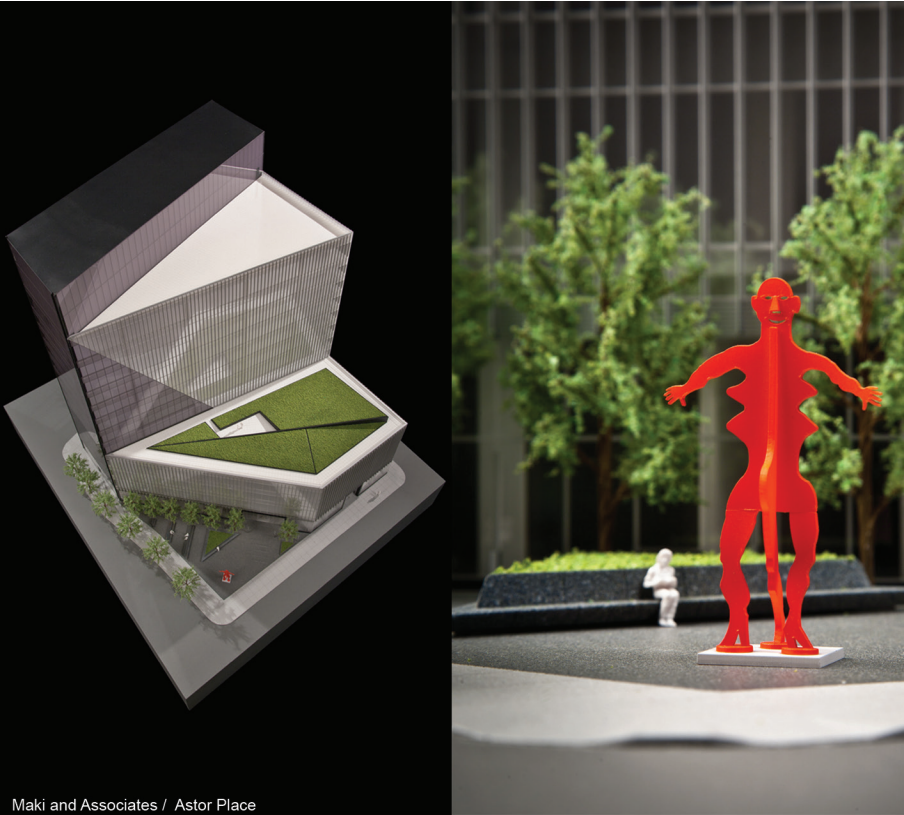
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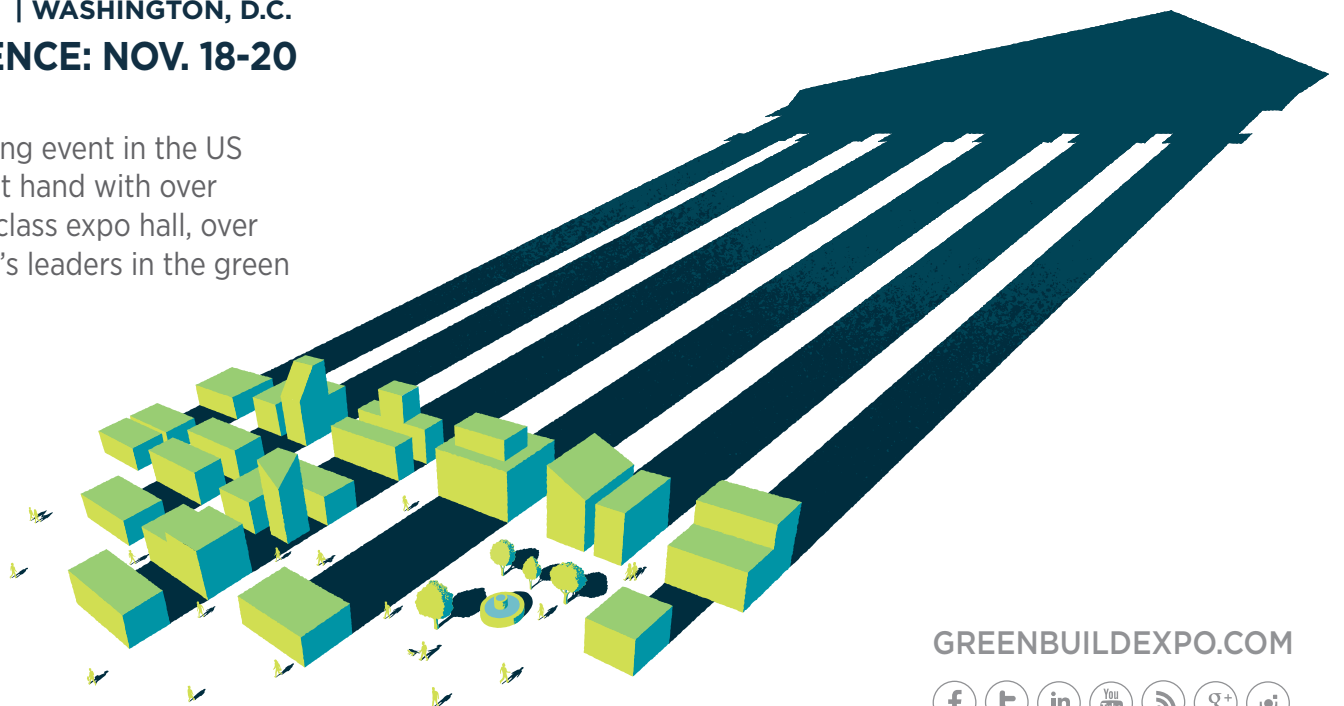
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Abu Dhabi has been the center of recent controversy about worker's rights in the AEC industry.



COURTESY NASA

IT IS TIME FOR THE ARCHITECTURE COMMUNITY TO STAND WITH ARTISTS AND ACTIVISTS TO IMPROVE THE LABOR CONDITIONS IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF BUILDINGS ACROSS THE DEVELOPING WORLD.*

Over the last several months, three prominent members of Gulf Labor Artist Coalition (Gulf Labor), the activist/artists group that formed five years ago to protest and rectify the exploitation and indenture of immigrant laborers working on the Guggenheim Abu Dhabi on Saadiyat Island, have been denied entry, and in some cases deported, from the UAE. All three—Andrew Ross, Ashok Sukumaran, and Walid Raad—are spokespersons for Gulf Labor. The reasons given by the UAE authorities for their denial of entry and deportation are that they pose a “security risk,” but this risk remains undefined. The real reason seems to be that all three have been vocal critics of labor conditions in Abu Dhabi, and by association critical of other developing/emerging market sites as well. Andrew Ross, a professor at NYU, has long been critical of many aspects of NYU’s Abu Dhabi campus, including its treatment of its laborers, as well as other institutions building on the site. While Ashok Sukumaran and Walid Raad, well-known and oft exhibited artists within the UAE, have also publicly objected to the labor conditions on Saadiyat Island. To date several art-related organizations have expressed solidarity with these Gulf Labor members, including AMCA, the Association for Modern and Contemporary Art in the Arab World, Iran and Turkey; L’Internationale, a European confederation of six modern and contemporary art institutions; the participating artists in the current, 12th Sharjah Biennial; CIMAM, International Committee for Museums and Collections of Modern Art; as well as a joint letter from 60 international curators, critics, and museum directors.

That there has not been a far greater outcry from within the increasingly global art and architecture communities about the banning of artists and activists from the UAE is disturbing. Perhaps it is the effect of many artists, architects, curators, scholars, critics, museums, and galleries inability to acknowledge that their own labor is not exceptional in its support of and exploitation by the multi-billion dollar industry that is the contemporary art and architecture world.

Nonetheless, there is interest in these issues as evidenced by press accounts of Gulf Labor’s activities at the Guggenheim Museum in New York City, and most recently at the Venice Art Biennale, where

Gulf Labor is an invited participant in Okwui Enwezor’s exhibition *All the World’s Futures*. Working alongside other activist groups, Gulf Labor successfully shut down the Peggy Guggenheim Collection during one of the preview days, forcing the museum to close for several hours. As a direct result of this action, Gulf Labor will finally meet with the Guggenheim trustees to present their extensive research about current labor conditions on Saadiyat Island; findings that detail how persistent these abuses continue to be.

Gulf Labor’s demands—to ensure that migrant workers rights are protected during the construction of museums on Saadiyat Island in Abu Dhabi—has also been endorsed by Human Rights Watch (HRW). Their 2015 report describes how, even now, after five years of protest, forced labor as a condition of employment continues on Saadiyat Island. Employers are still withholding workers’ wages and benefits, failing to reimburse them for recruiting fees, confiscating their passports, and housing them in substandard accommodations. HRW also noted that in the most serious cases, contractors working for the two government development entities on the NYU and Louvre sites apparently informed United Arab Emirates (UAE) authorities about strikes which lead to the deportation of several hundred striking workers. These abuses continue despite the fact that the UAE government has labor laws that would protect these workers if they were enforced.

There are some professions where it might be possible to avoid noticing the inequality among laborers, but the expanding reach of the global art and architecture milieu is not one of them. In fact, since the end of WWII, with the introduction of the U.S.A.’s Marshall Plan, artists and architects have increasingly performed as migratory cultural workers whose labor, especially over the last 20 years, is exploited and undervalued. Yet, most artists do not identify as laborers, and hence do not necessarily make the connection between their condition and other forms of migratory work, such as laborers, where conditions are much worse. This situation is the norm and is visible in the very same countries where many artists are also working as they participate in biennales, festivals, art fairs, and gallery exhibitions.

Nicholas McGeehan, in a recent *New York Times* op-ed piece, notes in discussing the response of the museums on Saadiyat Island, “These institutions, and some art critics as well, have touted their move to Abu Dhabi as a turning point in cultural history. But right now, in a climate of increasing repression, it seems that art and culture are being put into the service of money and power, an unquestioning surrender to authority that contradicts these liberal institutions’ very ideals.”

As Andrew Ross asks, “The artists and writers of Gulf Labor have been doing all the investigating and advocating. It’s time architects stepped up and took responsibility for addressing the gulf between Design and Build.”

How are architects considering labor issues?

In their influential book, *Building (in) the Future: Recasting Labor in Architecture* (Princeton Architectural Press, 2010), the editors Peggy Deamer and Phil Bernstein, both faculty at Yale School of Architecture, focus on the seismic shifts in labor roles that have accompanied the technological advances in building design and construction processes. Peggy Deamer has remarked that architects traditionally don’t consider labor issues as part of their purview of interests even in their own offices, let alone in the emerging markets. Hence, while it was shocking for Zaha Hadid to admit last year that she has nothing to do with workers, and it is the government’s responsibility to take care of labor conditions—and in fairness to her, she was quoted out of context—it is true that architects are not usually responsible for hiring the construction workers that build their buildings. But is it really true that she and other well-known architects don’t have the power to insist on fair labor practices for their projects? Surely labor conditions throughout most of the emerging world are by now well known, hence ignorance of these conditions is not a believable defense. What does all this star power translate into if not a responsibility to act ethically?

What if all the architects, and especially all the high profile architects, demanded a living wage and rights for these workers? And what if all refused to work on buildings where workers are not treated ethically? As brand name architects are hired to increase the cultural capital within an emerging region, a refusal of work by these brands in solidarity with other paid laborers, would go a long way toward bringing these issues to the forefront of public opinion.

After the Hadid controversy, Frank Gehry, the architect of the Guggenheim Abu Dhabi, seemed to take up this challenge. But other than the good public relations it generated about his awareness of the labor issues and his attempt to ensure that equitable labor practices will be implemented (and by association the enforcement of the actual labor laws in the UAE), it remains unclear if or how Gehry is currently addressing these questions. His statement did not become a rallying cry for other architects and architecture firms building in the UAE or elsewhere to band with laborers. No other architecture firms made a similar statement about labor conditions. In fact, it seems that Gehry’s willingness to engage in discussions about labor issues and, at least on paper, to insist that they be addressed, has not spread to other offices. It is also unclear whether or not Gehry’s good intentions translated into an actual contractual demand as his contract

with the Guggenheim has not been made public, leaving us wondering when his office will issue an update.

All of the above is further complicated by the Guggenheim’s oft-repeated claim that work on the building has not begun, whereas Gulf Labor/Human Rights Watch and others counter that the building’s infrastructure is being built as the site is being prepared for construction. The current laborers on the Guggenheim site share the same conditions that GL/HRW et al. are protesting, and as laborers should be protected under the UAE labor laws, but as mentioned, these laws have yet to be enforced by the TDIC, the governmental department of Tourism, Development, and Investment.

However, some architects are engaging with these issues.

In 2011, Who Builds Your Architecture? (WBYA?), a coalition of architects, activists, scholars, and educators, formed to examine the links between labor, architecture, and the global networks that form around the construction of buildings. WBYA? has organized a number of panels and working groups to widen the scope of the ethical reach of architecture as a practice, including adopting many of the labor reforms advocated by Gulf Labor.

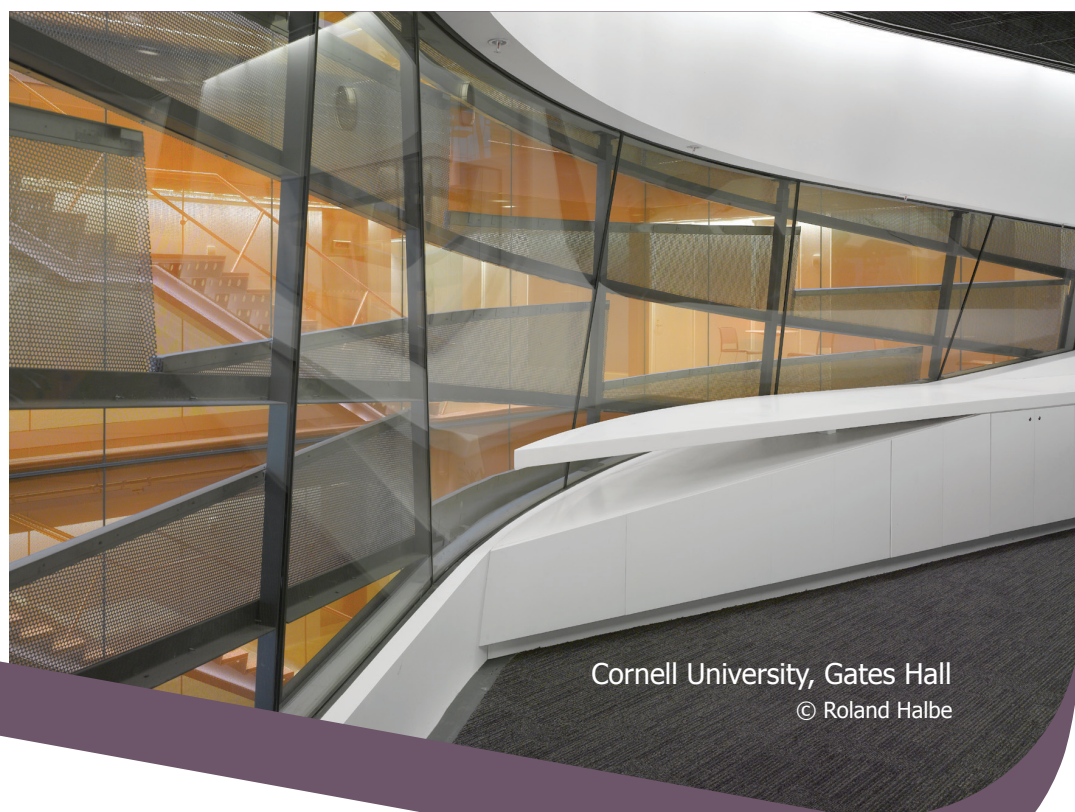
As is probably well known to most readers of *AN*, labor costs are among the lowest budget-line items in construction management documents for buildings in emerging markets. Why? Because of all the “materials” used in the construction of buildings throughout these regions, labor is the cheapest. It is the one resource that is easily available and especially, replaceable. In fact, as Cynthia Gorney notes in her article for *National Geographic*, “Far From Home,” in many developing countries people are often the most lucrative export. The most expensive building materials are concrete and steel, which is also exported from abroad.

But the issue with treating laborers as though they are a plentiful raw material is that they are not a raw material. Instead, they are human beings. As Phil Bernstein has said, “When do human lives become valuable? How do we make human lives valuable economically? We know how to do this ethically, but not how to do this economically?”

As the introduction of BIM and IPD modeling is irrevocably transforming the entire building process from design through construction, it seems to us that another step for architecture, alongside standing with Gulf Labor, would be to use technology (digital modeling) to explicitly consider labor as a resource just like concrete or steel; digital simulation like BIM can make labor explicit within the design and construction process, and thereby understandable. This might also be a way to leverage architecture into more of a supply chain model around issues of sustainability, and by association, social and ethical responsibility. While this is by no means a fix, it would immediately make laborers and labor issues much more visible locally within the practices of architecture and construction management, particularly to those making the decisions about the hiring of construction workers across the world.

JUDITH BARRY AND KEN SAYLOR

**In the interest of full disclosure the authors are members of Gulf Labor and among the 2,263 signatures of the Gulf Labor Petition.*



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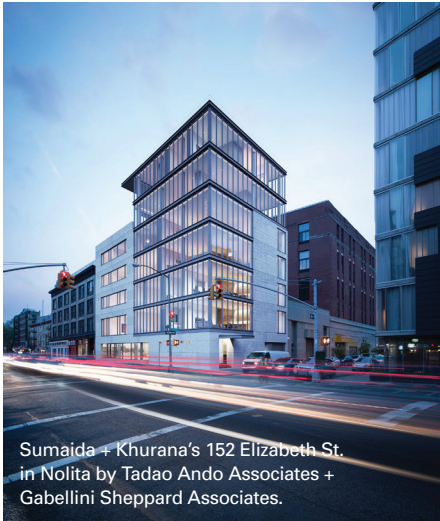
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In Conversation: Alternative Developers

As part of the AN developers feature, Matt Shaw interviewed representatives from four developers who are innovating in New York and elsewhere using alternative models for development. These perspectives offer new ways forward as the architecture and business communities work together to find new design, housing, and community-oriented solutions to our 21st century urban issues.



Sumaida + Khurana's 152 Elizabeth St. in Nolita by Tadao Ando Associates + Gabellini Sheppard Associates.

NOE & ASSOCIATES AND THE BOUNDARY

Sumaida + Khurana

Up-and-coming developer Sumaida + Khurana is bringing high-profile international architects to do its first buildings in New York, including NoLita condos by Tadao Ando and a forthcoming 400-foot midtown tower by Alvaro Siza. Amit Khurana has more than two decades of experience in the real estate industry, while Saif Sumaida holds an architecture degree from the Cooper Union. Together, they are changing how New York development is designed.

Matt Shaw: How did you end up working together as developers?

Saif Sumaida: I graduated from Cooper Union with a degree in architecture, and the education was very rich in discourse and concepts. Just by accident, I actually ended up in construction, and over the last 23 years, I've been building in New York. I like working as a developer because you have control of authorship both from a construction and architecture perspective, but also as the developer when you put the vision together.

Amit Khurana: Saif is tremendously experienced and when we met it was an interesting fit just because I love architecture and design. But I don't have artistic skills or skills in the way of trying to attempt to do architecture. I have to give Saif such credit for this but when we are in a room with an architect and we sit down, his knowledge is so fantastic, to not only think of just construction but to think of how architecture relates to construction. And I think that it was a unique situation because there was a shared vision and very complementary sets of skills.

What do you feel these projects bring to New York as a city, not just for the residents of the buildings?

AK: We see ourselves as developer/custodians of the built environment and ultimately we have a responsibility because we play a very important role that really changes the city. Small or large—it doesn't matter. It's about uplifting people, and fulfilling the dream of the city too, right? I think if you ask anyone, at the end of the day people appreciate excellence. It's not about

the asset type, it's not necessarily about who is going to live there or rent there or work there. It has something to do with a kind of purity of design and the impact it has on people.

SS: I think the problem is a lot of developers are really looking at buildings as commodities to monetize. But I think there is a legacy to be made in selecting the architect and making something that has meaning and has a place in the fabric of the city and that is something that you'll ultimately be proud of. We want to create places. We feel that we have some sort of a social responsibility to do that.

Why bring in these architects?

AK: New York is a melting pot with a lot of influence from outside. We also came from different countries although we spent so much time here. We wanted to just focus on, in a very pure fashion, this idea of bringing master architects to New York to design their very first buildings here. Especially in New York where as-of-right sites are such a tremendous opportunity to work in a specific way and to push the envelope a little bit. Looking at it and finding a site, we're actually looking for a site for Ando or for Siza. This inverted process allows us to think about things a little bit differently.

SS: A lot of developers rely on marketing people to tell them what has worked. They're following formulas because they believe that these are the formulas that will get them the profit. People find a proof of concept and just follow it. You don't have to think too much. When you bring somebody else from abroad or somebody who hasn't built anything in New York, they actually bring a certain amount of freshness. What's amazing about New York is that it allows for this diversity. You can still be visionary and make it successful.

Do you think that your experience as an architect lets you work with these architects in a different way rather than other developers?

SS: I think the one thing is, I'm very respectful of the process. I'm always able to talk to architects in their language. Instead of looking at it, again, as a commodity, I can engage them in their concepts and be able to enter that dialogue and be able to discuss it with them as opposed to always looking for an end product. I can enter the process and into a discourse with them so that once I understand what they're trying to do we can then figure how best to get there.

You mentioned affordable housing a little bit. Do you see that as a project that could be interesting to take on?

SS: Very much so. I think there's a responsibility for developers to be able to bring to the city various projects. It can't just be building for the wealthy, you have to be able to do it for all. Otherwise, you're not really making an impact in the city as you think you are. To make an impact on the city you have to touch on the various fabrics.

AK: Well I think that it's also responding to the realities of where you are in a market cycle. Currently we're in a market where land is insanely expensive. So we have to respond to that. It's always allowing yourself to be flexible with different opportunities. I mean, imagine bringing in a famous Spanish architect to New York to build a wonderful, affordable housing project or something like that. It isn't about how many dollars per foot you spend on a construction; it's about thoughtfulness. We have the ability and skillset that allows us to also control costs and control some of these variables that can get out of control.



Proposal for a pool at the Shore Club in Miami by Isay Weinfeld.

COURTESY HFZ CAPITAL GROUP

Thorsten Kiefer, HFZ

Thorsten Kiefer is Director of Design and Development for HFZ Capital Group. In this role, he has helped initiate collaborations with architects such as David Chipperfield, BIG, Moshe Safdie, and Isay Weinfeld on projects at various scales in New York and Miami. He talked with AN about his background at OMA, SOM, and SHoP, and what someone in his position can bring to the firm and ultimately the city.

As an architect at OMA in Rotterdam, his job included working in collaboration with Diller Scofidio + Renfro on a master plan for Brooklyn Academy of Music in 2001. This experience at OMA also led to HFZ bringing in OMA to develop an entire empty city block in New York between Tenth and Washington streets along the High Line. However, OMA wasn't able to continue because of previous contractual commitments, so HFZ turned to another OMA alumni, Bjarke Ingels of BIG, who had worked with Thorsten 15 years ago.

Matt Shaw: You have an interesting background. How did you end up in this role as an experienced architect working directly for a developer?

Thorsten Kiefer: My time at SHoP was truly formative. At SHoP I worked on competitions in London and New York as well as the

redevelopment of the South Street Seaport, initially with General Growth and then followed by Howard Hughes. I formed a number of connections with the development side of the business and after a couple of years at SHoP I began looking for the next career challenge. This opportunity seemed interesting for myself.

What is your role at HFZ?

As Director of Design and Development, I work closely with the marketing team and our executives on the overall conceptual and programmatic framework. The team establishes a list of architects, which we believe would be a great fit for the project. In high-end residential development, the branding aspect of an interior designer or design architect can make a difference in sales.

The global desire for design is higher now than it was 20 years ago. There is money from many countries. Different cultures have different attitudes toward design, and the global market is reacting to that. A lot of global people invest in the city. HFZ tries to offer a high quality product. We do high-end residential, and without design, we wouldn't get the margins. The value added from the architecture is necessary to get the numbers. 432 Park Avenue by Viñoly has a tremendous location, so people would buy there anyway. But 432 is getting astronomical numbers. Would you get the same price per square foot without the good design? Would the Russians, Chinese, Europeans, and South Americans still choose it?

This position is more common than maybe known in the architectural community. Large developers like Related or Extell have in-house design teams. I do believe that this role is valuable. There are very different mindsets in design, construction, and development. The architect is best suited to mediate in between all of them. I also work with zoning lawyers to see if our massing is possible, and also with the construction team to make sure quality is good.

How do you see your role impacting the designs and ultimately the city?

Ziel Feldman, founder and chairman of HFZ as well as Nir Meir, Principal partner at HFZ are very keen on design and quality. Good design simply distinguishes our product within a very competitive market, and we understand this well. I'm also really interested in finding smart solutions to making the city a nice, vibrant place to be.

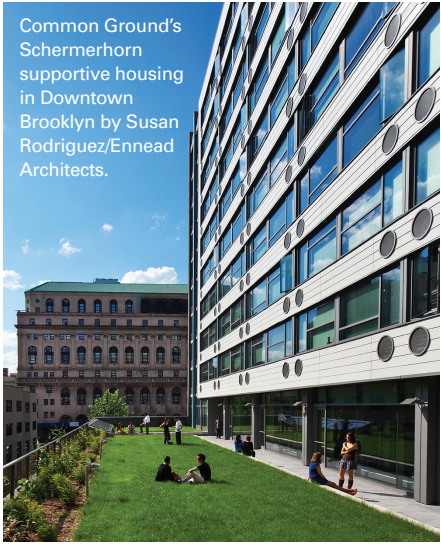
We are working with David Chipperfield on the last empty lot at Bryant Park and those units will come on the market in the next couple of months. I truly believe that it will not just be a beautiful piece of architecture completing an important urban space in New York, but also a very successful development.

What can this position bring to a company?

I believe an architect is best suited to communicate between all the different groups involved within the development process. We all know that the motivations of construction, marketing, development, or design are not always necessarily aligned, so the role we have with the position is to bring the different mindsets a little closer and hope that the end result is good design.

Do you ever push for different types of projects, like affordable housing?

I certainly have my personal opinion on "affordability" in New York and I do think that affordable housing will be a challenging component in any future residential development in this city.



Brenda Rosen, Common Ground
Common Ground is the largest supportive housing developer and operator in New York. The organization offers formerly homeless people quality environments and services to recover, and also works to develop more traditional affordable housing. Its non-profit status makes its work different from many other developers in the city. Brenda Rosen is the president and CEO, and she gave us some insight on how Common Ground supports its tenants and navigates the non-profit development process.

Matt Shaw: What is the mission of Common Ground?
Brenda Rosen: Supportive housing is affordable housing with onsite services so that's what is different from your cookie-cutter affordable or market rate operation. There is a percentage of the tenants that come through the lottery process like any other affordable low-income tenant. And the other part of the building is filled with formerly homeless people who oftentimes are suffering from mental illness or substance abuse issues or medical issues and often times all of the above.

So there's 50 percent or 60 percent of the building that is set aside for people coming from those circumstances and that is why we have onsite support to make sure that all of our tenants—low-income, regular working people, and those who are formerly homeless and who are coming with a lot of challenges and a lot of issues—have the support that they need to do that and to be as successful in housing as anybody else. With the exception of a few projects, one in Rochester and two in Connecticut, we are the property managers for all of our projects so we never leave the project.

We are about to break ground on our first stand-alone conventional affordable project which will be 248 units of affordable housing and that will not have a supportive housing component at all. Because our buildings are tax-credit buildings, your income has to be at 60 percent or less of the Area Median Income. We do the same marketing, advertising, and lottery like any other developer in the city for the affordable housing.

What are some of the challenges of being a non-profit? What does it mean to be a non-profit developer?
What it means is that the financing of the projects can be incredibly complicated compared to for-profits. When we finance a project we have multiple streams of support coming in for capital and for operating. We'll use bonds, we'll use tax credits, we'll use state and city subsidies. And sometimes borough presidents

or city council funds will fill a gap that we might have on the capital side. We also have government contracts that are providing operating support so we have regulatory agreements and government contracts, which means we are under intense scrutiny at all times regarding the services that we're providing and the quality of the housing.

Can you talk more about what it means to be non-profit and specifically do affordable housing?
Fortunately or unfortunately we are not in this business to make a ton of money as we develop. Any non-profit developer that builds housing—for whatever population—will be collecting a developer fee. I think that the thing that really sets a non-profit apart from a for-profit developer is that all of the development fees that we collect, all of the net proceeds of whatever we're doing, goes right back into the services and the housing that we're providing. At the end of the day, again, we're here to have a sound investment for investors that will buy our tax credits and finance a building. But we aren't here to come out with this monstrous surplus in our budget. I think that because we are a mission-driven organization, our goal is ultimately to develop and operate housing for vulnerable people in New York.

What role does design play in your mission and in your projects?
Design in all of our projects is a top priority for us. We believe that a pride in home and surroundings helps recovering people to gain stability and to really end up succeeding. Ennead [Architects] did Schermerhorn in downtown Brooklyn for us. It has a ton of green elements, is cantilevered over a subway, and it's incredibly beautiful. We have worked with COOKFOX who designed a building for us in Brownsville and is designing our next two buildings up on Webster Avenue in the Bronx—both a supportive building and an affordable building. The apartments and hallways are really flooded with natural light.

COOKFOX and Robert A.M. Stern are normally known for high-end buildings and yet they come back and work with us again and again, and bring those same design elements into an affordable project. Not many non-profits get to say that Robert A.M. Stern is going to be doing their next project and build in a low-income neighborhood in Brooklyn. We also develop mini studios, where the average apartment is between 225 to 300 square feet. We have to be really thoughtful about the design of the interior of each apartment. I've joked that we were doing micro units long before micro units were popular.

What are some of the challenges that you face when choosing sites?
Years ago when we were looking for land, we would site projects in Manhattan and in Brooklyn and in other places. Over the last several years we've done new construction in downtown Brooklyn, Brownsville, the South Bronx, and the Lower East Side, in addition to our older Manhattan sites in Midtown. But now primarily the only affordable land for us at this point is in the Bronx.
Common Ground tends to build large. Our smallest building has 72 units and our largest has 640. We prefer to have a building with 200 or more units. So you need a lot of buildable square feet for that, because in addition to the apartments we have a lot of community space in our buildings for our tenants—so we can have computer labs, a multi-purpose room, a gym, outdoor spaces, and offices for the onsite support staff.



Lisa Kim, Two Trees
Two Trees Management Company was founded in 1968 and has developed over 3 billion dollars in real estate. It is most famous for its redevelopment of the industrial neighborhood of Dumbo, Brooklyn. The company has remained committed to fostering artistic and cultural activity in the area through subsidized spaces for arts community tenants, and more broadly, supporting art as an urban issue. Lisa Kim is the Cultural Affairs Director for Two Trees. She formerly served as Private Collection Manager and Director of Exhibitions and Operations at Gagosian Gallery.

Matt Shaw: What initiatives does Two Trees have to support arts and culture?
Lisa Kim: Just having someone in my position is different. I am not a real estate person. My entire background comes from the art world. And so they brought me in to be the liaison to the art community and to think about this notion of organizing the company's efforts of cultural philanthropy and making space for arts and artists in the neighborhood and how that integrates into our development. For Two Trees in Dumbo, it was really organic from the beginning. They own the majority of this neighborhood, and have seen it change.

It has become expensive for artists to work in Dumbo. The reason for the cultural space subsidy program is to find an organized way to create a level of support for the art community and open up space in our buildings for artists and non-profit groups. We thought an application process was the best way to do it. The space subsidy is rather dramatic. If you are granted a space subsidy here you're given a lease of up to three years at basically a dollar a foot per month.
It's tricky because there are a lot of people that certainly do want to bring artists in just to kind of spruce stuff up and then leave them when they don't need them, but that's not our case. We have 17 tenants—11 artists and six non-profit groups. With the cultural space subsidy tenants who've come in, we want to make sure that they're also an active part of the community over there.

We want them to know who else is in the neighborhood. We had a little happy hour event last month where we brought in, not just the cultural space subsidy tenants, but our other artists and arts organizations tenants.

Who are some of the tenants?
We have New York's first feminist cooperative gallery that was founded in 1972 and has been in Dumbo for eight years. On the 2nd floor of 20 Jay Street is a young theater group that goes to empower young women, to teach them how to write, direct, and perform plays about women's issues. So here you have an A.I.R. gallery, a 40-year-old institution meeting Girl Be Heard, a six-year-institution with very-like minded initiatives talking about what they do.
We've been the go-to for arts groups that need a space once they've been booted from Tribeca, or Chelsea, or Soho. So we have arts support groups such as the New York Foundation for the Arts and the Marie Walsh Sharpe Faith Program. We also have the sculpture studio for the NY Studio School. Brooklyn Arts Council has their offices here. Arcadia is another arts funding organization that has its office here. We've been very supportive, for decades, to St. Ann's Warehouse and to Smack Mellon. These are all tenants who had free to low rent. So it creates a very serious art community and a cluster in this neighborhood.

Do these cultural initiatives translate to added value for the developers? Or is this sort of a cultural, philanthropic project?
I think it's cultural and philanthropic. A lot of people want to quantify what happens when you bring culture, but you can't say when you put in X amount of dollars into arts support that you're going to affect your bottom line by another number because you can raise property values or rents are higher or various other things. I mean I think it's really anecdotal. I wish I could give you a metric. If you have cool shit for people to see they're going to come see it. So who's doing the cool shit, it's the arts groups, right?

So how are these initiatives structured financially? Are they part of a separate non-profit? How does it relate to Two Trees?
Well, we're a two-person part of the staff of Two Trees. The cultural space subsidy program is straight out of Two Trees. You get the same commercial space you would get if you were a market rate tenant. In Dumbo we have three commercial buildings—45 Main, 54 Washington, and 20 Jay Street—and our subsidy tenants are spread throughout all three buildings.
Then, separately, there is the non-profit Walentas Family Foundation with two programs as part of it. One is a neighborhood school program where grants are given for innovative school programs. The other half is the Sharpe-Walentas Studio Program that offers 17 selected artists free studio space for one year in New York.

What does someone in your role bring to the development firm?
Because I'm naive to the world of development I can really be fresh about my approach in thinking about the art first. I go create it first and then there's the reality check of is it possible to do this? On this site? Is it possible to do it in this budget? Does it make sense for this project or development?" And that's when you start to put things together.
One of the buildings is a rather significant renovation and that's the old Galapagos Art Space building at Water and Main streets. Four galleries will occupy that space. We spent the winter and spring months renovating that building from a cavernous, theater event space/bar to four beautiful sixteen-foot-ceiling white box gallery spaces.