The Architect's Newspaper

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A River Ring of fire for

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Popping the Academy

Museum's bubble

\$3.95

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Say it loud: Black

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Off Center

For its 2021 edition, the Chicago Architecture Biennial ditches its downtown digs to invest in historically underserved communities.

L.A.'s pirouetting Sixth

Street Viaduct page 18

There wasn't much to the pavilion: a boxy open framework of green-painted lum ber infilled with gauzy white curtains that caught the sunlight and flapped in the breeze. According to the press flier, The Open Workshop, a practice run by California College of the Arts professor Neeraj Bhatia, built it to serve as a meeting space for the community. The curtains, it says, can be moved to "accommodate different styles of gathering, signifying the evolving practices and values of commoning." Bha tia calls it The Center Won't Hold.

A big name for such a modest structure, but that's not uncommon for temporary installations at architecture biennials, which, though often thrown together on a shoestring budget, grapple with larger themes. "The center won't hold" is a slight misquote of a line from The Second Coming, a poem by W. B. Yeats. It is perhaps the most cribbed poem in the English language, its lines continued on page 60



Opposites Attract

Gio Ponti's incongruously stolid Denver Art Museum undergoes a restoration and sprouts a space-age appendage. Read on page 24.



The Changing Tide Climate change is teaching designers to expand their horizons—or at least

it should. Read on page 31.



The Once & Future Harbor The growth of offshore wind energy could remake the Port of New York.

In March 2021, the Biden administration announced an ambitious plan to dramatically expand the country's wind energy output to 110 gigawatts by 2050. Much of this expansion will take place on the Eastern Seaboard, and while Senator Joe Manchin's machinations may jeopardize the financial largesse of federal support, New York State, in line with its goal to achieve a carbon-free electricity system by 2040, aims to take the lead in this massive undertaking with a bid to power 2.4 million homes across the state with offshore wind energy.

The growth of the offshore wind industry also presents a singular opportunity to reimagine the working waterfront of the metropolitan region. The nascent industry is in the process of reinvigorating long-dormant stretches of New York City's once pre eminent port, which could see a revival of maritime freight and subsequent reductions in truck-based emissions, all while providing thousands of middle-class jobs.

A vast political and commercial coalition, including the likes of longtime working waterfront champion Congressman Jerrold Nadler, has been pushing the movement forward.

"It was part of the Green New Deal before it was even hip to talk about the Green New Deal," said Nadler's district director Robert Gottheim. "We have been approaching this issue through economic development, jobs, and transportation. If the port industry becomes more efficient, they will be able to load a ship in Okinawa or Rotterdam or China, and drop off cargo in Brooklyn. And, through the redevelopment of a working waterfront, we can address asthma rates in the poorest neighborhoods of the city and provide well-paying jobs."

There are several infrastructural and geographic attributes that played an outsized role in the development of the New York City region into a global commercial center. The construction continued on page 35





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Editor's Note

Citizen Making at Utopian Hours



The Flussbad Berlin project aims to permanently transform the Spree Canal into a public amenity.

The fortunes of cities, ever in flux, took a nosedive in the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic. In New York it seemed everyone with the means absconded to country retreats with their entourage, leaving the less fortunate to get by in cramped quarters that had become terrifying in the context of a killer airborne virus. While now that picture has somewhat reversed, and cities, with their superior vaccination rates, are looking like safe havens from a countryside in decline, it is clear that some of the decentralizing trends of the pandemic, especially in the area of remote work, will have long-term consequences for urbanism.

It was thoughts like these that motivated the directors of the annual Utopian Hours International Festival of City Making, Luca Ballarini and Giacomo Biraghi, to dub this year's event, which took place in Turin, Italy, from October 8 to 10, the 1,000-Minute City. The theme is a twist on the New Urbanist 15-minute city—an ideal urban environment in which all necessary services can be accessed within a 15-minute walk or bike ride. In the 1,000-minute city, such proximities are not the focus. Instead, Ballarini and Biraghi asked an impressively diverse gathering of panelists and presenters-architects, landscape architects, artists, activists, entrepreneurs, municipal officials, journalists, and academics-to discuss their work in light of the Roman concept of civitas, or the social contract uniting citizens under laws that lay out both rights and responsibilities. What was up for discussion, in other words, was not so much the making of cities, but the making of citizens.

One precondition for *civitas* is agreeing on a view of reality upon which to base the law itself, and such a shared outlook has been especially elusive under the divisive politics that are currently roiling the world. Brion Oaks, the chief equity officer of Austin, Texas, spoke about the work his office is doing to establish a common understanding of where and why iniquities exist within their city. They harness public data and mapping to reveal a clear dearth of services in historic Black and Brown neighborhoods, but in order to persuade everyone that this is because of structural racism they rely on metaphor. Oaks uses the parable of the fish the lake and the groundwater, which goes like this: If you see one dead fish in a lake, vou think there's something wrong with the fish. But if you see half the fish floating belly up, you wonder what's wrong with the lake. And if all the ponds within a 5-mile radius have half-dead fish populations, you start to suspect that the groundwater itself might be the problem.

This very local example scaled up quite quickly to earth size in back-to-back presentations the following night. Peter Versterbacka, creator of the game app Angry Birds, described his plan to link Helsinki, Finland, and Talinn, Estonia, with a high-speed rail tunnel beneath the Baltic Sea, in quest of talent density and the creation of the "Fin-Est Bay Area." This heady vision of tech

consolidation and incubation of future billionaires (the proposal included an artificial island bristling with glass towers and yacht harbors) was brought into sobering relief by Kunlé Adeyemi of NLÉ Architects. His presentation focused on the floating architecture his firm has been developing for Makoko, an informal settlement of 80,000 people in Lagos, Nigeria, twothirds of which is built on stilts over the lagoon. (The first iteration, lashed together by hand from local materials, famously collapsed in a storm after three years; current versions have more robust structures.) Waterfront property, Adevemi pointed out, is the most expensive, but the water itself is quite affordable. Considering that 80 percent of the world's major cities, and 50 percent of its population, are by the water, and that climate change is elevating sea levels around the planet as well as increasing flooding, learning to live with and on the water seems like a reasonable common purpose.

Some of the most compelling presentations at Utopian Hours, however, did not so much draw attention to inequality, but proposed ways of stitching wounds to create a common ground where civitas could flourish. These were especially in the area of blending urbanity and nature. Robert Hammond, cofounder of Friends of the High Line, appeared remotely to tell the unlikely story of that project's success and spoke openly about its downsides (overcrowding, gentrification, etc.). Mette Skjold of Danish landscape architecture practice SLA walked the audience through an array of global projects that bring ecological systems to life within city limits. Césare Peeren of Rotterdam's Superuse Studios presented his practice's approach to mixing passive architectural strategies, recirculating systems, and urban farming to make habitations that deny any boundary between the city and the countryside. And Jan Edler of realities:united showed off Flussbad Berlin. a project decades in the works that seeks to keep the Spree Canal clean and transform it into an amenity for public swimming in the heart of the German capital.

The final presentation was from Italian architect/entrepreneur Carlo Ratti, who paraphrased R. Buckminster Fuller's line from Utopia or Oblivion: If design were applied to global problems, we'd have utopia. It's a beautiful conceit. But looking at the projects that Ratti presented as possible examples of this principal in action-a competition-winning proposal for a thermal battery in the Baltic adorned with saunas and tropical gardens to power Helsinki; and a power-assist bike wheel designed for Copenhagen that failed to take off (Denmark is remarkably flat and not in need of power-assist bikes)-what became more apparent were the limitations of design done in a neo-liberal system. To really get at Fuller's prescription for utopia, bigger and systematic thinking will surely be required. Aaron Seward

Masthead

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Correction

AN released its Best of Products Awards digital booklet earlier in the month. Due to an editing error, we neglected to include Pedra Palazzo by Walker Zanger in the issue. The porcelain tile collection received an Editors' Pick in the Interior Finishes & Surfaces category. Learn more at walkerzanger.com

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5 Regional Diary

East



In New York, Adjaye Associates is competing to fill a vacant full-block plot of land directly across from the Jacob K. Javits Center in Manhattan between West 35th and West 36th Streets. The firm's proposal, dubbed the Affirmation Tower, would infill the site at 418 11th Avenue, part of Related Companies' Hudson Yards neighborhood, with a teetering supertall skyscraper—the tallest in the hemisphere. In other sky-needling news, One Vanderbilt opened its dizzying observation deck, featuring hall-of-mirror interiors by Snøhetta. On a more contemplative register, the PRO-designed Mandala Lab at the Rubin Museum of Art in Chelsea is now accepting wisdom-seeking adults and children. Elsewhere on the interiors beat, SOM unveiled its sumptuous design for the UAE's new permanent mission to the United Nations in Manhattan, and WORKac's endearing Adams Street Library made its DUMBO debut. Outside of New York, a Connecticut tobacco farm where a youthful MLK Jr. worked as a summer laborer will be preserved; in New Jersey, Ennead broke ground on a mass timber museum for a fossil park at Rowan University; South Philadelphia's FDR Park will add a new welcome center and play space, among other upgrades; and Atlanta approves Foster + Partners' master plan for the city's Centennial Yards megaproject.

Southwest



The Dallas office of Perkins&Will has completed the new Technical Training Center at Collin College in Allen, Texas, a vocational training hub that will anchor the college's technical campus. The interiors of the capacious structure use an industrial palette, but from the outside, the building's most obvious feature is its massive cantilevering overhang. In other campus news, the University of Denver opened three new academic facilities, each one designed by a different architecture firm, just in time for the fall semester. The Community Commons (Moore Ruble Yudell), Dimond Family Residential Village (Anderson Mason Dale Architects), and Burwell Center for Career Achievement

(Lake|Flato) are all part of the university's strategic plan to modernize its campus. Also in Denver, local contractors sued the city over its vaccine mandate for construction workers. The Colorado Contractors Association is arguing that the move, which applies to companies working on public projects in the city, is unconstitutional. Failure to comply with the order can result in fines of up to \$5,000 per day that compliance is not met-terms the association argues are much stricter than President Biden's mandate that only businesses with 100 or more employees are required to have employees vaccinated or else tested for COVID regularly.

Midwest



Apart from the launch of the Chicago Architecture Biennial (read AN editor in chief Aaron Seward's review on page 60), it's been a slow news month for the Midwest. In Plano, Illinois, a Mies van der Rohe-designed classic was rededicated in honor of its client. The canonical, low-slung, floodprone bungalow formerly known as the Farnsworth House will now be known as the Edith Farnsworth House. A researcher, physician, and patron of the arts, Farnsworth commissioned Mies to design her the suburban getaway; the two grew close, until escalating costs and a court battle poisoned their relationship (and tarnished Farnsworth's name in architecture history books). On Lake Michigan, a home designed by another modern—Frank Lloyd Wright—hit the market for the first time in two decades. The sellers of the Harper House, worked closely with the Frank Lloyd Wright Building Conservancy out of Chicago to restore and modernize the four-bedroom dwelling; the asking price is just shy of \$2 million. In Columbus, Indiana, home to another ongoing design biennial, a grayglazed brick 1961 bank designed by the modernist architect Harry Weese has been repurposed into an independent coffee shop. The 5,000-square-foot structure is locally known as the "dead horse," due to its four crenellated towers, which stretch high into the sky like stiffened, upturned legs.

West



In Oregon, Nike unveiled a 700,000-squarefoot research and development institute named after L.A. Laker and brand ambassador LeBron James. Seattle architecture firm Olson Kundig designed the massive complex, with Mortenson Construction serving as the project contractor. In Los Angeles, Apple announced that it would dramatically bolster its presence in the city): The tech giant revealed plans to build 550,000 square feet of office space across two new connected buildings in Culver City, doubling its footprint at the headquarters of Apple TV+. The Holocaust Museum LA announced expansion plans of its own. The institution, whose partially turf-covered, Hagy Belzberg-designed building opened at Pan Pacific Park in the Fairfax District in 2010, has tapped the architect for the \$45 million expansion.

Over in East Hollywood, local firm Killefer Flammang Architects (KFA) completed the Ariadne Getty Foundation Senior Housing Complex, a five-story complex dedicated to providing safe and supportive housing to low-income LGBTQ Angelenos over the age of 62. KFA collaborated with the New York–based office Leong Leong on the 70,300-square-foot facility, which is locat-ed next to the Los Angeles LGBT Center's 2-acre Anita May Rosenstein Campus (also designed by KFA and Leong Leong). Lastly, public art commissions for the Destination Crenshaw initiative were given the green light. L.A.'s Cultural Affairs Commission gave its approval to seven outdoor installations that, along with a Perkins&Will-designed park structure, will form a Black cultural corridor in South Los Angeles.

6 Eavesdrop

Salvage Job

Architecture academia's latest controversy has all the makings of a shit show. But by seeing past the spectacle, we might grasp the mechanisms that underpin the modern university—and keep it from changing.



A complex diagram was among the gigabyte's worth of material that Zaera-Polo made available through Dropbox.

This past summer, architecture professor Alejandro Zaera-Polo was dismissed from his position at the Princeton University School of Architecture (PSOA), where he'd been teaching since 2008 and where he also briefly served as dean. (Full disclosure: I earned an AB in architecture from PSOA in 2003.) The would-be context for the dismissal spans several years, beginning in 2014, when Zaera-Polo was accused of plagiarism by the university and encouraged to resign as dean. In 2016, he sued on defamation grounds. Then in 2020, he was barred from contact with current architecture dean Mónica Ponce de León. Still, what could have been a quiet resolution to a sticky professional situation-a sacking given the euphemistic dignity of a "resignation" or "lateral move," which happens more often than you might think-has instead, thanks to an enterprising approach to Dropbox, the desire for total transparency (more on that in a minute), and the bottomless energy of Architecture Twitter to jump on the news of the moment, become a flash point.

I'll list a few highlights that I'm aware of, for which I have relied on three sources: Choire Sicha's great Curbed piece, a *Princeton Daily News* article from 2016, and Twitter. There are the allegations of plagiarism, resulting from Zaera-Polo's relying on/possibly paraphrasing Wikipedia entries in a 2014 public exhibition he worked on with Rem Koolhaas. Things escalated from there, with Princeton apparently asking for his resignation as dean and Zaera-Polo releasing a statement to that effect and subsequently suing the university. Part of his defense, as he stated in a letter to Princeton president Christopher Eisgruber, was a professed preference for "non-academic" rather than scholarly practices—i.e., not directly citing sources, which, frankly, could go either way. (I remember reading OMA's explanatory wall texts at the Guggenheim Countryside exhibition last year and wondering where all the citations were. I also know that accusations of plagiarism are pretty unsurvivable. In fact, academics take them so seriously that even self-plagiarizing-for instance, quoting something you already wrote and thought, but without attribution to your past self-is basically career suicide.) To cap it off, there are general whispers of some generally not ideal behavior on the part of Zaera-Polo toward his colleagues. Nevertheless, he had, until this summer, remained at the school as a professor of architecture.

Then there is Zaera-Polo's side. In a number of self-published videos (which I have not watched, relying instead on the herculean efforts of The Hustle Architect Twitter account) and disclosed documents (which I have skimmed), as well as in a number of tweets, the architect and professor has, as a seeming result of this successful dismissal, alluded to a profound lack of transparency on Princeton's part; complained at length about the institution's move toward a sort of "woke" attitude that he disagrees with; and derided what he alleges is a practice of certain professors of interfering with thesis advising (at the graduate level). Also in the mix are power dynamics within PSOA and the wider university, which Zaera-Polo has painstakingly mapped in diagrams or highlighted

in documents made available through Dropbox in order to point up questions ranging from why certain committees are formed and by whom to the influence of trustees' money. Zaera-Polo's practice here seems to be a commitment to disclosing every possible piece of information he has access to, in the hopes of swaying public opinion and bringing to light other people's bad behavior.

Honestly, I kind of get where he's coming from. In 2016, I filed a Title IX complaint at UC Berkeley and found myself in a three-year process that got only more arcane and stressful as time went on. I often regretted having even said anything and found myself doing such things as googling members of the Privilege and Tenure Committee to see if they had any relationship to anyone who had any relationship to the person I had reported; looking up the salaries of everyone involved; wondering why they had chosen X professor as interim head of a particular committee when it was a well-known rumor that this professor wasn't really on the side of women; and trying to draw connections where, maybe, there were none. I talked about my case-about what I perceived as the institution's failure to protect me and other women, to the point where it did start feeling like a cover-up-almost relentlessly. I took three full minutes of a public UC Regents meeting, at which former president of the UC system Janet Napolitano presided, to talk about how I had been asked in the Privilege and Tenure Committee hearing about how quickly I'd slept with my various boyfriends. I firmly believed that the institution was waiting me out, hoping

I would graduate and give up, and I said that to anyone who would listen. Honestly, I probably sounded paranoid, but that doesn't mean I was wrong. And I only wonder how I would have acted had I also had the stressors of a one-and-a-half-year pandemic to contend with.

In thinking through what I wanted to say about the Princeton–Zaera-Polo situation, I kept returning to what has happened to academic institutions in the past few years. Almost every professor I know is struggling. The reasons vary: fear (justified or unjustified) of their students' reactions to being asked to read certain texts over others; unsustainable working conditions owing to the transformation of adjunct positions that were once filled by established practitioners but are now the only option for many talented, dedicated doctorate holders with no chance of tenure; and what we could call the deanification of the collegiate institution, in which layers and layers of middle management, following practices set down by consulting firms, pad their own pockets while decimating academic programs. There has been extraordinary pressure put on academics to teach through the pandemic, often at very real risk to either their lives or the lives of the unvaccinated children they might have at home. Meanwhile, as an increasingly politicized student body creates new demands of seemingly every administration, there is ever more pressure on deans, chairs, and provosts to keep big donors happy, often over assuaging the very real concerns of students and faculty. In short, the university has changed, in many ways for the worse, and Zaera-Polo's desire to shed light on these changes and tighter concentrations of power is, on the face of it, good.

I don't want us to litigate the facts or the interpretations of Alejandro Zaera-Polo's particular situation, nor to do what so many of us have been inclined to do, which is to enthusiastically spectate from the sidelines at what is easily perceivable as a shit show turning into an even bigger shit show. What I do want us to do is look for the kernels of truth in his troves of documentation and see that, while these particular events may have one particular set of facts behind them (facts we will probably never have full access to, which is part of why I appreciate his dedication to transparency), this experience has much more to say about the quiet whisper networks of academia; the way in which friends do look out for friends; the way in which the formation of committees often is a way of getting someone to eventually leave; and the way in which, instead of being a place for collegiality, teaching, and the shared drive for knowledge, academic institutions are often sites of fear, avarice, and infighting for small scraps of power. I think it's worth reading much of what Alejandro Zaera-Polo is making public because it's worth actually seeing some of these mechanisms at work. Maybe instead of throwing everything out wholesale, we can take what we need from this document dump and leave the rest behind.

Disclaimer: I reached out to Zaera-Polo, emailing a few questions. He requested approval of my entire text if I were to quote anything. In lieu of complying with his demands (which are unreasonable), I will wait for him to publish my questions and his answers, as he said he may. **Eva Hagberg** GOLDBRECHT

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River Ring of Fire

How the slow forward march of a Brooklyn waterfront megaproject highlights the city's land use gauntlet.

The night Hurricane Ida inundated New York City, Brooklyn's Community Board 1 and roughly 100 residents met in a high school auditorium to discuss a potential development that would fundamentally change the Williamsburg waterfront. By the time the meeting concluded at 11:30 p.m., what began as light rain had turned into a torrential downpour and flooding. "It was like a red alarm siren ringing," said Bonnie Campbell, a principal at Two Trees, the developer behind the project under review.

Weather is an apt source of metaphors for New York's planning, approval, and entitlements process, especially in the case of River Ring, which proposes a pair of curving Bjarke Ingels-designed high-rises set within a new sponge park for absorbing storm surges. (The landscaping, by James Corner Field Operations, would also include marshes and tidal flats.) The climate of opinion on developments like this one is evolving, and it's clear that developers need to tailor their proposals to the communities that would be directly affected.

This, in effect, is what Two Trees has attempted to do by focusing the project narrative on affordable housing as well as resiliency. On September 14, the community board approved River Ring by a 20-15 vote (technically a "yes, with conditions" outcome). No rain, this time.

Though favorable to the developer, the outcome nonetheless underscores certain questions: Do the city's community boards and Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP) act more like gatekeepers than catalysts for equitable development? And how conditional are these conditions?

Some residents feel the process could function like a needed gatekeeper, but in this case, it seems to be falling short. In the view of local advocacy group Sustainable Williamsburg, River Ring is being railroaded through without enough public awareness, represents a tax abatement giveaway for developers, and overrules community sentiment for a paltry number of affordable units and meager public space. (Sustainable Williamsburg did not respond to multiple requests for comment.)

Broadly, criticisms of River Ring fall into two main camps. There's what the developer is painting as the NIMBY contingent, which contends that the rezoning necessary for something of this magnitude-two giant towers, double the height of neighboring structures, containing 1,050 units (263 of which are designated as affordable)—will result in crowding the waterfront and opening the area to new residents and traffic. thereby altering the neighborhood fabric. As if to bolster these claims, the community board's land use committee initially arrived at a "no, with conditions" result before being overruled by the full board. (The twist and turns of the ULURP process caused confusion even among committee members.) "The NIMBY coalition surprised us a bit

"The NIMBY coalition surprised us a bit because these residents are, from our perspective, new, from the last 10 to 15 years," Two Tree's Campbell said. "Surprising to see people who didn't want their neighborhood to change when they had been the change."

Then there's the second camp, local political actors and organizations that evaluate the project through the lens of benefits and trade-offs and how these can be tweaked or added upon to best serve the neighborhood. The horse-trading over building heights and affordability up until now hinged on requests to increase the number of very affordable units while at the same time cutting the total number of apartments by a third to "reduce the anticipated increased load on existing overcapacity on subway transit, vehicular traffic, pedestrian traffic, and wastewater" per public requests—an "unfeasible" demand, according to Campbell.

Two Trees' argument turns on the matter of density. The recommendations added to the community board's approval—that half the units be affordable and the height get cut by a third—can't be met. For the project to pencil out and add to the nearby affordable housing stock, it needs to be a certain size, with a certain number of market-rate units, to subsidize the affordable ones. There's some wiggle room, but nowhere near what would be needed to meet those recommendations. "Density pays for it," Campbell said. Two Trees' current commitment to permanently affordable housing would make a quarter of all units affordable to families making between 40 and 60 percent of the median income of area residents. This was enough to sway Community Board 1 and secure the provisional support of Brooklyn borough president, and presumptive future mayor, Eric Adams, who provided his own conditions and suggestions for more affordable housing in a 26-page report directed to the City Planning Commission. The commission has until early December to review these and other conditions (ultimately, these and the request to slash the height aren't binding).

Local nonprofits and community groups have also come around. On September 27, before the borough president weighed in, Los Sures, El Puente, and St. Nicks Alliance, or the Coalition, sent Adams's office a letter in which they demanded that 50 percent of the units be made affordable for residents with 40 percent AMI; in the same letter they observed that conventional inclusionary zoning, set between 80 percent and 120 percent AMI, is "too often filled by rising young professionals who have far more housing options." Another neighborhood leader, Ramon Peguero of the Nuestros Niños Child Development Center, explained in an op-ed for *Brooklyn Paper* that "the development of affordable housing has been the only mechanism that has kept long-tenured Williamsburg residents in their neighborhood" and that supporting projects such as River Ring is more realistic than demanding all-affordable development and may offer the "last opportunities for many" to live in the desirable waterfront neighborhood.

In navigating the opposition, Two Trees called upon its lengthy experience in the area. (It owns the former Domino Sugar factory site next door; critics say there's a sense of déjà vu over the current approval process.) But when it looked like its rezoning bid might founder early in the summer, the developer resorted to what were perceived as threats. If residents voted down the proposal in its latest iteration, Two Trees said, it would cut its losses and sell the site to the highest bidder—in all likelihood, a distribution warehouse, or so the developer maintained. In other words, the neighborhood could take the housing or leave it.

River Ring will continue to move through the ULURP process, including architectural design and permitting with the numerous agencies that oversee waterfront development. Two Trees tentatively hopes to get the official OK by the end of 2021—the end of the current mayor and city council's term—and break ground in early 2023. But it is distinctly possible that newly elected local council member Lincoln Restler will weigh in if approval takes longer, and so the balancing act between density and housing commitments is certain to continue.

"These things will get negotiated until the very last vote is taken in the ULURP process," said Campbell. **Patrick Sisson**





Top: River Ring comprises a pair of mostly residential towers designed by BIG and situated amid a landscape by James Corner Field Operations. Above: The landscaping features marshes, tidal flats, and a sponge park that meet the East River and protect against storm surges.



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Fan Mail

Oudolf Garden Detroit opens at Belle Isle Park five years after the pioneering Dutch plantsman was first beckoned to the Motor City.

It all started with a letter.

With its postage at least thrice confirmed but the likelihood of an affirmative response to its receipt anything but certain, the single piece of snail mail in question began its journey from Wayne County, Michigan, to the small Dutch village of Hummelo just after Thanksgiving in 2016.

Between Christmas and New Year's Day, the three members of the Garden Club of Michigan (GCM) who had sent the Netherlands-bound missive received a reply from its recipient, Piet Oudolf. They could hardly have predicted his response, nor the chain of events that followed.

In late August, after being delayed by an ongoing global pandemic, Oudolf Garden Detroit made its debut at the city's historic 982-acre Belle Isle Park. The four-season garden is one of only a modest handful of public Oudolf projects in the United States, a list that includes the High Line in New York City and the Lurie Garden in Chicago's Millennium Park. It's also the only public garden by the celebrated landscape designer to be run by an all-volunteer grounds crew.

Writing to Oudolf, the GCM specifically mentioned Belle Isle, which was designed by Frederick Law Olmsted and moored in the Detroit River. (Previously a city park, Belle Isle has operated as a state park since 2014.)

"We wanted to do one that would make a difference to the island and to the community," recounted Maura Campbell, then-president of the GCM and current spokesperson for the Oudolf Garden Detroit grounds crew. "And I urged everybody at the time to think big: If you could have anybody in the world come and do a garden, who would it be?"

Oudolf was one among many landscape designers suggested by club members; his name was specifically mentioned by Jean Hudson, wife of the late Detroit philanthropist and department store magnate Joseph L. Hudson. After "hitting a few little brick walls and not getting anywhere with connections that people had," in the initial outreach phase, Campbell cold-called filmmaker Thomas Piper, who at the time was working on his documentary, Five Seasons: The Gardens of Piet Oudolf, which he released in 2018. Piper suggested reaching out to Oudolf directly about visiting Detroit—a shot in the dark, but still a shot.

Talks began soon after Oudolf accepted the invitation. By April 2017, the pioneering New Perennialist was on the ground in Detroit for a whirlwind day-and-a-half tour, during which he selected the site for the future 2.5-acre garden that bears his name.

"We showed him everything in Detroit the good, the bad, the ugly, the Dequindre Cut, the riverfront," said Campbell. "We decided that while we wanted the garden to be on Belle Isle, if you have the world's best, why would you tell him where his garden should go? Have him tell us where he thinks his garden should go—and the site where the garden is today is the one that he picked."

Located in the southwestern section of the park on what was once an expanse of "terrible scrappy sod grass," as Campbell put it, Oudolf Garden Detroit is a painterly landscape of hardy perennials, shrubs, and trees that melds three distinct planting styles: group- and block-pattern beds, both of which are more or less self-explanatory, along with Oudolf's signature matrix style, a highly naturalistic, blended planting method in which



one or two species, usually grasses, serve as a soft base layer—the "matrix"—for a variety of more structural and showy plants. (In yet another point of distinction, the garden is the only Oudolf project in the U.S. to utilize all three: group-pattern beds, block-pattern beds, and Oudolf's signature style.) Fifteen 25-foot-long beds, bisected by gently meandering paths, are collectively home to 32,000 or so perennials and grasses, 90 percent of them sourced from Michigan-based growers. As with other Oudolf designs, the garden's understated, naturalistic beauty is meant to evoke an emotional response.

"His aim is to bring people in and connect people," said Campbell, noting the garden's tranquil riverside setting adjacent to the Nancy Brown Peace Carillon, a landmark neo-Gothic bell tower, and the Canadian Peace Monument. "We want it to be a place of peace, meditation, and contemplation."

The COVID-19 crisis prevented the typically hands-on Oudolf from personally overseeing the garden's planting in the fall of 2020, a process already stalled by record flooding in 2019 that prompted an extensive redesign. Still, he coordinated closely via FaceTime with the Oudolf Garden Detroit grounds crew from his home base in Hummelo. (Ann Arbor–based InSite Design Studio served as landscape architect alongside a long list of project collaborators and backers that worked with the core team of volunteers.)

The pandemic also thwarted Oudolf's plans to attend the August opening of the \$4.7 million project. "My bags were packed but, unfortunately, this trip was not to be," he said in a written statement. "This garden sits on one of the most natural sites for one of my gardens anywhere."

While COVID travel restrictions resulted in a major wrinkle for Oudolf Garden Detroit's debut, there was a sweet bit of synchronicity in play: The garden's opening virtually coincided with the launch of the 11th



Top: The Oudolf Garden Detroit at Belle Isle Park opened in late August. **Bottom:** A drawing prepared by designer Piet Oudolf depicting the garden's organization and 32,000 plantings.

edition of Detroit Month of Design, a citywide celebration held every September that features open studios, exhibitions, site-specific installations, talks, and workshops. Organizers, preparing for the biggest show in the event's history, lined up guided tours for visiting journalists and guests.

"People will come from all over to see the garden, and I really hope that they will stay and linger so that they can feel and experience what we feel," said Olga Stella, executive director of Design Core Detroit, the nonprofit behind Detroit Month of Design, who is also steward of Detroit's singular (for the U.S.) UNESCO City of Design designation.

"Detroiters aren't waiting for someone else to solve their problems," said Stella of the project's origins. "They're active problem solvers at all levels."

As evinced by Oudolf Garden Detroit, sometimes making happen what you want to happen in the Motor City can be as simple as sending a friendly hello in the mail to a stranger thousands of miles away. Matt Hickman



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Bringing Down Barriers

Cleveland's Dunham Tavern Museum plots a new beginning through community green space.



Merritt Chase's master plan improves circulation and enhances wayfinding across the 3-acre site.

In 1819, Rufus and Jane Pratt Dunham migrated from Massachusetts to the sprawling Western Reserve, now northeastern Ohio. The young couple settled on a nearly 14acre farm in "Cleaveland," a sleepy riverside village founded in the opening years of the 19th century. Throughout the 1830s and '40s, Cleveland (having dropped the extra vowel in its name in 1831) benefited from the completion of the Ohio and Erie Canal and underwent a major growth spurt. The Dunham farmstead expanded, too, with the original 1824 clapboard colonial farmhouse sprouting two new wings, a barn, and a taproom. The tavern soon proved lucrative because of the farm's location along the old Buffalo-Cleveland-Detroit Post Road, now Euclid Avenue.

The Dunhams eventually sold the property, and in 1857 the tavern served its final pint. Converted to residential use, the structure—among the oldest buildings in Cleveland—continued to function as a private dwelling for decades, save for a brief period in the 1930s when it was used as a studio for Works Progress Administration artists. In 1941, a few years after it had been taken over by the Society of Collectors and the landscape architect Donald Gray, the property opened as a public museum.

Today, the Dunham Tavern Museum is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The museum campus spans 6 acres in the Hough neighborhood on Cleveland's east side and offers visitors an authentic and skillfully preserved, thanks to the early efforts of Gray—slice of the Ohioan pioneer life, complete with a Heritage Trail, period gardens, demonstration farm, and antique furnishings. Dunham's frozen-in-amber qualities are its most charming asset, but in an attempt to keep the present at a remove, the museum inadvertently closed itself off from the majority-Black neighborhood surrounding it.

A new campus master plan, pegged to the larger transformation of MidTown Cleveland into a multifaceted civic and innovationdistrict, stands to mitigate the "kind of insularity" that has mired Dunham over the years, Lauren Hansgen, the museum's executive director, explained. "That means that we must deal with both physical and perceptual barriers, including literally taking down fences and cleaning up undergrowth. We want to make it obvious that there is a path into our campus and that [everyone is] welcome."

Developed by the landscape architecture and urban design firm Merritt Chase, in tandem with local nonprofit LAND studio, the recently unveiled plan proposes a range of interventions that preserve and enhance existing elements, in addition to the creation of new gathering spaces. The landmarked tavern building will largely be left untouched, while the barn, rebuilt in 2000 after a fire long ago destroyed the 1840s original, will be enlarged to better accommodate museum programming as well as public and private events. Already, the now-vacant Banks-Baldwin House, on the northern end of the campus near Chester Avenue, is being relocated closer to the museum, where it will function as a visitors' center, freeing up space within the museum proper. Meanwhile, the Heritage Trail will be extended to form a full loop around the site, while the existing demonstration farm will be scaled down and moved to the northeast section of the grounds. Most of the mature tree canopy across the campus will be preserved, including the farm's existing orchard.

The master plan also envisions wholly new elements. These include a spacious event lawn to be sited north of the centrally located barn, a series of culturally themed specialty gardens (community reconciliation-, healing-, indigenous-, and local geology–focused gardens among them) along the Heritage Trail, and a roughly 3,000-squarefoot Community Farm Pavilion. The latter will support community programming and farming operations.

Some short-term, priority projects are intended to enhance wayfinding, bring about landscaping improvements in key areas, and, as Hansgen suggested, remove barriers and perimeter fencing.

In proposing all these changes, the master plan attempts a double transformation. "I don't want it to just be a regional cultural destination, but also an asset to the neigborhood and anchor in the community," Hansgen said. For Chris Merritt, founding co-principal of Merritt Chase, it was immediately evident that the institution, while known locally for its antiques and gardens, didn't feel "*of* the neighborhood." It was important as a first step to "building trust that hasn't been there," he added.

Working alongside LAND studio, Merritt Chase oversaw a lengthy engagement process with community groups and Hough residents, who were invited to participate in workshops, presentations, and listening and learning sessions. Lasting a period of 18 months, this initial phase of the project was more than just information gathering and instead was akin to relationship building, Merritt explained. The feeling appears to be mutual: Ahead of Juneteenth, neighborhood organizers asked Dunham if it would host a celebration marking the newly consecrated national holiday on the campus.

"This was probably the most exciting and symbolic of the changing relationship between Dunham as an organization and residents," said Hansgen of the museum's Juneteenth festivities. "It was stupendous."

A positive turn of events indeed this was for Dunham, which at that moment was embroiled in a minor real estate scandal. The museum purchased a 3-acre patch of land on the corner of Euclid and E. 66th Street, with the intention of demolishing the moribund textile factory that stood there in order to make way for a large public park. But the museum abruptly switched gears and sold the property to the Cleveland Foundation, which was founded in 1914 as the first community foundation in the world, for its new headquarters. The move prompted a headline- grabbing 2019 lawsuit filed by former Dunham board and museum members (the land had been purchased

with funds raised for the creation of the park), but in December 2020 the Ohio Supreme Court declined to hear an appeal to invalidate the sale. With that, construction work at the former brownfield site, which also required extensive environmental remediation, was cleared to proceed.

Designed by Pascale Sablan, then at the New York firm S9 Architecture, the 54,000-square-foot Cleveland Foundation Headquarters will form part of the western edge of the Dunham campus. A proposed east-west greenway of pocket parks and public plazas just north of the building would connect both the museum and the foundation to the larger nascent MidTown civic and innovation district. A separate project to create a new Black historic and cultural corridor in the area would seek to rejuvenate a mile-long stretch along E. 66th Street.

"Dunham all of a sudden gets connected—structurally and recreationally—beyond its own borders, into the community," said Lillian Kuri, executive vice president and chief operating officer of the Cleveland Foundation. The plan effectively knits together disparate parts of MidTown—old, new, and reborn—with open public space.

Back at the Dunham Tavern Museum, where barriers are coming down and community trust is being built up, Hansgen anticipates the possibilities of a reimagined historic house museum that caters to traditional visitors while also serving as a backyard for the surrounding neighborhood.

"It's interesting to think about telling more than just the story of the Dunham family 200 years ago, but also what the land looked like before they arrived and what happened in that 200 years of history after they moved on," she said. "Connecting people to this place across time is the goal."

Merritt put it in slightly more blunt terms: "It can't just be kind of an *Antiques Roadshow* in the museum. It's also got to be whatever you develop with the neighborhood." **Matt Hickman**

Rocky Road

A new linear park promises to redeem a developer megaproject in Boston.



The first section of Harbor Way-a central green punctuated by boulders-opened in October.

No urban neighborhood in the country has grown as fast as Boston's Seaport District. What ten or 15 years ago were parking lots have been replaced by office towers and mixed-use blocks, with more on the way. The district hums day and night with office workers, condo owners, and tourists.

But there's been severe criticism of the quality of the architecture in the Seaport, a substantial portion of which was overseen by WS Development. (The entire Seaport was financed and subsidized by public

money to the tune of about \$22 billion.) A few pocket parks are scattered about the mostly clunky buildings, but up until now the area lacked a unifying urban gesture. Harbor Way, a linear park featuring native New England flora and incongruous granite boulders, is just such a gesture. A third of a mile long, the pedestrian promenade cuts through the dense site to connect the harbor waterfront to Summer Street, a crucial Boston thoroughfare.

"This park is for all of Boston," said

Yanni Tsipis, WS's senior vice president of development, at an opening ceremony held in mid-October for the central green, known as the Rocks at Harbor Way. "We worked with all the development agencies in Boston and the city was immensely supportive of the project."

James Corner, whose New York-based firm, James Corner Field Operations (JCFO), was behind Harbor Way's design, was also in attendance. He spoke eloquently about the parallels between the "raw, visceral nature" of Northern England, where he grew up, and New England, whose forests he has come to know intimately since buying a Cape Cod home 30 years ago. "It's this collision be-tween urbanity and a sense of the New England wilderness," he said of Harbor Way.

It's an apt summary of the park environs. Framed by trees and retail storefronts and terminating at the water's edge, Harbor Way aspires to be a kind of Las Ramblas, Barcelona's famed promenade. But indus-trial touches recalling the maritime activity that once happened here set it apart-as do those boulders. Plopped down on the green, the giant rocks (weighing 250,000 pounds altogether and sourced from regional quarries) allude to an ever-older, geological time line. "We like the idea of landscape design that is varied," Corner said.

He also showed sensitivity toward critiques of the Seaport. "For me it's all about the ground plane," Corner told AN. "I really don't care about what the buildings are doing. The footprints of the buildings are important because it's between them that placemaking happens. Planting a few trees in re sidual, leftover space is not placemaking."

Corner's involvement in the district goes back several years. In 2015, WS tapped JCFO and the local office of NADAAA to develop a master plan, which was subsequently picked up and altered by Sasaki (with continued input from the other two firms). This plan, approved two years later, called for developing 23 acres of land through 7.6 million square feet of office, hotel, and residential properties. Building works are expected to wrap in 2024.

In his remarks, Tsipis indicated how the earlier plan allotted substantially more area for roadways than for pedestrians. Indeed, the strip of land that became Harbor Way had originally been designated as hard top. "With the revised master plan, we said, "This is 2017. Why are we building roads?" Similar environmental concerns shaped

the design of Harbor Way. The promenade, whose last stretch has yet to be completed, integrates permeable surfaces and abundant native plantings. It also reduces the urban heat island effect by creating a significant mature tree canopy in the heart of the district.

At the park unveiling, beautiful early fall weather set a festive mood. Dogs sniffed and barked about, children climbed the boulders, and adults mingled and exchanged congratulatory greetings. "This is a win for the city of Boston," Tsipis said. James McCown



Reinforced Gypsum.

Monuments Are Dead; Long Live Monuments

Monument Lab and the Mellon Foundation's National Monument Audit reveals the plasticity of our history in the commemorative landscape.



A little more than one year ago, Americans took to the streets in the name of antiracism and social justice. Their actions fomented a national conversation about confederate statues that continues unabated; if anything, actions like the City of Richmond, Virginia's removal of its Robert E. Lee statue in September stand to galvanize critics.

The Lee statue and others like it form only a portion of America's "commemorative landscape," according to a new audit produced by the Monument Lab with funding from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation in New York City. The National Monument Audit is the first of the Mellon's \$250 million Monuments Project to come to fruition. Led by Laurie Allen, Paul M. Farber, and Sue Mobley, the audit's research team analyzed a set of nearly 50,000 monuments to gain new insights into their role in shaping American identity. The monuments profiled in the study are not limited by aesthetic or purpose; essentially any public artwork tied to a specific event, cause, or person was eligible for inclusion.

The group's findings are stark: Of the 50 most-represented individuals, half were slave owners, just five were Black or Indigenous, and only three were women. There are more monuments depicting mermaids (22 to be exact) than US congresswomen (2: Barbara Jordan of Texas and Millicent Fenwick of New Jersey). On the issue of subject matter, American monuments overwhelmingly favor themes of war and conquest. According to the audit, the word "war" is used 13 times more than "peace," 17 times more than "love," and 59 times more than "care." Of the monuments pooled by the study, more than half (29,792) bear attributes of war and weaponry; 33 percent represent war; and a sizable share (5,917) reference the Civil War.

Sue Mobley, co-director of the National Monument Audit and senior research scholar at Monument Lab, admitted that she and her team had anticipated many of the findings. Nevertheless, they did turn up some interesting, if dispiriting, insights. "I was surprised by the extent to which violence and conquest dominated the landscape," Mobley said. She went on, noting the "dominance in how the heroics of war are rendered singularly—i.e., generals on horses or symbolic figures—while the losses and costs are rendered collectively, through lists of soldiers and sailors from a neighborhood



Top left: Mel Chin's *Two Me* was part of Monument Lab's 2017 *Citywide Exhibition*. **Top right:** The Lab has held workshops to solicit opinions on public spaces and monuments. **Above:** It staged *Staying Power*, an outdoor exhibition in Philadelphia, over the summer.

or town who were killed in action."

The visual motifs she described contribute to a triumphal narrative that quite literally reduces the casualties of war to the equivalent of a footnote. And, as the audit makes clear, this narrative's prevalence in public commemorative art is not uniquely American but is in fact common to all countries with roots in the Western tradition. Ancient Rome was dotted with victory monuments-the Equestrian Statue of Marcus Aurelius, the Column of Trajan, the triumphal arches of Titus, Septimius Severus, and Constantine-which celebrated the spoils of conquest. These commemorative structures functioned as propaganda for imperial expansion, so it's no surprise that they also served (and continue to serve) as models for American monument makers.

Maya Lin's 1982 Vietnam Veterans Memorial was the first monument of its kind to meaningfully break from this triumphalist template. The work is referenced multiple times in the audit as a means of illustrating how a successful monument changes over time (342 names have been added since the memorial's completion), and it continues to engage the public in a collective experience. While figurative monuments in the triumphal tradition are still built, the most impactful monuments designed and built in the last 40 years—such as the Oklahoma City Bombing National Memorial (2000), the World Trade Center Memorial (2011), and the National Memorial for Peace and Justice (2018), to name a few—are distinctly in the mold of Lin's memorial. It would not be an overstatement to characterize the Vietnam Veterans Memorial as the catalyst of a critical shift in the way that the American public considers and interacts with public monuments.

Drawing on a decade's worth of conversations and research about public spaces across the country, the Philadelphia-based Monument Lab defines a monument as "a statement of power and presence in public." Returning to the audit's findings, we might wonder what separates the monument from propaganda. Not much, Mobley said: "Monuments really are propaganda as a form and function." Even shifts in the form—she pointed to the wider application of digital interfaces and overlays in contemporary memorials and monuments—cannot escape the fundamental use of the typology to anchor rituals and performance. These acts are far from neutral, Mobley said, and "can certainly contribute to, rather than resist, propagandizing. Look at the formulaic 'unveiling' rituals for many confederate monuments, for example."

The National Monument Audit asks its audience to reckon with numerous uncomfortable truths in its key findings, the first of which turns one of the central concepts behind monuments on its head: meaning is always subject to change. The historical figures depicted in monuments meant to endure for centuries evolve into allegories or symbols. Or they may just as easily be forgotten. Or, conversely, an unsavory aspect of one's history may come to light. In some instances, removal is requested and in others it's required, as happened on July 9, 1776, five days after the country's founding, when citizens brought down an effigy of King George.

"Monuments suppress far more than they summon us to remember; they are not mere facts on a pedestal," the audit authors write. The assertion is that these works of stone and bronze play an outsized role in promoting certain histories over others. Mobley hopes that through a process of recontextualization we can expose "the editorial choices made in both the initial depictions and later additions as well as make explicit the editorial choices made in the updating and contextualizing [of monuments]."

The audit is sprinkled with calls to action intended to ensure that monuments serve the best interests of the public. But Mobley also emphasized the complex symbolic space that monuments inhabit and suggested ways for bringing them into everyday public life. "Restoring agency, especially names, where possible, and explicating reasoning are an important part of denaturalizing monuments and other 'historic' presentation forms." And by embracing the ephemeral, participatory nature of monuments we can create public commemorative art that fosters community bonds and shared histories. Idealized historical figures, equestrian statues—these monuments are dead; long live monuments.

Anna Marcum is an architectural historian and preservationist based in Brooklyn, New York. She is the director of research and preservation at Village Preservation.

Green Labor

The restoration and landscaping of Chicago's former Pullman Company Town commemorates a pivotal site of progressive American labor.

When Andrea Terry, a principal at the Chicago architecture firm Bauer Latoza Studio began working on the renovation of the Pullman Administration Clock Tower Building in 2017, it had no floor, lots of racoons, and trees growing inside. "It was in a terribly sad state," she said, a tragic near denouement for one of the city's most historic buildings, in one of its most historic neighborhoods.

The area known as Pullman on Chicago's far South Side was established by the industrialist George Pullman in the late 19th century. The sprawling company town he built there witnessed major events in the histories of labor (the bloody 1894 Pullman strike, which launched a period of labor militancy in America) and civil rights (it was home to the Pullman Porters, the first Black union to be recognized by a major American corporation). The company, which for much of its history produced luxury rail cars, was completely shuttered in the 1980s, and "for decades [it] was treated like some South Side thing we didn't have to think too hard about," Terry said.

In 2015, President Obama made the 12acre site a national monument, promising federal dollars for staff and maintenance. But it was the National Park Foundation that raised the funds for the restoration work—more than \$10 million to date. The Clock Tower Building was rebuilt from the inside, with capacity for a visitors' center and museum exhibits, and the grounds were transformed into an urban park. Fittingly, the Pullman National Monument celebrated its opening Labor Day weekend. "It's been a pinnacle of my career to see something come from that place to where it is now," said Terry. "It's touching so many different parts of everyday life that it can't help but be a great thing."

In 1971, the former company town was designated a national landmark to save its key structures from demolition. Pullman selected the architect Solon S. Beaman to build the red brick, Queen Anne-style row houses and hotel, which were set in parklike environs designed by the landscape architect Nathan Barrett. With its iconic clock tower, the 1880 administrative building was Beaman's grandest creation, but few of his working drawings and other documents have survived. When Terry became involved, the building was a hollow shell of itself, having suffered a fire in the late 1990s—even though a 2005 project guaran-teed its continued existence. "We worked on some of the re-creation components with basically two photographs," she recalled.

An action plan developed by a coalition of professional planning and neighborhood organizations, including design help from big-time Chicago firm Adrian Smith + Gordon Gill, charted a course for Pullman's renewal. Bauer Latoza integrated the ruins of arched bays to the south of the Clock Tower Building into a broad civic plaza that preserves the footprint of long-destroyed workshops. The museum exhibit inside not only foregrounds the figure of Pullman, but also that of firebrand union leader Eugene V. Debs, who organized the Pullman strike, which was violently put down by the National Guard. Among the exhibit displays, by the Fairfax, Virginia-based firm Design Minds, is a sumptuously ornate interior wood-paneled model of a Pullman car. Further on, pulley



wheels and levers, paragons of 19th-century mechanization once accustomed to incredibly heavy loads, hold up signage.

Outside, the landscape, designed by Chicago's Site Design Group, is ordered along a strong, axial plan. As conveyed by interpretive plaques, this north-south axis was the path that workers and the product of their labor traversed each day. They shuffled along the transfer pit tracks at sunrise and again when the closing whistle blew, closely monitored by security personnel hired by Pullman. It was also here that they brought machinery to a shuddering halt and clashed with federal troops.

The centerpiece is transfer pit tracks once used to slide segments of railcars from workstation to workstation. The designers reassembled the tracks and recessed them slightly below grade. They wove clutches of asters and goldenrods between bands of pavers and richly rusted rails and introduced bees and other pollinators. "The transfer pit was always about efficiency and high performance, so that's why we wanted to go with native pollinators," said Site Design Group studio director Rob Reuland. The result is a picture of mechanized order that's literally, well, buzzing with activity, albeit at a lower volume than during Pullman's reign.

One major aim of the action plan was to reverse a trajectory of alienation that had pitted the company town against the surrounding neighborhood. When it first opened, the campus was ringed by low walls and shrubs, but by the mid-1880s, the periphery resembled a militarized checkpoint. (Pullman



Top: Site Design Group transformed the former railcar tracks into elements of a new landscape **Above:** The National Pullman Monument opened this past Labor Day weekend.

erected a guardhouse and staffed the entry points with police.) By the 1890s, iron fences and masonry walls had sprung up in likely response to increasing labor unrest.

Site Design Group brought down the walls and fences. Furthermore, they established a network of heritage trails that crisscross the site. Unlike the majority of National Park Service properties, which are often isolated or carefully circumscribed by fences, Reuland said he wanted Pullman to be as "porous as possible." This is only right; after all, it was mainly neighbors who for years struggled to get the historic property back into a condition befitting its importance. "There's a high level of ownership of it," he said. "We wanted to make sure it felt like a neighborhood park *to* neighbors when they walked through." **Zach Mortice**

Pay D.I.R.T.

The Oberlander International Landscape Architecture Prize selects its first recipient.



Julie Bargmann, a Charlottesville, Virginia-based landscape architect and educator whose work redeems the seemingly irredeemable and gives new life to long-moribund sites, has been named the inaugural laureate of the Cornelia Hahn Oberlander International Landscape Architecture Prize.

Established by the Cultural Landscape Foundation (TCLF), the biennial Oberlander Prize recognizes seasoned practitioners who have made significant artistic contributions to the discipline. In its citation, the jury hailed Bargmann, who has served as a professor of landscape architecture at the University of Virginia since 1995, as being "hugely important as a catalyst for other, younger landscape architects."

"She has been a provocateur, a critical practitioner, and a public intellectual," the citation continued. "She embodies the kind of activism required of landscape architects in an era of severe environmental challenges and persistent social inequities."

The award's namesake, the revered German Canadian landscape architect Cornelia Hahn Oberlander, serves as a template for laureates. Oberlander passed away from complications of COVID-19 in May of this year, just a few weeks ahead of her 100th birthday, but she sanctioned the prize in 2019. What followed was a lengthy selection process involving an independent advisory committee, a seven-person jury comprising practitioners like Walter Hood and Tatiana Bilbao, and several virtual deliberations.

"We couldn't be more pleased with the jury's selection of Julie Bargmann as the inaugural Oberlander Prize laureate," Charles A. Birnbaum, founder, president, and CEO of TCLF, told *AN*. "Julie is a storyteller with an extraordinary ability to connect people with sites that are abandoned, forgotten, and even toxic by revealing and making visible their environmental and cultural histories; this is foundational to her trailblazing and inspiring work."

A native of Bergen County, New Jersey, Bargmann attended Carnegie Mellon Uni-



Top left: Core City Park in Detroit Top right: Landscape architect Julie Bargmann Above: Turtle Creek Water Works in Dallas

versity, where she pursued a fine arts degree in sculpture. Next came the Harvard Graduate School of Design (GSD), where she earned a master's in landscape architecture in 1987. While at the GSD, Bargmann worked at a then-fledgling firm run by Michael Van Valkenburgh, with whom she would continue to collaborate after graduating. In 1990, she was named a fellow of the American Academy in Rome. Two years later, in 1992, she founded D.I.R.T. ("Dump It Right There") studio on the heels of Project D.I.R.T., a research initiative she developed while teaching at the University of Minnesota that took her to abandoned mining sites across the country.

"I wanted to see how they were being treated, and in most cases, I disagreed with what I witnessed," said Bargmann. "Restrictive reclamation policies, uninspired remediation practices, and shallow readings of former working sites—I became openly critical of all these things but was also inspired by them." Similar investigations into the blighted and befouled followed. With support from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Bargmann studied reclamation strategies for a dozen Superfund sites, including the old Roebling Steel plant in New Jersey, a Superfund site since 1983, and Avtex Fibers, a 440-acre former rayon-manufacturing complex in Front Royal, Virginia.

Bargmann's interest in the transformation of postindustrial sites, ones that have been jilted or maltreated or appear tarnished beyond repair, persists to this day. Indeed, it's the throughline of her career. As she explained in a statement:

"Unearthing the raw ingredients of design from waste and wastelands defines my life's work. Both the pedagogy of my teaching and my methodology as a designer address the social and ecological imperatives to reclaim degraded land. Integrating regenerative technologies



with design propositions and built landscapes embodies my contribution to the discipline of landscape architecture."

Major projects, typically executed in collaboration with larger multidisciplinary teams, include Vintondale Reclamation Park in Pennsylvania, a 2001 National Design Award-winning project that Bargmann has referred to as "the project that I feel launched D.I.R.T. and still defines its trajectory"; Turtle Creek Pump House, a 2002 private commission in Dallas that entailed the wholesale recycling of an abandoned historic pump house into a deconstructed residential garden/arts center; and, most recently, Core City Park in Detroit, a 2019 reuse project conceived with Detroit-based developer Philip Kafka of Prince Concepts, which the Oberlander Prize jury called a "nascent urban forest planted in artfully rearranged urban rubble."

The prize was announced a day ahead of the Oberlander Prize Forum, a symposium devoted to climate resiliency in New York. Field sessions at four different city landscapes complemented the discussions.

"The Oberlander Prize in landscape architecture, which is now the most important prize in landscape architecture, is signaling where the discipline should be going and what kind of values the discipline should stand for," said Maurice Cox, the Chicago commissioner of the Department of Planning and Development and former design director at the National Endowment of the Arts.

Cox continued: "[Bargmann's] advocacy for landscapes that are fallow, landscapes that are contaminated—digging literally in the soil of urban areas and finding beauty has in and of itself shaped a public dialogue about lost and forgotten landscapes as places where solutions can be found, where landscapes can be regenerated." Matt Hickman

17 Comment

Squaring the Circle

In order to meet the climate challenge, planning advocates must rethink their nearexclusive focus on bike lanes, mixed-used zoning, and other municipal tweaks.

On September 1, three days after Hurricane Ida's deadly landfall in Louisiana, what was widely billed as the storm's "remnants" swept through the New York City metro area, submerging massive portions of its roads and transit system in floodwater and leaving at least 52 dead in stranded cars and illegal basement apartments. This event did not *reveal* anything about the city's aging, ill-maintained infrastructure per se. Rather, it simply underscored—and not for the first time—how wholly unequipped the system is to deal with climate change, the escalating consequences of which overwhelmingly burden the poor.

The response from the planning and design community was predictable, with many raising up familiar hobbyhorses. By expanding New York's bike lane infrastructure and discouraging car use, advocates argued, we can actually begin to combat climate change. Should that seem a particularly narrow solution to a globally diffuse problem, you might familiarize yourself with the data: Transportation, after all, accounts for 29 percent of carbon emissions nationally. This attitude matched the tone of last month's "climate week," during which the United Nations General Assembly convened to discuss actionable strategies on the subject. To mark the event, the city's Metropolitan Transit Authority ran subway ads meant to rally, or simply affirm, riders: "Fight climate change. No driving required.

If only it were so easy. In truth, the transportation sector responsible for that 29 percent statistic includes much more than private vehicles, with planes, trains, and ocean liners all contributing to the overall count. Decreasing traffic congestion within New York alone would certainly result in improvements to local air quality, but by any calculation, even the immediate elimination of the city's hordes of private cars would have a profoundly negligible effect on freezing global emissions, which is what is needed to prevent future devastating hurricanes and flooding. And though it makes sense to seize on these moments of more acute public awareness to consider climate solutions, to do so in such a misguided way is not only unproductive but truly a step in the wrong direction. It essentially floats an easy solution-"one weird trick"-that ends up trivializing a deeply grave, desperately urgent crisis.

Much of this progressive, "ban cars" activism regurgitates the principles of New Urbanism, a planning philosophy stemming in part from the midcentury work of Jane Jacobs and more recently promoted by the Congress for New Urbanism as well as an active internet culture exemplified by the Facebook group New Urbanist Memes for Transit-Oriented Teens (NUMTOTs), a kind of clever vet lowest-common-denominator forum for anti-car discourse and, of course, fun memes. Broadly speaking, New Urbanism fosters an ideal of car-free streets. mass transit, housing density, and mixeduse development. But the movement's seminal literature is now 60 years old, and its extrapolation along ecological lines requires a different set of considerations.

What plagues New Urbanism as a contemporary reform tendency is not a lack of noble intentions nor even a paucity of supporting data, but instead a dogged solutionism. Here, New Urbanists ardently believe that a greener world can be reverse engineered by way of municipal tweaks; that the ills of climate change can be boiled down to such reductively classed phenomena as "car culture" or low-density zoning, while ignoring the capitalist regimes of urban inequality that give rise to these phenomena in the first place. An oft-cited 2017 Carbon Majors report found that just 100 fossil fuel-producing companies are responsible for 71 percent of global greenhouse gas emissions. Still, the New Urbanists insist that planetary salvation is to be found in regressive taxation schemes like congestion pricing and the elimination of parking minimums for new housing developments.

Research indicates that expanded bike lane infrastructure and higher density zoning can indeed contribute to reduced emissions-for example, an August report from the UN's International Panel on Climate Change lists less car use as one of many possible mitigation strategies for climate change. But these strategies are not itemized by scale. To put things into context, a Rails-to-Trails (RtT) conservancy report from 2005 estimated that a best-case national scenario for improving public transportation, decreasing dependency on driving, and encouraging mixed-use development could reduce total U.S. emissions by up to 91 million metric tons of CO₂ annuallyout of over 6.5 billion, resulting in a difference of less than 1.4 percent. Per New York City's official 2016 inventory, eliminating every single on-road vehicle in the city, of any kind, tomorrow, would result in an annual reduction of 15 million tons of CO₂or, working with RtT numbers, somewhere around 0.2 percent nationally. This is hardly the silver bullet the NUMTOT's ilk imagine. And given the immensity of the crisis before us, by the time any realistic plan to reduce city driving were to be implemented, it would be too little, too late. One imagines Eric Adams, New York's next mayor and a dedicated cyclist, regaling the press with the ecological virtues of the city's new bike lanes as he canoes along them.

Interventions at the municipal level can prove meaningful, but not for the same purposes. Improved drainage to prevent flooding, new trees for shade to prevent overheating, fortified levees and subway repair, and safer, more plentiful affordable housing can all make a difference in the short-to-medium term. But these measures can only temporarily mitigate the effects of climate change, not deter the process of climate change itself, because such a task is simply too massive to be situated fully within the realm of localized urban policy. Even the ongoing initiatives of the C40, a coalition of 97 mayors around the world working toward the goals of the Paris agreement (54 of which are "on track" to hit their individual goals), can't seem to slow the rising tides. In June, the Coalition for Negative Emissions found that, barring drastic scaling up of global efforts, the world will fall short of the Paris agreement's 2025 climate target—reducing global emissions by 100 billion metric tons of CO₂—by some 80 percent.

Not all New Urbanists are so blinkered. Some have suggested that an effective environmental policy can be situated within a Green New Deal, even as the latter pursues different strategies. (For instance, the GND carbon tax targets industrial polluters rather than the individual motorists charged in congestion pricing.) As a federal proposal for reducing fossil fuel dependency and greenhouse gas emissions with modernizations like 100 percent renewable electricity and an overhaul of the nation's transpor tation system, the GND would ostensibly be more likely to meet the goal of net zero global emissions by 2050. Some GND measures appeared in an earlier version of President Biden's just-passed infrastructure bill before it was largely stripped of its climate change provisions. In the hands of an impotent and likely ill-fated Democratic congressional majority, passage of any more meaningful iteration of such legislation in the near future faces some very long odds.

Regardless, the true adjudication of these planetary conditions occurs geographically farther and farther removed from wealthy American cities, in the sphere of industrial production. Materials used to construct and fuel the products of sectors like transportation, construction, and agriculture are far more consequential than how those products are later consumed—eco-conscious trends in the latter realm have effected precious little change in the former.

The sphere of production also encompasses that which deters production. While some work toward a Green New Deal, others embrace methods outside a more palatable Overton window. Industrial sabotage, disabling excavators, and blowing up oil and gas pipelines directly target an industry that, per a 2021 Energies study, accounts for 9 of the 10 top carbon polluters. It's not exactly a fringe position. The ecologist Andreas Malm's recent book, How to Blow Up a Pipeline-more incendiary than practical from a political standpoint—was sympathetically reviewed in the New York Times. Should this tactic be pursued in even the most isolated instances, its efficacy would still likely exceed some of the best-case scenarios for local transportation reform. In New York state alone, just preventing new pipelines currently under consideration, by whatever means, could reduce future emissions by 12 percent over the next 20 years. Drastic, large-scale measures are eminently necessary; we can't pedal our way out of the climate crisis, and we can't afford to pretend otherwise.

Leijia Hanrahan is a writer, researcher, and tenant organizer in New York City. She can't drive.



News

Heal the Land

Memphis's long-neglected Tom Lee Park gets an overhaul.

Work on a \$60 million project to overhaul a long-neglected stretch of Memphis, Tennessee's Mississippi River waterfront is moving swiftly. Begun in 2019, the transformation of the 30-acre Tom Lee Park into a public gathering space and resilient stormwater barrier is unfolding according to a master plan by Chicago's Studio Gang and landscape design by New York's SCAPE. Now, the redevelopment has gained another notable contributor: artist, educator, and urbanist Theaster Gates.

As announced on October 6, the Chicago-based Gates will contribute a site-specific artwork that celebrates the park's namesake, a Black river worker who, in 1925, heroically saved 32 people from drowning when the M. E. Norman steamboat capsized on the Mississippi. A Monument to *Listening* will be split into two installations within a contemplative section of the new park known as the Community Batture. Gates's pair of bronze sculptures, financed through a \$1.4 million grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, will anchor two new plazas paved with stone and brick. Community programming launched in partnership with Memphis's National Civil Rights Museum and poetry competitions are also planned to engage both sites. *"A Monument to Listening* is my attempt

"A Monument to Listening is my attempt at leveraging the traditional monument to new potentials," said Gates after his involvement was made public, "while honoring and celebrating the heroic actions of Tom Lee. I want Tom Lee to be remembered as the human who saw other human lives as equally valuable as—if not more valuable than—his own, and to invite people to visit the site and have the same encounter with their own humanity. This is my small contribution to the possibility of healing."

The day after, on October 7, Studio Gang and SCAPE publicly presented updated renderings of the final design as well as photos of the ongoing construction. Programmingwise, the park is broken up into four linear segments, including the socalled Active Core, which will hold its playscape (designed by the Danish firm Monstrum) and a 100,000-square-foot central lawn. Next to it will be the aforementioned Community Batture, which will feature a river overlook. A 16,000-square-foot timber pavilion to accommodate everything from concerts to fitness classes will occupy a separate strip of the park, while in the Habitat Terraces, visitors will ascend a treetop walking trail elevated 120 feet from the ground.

Tom Lee Park's wending trails will be essential in both integrating the park with the greater city and in allowing patrons to enjoy the riverside views. Luckily, the state is showing the project plenty of love. On October 13, the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation awarded \$800,000 to help develop a trail along its western edge, along the river—part of a \$7.5 million package aimed at creating trails across the state.

"People want to get to the river," Memphis River Parks Partnership president Carol Coletta told the Daily Memphian. "You can either go to Martyrs Park and right across the bridge, taking the Big River Crossing or you can come north again up on the bluff walk." Jonathan Hilburg

18 In Construction

Upstaging a Classic

The Michael Maltzan-designed Sixth Street Viaduct portends a multimodal renaissance for Los Angeles.

Architect: Michael Maltzan Architecture Infrastructure Design Firm: HNTB Corporation

General Contractor: Skanska and Stacy and Witbeck

Landscape Architect: Hargreaves Jones

A high-profile replacement of Los Angeles's famed Sixth Street Viaduct is nearing the final lap of construction. The 3,500-foot-long cast-in-place concrete, network-tied, and through-arch bridge broke ground in February 2015, several months ahead of the demolition of the original viaduct. Like its predecessor, the new bridge, which was designed by local firm Michael Maltzan Architecture (MMA), will directly connect the Boyle Heights neighborhood to Downtown Los Angeles when it opens next summer.

The original 1932 Sixth Street Viaduct, while iconic (its arching Art Deco profile can be seen in films such as Grease and the Terminator franchise, as well as countless music videos), was built with poor-quality concrete containing a high alkali content, which led to cracking and overall structural weakening. A series of inspections beginning in the early 2000s revealed the bridge to be in a state of material deterioration, and it faced a 70 percent chance of significant failure from seismic events over the coming half century. Such dire circumstances called for action, and the City of Los Angeles launched an international competition in 2012 to reimagine the critical infrastructure link. MMA and infrastructure design firm HNTB Corporation pitched its design, dubbed "Ribbon of Light," as a once-ina-lifetime opportunity to transform a formerly auto-centric piece of infrastructure into a "civic structure" embodying 21st-century values of connectivity and walkability. The team was awarded the half-billion-dollar contract.

"The viaduct is more than a simple replacement thoroughfare crossing the Los Angeles River," noted MMA principal architect Michael Maltzan. "It foresees a multimodal future for Los Angeles, one that accommodates cars, incorporates significant new bicycle connections, and increases connectivity for pedestrians, not only at the bridge's endpoints, but along the entirety of the span, linking the bridge, the Los Angeles River, and urban landscapes below."

The bridge, whose construction is being overseen by Skanska along with Stacy and Witbeck, rises from a complex foundation built of 10-foot-diameter concrete shafts that extend 100 feet into the earth by virtue of cast-indrilled-hole piles. Certain areas were selected for such intense intervention due to the mesh of expressways and freight lines that define this stretch of the Los Angeles River. The foundation work also includes detailing that raises the bar for seismic resiliency.

"The new bridge is base isolated, allowing it to move independently from the ground below in the event of an earthquake," said MMA associate Paul Stoelting. "The base isolators are steel, triple-friction bearings, 6 feet in diameter and placed on top of each foundational shaft, which allow movement of 30 inches in any direction."

The project's distinctive Y-shaped columns are placed atop the foundational shafts, and their outstretched arms pass through the edge of the bridge to support ten pairs of concrete arches. Each arch is poured at a rate of four vertical feet of concrete per hour, totaling approximately 12 to 14 hours per arch; the





concrete mix is injected with liquid nitrogen to reduce the potential for cracking. The project is also a demonstration of more sustainable construction methods: 98 percent of the materials used in the concrete production are sourced locally, and all of the supplementary cementitious materials are recycled.

Each arch is 10 feet wide with a typical span of 300 feet; seven of the pairs are 30 feet tall, while those above U.S. Route 101 and railroads are 40 feet and 60 feet tall, respectively. In a first for the construction industry, those arches cant 9 degrees outward from the viaduct's roadway, and a diagonal network of nearly 400 suspension cables hoists up the lengths below.

It is those generous and outward-leaning spans that elevate and make room for the Sixth Street Viaduct's newfound pedestrian potential: As Maltzan noted, there will be 10-foot-wide bicycle lanes and 8-to-14-footwide sidewalks running in both directions: numerous ramps and stairways will link to the new 13-acre public park situated beneath the viaduct. Called the Sixth Street Park, Arts, River & Connectivity Project, or PARC, it features a design by landscape architecture firm Hargreaves Jones and will include a soccer field, basketball/volleyball court, and a host of other amenities. It will begin construction once the bridge is completed next summer and should be open to the public by 2025. Matthew Marani



OURTESY MICHAEL MALTZAN ARCHITECTURE

Top: The roadway of the new Sixth Street Viaduct is supported with the help of nearly 400 suspension cables.

Above left: Designed by Michael Maltzan Architecture, the bridge connects Boyle Heights to Downtown Los Angeles and cuts a striking figure with ten pairs of canted arches.

Above right: The project spans over a mesh of railroads, highways, and the Los Angeles River. Work on a new public park will begin shortly after the bridge is completed in summer 2022.

Right: The arches are built of cast-in-place concrete poured at a rate of 4 vertical feet per hour.

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The Architect's Newspaper

Anthology

The Talkies, A Late-Modern Citadel, & Urban Re-wilding

In this month's anthology, critics review two new buildings and a city park: Renzo Piano Building Workshop's Academy Museum for Motion Pictures in Los Angeles; Machado Silvetti and Fentress Architects' renovation and expansion of the Denver Art Museum; and Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates' Waterloo Park in Austin.



Cultural



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Facing page: The dome of the sphere comprises 1,500 laminated glass panels, which shelter a public belvedere.

October/November 2021

Above: Dubbed "the Death Star" by the press, the 45,000-square-foot sphere rests atop eight base isolators to withstand seismic movement. Far left: Sixteen-foot-wide steel-and-glass pedestrian bridges link the two wings of the Academy Museum.

Left: The exterior circulation spaces are meticulously detailed.

Blowing Bubbles

Anthology

The Academy Museum is open, but its standout gesture rings hollow.

The Academy Museum of Motion Pictures

Architect: Renzo Piano Building Workshop Location: Los Angeles

Executive architect: Gensler Structural engineer: BuroHappold Engineering

Facade consultant & consulting engineer: Knippers Helbig

Facade installers: Josef Gartner, Permasteelisa, MATT Construction Facade system: Permasteelisa Glass: Saint-Gobain Genoese architect Renzo Piano would prefer it if you didn't call the imperial sphere that his firm, Renzo Piano Building Workshop (RPBW), realized for the Academy Museum of Motion Pictures "the Death Star." Indeed, the *Star Wars* reference is too on-the-nose for a bulbous structure meant to celebrate Hollywood history. Too self-referential even for an industry that loves a reboot. As if the architecture itself might break the fourth wall and mug for the camera, begging to be blown to smithereens in next year's biggest blockbuster.

"Call it a dirigible, a zeppelin," Piano said correctively to the press ensconced in the plush, red-carpet red, 1,000-seat Geffen Theater, snug in the belly of the monumental vessel (surround sound courtesy of Dolby). Better yet to refer to the 26-million-pound precast concrete, steel, and glass addition to the landmarked May Company building as he does: "a soap bubble."

Technically, the Academy Museum encompasses the 45,000-square-foot sphere and the 250,000-square-foot former department store, delicately connected by two 16-footwide steel-and-glass pedestrian bridges. In practice, its footprint nestles into LACMA's campus, which is home to two earlier, wholly rectangular RPBW buildings.

Constructed in collaboration with executive architect Gensler and structural engineers Buro Happold, the inexplicable bubble is some 150 feet in diameter and "floats" at least 10 feet above the so-called Walt Disney Company Piazza on eight mammoth base isolators to stave off earthquake catastrophe. Up top, 1,500 laminated glass panels crown the dome in a toupee of tectonic artistry. True to Tinseltown hierarchies, that uppermost level, which promised a panorama of the Los Angeles basin and the Hollywood sign, was closed to the media as staff set up the opening gala.

Piano's concept for the sphere has less to do with physical lightness and more with the whimsical idea that going to the movies is a transposition from one world to another—a kind of universal act of fantasy preached by the industry. And while a collective hush fell over the Geffen Theater as the lights dimmed and the curtain lifted, there's no denying that things have changed.

Actor, museum trustee, and COVID survivor Tom Hanks also spoke at the press event. He recalled his childhood in Oakland, whose domed Century 21 theater was a landmark. Rather than offering up a whiff of cute nostalgia, the memory of a long-demolished bubble was a reminder of the uncertain fate of the Cinerama Dome on Sunset Boulevard, which was shuttered during lockdown with no plans to reopen it. Incidents, ideologies, and cultural shifts over the past few years—social uprisings, pandemic politics, "Netflix and chill" have dissolved any illusion that one bubble can unite everyone.

Hollywood and the Academy were rocked by movements like #metoo and #oscarstoowhite that demanded changes to the white, male power structures that have governed 22

Cultural

The project essentially sits within LACMA's campus, which is home to two earlier, wholly rectangular RPBW buildings. Some of that same vocabulary is on display at the Academy Museum.



the last 100 years of movie history. Jacqueline Stewart, a scholar of African American cinema who was named the Academy Museum's chief artistic and programming officer in fall 2020, stressed at the press event that the institution strives for inclusion over universal. To a degree, RPBW's approach to the 1939 May Company building (now called the Saban Building) fares better under such reframing. Galleries are flexible and raw-ready for a projected 4 million visitors per year.

The Streamline Moderne facade was meticulously restored to its original condition. The stylized gold cylinder that marks the corner of Wilshire and Fairfax once again gleams as bright as an Oscar. However, the interior was stripped of all ornament and old casework. If the art of filmmaking is about cultivating a suspension of disbelief, then the exposed columns and polished concrete of the double-height Sidney Poitier Grand Lobby and concourses on each of the five floors adhere to vérité. RPBW asserts that clearing out the department store kitsch preserves the integrity of the original structure, but it may be a matter of taste. The stripped-down results are very European *kunsthalle* chic. Or an elevated riff on the bare-bones studio soundstage (a timely tribute to entertainment laborers as the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees union is on the verge of a strike). Walking into the cavernous main lobby, with its polished concrete floors and oversized red poufs, leaves a visitor perplexed. Minus the red carpet that leads up the stairs to the mezzanine and to the theater, there's little glitz.

Glamour is replaced with Piano's trademark detailing. Lighting grids, fire sprinkler piping, handrails, window mullions, escalators, are centered and aligned with intense precision. This kind of meticulous coordination requires time. And money. It's an expression of the dealmakers with expense accounts behind the scenes, not the celebrities in front of the cameras. RPBW makes a hard and clear distinction between circulation and display spaces. Escalators drop visitors off at empty landings on each floor, facing a wall of hard choices. Nearly every gallery requires that you open a door and cross a threshold. This is in part practical: to mitigate light and sound spill from the many screens on view, and it is a demarcation of church and state—not between front and back of house, but between capital-A architecture and stagecraft.

"You can't make magic out of magic," noted exhibition designer Kulapat Yantrasast of WHY Architecture. He and Brian Butterfield, working closely with Academy representatives and more than a dozen curators, wrangled the Academy's extensive array of film artifacts and memorabilia—from Dorothy's ruby slippers to Barry Jenkins's Oscar for *Moonlight*—into immersive experiences rich with diverse narratives. In contrast to Piano's luxurious austerity, the galleries are visual explorations of color and image. The museum's core presentation, *Stories* of *Cinema*, stretches over three floors and features old and new Hollywood objects, like the Rosebud sled from *Citizen Kane*, but also dives into the work of filmmaker and producer Oscar Micheaux, who founded the first Black-owned studio, Lincoln Motion Picture Company, in 1916. The exhibition concludes in an otherworldly saturated blue gallery full of large screens playing clips of Pedro Almodóvar's most iconic films.

Fans will certainly rush upstairs to see a gleaming C-3PO, yet to navigate more slowly through the displays is to go from one possible imaginary to another. For example, a room developed with director Spike Lee is an explosion of his influences set against orange walls (plus the purple tux he wore to the Oscars to tribute Kobe Bryant). The Academy Museum experience is a strange trip that veers between high and low, popular and precious. To suggest that there might be a universal message, an all-encompassing design, a





bubble that unites this wealth of material other than the medium of film (and even that has fragmented into different markets, technologies, and platforms) is ill-advised.

gies, and platforms) is ill-advised. To crib a bit from German philosopher Peter Sloterdijk: Contemporary society is defined by a plurality of soap bubbles loosely networked together—a foam, not an orb. When Piano introduced his far-out sphere in 2012, it seemed like it would take a minute for us to catch up with the audacity of his architectural design. In the near-decade since, a foamy culture has overtaken the gesture, rendering it an anachronistic relic of another future.

Mimi Zeiger is a Los Angeles-based journalist, critic, and curator.



Top: The space beneath the sphere was given over to the creation of a public "piazza."

Above, left: The sphere contains the the plush, red-carpet red, 1,000-seat Geffen Theater. Above, right: Inside the galleries, lighting grids, fire sprinkler piping, handrails, window mullions, escalators, are centered and aligned with intense precision.



Cultural

Opposites Attract

Anthology

Gio Ponti's incongruously stolid Denver Art Museum undergoes a restoration and sprouts a space-age appendage.

Denver Art Museum

Architects: Machado Silvetti and Fentress Architects

Location: Denver, Colorado

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Landscape design: Mundus Bishop Structural & civil engineer: Martin/Martin MEP engineer: ME Engineers Lighting design: Buro Happold Construction manager/general contractor:

Saunders Construction Envelope & skin consultant: Simpson

Gumpertz & Heger Facade manufacturer: Sentech Architectural

Systems; Oldcastle Building Envelope; Vitro; Guardian; NorthGlass By all accounts, much of Denver's Golden Triangle neighborhood was once a desolate place. Up to and through the 1980s, the southern perimeter of Civic Center Park was reputedly home to a tolerably good diner, a dry cleaner, a lot of parking lots, and one thing more: the looming frame of Gio Ponti's 1971 Denver Art Museum (DAM), an astonishing quasi-Brutalist castle keep faced in gleaming tiles. Standing alone amid the mostly-nothing, the building must have been even more impressive than it looks today, a medieval torro plucked straight out of San Gimignano and set down at the foot of the Front Range.

Slowly at first, then all at once, things changed. First, in 1995, there came Michael Graves's Denver Central Library, a congenial PoMo ensemble just east of the museum. Then, in 2006, there appeared DAM's Hamilton Building, a dramatic crag of a building from Daniel Libeskind that connected to the main museum via a glazed sky bridge. Brad Cloepfil's 2011 Clyfford Still Museum was next-rough, abstract, like its namesake's paintings, crouching quietly to the south of the Hamilton-and now, as of last month, there comes what could be the last piece of the puzzle: the Sie Welcome Center. It's yet another addition to DAM, a demure ribbon of glass curling around the base of the lofty tower. The product of a double-barreled designer collaboration between Fentress Architects and Machado Silvetti, the new building complements a just-completed restoration of Ponti's incongruous masterpiece, with the latter undertaking also directed by the (respectively) Denver- and Boston-based architects.

Both Curt Fentress and Jorge Silvetti were on hand for the opening festivities in mid-October, and both professed themselves huge fans of Ponti's ambitious skyscraper-for-art. "Sometimes it's gray, sometimes it's gold, sometimes it's green," said Silvetti, speaking of the way the tiles pick up the changing light throughout the day. Fentress echoed the sentiment, noting that what Ponti built is "a massive wall, but he broke it down with this geometry," animating the facade with irregular fenestration and strange, almost runic arrangements in the tilework. The duo's restoration has given the exterior back its luster, while opening up interior spaces that had long been neglected or shut to the public altogether: A ground-level terrace (previously colonized as an outdoor smoking lounge for staff) is accessible once more, as is the rooftop. which now houses a small outbuilding (very much like one that appeared in Ponti's original scheme) letting onto a stunning observation deck. Long-shuttered gallery windows have been uncovered, affording alimpses of the distant Rockies, and even Ponti's original fire stairs-each level given its own punch of colored tile-have been given new life, inviting intrepid patrons to hike all the way up to the sixth floor.

The Architect's Newspaper

The Sie Welcome Center does not in any way distract from all this late-modernist splendor, but augments the Ponti building with new 25

Cultural

Facing page: The Denver Art Museum fully restored the pride of its campus—the Martin Building, designed by Gio Ponti, with Denver architecture firm James Sudler Associates.

Left: In addition to heading up the renovation, Fentress Architects and Machado Silvetti also designed the 50,000-square-foot Sie Welcome Center located at the base of the Martin Building.

Left: The museum also spruced up, and added to, the original galleries in the Martin Building, measuring 11,000 square feet in total.





event spaces, ticketing, educational facilities, and more. Extending the older building's glassed-in entryway toward 13th Avenue, the addition gives the museum a formal presence on the Golden Triangle's main drag, as well as a more visible point of ingress on the guieter 14th Avenue, where a long gangplank projects over a new subgrade terrace toward a tubular entryway. The overall effect is to soften the tower's hard landing, with the saucer-like pavilion topping the Center, acting as a kind of understated beacon, drawing in passersby as they waltz through the cultural district. Save for a grand sculptural stairway ascending into the saucer, the inside is similarly subdued. giving pride of place to the main exhibition spaces-each of which has been meticulously restored, with a brace of different firms (including OMA's New York office, for the refreshed second-floor design galleries) getting in on the action.

It all adds up to a lot–arguably too much. During his remarks at the opening ceremony, DAM's director, Christoph Heinrich, joked that the just-finished work represents "the last building project we'll have to do here, at least for the next five years." In point of fact, it might be the last project ever in the whole area. The sliver of turf between Broadway and Bannock Street is now pretty full up, and in its pitched effort to make Ponti's building accommodate the needs of a modern museum, DAM has jammed more programming into its buildable envelope than one might have thought possible. Together with its neighboring institutions. that has turned a former Nowheresville into what might be the ultimate expression of a very recognizable urban type: the Twenty-First Century Global-City Cultural Acropolis, a model for redevelopment whose time has come and gone.

Only, there's one catch. If the lower tier of the Golden Triangle is now yet another elephant's graveyard of contemporary architecture, this one at least happens to be a very *alluring* elephant's graveyard. To a remarkable degree, and in moments that might catch the visitor by surprise, this unlikely gaggle of buildings actually resolves into a strikingly cogent composition. At its center is the Ponti tower-bold, defiant, heroic; confronting it, the Graves, puckish and insouciant, a mannerly mocker; then Libeskind, in frantic defense, lunges into the fray; Cloepfil, a hermit, cowers and turns its back; and finally, there's Fentress and Silvetti, their saucer a sort of referee, interposing itself between the combatants. Completing this gestural cycle, the Sie Welcome Center gives Denver a surprising, and surprisingly compelling, bit of urbanism, turning a staid high-art ghetto into a moment of genuine architectural theater.

lan Volner has contributed articles on architecture, design, and urbanism to *The Wall Street Journal, The Washington Post, Harper's, Dwell*, and *The New Yorker* online, among other publications.









Top: The saucerlike form of the Sie Welcome Center, with its swishing glass envelope, and a new tubular entryway embody a certain space-age optimism that contrasts Pon-ti's building.

Above left: As part of the restoration, Fentress Architects and Machado Silvetti inserted a curving grand staircase.

Above right: The new museum restaurant bears Ponti's name. The scalloped bar shelving recalls the Sie Welcome Center's glass facade.

Green and Gray

At Austin's Waterloo Park, Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates weaves nature and infrastructure.



Waterloo Park

Landscape architect: Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates Location: Austin, Texas

Local landscape architect: dwg. Bridge design/structural engineering: Architectural Engineers Collaborative Civil engineer: Big Red Dog, a division of WGI Geotechnical Engineer: Terracon Precast pavers: Hanover Architectural Products

Brick pavers: Whitacre

Wood decking: Thermory Edge restraint aluminum edging: Permaloc Wood seating system: Vestre VIA Light poles and meteor lighting: ULS Pole Metal mesh railing: Carl Stahl Trash, recycling, and compost receptacles:

Landscape Forms

The cost of living at Austin is extraordinarily high. —Frederick Law Olmsted

In the patois of the Old West, the peoples of Texas and the Great Plains were known as "flatlanders." distinguishing them from the "hillbillies" from whom many of them descended. While the epithet is certainly reductive, it's easy to catch the impression in today's Texas that the surrounds are very flat indeed. The freeway system flattens out what topographical vagaries do exist into one smooth ribbon of concrete, and the suburban subdivisions where most Texans live sprawl across prairies that have themselves been leveled by bulldozers. For that reason, Austin's newly opened Waterloo Park is a revelation. It provides a multilayered, multilevel experience for locals more accustomed to squinting at the distant horizon.

Designed by Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates (MVVA), with help from local landscape practice dwg., and including an ethereal canopy by Thomas Phifer and Partners, as well as a charming bathroom facility by Michael Hsu Office of Architecture, the 11-acre park is the most significant public green space to open in the state since Dallas's freeway-capping Klyde Warren Park in 2012. Austin is known for its extensive network of greenbelts, which trace creeks, rivers, and lakes, and Waterloo Park is part of this network. It is the first phase of a redesign and restoration of a 1.5-mile stretch of Waller Creek, from 15th Street to where it empties into Lady Bird Lake.

Most of the city's park and greenbelt acreage stands out for its informality, which, from a certain point of view, could be seen as neglect. Pathways of asphalt, gravel, or just mud and rock wend through clumped vegetation, local and invasive species growing side by side. Wide open fields, regularly mowed, are surrounded by shade trees and ring roads. Throngs of cyclists, joggers, walkers, swimmers, kayakers, dog walkers, sunbathers, pot smokers, and frisbee players intermingle with the city's growing population of the unhoused (whose encampments are receding deeper into the brush since voters overturned a public camping ordinance earlier this year).

In contrast to this casualness, Waterloo Park is a highly designed, highly choreographed space built around a major piece of infrastructure: the mouth of a just-completed mile-long tunnel that diverts stormwater away from downtown and draws water back upstream to keep this section of the creek flowing through the dry months. MVVA took water flow as inspiration, laying out the park's major program elements-amphitheater, bandshell, playground, native vegetation garden-in a series of colliding whorls. The real excitement, however, does not come so much from the plan as from the section. From Trinity Street, the park slopes down to the creek, which cuts a narrow trench through downtown crisscrossed by bridges. The design offers several different paths to negotiate this grade change, each revealing fresh and stimulating views.

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Recreational





Previous page: The design provides several ways to negotiate the site's grade change, including a curving ADA-accessible ramp that offers panoramic views of the city. Above: A layered steel canopy designed by Thomas Phifer and Partners shades the Moody Amphitheater. When not activated with live music, the stage can play host to a variety of activities. Left: The park features three playscapes, including a custom-carved stone slide manufactured in Frasdorf, Germany, by Richter Spielgeräte.

Visitors can climb a series of broad, low steps to stand beneath the tenderized modernism of Phifer's canopy and look down across the stage and amphitheater that cantilever over the creek. A curving, elevated walkway from the southwest corner to the center of the park offers ADA accessibility and another perch from which to take in a panorama of the burgeoning city, where cranes are erecting towers without cease. The approach from Red River Street crosses the Farmer Bridgewhere, looking upstream, you can see the reconstructed banks of the creek and, downstream, the yawning gullet of the diversion tunnel-then leads up to the amphitheater and a view of the Capitol building's pink granite dome peeking out from beneath the cloudlike canopy. Several mature live oak trees, some of them moved into location from other nearby development sites, extend their broad evergreen boughs to provide shade and another layer of visual complexity and fascination. From the edge of the cantilevered amphithe-

ater, you can watch the mechanical claw that pulls debris from the intake of the diversion tunnel, but you also have to look at the tunnel's maintenance building, a charmless box that, though gussied up with a mural by Venezuelan artist Arturo Herrera, could really have used some greenery on its bare and expansive flat roof.

Waterloo Park must be commended for the way it reconstructs natural habitats—along the creek as well as in the native garden—while cozying up to its infrastructural element. It's worth noting that the Waller Creek Conservancy, the nonprofit that directed the project, was formerly headed by Peter Mullan, a onetime executive vice president of Friends of the High Line. That project, while rightly praised for its interweaving of nature and infrastructure, has also been criticized as an intensifier of gentrification. Austin, a growing city caught up in its own affordability and housing crisis, should take a hard look at how its improvement projects affect its population, in order to avoid a similar fate to that of the New York park. Though it's probably too late. The path that connects Waterloo Park to the Waller Creek Trail, which is next in line for restoration, is currently fenced off. There, beneath a bridge, someone, for the time being, has made a bed and hung clothes to dry on a tree branch. Wouldn't it be nice if design also had a solution for restoring that life?

Aaron Seward is editor in chief of AN.

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Native plantings, laid out in whorls, and a reconstructed wild creek edge cozy up to the mouth of a tunnel that diverts stormwater from flooding downtown.



The Coast Is Not Clear

Prompted by the destruction wrought by Hurricane Ida, we survey the mitigation and adaptation strategies from New York to the Gulf of Mexico.



Feature

The Changing Tide Climate change is teaching designers to expand their horizons—or at least it should.

A lot can happen in the space between a book's title and subtitle, as *A Blueprint for Coastal Adaptation: Uniting Design, Economics, and Policy* (Island Press, 2021) demonstrates. Here, in a reversal from the norm, the subtitle assumes the more evocative bent by elevating design to the same status as economics and policy. To some, this might seem a spurious move, but the volume lives its creed: Its editors include two design academics and a business school professor, to say nothing about the myriad backgrounds of its contributors.

Blueprint goes deep into the policy decisions that have shaped the brittle condition of coastal infrastructure. It coalesces into a convincing picture of the wider context in which design operates, with the aim of making the built environment more equitable for those caught on the front lines of certain climate change cataclysm.

Much of the book gets down in the weeds, which is arguably an appropriate place for it to be, considering its predilection for soft barrier planted landscapes that act as permeable water breaks. There's an entire chapter on flood insurance, which reminds us that it's impossible to fully insure against flooding and other climate-related events that are guaranteed to grow in frequency. We learn of the discrepancy between FEMA disaster relief funds for homeowners and renters (\$35 billion vs. \$1 billion, according to 2017 figures) and of the unexpected knock-on effects of coastal inundation, like what happens to the 1,000 superfund sites prone to leaching out a toxic slurry when wet. And, just to remind us that climate has a habit of revealing the interconnectedness of systems, there are investigations linking saltwater encroachment in the Delaware River with Philadelphia's drinking water. Lastly, and more conventionally for these types of anthologies, there are design prescriptions for threatened coastal cities that don't quite add up to a blueprint.

Though it presents a mix of solutions ranging from the reformist to the transformative, *Blueprint* is consistently, if implicitly, critical of the private sector's ability to get to grips with the problem of coastal adaptation. The editors are much more frank about the polarities that characterize the system within which architects and planners—but also economists, lawyers, and policy makers—find themselves. In one of the most compelling chapters, contributors Karen M'Closkey and Keith VanDerSys call to account the social and financial inequities that have left Black and Brown communities especially vulnerable to climate change. There can be no meaningful adaptation for coastal towns and cities, they argue, without a massive wealth transfer that reverses the tide of current political economy.

I interviewed Billy Fleming, director of the McHarg Center at the University of Philadelphia, who edited the book alongside Carolyn Kousky, an executive at the Wharton Risk Center, University of Pennsylvania, and Alan Berger, MIT landscape architecture and urbanism professor and founding director of the school's P-REX lab. We discussed where design activism starts and stops, what's driving the climate adaptation projects that are happening right now, and how the threat of climate change alters the time line for coastal mitigation. **Zach Mortice**

- **ZM:** One of your co-editors is from a business school, and the book has as many chapters on policy as it does on design. What are you trying to say to designers?
- Billy Fleming: That we can just think of design as a professional service like any other, not as this wholly unique field populated by creative geniuses. It's that view that leads designers to make what are pretty libertarian, deregulatory arguments about why they should be able to do whatever they want to in the built environment. For this book, it was important for us to think about design as one of many pieces that are needed to think through the generational, century-plus challenge of adapting to the climate crisis. It's certainly true that the best mode of adaptation is mitigation, and that's where we should be directing significant resources. But we put so much carbon into the atmosphere that we no longer have the luxury of investing ourselves in [a debate over choosing] mitigation or adaptation-we have to find ways, within and well beyond design, to do both at once. So I think this book is about trying to situate it in that larger eco-



Elevation-based zoning is one of several strategies considered in the book.

system of climate adaptation and helping designers—and then the other folks who are a part of the ecosystem—figure out how to relate to one another; how to do the work that's needed over the next 20, 50, 100 years better and faster. Because we need to do it much better and faster than we're doing it now.

ZM: Landscape architecture moves through cycles of wanting to tackle "big" problems and pursuing more localist approaches. Why is fusing policy-based advocacy with design like this a more novel approach?

BF: There's not a culture of organizing; there's not a culture of advocacy or political engagement in landscape architecture. No one gets any political education during their time in school. And once you leave school, you are forced to work too many hours to even begin engaging with the world outside the walls of your firm's office. So it's just going to take some time. One of the things that is heartening to me is that every time I put out something on this topic, the flood of notes I get from junior and early-career designers and academics is just overwhelming. There's a real appetite in the field for this. If we think the climate crisis is a generational challenge, then we have to put people in positions of power who are of the generation that will have to face that challenge.

ZM: How do you want this book to be used?

- BF: For us, it was important to get this book together when we did because we were hopeful that a future administration-our present administration-would take it seriously and incorporate it into the first 100 days or first-year of policy making. What [such an administration] would really need was a central reference that they could go to, and not have to dig through a mountain of literature and experts. So for us, the hope was always that this book could bring these different threads of expertise together. As for our other goal, we'd like for it to bring designers into this larger set of conversations about all the other forces that shape and bound their work, which are obviously much larger than any one project, any one firm, any one local government.
- **ZM:** What did you learn about how we typically fund and execute climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies?
- **BF:** The current mode of climate adaptation is basically triaging, in which wealthy



These street sections illustrate how elevation-based zoning would work, with more development clustered on high, dry ground.



Feature

In this proposal for East Harlem, hardtop is replaced with layered, permeable landscaping.

cities like New York, San Francisco, and to a lesser extent Miami and Houston can-at least for the short-to-medium term-afford to do small-scale climate adaptation work through financing luxury real estate development. So every TIF or special increment financing district that's set up in those places is designed to do essentially that: to incentivize luxury real estate development somewhere, often along the waterfront, and to use the excess tax revenue from it to pay for local climate adaptation infrastructure. That creates problems in a myriad of ways. The two most important is that it's a system in which only the wealthiest cities in this country will ever be able to afford climate adaptation. For lots of reasons, I think that's a horrible system to perpetuate. The second is that even in those cities that can at this moment afford to do it, that kind of shell game just isn't going to last for very long

- **ZM:** In their chapter, Joyce Coffee and Sarah Dobie compare adaptation responses in cities and in the rural hinterlands. The former is a closed-door process between technocrats and the private sector, whereas the latter appears to be grassroots driven because of the absence of institutional support in those areas. Without those institutions, designers have a difficult time finding work in a place like rural Louisiana. How can the situation be helped?
- **BF:** Well, there are firms like Kate Orff's SCAPE, Susannah Drake's DLAND, and Chris Marcinkoski and his colleagues over at PORT that have been working in the South for a long time. But like you're saying, they've been able to do that work by going through cultural institutions that in some ways insulate them from market forces. I think this gets us to one of the fundamental differences between the profession and the academy. If you're in the profession, you're bound by market forces and really have no choice about that. Even nonprofit practices like MASS Design are largely bound by the larger

forces of global capitalism that direct, or deny, investment to certain places. They can only go where money flows.

For those of us in the academy, we are to some degree unencumbered by such constraints. We can devote ourselves to long-term engagement and trust-building work in places that are never going to be well-served by this country's political economy. The rural parts of Louisiana that Joyce and her colleagues are talking about fit that description, as do parts of Appalachia, the Mississippi Delta, the Corn Belt, the Great Plains, and Montana's Big Sky country, once you get away from of all the



Blueprint argues for drastically rethinking waterfront development.

billionaire cabins up there. As leaders of design studios, we should be spending our time in these areas. And what's interesting is that the people we work with in those places can have a much more radical vision for the future than any designer is capable of dreaming up. What they are sometimes missing is that little bit of work that they can organize themselves around.

- ZM: In one of the final chapters of the book, Fadi Masoud and David Vega-Barachowitz introduce the idea of flux zoning, where zoning parameters change automatically in response to external conditions and performance metrics. For example, as more households become rent-burdened or more climate refugees flee to a given area, the percentage of affordable housing required in new developments would rise. But automatically triggered zoning changes could be tied to solar power generation, biodiversity, open space, water retention, and more. Given the continually worsening effects of climate change, does it not make sense to apply this "flux" approach to other regulations beyond zoning?
- **BF:** Flux zoning is basically about building some ability to learn from experience into your zoning code, which we don't really have in the United States. I think it's a

fabulous sort of ending to the book that begins to synthesize some of the pilot designs of projects that are present at the beginning of the book with some of the more wonky policy, legal, or economic contributions that come toward the center and end of the book.

In some ways flux zoning has roots in something called rolling setbacks. In island nations, especially nations in the Caribbean and South Pacific, where a significant chunk of their economy is based on tourism, inevitably those things are knocked out every however many years by a hurricane or by some other kind of event. A rolling setback basically says that when that happens, that property is essentially, at least for a period of time, turned over to the state. It's almost like eminent domain: The property owner is compensated in other ways, either financially or with other property elsewhere on the island.

- **ZM:** Where does this idea of continually shifting parameters regarding design and regulatory systems leave our definitions of *sustainability* and *resilience*? What gets left out when designers, planners, and policy makers talk about reaching some kind of static equilibrium—a permanent state of resilience?
- **BF:** There is this idea that when you solve the project delivery questions, then you're kind of set because you get to go build a bunch of stuff and then the task is over. We can look at the rest of the world around us to know where that kind of thinking has led us, which is to a bunch of crumbling infrastructure that's filled with water when a slightly heavier-than-normal rain event happens. Or if you're in Texas, you have an electrical grid that collapses when you get a weeklong cold spell. I think Fadi's contribution is really interesting in that it's arguing that climate adaptation work is never done. That's an important message to have in a book like this, because it's easy to just say, "Well, the way that we solve the climate crisis is spending X trillion dollars on Y amount of infrastructure," and not thinking through those larger, longer-term sort of operational and management questions. It's just how people live with the legacy of the built environment that was delivered to them.



Left: A future flood map of Mastic, New York. Right: A plan for densifying the town's high, dry ground and retreating from the shoreline.

Town and Country In Ida's wake, it's clear that America's rural communities need better protection from flooding—cities can't hog climate adaptation action for themselves.

In one of the innumerable news reports following Hurricane Ida, a reporter talks to a young Black woman in Terrebonne Parish, Louisiana, whose electricity still hasn't been restored three weeks after the storm.

"You're feeling a bit forgotten," the reporter says.

"We *are* forgotten," the woman, Brittany Gauno, responds. "It's not a feeling. It's factual."

Gauno was referring to the state and federal agencies, the local electricity provider, and the public housing authority, which for weeks left her family in the dark, without any kind of assistance. But she also could have been talking about the general status of climate adaptation planning in the U.S., which has, with some notable exceptions, tended to focus on large metropolitan areas, particularly in the wake of Hurricane Katrina and Superstorm Sandy. As Susan Cutter, one of the country's leading experts on disaster recovery, has pointed out, even our basic understanding of disaster recovery and resilience is largely based on cities.

Within this context, Hurricane Ida served as a harsh reminder that the nation's rural and smaller coastal communities often bear the brunt of the effects of climate change, suffering extensive flooding and other damage, yet lack the resources to rebuild or to implement measures that could prevent future disasters. Located outside the levees and planning boundaries that protect their urban counterparts, these communities are fast becoming part of what could be thought of as a national climate sacrifice zone.

"Rural communities are vastly underserved," said Karen McGlathery, director of the University of Virginia's Environmental Resilience Institute, which is currently leading a \$5 million initiative to study the needs of the state's smaller coastal villages.

At stake is a part of the country that is both more populous and more racially diverse than is suggested by politicians and pundits. According to the U.S. Census, some 60 million people—1 in 5 Americans—live in rural areas. But that total increases when one takes into account socalled "urban clusters," the counterintuitive term by which the census refers to towns of between 2,500 to 50,000 people. These areas have a collective population of closer to 90 million, or 1 in 4 Americans.

People of color make up 20 percent of the nation's rural population, and just like in cities, they are often at greater risk from climate impacts. Indeed, many of the areas that have suffered damage from climate disasters over the past few years are disproportionately Black and Brown, from the flood-prone colonias along the Texas border to the vanishing homelands of Indigenous communities in states from Louisiana to Alaska.

Kate Orff, founder of the New York City– based landscape architecture firm SCAPE, said the lack of investment in small, rural communities stems from a "brutal political calculus" that leaves these areas fending for themselves. "And then there's a brutal funding reality, because there's not really a tax base for this kind of work," Orff added.

Among the many barriers such communities face is a lack of access to the kinds of technical assistance design professionals provide to urban resilience projects. "The biggest factor that we face is capacity," explained Andrew Fox, a professor of landscape architecture at North Carolina State University and the co-director of the Coastal Dynamics Design Lab (CDDL). "Capacity could be defined as resources—dollars and cents—or people in chairs. Many of the places we work might have one part-time staff member. Design can be very challenging when you're worried about keeping the lights on."



Launched in 2017, Louisiana's Strategic Adaptations for Future Environments (LA SAFE) has worked with communities in parishes across the state.



In July 2021, LA SAFE launched a stormwater pilot project in Gretna, Louisiana.

Feature

Fox, who grew up in rural Michigan, co-founded the CDDL with David Hill in 2013. Their goal was to find a way to provide design and planning services to underserved areas, specifically around issues of disaster recovery and resilience. Over the years, they have developed an approach they call "longitudinal engagement": The CDDL works only in communities that have invited it and then continues that work indefinitely. "We're committed for the long haul," Fox said. "As long as communities invite us back, we'll be there."

The CDDL, which is part of NC State's College of Design, uses state and federal grants to work alongside small and rural communities like Princeville, North Carolina-the first town in the U.S. chartered by freed slaves-through multiple phases of long-term resilience planning. At the end of each phase is a deliverable, such as a detailed assessment of a town's climate vulnerabilities and assets-what Fox and his team refer to as a "floodprint"-that doubles as an application for further grant funding. "In some ways, we're acting as town staff," Fox said. "We're ghostwriting grants. We're turning each phase into the next step. And for all the technical assistance we've provided, it's cost the community zero. Not one penny.

A prime example is the CDDL's work in Lumberton, North Carolina, a town of approximately 20,000 people (one of the Census Bureau's "urban clusters") that straddles the Lumber River. Like many communities in the South, the town is visibly segregated, with lower-income people of color, including Black residents and members of the Lumbee tribe, disproportionately living in the most floodprone areas. After Hurricane Matthew, in 2016, at least 107 properties in these neighborhoods were approved for FEMA assistance, 47 of them eligible for a buyout. Fox's team mapped out each of the eligible parcels, then marked properties that were already state-owned, cityowned, or reserved for conservation and, in so doing, hoped to identify routes for a potential greenway that would naturally protect the town from floods. "We found a route that required only nine parcels to be acquired to connect an 8.5-mile loop," Fox said.

The plan was approved unanimously by town leadership, and the Lumberton Loop, as the proposal is called, went on to become the basis for an application for FEMA's Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) program, which was created in 2020. In September 2021, the Lumberton Loop was selected as one of 22 inaugural projects. Including the forthcoming \$1.93 million award from FEMA, Fox said the CDDL's work in Lumberton has helped the town bring in close to \$5 million, more than 20 times the value of the center's donated design services.

The CDDL isn't alone in piloting creative ways to address resilience in rural communities. McGlathery, of the Environmental Resilience Institute, recently received a \$5 million research grant from the National Science Foundation's Coastlines and People program to create what she's calling a Climate Equity Atlas for communities along Virginia's Eastern Shore. Led by a multidisciplinary team with expertise in ev erything from behaviorial psychology to public policy, the atlas will visualize flood risk as well as social and institutional connectivity in order to provide community members-and policy makers in Richmond-with a finely detailed picture of both their assets and vulnerabilities 'There's something at the end that's scaffolded by all this science and community engagement but is something that people can actually use," McGlathery said.

These efforts point to the value of university-affiliated design studios and research hubs, which at times offer smaller communities the only avenue through which they can access climate adaptation planning assistance. The same is true for architects and landscape architects, who are limited by a fee-for-service model. "The things that we should be doing are not necessarily what we are being asked to do," said Orff, who this year used a design studio at Columbia University's Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation, where she teaches to engage underserved and Indigenous communities on Sapelo Island, Georgia; in Shishmaref, Alaska; and on the Shinnecock reservation on Long Island.

Feature

At the state level, Louisiana's Office of Community Development recently piloted a community-informed resilience planning process in six of the state's most vulnerable parishes. Launched in 2017, the \$47 million program, known as Louisiana's Strategic Adaptations for Future Environments, or LA SAFE, is reportedly a firstof-its-kind collaboration between the state and the Foundation for Louisiana, a nonprofit working toward racial and social justice. Through an extensive and transparent engagement process, communities were put in charge of the program, with local leaders tapped to guide discussions and residents voting on which projects should move forward. As a result, funded interventions will include traditional green infrastructure projects that will mitigate flooding, experimental housing prototypes, and expanded mental health and substance abuse services. (New Orleans architecture firm Waggonner & Ball served as LA SAFE's design lead.)

In August, President Biden announced a nearly \$5 billion infusion into FEMA, with \$1 billion earmarked for the BRIC program. This is welcome news for rural communities and the design programs that assist them, yet exactly how those dollars will be appropriated remains an open question. Already, the program has been criticized for awarding just \$36 million of its initial \$500 million to small, low-income communities.

Awareness of what these communities face is growing, however. "Whether it be drought or floods or wildfires, there's so much that happens out in rural lands, the conversation is gaining speed," the CDDL's Fox said. That's a good thing, not only for the communities in question. but for architects and planners and for cities, too. Because while smaller communities can stymie traditional design and planning models, they can serve as important testing grounds for how to work sensitively in other under-resourced places. "You can learn: How did this place with so little make this work?" Fox said. 'And I think that can translate into a neighborhood or into historically marginalized areas. These are all places that might not have access to resources and power."

Timothy A. Schuler is an award-winning magazine journalist based in Honolulu.





An example of the CDDL's mapping methodology





A mapping project by LA Safe





Buyout and Floodway Interecting Parcels

Based at the North Carolina State University, the CDDL uses state and federal grants to work alongside small and rural communities.

Primary Acquisitions (+4)

Secondary Acquisitions (+31)

The Once and Future Harbor The growth of offshore wind energy could remake the Port of New York.

Feature



Selldorf Architects designed this material recovery facility in Sunset Park, Brooklyn.

Continued from the cover of the Croton Aqueduct, and later the Catskill and Delaware Aqueducts, accommodated exponential population growth. The subway system facilitated this population's movement across the five boroughs. But New York Harbor, one of the largest harbors in the world, with access to the continental interior through the Erie Canal and links to a vast web of freight rail lines, set the metropolis apart from its peers.

By the beginning of the 20th century, New York Harbor was the primary American entrepot for foreign trade, handling nearly two-thirds of the country's imports and over one-third of its exports. Thousands of docks and piers jutted into the harbor to meet the great constellation of cargo ships and tankers, barges and ferries, and steamboats and ocean liners entering the harbor's waters. The shipping industry employed tens of thousands of longshoremen and nearly half a million other workers. However, the rise of containerization and the construction of Port Newark-Elizabeth, coupled with the demographic and economic shift to the Sun Belt and the ascent of interstate trucking, rendered much of the waterfront industry obsolete.

Improved port infrastructure will necessarily play an integral role in the development of New York's offshore wind industry, and this will be largely a matter of size: Offshore wind components are gargantuan and getting bigger-the state-of-the-line towers are approximately 450 feet tall, while the blades are now over 300 feet in length-and this raises complications for rail or truck transport. The components have to be loaded onto a wind turbine installation vessel and carted out to sea, where they are put together atop a monopile foundation that transmits electricity to offshore and onshore substations. New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) has identified five sites as key nodes for the offshore wind supply chain and wind turbine staging: Montauk Harbor, Port Jefferson Harbor, South Brooklyn Marine Terminal, Port of Coeymans, and the Port of Albany.

The South Brooklyn Marine Terminal (SBMT) will be the most significant maritime facility within the NYSERDA-led scheme. The site is a 73-acre intermodal transport hub located squarely between Industry City (formerly the Bush Terminal) and the waning industrial mecca of Gowanus and Red Hook. It was built as a container terminal and break-bulk and general cargo facility in the 1960s, but growing ship size rendered the facility obsolete by the 1980s, and it was largely abandoned.

In 2018, the New York City Economic Development Corporation initiated the process of reactivating the terminal with a significant \$115 million investment for infrastructural upgrades. That same year, Sustainable SBMT LP, a partnership between nearby port facility operator Red Hook Terminals and developer Industry City, was awarded a long-term lease for operation of the site. Later, in January 2021, Norwegian state oil company-turned-wind-energy-behemoth Equinor and strategic partner BP were awarded offshore wind energy procurement grants to produce 3.3 gigawatts of power for New York State. The Port of Albany will serve as the manufacturing hub for wind tower and transition pieces, which will be loaded onto ships and barged down to a staging ground for the offshore wind farms at the South Brooklyn Marine Terminal. The latter will receive a further \$400 million in upgrades, to be split evenly between NYSERDA and the Equinor/BP joint venture.

Across New York Harbor, at the southernmost edge of Staten Island, a different but equally ambitious offshore wind project is taking shape. The Atlantic Offshore Terminals is a privately owned infrastructure real estate company with plans to transform a 32-acre site on the Arthur Kill tidal strait into a state-ofthe-art port facility for offshore wind staging and assembly. The ground-up project is led in collaboration with the state, and Empire State Development recently submitted a grant for the Arthur Kill Terminal (AKT) to the U.S. Department of Transportation for approval. Critically, the AKT is the only staging and assembly port proposed for the Eastern Seaboard with unrestricted clearance-it is located south of the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge, while the South Brooklyn Marine Terminal is several miles to the north

"Due to the geography and configuration of ports on the East Coast, there are very few locations where you'll have co-located manufacturing and staging and assembly," said Atlantic Offshore Terminals CEO Boone Davis. "We just don't have sites like they have in Europe, which have hundreds and thousands of acres with no bridge restrictions, and where you can make a lot of these parts and assemble them and then load them and deploy them directly to wind farm sites." Davis suggested that manufacturing port developments like AKT could be built across the East Coast in parallel with and following staging port investments already underway across the country.

The utility of the fast-growing offshore wind farm industry extends beyond green energy and job creation within the New York metropolitan region: There are numerous avenues by which a working waterfront can also increase citywide resiliency and access to parkland. One group advocating this approach is the Waterfront Alliance, which, since its founding in 2007, has steadily assembled a broad regional coalition of



The facility was designed in accordance with the Waterfront Edge Design Guidelines.

over 1,100 organizations to realize this goal ranging from the Billion Oyster Project and Riverkeeper to manufacturers and dry docks. "People are often quite surprised to learn

about how much maritime activity still goes on in the city and how much potential there is for growth," said Waterfront Alliance vice president of programs Karen Imas, "and that interest brings growing attention to what the future of the working harbor will look like as a combination of shipping, ferries, potential renewable energy, and offshore wind, mixed-use industrial sites, and green infrastructure."

In 2015, the Waterfront Alliance launched the inaugural iteration of the Waterfront Edge Design Guidelines (WEDG), a voluntary rating system and set of guidelines similar to LEED certification for projects located on the waterfront. "The idea is to change the way that designers and developers are looking at waterfront projects," Imas said, "but also to encourage the city and the state to look at the permitting processes through a lens that can drive more innovation, ecology, and resilience for the waterfronts that we need today."

While the exact manner in which such measures will or could be implemented at the SBMT or AKT is still unclear, there are recent projects that set a precedent for the incorporation of WEDG guidelines into waterfront industrial sites. One such site is the Sunset Park Materials Recovery Facility, located at the northern quay of the SBMT and operated by international recycling company Sims Metal. The facility was designed by Selldorf Architects and can accommodate 20,000 tons of refuse a month freighted in by barge, rail, and truck. It also makes room for approximately 50,000 square feet of green space featuring native plantings, bioswales to handle stormwater, and breakwater barrier reefs built with dredged material from the Kill Van Kull, which will support bird and marine life. The facility is also semi-open to the public through the Recycling Education Center, which provides access to community and school groups.

To the north, in the Bronx, the McInnis Cement Marine Terminal also portends resilient landscaping to come. The 28-acre facility is the New York City outpost of the Quebec-based cement manufacturer. With the help of a new pier and piping system, it has the capacity to barge 5.5 million tons of cement annually from the St. Lawrence River, which translates to an approximate reduction of two million truck miles per year. On the ground, a team led by WXY incorporated a 30-foot-wide public walkway adjacent to 3 acres of restored wetlands that, with a system of breakwaters, can attenuate wave height by approximately 60 percent in the event of a 100-year storm.

The economic and political will is there to establish New York as a leader in offshore wind energy, and with that will come a rare opportunity to comprehensively reimagine the city's harbor with a working and resilient waterfront. Let's hope that it doesn't go to waste.

Matthew Marani is studying city and regional planning at Pratt Institute and writes about architecture and urban design.

36 Products

Check Your Tech

Remote work—or some version of it—is here to stay, but that doesn't have to translate to a drop in productivity or continuous workflow snafus. The latest advances in project management software have seen to that. But it's not all about staying on track: New AR technology made available in app form promises to streamline the specifying process, equipping users with intuitive ways to envision the full extent of their decisions. Of course, tech's application knows few bounds. One Texas-based robotics and advanced materials construction company has developed a 3D-printing process for building single-family residences, though it will presumably diversify from there. (It already has. The company has begun publicizing its lunar construction ambitions.) Flip through for more on these subjects—or better yet, tune in to *AN*'s upcoming annual Tech+ conference, happening in early November. By Adrian Madlener


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38 Case Study

Print to Order

A Texas start-up introduces a cost-cutting way to build houses—by printing them.

The neighborhood around East 17th Street in East Austin is a hodgepodge of residential construction techniques from the past century: stick frame and concrete block, asbestos shingles and stucco, structural insulated panels (SIPs) and insulated concrete forms (ICFs). A new development from Kansas City developer 3Strands and ICON, a Texas-based 3D-printing company, is not unusual for the rapidly densifying single-family neighborhood: four stand-alone units in tasteful black, white, and wood around a shared drive. But the buildings, designed by Logan Architecture with interiors by Claire Zinnecker, present a challenge to traditional construction methods.

"Existing materials have failed to meet the demands and challenges of the housing crisis," said Melodie Yoshar, director of building design and performance at ICON. Wood-frame construction, for example, is labor-intensive, requires multiple trades, and often results in significant material waste. 3D-printed concrete, on the other hand, offers the possibility of reducing the number of trades on site, cutting down on both construction waste and construction time, and, ideally, making housing more resilient and affordable.

ICON's 3D-printing technology uses a gantry printer dubbed the Vulcan to print a double wall of the company's proprietary concrete mix, Lavacrete. The cavities within the wall are filled with insulation and a small amount of steel for support. At East 17th Street, the possibilities of the material are expressed in the stacked ridges and curves of the first-floor walls. Currently, the Vulcan can print up to 10.5 feet in height, which is why the second stories of the residences are woodframed. Even so, according to developer Gary O'Dell of 3Strands, using 3D-printed concrete for the first floors represented a significant cost savings for the project. Said O'Dell, "3D printing allowed us to build better homes at a better value for 3Strands and the residents of

these houses." (The two larger homes listed in August at \$745,000 and \$795,000. For comparison, there were 17 other homes available for sale in the area at the time of listing, with an average asking price of \$902,000. Affordability in this context is relative.)

ICON has been making the news for its space-based work, including Project Olympus (with Bjarke Ingels) for NASA ("Imagine humanity's first home on another world"). Back on earth, ICON first focused its technology on affordable housing construction, including a project in Tabasco, Mexico, with the nonprofit New Story. Now ICON is scaling up: It recently launched its Exploration series, partnering with architecture firms like Lake|Flato to "cooperatively develop new design languages and architectural vernaculars" and explore the opportunities specifically afforded by 3D-printing, Yoshar, who co-founded Space Exploration Architecture (SEArch+) and first worked with ICON on Project Olympus,

outlined some of those opportunities: "Our ongoing prototyping and experimentation encompasses elements such as wall system weatherization strategies; mechanical, electrical, and plumbing integration; new options for interior finishing [and] materials development—as well as new and emergent ideas for robotic construction with the Vulcan printer, our gantry-based system. This project also helped further inform how we integrate traditional construction elements seamlessly with our 3D-printed wall system."

Whether or not ICON's projects currently live up to the sometimes-hyperbolic messaging of its founder, Jason Ballard, is not the point. It hardly needs saying, but 3D-printing is not the answer to all of our problems, any more than mass timber or SIPs or ICFs are. However, the questions that ICON and others are addressing *are* important—and way more exciting than drywall. Jessie Temple



Above: ICON has completed a series of single-family homes in East Austin, Texas, that make use of 3D-printed concrete. **Right colum, top:** The 3D-printed sections of the homes were made possible by a gantry printer.

Right column, middlet: Pipetted rows of a proprietary concrete mix called Lavacrete. **Right column, bottom:** The use of 3D-printing is cost-effective, which contributes to lower asking prices (at least for the area).







Construction Project Management Software

Integrating everything from CRM systems and real-time data reports, these dynamic programs not only help architects take charge of complex projects, but also facilitate collaboration among various stakeholders. The following software solutions combine BIM and 3D modeling functionality and boast intuitive interfaces and features to boot—all with an eye to offering users seamless workflows and assistance with teamwork. By Adrian Madlener



Buildertrend buildertrend.com Construction Cloud Autodesk autodesk.com



Bluebeam Cloud Microsol Resources microsolresources.com



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Visualization Tools

For many years, augmented reality (AR) failed to find a proper footing in the AEC industry and was instead relegated to consumer novelties. A shame, really, since AR seemed to hold a lot of potential for rethinking how practitioners convey their designs to clients, the public, and everyone in between. But a new crop of proprietary apps and product aggregators makes good on this promise, touching on every facet of the design industry. This selection of tools empowers both designers and consumers to better gauge the impact of their decisions. They give immediate feedback on which FF&E and architectural solutions work best in different spaces and on their long-term performance.



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41 Tech+ Preview

Tech It to the Max

AN's technology conference returns on November 2.

The design of our buildings and cities is increasingly driven by technology—and not just the familiar 3D-modeling and visualization tools to which we are accustomed. New advances in data and collaboration software, plus AR/VR, are all driving the industry forward.

At the fifth edition of *The Architect's Newspaper*'s TECH+ event series, select AEC leaders will bring you up to speed on these innovations and more.

In the keynote address, MIT associate professor and Civic Data Design Lab director Sarah Williams will discuss the power of big data and the ways in which it can be used to cultivate civic change. Her talk will draw on her recently released book, *Data Action: Using Data for Public Good*, and will explore how data can be used as a tool for empowerment and not just surveillance. Williams will also give attendees a look at a web-based software product she helped develop, Envelope.city, that consolidates New York City's incredibly complex zoning rules into an easy-to-use, 3D interface.

Margaret Newman, practice leader of urban places and smart mobility at Stantec, and Timur Dogan, director of the Environmental Systems Lab at Cornell, will pick up the data thread in the day's first panel. The pair have dissected massive amounts of information available to the public, known as open data, and have uncovered new approaches to urban planning in the process. They'll present their findings in depth.

In the second panel, Colin Booth and Katherine Faulkner, managing director and director, respectively, of PT Technologies, will discuss their work at the Boston-based Placetailor, which is looking to make advances in "hypersustainable" urban housing. Their talk will touch on the technological tools that make it possible to achieve future-ready design builds that promote equitable stakeholder engagement.

The talks will conclude with a four-way dialogue on emerging AEC tech-enabled tools

and techniques. Tech+ co-chair Luc Wilson of Kohn Pedersen Fox will discuss the work the firm's internal think tank, Urban Interface, is doing around computation. Nicole Mater of HOK's Kansas City office will demo the parametric design tools she's developed for optimizing building performance under complex conditions. Adam Chernick, SHoP Architects' director of interactive visualization, will dive into augmented and virtual reality, and John Haymaker, director of research at Perkins&Will, will show what R&D looks like at a major firm.

Virtual networking breaks, a meet-andgreet with speakers, and product demos will punctuate the conference talks. The symposium will provide attendees with four AIA CEUs. Stick around for our afternoon deep-dive workshops and earn an additional two AIA CEUs. For more information, including registration, head to techplus.co/tech21/. **Sophie Aliece Hollis**

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OpenAsset is the preferred DAM (Digital Asset Management) solution for architecture, engineering, construction, real estate, and hospitality firms across the world.

Moetsi

Spatial Fields, by Moetsi, creates a real-time 3D model of a space using advanced sensor technology. The tech anony-mously detects human bodies and streams that real-time data into a UI (built on Unity) with an open API for use by third-party developers.

COURTESY LOUIS POULSEN

Nearly two years into a global pandemic, after multiple periods of self-isolation, we are refamiliarizing ourselves with the pleasures of the outdoors. Research shows that engagement with nature however brief—can have a restorative effect on our bodies and minds. Now more than ever, we all want to be outside, at least for some period of time. Manufacturers have responded in turn, delivering a new generation of outdoor products that are designed for an expanded format. *AN*'s annual Outdoor special section foregrounds these innovations, while also drawing attention to a case study with plenty of lessons to impart. We also speak to Stimson, the recipient of American Society of Landscape Architects' 2021 Landscape Architecture Firm Award, for insights on a postpandemic world.

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44 Q&A

Slow Growth

AN sits down with the winner of the 2021 Landscape Architecture Firm of the Year.

Over the summer, the American Society of Landscape Architects announced that it would bestow its annual firm award on the Cambridge, Massachusetts-based office Stimson. The practice, founded by Stephen Stimson in 1992, produces sharp work that straddles the urban and rural realms. This quality is baked into the firm's operations: Stimson and his wife and co-principal, Lauren, maintain a farmcum-living laboratory in central Massachusetts, just north of Worcester, while co-principals Edward Marshall, Joe Wahler, and Glen Valentine oversee the Cambridge office.

AN contributor James McCown met with Valentine in the courtyard of MIT's Hayden Library to discuss the award and reflect on the studio's growth. Valentine had suggested the meeting place, a pleasant outdoor space conceived by Stimson as a nine-square grid on which to plot plantings and select pieces from MIT's collection of 20th-century sculpture. Twin curvaceous berms lent a touch of whimsy to the space.

- James McCown: First, congratulations on the award. Talk to me about the uniqueness of the firm.
- Glen Valentine: Sure. It's a commitment to agricultural and rural life. Steve Stimson, the founder of the firm, has deep roots in New England, going back ten generations. A few years ago, he was able to buy a farm in Princeton [Massachusetts], which is very close to the [family's] ten-generation farm in Charbrook. He turned the Princeton farm into a homestead for him and his family.

For Steve, it's been a sort of reclamation of his past. Charbrook allowed him to do some new things, like build a nursery and raise livestock for organic, grass-fed beef and lamb and really design the whole space both as a working farm and a laboratory for us.

- JM: So you use plantings from the farm in your projects?
- GV: Yes, we can use the trees from the nursery on the farm. And now there's a studio under construction there, which will be completed this fall. The [firm's] connection with the nursery, with all the fields, is going to be even stronger than it already was. It's all organic, and we can push different species. The nursery lets us try a species like gray birch, which you can't find in the industry. Both institutional and residential clients appreciate that they know where the trees are coming from. They know who took care of them.
- JM: How does a firm with such a deep and abiding belief in rural, agrarian life do urban projects like the one we're sitting in right now?
- GV: We fully embrace a modern contemporary aesthetic, but we try to make it feel almost relaxed. So we're in the Lipchitz Courtyard, and there are three works by the sculptor Jacques Lipchitz.
- JM: Was that your idea, to base a garden around these pieces?
- **GV:** No, but I'll take credit for it. [laughs] The sculptures were here already but were





Top: Campus work like the Boston College Pine Tree Preserve is a staple of Stimson's portfolio. Above: Earlier this year, the firm completed the landscape at the Behnisch Architekten-designed Harvard University Science and Engineering Complex.

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46 Q&A

randomly placed around. And we said, "They should really be in a conversation with one another," and we worked very hard to site them [accordingly]. It's a very contemporary space, which comes through in the nine-square grid that [underpins] it. At the same time, we had to consider the practicalities of growing trees. We're sitting above a part of the Hayden Library, and there wasn't enough room for a membrane and paving. So we raised the courtyard about 18 inches, which gives you eye-level views into the library. The garden has a contemporary feel that isn't imposed so much as [it is] a natural consequence of thinking about certain practicalities.

- JM: Name another new project that you're particularly proud of.
- $\ensuremath{\text{GV:}}$ I'd say the Pine Tree Preserve at Boston College. One of the things we really pride ourselves on is building relationships with institutional clients. I've been working at Boston College for about 12 years now, on ten or so projects. And they've all been very specifically related to guads and buildings and fields. But this Pine Tree Preserve is a collaboration. It's a parcel of land adjacent to a reservoir that for the past hundred years has been fenced off. It's owned by the Metropolitan Water Resources Authority, And they, in an agreement with Boston College, decided to take down the fence, open it up, and make it into a public park.
- JM: What are some architecture firms with which you've had especially good, collaborative relationships?
- GV: We've worked a lot with Centerbrook [Architects + Planners] on campus projects. That's been a big focus for our practice. We recently worked with Behnisch [Architekten] on the Harvard Science and Engineering Complex.here we really tried to make the stormwater components a strong element of the design. Lake|Flato out in Austin has also been a great partner of ours; we're also doing some campus work with them. But we did a master plan for a 300-acre park in San Antonio-Hardberger Park [Phil Hardberger Park Conservancy]-where they also designed a building. We just finished a big land bridge over the highway that connects two sides of the park and gives wildlife a safe place to cross.
- JM: Your website says: "We draw by hand and we embrace slowness." Do you not use computers? [laughs] And does embracing slowness scare off some clients who have a deadline?
- GV: That is a great question. Slowness forces vou to think carefully about what it is you're doing. It also [gets] into our whole idea of growing things ourselves, of getting our hands dirty. We have people, particularly young people, who come to the firm and start by digging and balling trees. It's a way of familiarizing yourself with the materials you're going to be using later. We absolutely use computers-our vounger staff spends much of their time in Revit and 3D modeling programs-but we try to integrate them into a certain workflow. We have a very deliberate, purposeful way of working. It hasn't scared clients off at all.
- JM: And how was the transition to remote work because of the pandemic?





GV:



Top: For several years, Stimson has been engaged in the design of the 311-acre Hardberger Park in San Antonio. In 2021, the firm completed (with local architecture firm Rialto Studio) a land bridge over a busy highway, ensuring wildlife safe passage. Left: Also in 2021, Stimson completed its renovation of a courtyard at MIT's Building 14.

Above: For the redesign, the landscape architects planted nine new trees and twin berms. They also introduced continuous seating.

- ally knew how to build without destroying the pristine nature. We worked in the studios up there for a week. It was fantastic.
- JM: How do you think the firm award will change your practice? Has it made it easier to market your work? Or did you have to do any marketing at all? Do you just sit around and wait for the phone to ring?
- GV: [Laughs] I'd say we're pretty lucky to have established relationships with a number of architects a long time before this happened. But I'll be honest: The award has definitely increased the number of calls we're getting. It's made getting work just a little easier.

JM: Are you looking to return to the office soon?

before.

GV: I'm not going to say it's easy, but Zoom is

pretty good. The fact that you can draw

great. We've even done a few site visits

that would work either, but it did. And of

course, we've had to do virtual meetings

for public process. Admittedly, a certain

everything goes digital. You lose a little of

site. Having said that, it's really given us a

geographical flexibility we just didn't have

the magic of being in the same office or

"spontaneous" creativity is lost when

and put drawings up on the screen is

with someone on FaceTime walking

around the site. We didn't think that

there at any given time. But because of the Delta variant we wanted to leave it open to staff. A lot of the architects' offices are already back. We'll get there. We just reconvened the office for a retreat at the Haystack Mountain School of Crafts in coastal Maine. I say "reconvene"—we hired several people during the pandemic, so in some cases this was the first time we'd met face-to-face.

Right now, there are about three people

- JM: Isn't Haystack great? I've attended three workshops there.
- GV: We're actually doing the master plan for the school now! Those [Edward Larrabee] Barnes buildings are so beautiful. He re-



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48 Case Study

West Side Refuge

The MNLA-designed Waterline Square Park welcomes, with arboreal landscaping and Hudson River views.

Landscape architect: MNLA Location: New York City

Structural steel: Paragon Iron Inc. Steel edging and walls: ADG Metals (custom) Lumber decking: Art Woodwork (custom) Stone: ABC Worldwide Stone Granite walls: Berardi Stone Setting Concrete: Regal USA Concrete (custom) Soil cells: Deeproot

Outdoor furnishings: Landscape Forms Lighting: Louis Poulsen (pedestrian lights and bollards), Structura Inc. (custom wood poles), BK Lighting (accents), Landscape Forms (plaza light-fixture heads)

Waterline Square Park opened at the tail end of 2020. The arboreal public space is flanked by a glassy trio of residential towers that make up the Waterline Square development. It is just one in a string of new parks on Manhattan's Far West Side designed by the New York-based landscape architecture firm MNLA (think Little Island), which has played a critical role in the transformation of the postindustrial waterfront. Waterline is situated on the former grounds of the New York Central railyard, adjacent to the decommissioned IRT Powerhouse, and it links to the nearly borough-length Hudson River Greenway.

The 2.6-acre park takes a different approach than that of the fortresslike superblock of Hudson Yards to the south, in that it embraces the existing street grid within its layout, meanwhile framing views of the Hudson River and Riverside Park South across West 60th Street. MNLA designed with porosity in mind: The park descends toward the riverfront in an amalgam of pathways, sloped plantings, terraces, and a bubbling brook—features that, in their accessibility, invite harried pedestrians and anyone seeking a break from the cacophony of Manhattan to explore them.

Abundant flora makes the park transportive. Of the more than 40,000 plants, many are arranged functionally as sunscreens and wind blocks. The location and choice of plantings was also determined in part according to their seasonality and health within the complex's microclimates. "As spring takes hold, the banks of the riparian fountain come to life as beds of crocuses poke through the snow. These are soon followed by the soft pinks and whites of eastern redbud and fothergilla. Summer's ornamental grasses sway gently in soft breezes while drifts of sun-loving perennials such as meadow sage, echinacea, and verbena glow with color within the meadow berms," said MNLA principal Molly Bourne. "These grasses and perennials erupt into breathtaking swathes of fall texture that ultimately lend themselves to winter interest and pollinator habitat. Native conifers create warmth and insulation as they block prevailing winds and noise from adjacent highways and form a lush, everareen backdrop that contrasts beautifully against winter's frequent gray skies.'

The development also hosts a sprawling amenity space whose variable topography arose from the carving out and remediation of the site's contaminated soil. The design of the spaces above these areas required a ballet of code compliance and structural evaluation. Slab elevations and penetrations are integrated within landscape features, and points of egress and utility connections are embedded throughout, a process coordinated through 3D analysis in collaboration with the design team. **Matthew Marani**









Top: Waterline Square Park is a multilayered public space in the middle of the Riverside Center development on Manhattan's Upper West Side.

Above left: The park features abundant flora—more than 40,000 plants in total—as well as a bubble brook.

Above right: Visitors enjoy views to the Hudson River and to the landmarked, Stanford White-designed IRT Powerhouse.

Left: Covering 2.6 acres, the park's plan comprises a series of angular elements, including an expansive playscape with equipment from Landscape Structures.



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Seating

Is there any design category as polymorphous as seating? Especially outdoor seating, which, given its context, can do more than just provide a place to sit down. Park benches can do wonderful things, when they're allowed (for instance, integrating planters). Regardless of the shape, comfort should be a factor, though this is hardly a universal rule. Many public spaces feature seating seemingly designed to prevent languid stays. That isn't the case with the following examples, which, in addition to being aesthetically pleasing and multipurpose, promote socializing—from short or long distances.





Truss Erwan and Ronan Bouroullec, Emeco emeco.net

Solaria Ludovica and Roberto Palomba, Poltrona Frau poltronafrau.com



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Lighting

Lighting design is a more varied thing than it's given credit for. Whether subtle or obvious, soft or bold, light operates on many different registers, particularly when applied to a public plaza (where safety is paramount) or garden (where privacy might be desired). Often when flexibility is required, or simply when a site is past a certain size, a mix of light sources must be used in coordination. Lastly, lighting needs to be durable. On these points and more, these stylish luminaires fit the bill. By Adrian Madlener







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Surfaces

Surfaces are one of the most overlooked elements of an outdoor space. But used ill-advisedly, they cause people to take notice. Pavers, decking tiles, and planters should work together to create a sense of cohesion while also indicating patterns of use. Obviously, they should all be functional, engineered to withstand serious wear and tear. The following selection checks all these boxes. And as you'll notice, these products aren't limited to ground applications, but extend up the sides of plazas and enclosures. By Adrian Madlener



gsTree greenscreen greenscreen.com



Pro Putt Turf Pioneer proputtsystems.com



Gravelpave² Invisible Structures invisiblestructures.com



Porcelain Paver Hanover Architectural Products hanoverpavers.com



Holland and Moduline Belgard belgard.com



Nuances: Scorcio Esterno ITALGRANITI italgranitigroup.com

55 Resources

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58 Highlights

2021 Socrates Annual: Sanctuary

Socrates Sculpture Park 32-01 Vernon Boulevard, Queens, NY 11106

Open through March 6, 2022



For its annual open call exhibition, the Socrates Sculpture Park invited artists to submit proposals responding to the concept of sanctuary—now more meaningful than ever. In total, 11 projects were selected and installed at the waterfront site in early October. Making use of form, industrial materials, and sound, the works offer diverging yet complementary interpretations of the curatorial theme. Only a few provide shelter, perhaps in the recognition that sanctuary, which was once invested with architectural meaning, is today a precarious geopolitical designation—lines on a piece of paper. Matt Hickman

Multiple artworks

Franconia Sculpture Park 29836 St. Croix Trail N., Shafer, MN 55074 Open year-round



It's a momentous year for Franconia Sculpture Park, a 50-acre open-air contemporary art museum and community hub in Minnesota's St. Croix River Valley that's complemented by public art programming, educational camps and classes, and a major artist residency program. This year the Midwest's self-described "pre-eminent, artist-centered sculpture park" celebrates its 25th anniversary—a good reason for Minnesotans, neighboring Wisconsinites, and art lovers from farther afield to visit this rural stretch of the North Star State. The museum grounds are free and open to the public 365 days a year. Artists with works currently on exhibit at Franconia Sculpture Park (and there are many) include Melanie VanHouten, Kyle Fokken, Daniel Shieh, Samantha Persons, and Jennifer Newsom and Tom Carruthers of architecture practice Dream the Combine. **MH**

Martha Tuttle: Outlooks; Rashid Johnson: The Crisis

Storm King Art Center 1 Museum Road, New Windsor, NY 12553 Open through November 8



Fall is a particularly lovely time to spend a full day traversing the 500 acres of pristine, art-studded landscape that compose Storm King Art Center in New York's lower Hudson Valley. While Storm King's vast collection of large-scale outdoor sculptures and site-specific commissions by Maya Lin, Sol LeWitt, Alexander Calder, Richard Serra, Magdalena Abakanowicz, and others isn't going anywhere, there are two special projects to catch before they close in the coming weeks: Rashid Johnson's *The Crisis* and Martha Tuttle's *Outlooks*. And new as of this June are two works by Sarah Sze: Fallen Sky, a permanent sculptural commission that is the first for Storm King in more than a decade, and an accompanying multimedia installation, *Fifth Season*, on view in Storm King's Museum Building. **MH**

North Forest Lights

Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art 600 Museum Way, Bentonville, AR 72712 Open through January 2, 2022



Crystal Bridges' otherworldly *North Forest Lights* exhibition opened at the top of September for its third annual run. Nestled deep in a patch of Ozark forest on the museum's trail-laced, 120-acre grounds, *North Forest Lights* is an immersive light and sound experience that "invites people to reconnect with nature and art while making everyone feel part of it." This year's ultra-atmospheric experience includes five unique light and sound installations designed by the Montreal-based Moment Factory. While admission to the museum proper is free–current special exhibitions include Julie Alpert's *Altars, Keepsakes, Squiggles, and Bows* and *Selena Forever/Siempre Selena)–North Forest Lights* is a ticketed attraction. Separately exhibiting (for free) in Crystal Bridge's North Forest is *The Bruising: For Jules, The Bird, Jack and Leni,* an outdoor sculpture/"living greenhouse" conceived by artist Rashid Johnson. **MH**

AN **Best of** Design er Exhibition De Gree Winners will be announced in the Best of Design magazine **Releasing December 7, 2021** archpaperawards.com/bestofdesign

60 Review

The Available City

Chicago Architecture Biennial | Chicago | Open through December 18

Continued from the cover appropriated for everything from Heavy Metal lyrics to conservative talk radio screeds. "The center cannot hold," the actual line, has been brandished recently as a shorthand for America's cultural and societal polarization. And the poem itself, written in the aftermath of World War I, does read like a doomy prophesy of the apocalyptic politics that have characterized the last five years.

In that respect, and in a way, this modest pavilion, which sits on an asphalt lot outside the decommissioned Overton Elementary School in Chicago's Bronzeville neighborhood, was a fitting first encounter for the fourth edition of the Chicago Architecture Biennial (CAB). This is due not only to the fact that *The Center Won't Hold* references our current political trauma, but also that it offers a path toward a more harmonious future, rendering it in a simple but effective object—this one harnessing the everyday magic of sunbeam, sheet, and wind—that is delightful to experience, fulfills its brief, and endures in the mind.

This year's show, The Available City, is a continuation of a project that artistic director David Brown, a professor in the School of Architecture at the University of Illinois Chicago, has been working on for years. The aim is to create a collaborative, community-led framework for the development of vacant city-owned lots, of which there are more than 10,000, concentrated in Black and Brown neighborhoods on Chicago's South and West Sides. The project was first unveiled as part of Team Chicago: City Works at the 2012 Venice Architecture Biennale, in which Brown mapped the vacant lots, coming up with an area of land roughly equal to the Chicago Loop. It appeared again at the 2015 CAB, where Brown put forth guidelines for architects and designers to work in tandem with community members to develop projects for these spaces that are, unlike so many measures that pass through the city's planning department, sensitive to local needs. In that showing, some high-profile architects, including currently bankrupt JAHN and now-dissolved Tigerman McCurry, turned out designs that were displayed downtown at the Chicago Cultural Center.

Now in the pilot's seat of North America's largest architecture festival, Brown has had the opportunity to expand his decade-long research project through explorations in the field. He invited 80 contributors from more than 18 countries (though many are local, as well as Black or Brown) to team with community groups in Bronzeville, Englewood, Woodlawn, Pilsen, and North Lawndale. There are also exhibitions at the Graham Foundation and the Bronzeville Artist Lofts, plus a series of essays that will be published on the CAB website, all of which open the Biennial to perspectives from elsewhere in the U.S. and around the world. The meat of the show, however, focuses on Chicago itself and comprises installations on actual sites, all of which are outdoors in consideration of COVID.

The 2019 CAB, *...And Other Such Stories*, inundated visitors with histories of violence and documentation of environmental collapse, everything from squatters' struggles in South America and garbage crises in India to gun violence in Chicago and global warming. The Beaux Arts edifice of the Cultural Center itself, where most of the exhibitions



Above left: The Center Won't Hold by The Open Workshop. Above right: The Garden Table by Studio Ossidiana.

were housed, was decorated with land acknowledgements that notified anyone who cared to look that the building stands on ground ceded from Indigenous occupants.

The Available City picks up where the previous edition left off, taking communities' histories and collective aspirations as a starting point from which to explore possible solutions in situ. The word *available* itself, which could be taken from a realtor's listing, puts the most positive possible spin on what much of this vacant land might be called. Anyone familiar with these neighborhoods (excepting already gentrified Pilsen), which archival photos from the not-too-distant past show as thriving urban districts, or even anyone visiting for the first time, could see in the broken-down streetscapes, the shuttered storefronts, the sheer quantity of empty lots, an index of disinvestment and neglect, and a record of the most iniquitous currents of American society.

It must be said that some visitors might feel trepidation about visiting these areas. After all, Chicago's soaring murder rate has been endlessly publicized. For this reason, meeting the people who live in these communities, as anyone who visits during CAB's active programming will have the opportunity to do, and experiencing their warmth, humor, pride in their place, and the ownership they evince for the results of the collaborative design projects, is essential and might be *The Available City*'s best aspect. With the pandemic severely limiting international visitors, this edition of CAB is more for locals, and that's OK because it provides the potential for Chicagoans to dissolve the fear that can come from not knowing one's neighbors and, hopefully, begin to form the bonds that will be necessary to build a more equitable future.

The projects themselves vary considerably, but most provide places to gather for events, socializing, and play. Some are ephemeral, while others are meant to serve their communities well after CAB ends its run on December 18. A clear standout is *The Garden Table*, Dutch practice Studio Ossidiana's work with the El Paseo Community Garden in Pilsen, which caps a brownfield site with a sturdy assembly of modular cast concrete blocks that provide surfaces for eating, game play, plantings, wildlife habitat, sitting, lying, climbing, or just looking at. The blocks' simple shapes—circles, squares, arches, triangles-renderedin a dusty pink with rounded edges, make for an approachable and reassuring presence in what is already a well-established community space alive with vegetables, flowers, and beehives. Another favorite in the urban furniture category is Block Party, by Studio Barnes (Miami, though founder Germane Barnes is originally from Chicago's West Side), Shawhin Roudbari (Boulder, Colorado), and MAS Context (Chicago) in collaboration with the Westside Association for Community Action, Open Architecture Chicago, and Freedom House Studios. (The long list of contributors for such a small-scale but impactful project signals The Available City's approach of channeling multiple voices toward pointed goals.) Located at Bell Park in North Lawndale, it is a bright pink and blue play structure inspired by the Bouncy Castles that are a ubiquitous feature of Chicago block parties. While it is not yet permitted to stand past the closing of the festival, it could and could be multiplied and deployed in other parts of the 'available" city.

Others are more rhetorical, though no less compelling in urban terms. The Central Park Theater Restoration Committee's collaboration with the Swiss architect Manuel Herz focuses on an endangered architectural monument, The Central Park Theater in North Lawndale, arguably America's first movie palace, which is now a church and badly in need of repair. The project is a mural on the west side of the building, which faces an empty lot. It re-creates the floorplans and domestic spaces of the buildings that stood there until the 1960s, prompting viewers to imagine a time (could be the future) in which this place is an important cultural hub. Another intervention in North Lawndale that speaks is Grids + Griots, by Charlotte, North Carolina-based Seikou Cooke Studio and neighborhood organization Young Men's Employment Network (YMEN). Like a DJ, the installation plays off a bike shop YMEN operates out of a shipping container, remixing it for a variety of different uses. A local metalworker cut a 40-foot shipping container (not the bike shop itself) into sections outlined in a drawing by Cooke and equipped them with some built-in furniture, a team from YMEN painted the sections vibrant colors of their choosing, and then together the architect and his

collaborators distributed them across the site. Cooke loves working with metaphors, and here, in addition to harnessing ideas from rap music, he references the griot, a traveling storyteller figure in many West African cultures. One could interpret the chopped and remixed container sections as frozen hip-hop—or more accurately, "active" hip hop because the modules can be rearranged in any order that feels right but the project may also be viewed as an expression of freedom, as embodied by the griot, an irrepressible, footloose bard who determines his own path.

One disappointing aspect of The Available City was that Atelier Bow-Wow's collaboration with Grow Greater Englewood was not finished for the opening and will remain under construction throughout the course of the show. Called Englewood's Commons, it will be a community space at an entry point to the Englewood Nature Trail for Environmental Sustainability, a twomile-long rails-to-trails project, now slated to open in 2022. While the delay could be chalked up to the pandemic slowdown, this lacuna and others gave the impression that this edition of CAB didn't receive the same resources as previous iterations—just as the neighborhoods upon which it focuses have been historically underresourced. One participant, In c/o: Black Women, withdrew from the festival and, on opening day, issued a statement denouncing the Biennial as a parachute operation, decrying the lack of funding and support it gives participants, and accusing it of being yet another elitist organization exploiting Black bodies. Strong words. Whether or not the group's claims are valid, the allegation is a reminder that fractures and hurt feelings haunt even presumably aligned groups. The center, it seems, won't hold, as Bhatia perhaps unwittingly indicated with his pavilion, and maybe ultimately it simply cannot, as Yeats proclaimed, even if we are supplied with gauzy, sun-filled pavilions in which to hash out various styles of gathering. But to my mind Brown's prescription of reclaiming vacant lots through collaborative, community-based design is a promising, if a tad shaky, first step toward healing a historical wound the closure of which would make our world a little more harmonious. Aaron Seward is AN's editor in chief.

61 Review

Black Landscapes Matter

Edited by Walter Hood and Grace Mitchell Tada | University of Virginia Press, 2021 | \$35



Above: A memorial in Nashville, Tennessee, by Hood Design Studio Right: A temporary community painting project in Opa Locka, Florida

If Black lives do matter, then where we live, and how we live there, must matter as well. This deceptively simple suggestion is the provocation that Black Landscapes Matter poses to the fields of landscape architecture and design. Edited by Walter Hood and Grace Tada, this collection of a dozen essays holds up a mirror to the design profession as a way of inciting a racial reckoning within that space, much as the Movement for Black Lives and related social movements have done in the wider world. Indeed, the tension between-or, perhaps, the co-constitution of-the anti-racist social move ments and the rise of the neo-fascist right serve as a backdrop to this work.

In written and photographic essays, as well as design proposals, Hood, Tada, and nine other contributing authors deftly draw a through-line connecting the contemporary moment, of sociopolitical unrest regarding racism, to a much longer, and deeply rooted, history of dispossession, erasure, and-to quote Hood-the "ugly and unforgiveable." When reading the chapters as a whole, two dominant arguments emerge: "the precariousness of Black geographic claims," to borrow the words of contributor Anna Livia Brand, requires us to pay attention to the ordinary and the ephemeral, alongside the monumental and the permanent; and, the American economy and American landscapes-so often implicitly understood as white spaces—are created through the extraction of Black labor and Black land. As Hood notes in the conclusion, "Black landscapes force us to reconsider what is vernacular." Through this lens, the fields, cabins, and main houses of plantations, the ironwork adorning Southern port cities, and the murals dotting MLK Boulevards across the nation are all reframed as the Black vernacular, whose architects, designers, and builders have long

been excised from the frame.

The 12 chapters in this slender volume were authored by design practitioners and academics, who drew from their client projects, partnerships, fieldwork, and life memories to share their perspectives on how and why Black landscapes have always mattered and how they continue to matter. These American geographies and spatialities represented are diverse: North, South, West, and Midwest; urban and rural; domestic and industrial; public and private. Project plans and renderings and photo essays richly complement the scholarly and discursive entries.

In the first section, "Calls to Action," Richard Hindle, Louise Mozinga, and Anna Livia Brand invite readers to reread familiar landscapes through the lens of Black life. By reflecting on a diverse range of geographies, from the free Black town of Seneca Village in 1800s Central Park to Northern Virginia's midcentury suburbs to the ongoing abandonment of Black humanity by the state during and after Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans, the authors suggest that understanding Black landscapes in fact requires a double lens of the DuBoisian kind: Both state-sanctioned erasure of Black spaces as well as state-sanctioned creation of white spaces must remain in the frame. The second section, "Practicing Culture," effectively utilizes photographs and design renderings to depict Black vernacular landscapes, "the everyday and the mundane" spaces of Black life past and present. The case studies in the third and final section, "Notes from the Field," read as a less cohesive set than the contributions in the previous sections, but the differing interventions each author makes are compelling. Of particular note is the critique of the field put forth by Kofi Boone, Distinguished Professor of Landscape Architecture and Environmental Planning at North Carolina State. After tracing various Black landscape histories, such as the targeted extraction of Wolof farmers and their knowledge of rice cultivation to design the rice plantations of the Carolinas, Boone writes:

"Mainstream landscape architecture history, theory, and practice relegates the critical Black landscape to historic preservation, cultural anthropology, and archaeology. Why can they not be read as landscape architecture?"

The challenges he puts forward permeate the remainder of this last section, and they link to Hood's conceptualization of Black landscapes as the sites we already know, like Monticello, presented in a new light. Thus, Black landscapes become an opening: to rethink how and why we know what we think we know about American cities and landscapes, and, by looking at our cities and landscapes in the mirror, to forge a sense of empathy and our collective obligations to one another.

The book falls short of its aim in one minor, but poignant, way. While the essays in the third section rely heavily on the perspectives of practitioners and the insights of intellectuals, voices from communities embedded in these Black landscapes are not often heard. Speaking for those working in the grassroots, however earnestly, rather than incorporating their insights directly as chapter authors, stands in tension with the volume's inspiration, the Movement for Black Lives. This social movement emerged at the grassroots level and names community control, collective ownership, and political power as three demands in its six-point platform. Authorship honors those demands, and including contributors from the grassroots may have added unique insights to this volume.

Black Landscapes Matter was published in December 2020—several years after the Rally for the Right in Charlottesville (a site chosen for the legacy of enslavement embedded in the landscape), in the midst of a global reckoning on racism catalyzed by the police killing of George Floyd, and mere weeks before the January 6 storming of the Capitol. The book went to press in the aftermath of Floyd's death, coinciding with a resurgence of public support for anti-racist action that transformed American landscapes: Statues at public sites came down; exhibit labels and tour scripts at historic sites were rewritten; dormitories and lecture halls were renamed.

Yet applying a historical lens to the subject matter reveals how regularly gains for Black people in the U.S. are foreclosed (as was the case with the fleeting experiment of Reconstruction) or met with resounding subversion (as occurred when the Brown v. Board of Education decision was directly followed by white flight from public schools and city neighborhoods). DuBois's framing of double consciousness, periodically invoked in the book, allows us to appreciate the removal of Confederate insignia from state flags, while simultaneously understanding the monumentality of the Confederate flag entering the Capitol for the first time and recognizing a "white vernacular" in "the everyday and the mundane" proliferation of black-and-white U.S. flags flaunting a single blue, red, or green stripe. *Black* Landscapes Matter is at its best as an epistemological critique, instructing its readers how to reread their everyday landscapes and challenging leaders in the field to rethink their sanitized paradigms.

Hilary Malson is a scholar of urban planning and geography. She currently researches housing justice and planning history as a doctoral student in urban planning at UCLA.

62 Pictorial

Greetings from the Waste Age

Enthralling scenes of decline await visitors to the Design Museum London.

There's an old YouTube clip of the Slovenian philosopher Slavoj Žižek—it has nowhere near the number of views as I'd remembered—holding forth at a municipal trash dump. Disheveled but animated, he doesn't chew up the scenery so much as imbibe it. He talks and talks, stopping only to riffle through loose items of refuse. He's playing cute, this mangy teddy bear, but he makes his points well enough. The reason that he's chosen this setting for his soliloquy? To underscore the impoverishment of our concepts of nature and ecology. "We need more alienation from our lifeworld—from our, as it were, spontaneous nature," he inveighs. "We should become more artificial."

In sewers and in landfills, in the plastic-churning ocean gyres and the pharaonic heaps of trash poised at the edges of cities here is where our humanity is most exposed. Something of this sentiment is at work

in *Waste Age: What can design do?*, a new exhibition at the Design Museum in London. The show is the latest in a subgenre that could be called "climate realist," or, perhaps less charitably, "climate fatalist." The fullest expression of this curatorial deviancy was Paola Antonelli's *Broken Nature*, which premiered in 2019 at the Milan Triennale and later traveled to the Museum of Modern Art. But unlike that show, which reveled in its aesthetic disengagement, Gemma Curtin's effort asks designers not to throw in the towel just yet. Indeed, *Waste Age* finds hope in the work that they are already doing.

One can't help but feel a bit manipulated. The exhibition announces its cause through a litany of bleak statistics: In 2019, some 50 million metric tons of electronic waste were generated, a figure that is bound to grow by leaps and bounds in the coming years. Every second, plastic dissolves in the ocean and our hold on the future grows ever more tenuous. But behold the ingenuity of designers such as the Italian-Dutch office FormaFantasma or the French architects Lacaton & Vassal or ... Stella McCartney? A "sustainable" collection of the British fashion designer's wares—made of old fishing nets—features among the exhibits, as do the pictorial works of Alexander Donka and Edward Burtynsky, who, probably more than anyone else, could make an asphyxiating pile of rubber tires feel like home. **Samuel Medina**









Clockwise from top left: *Oxford Tire Pile, Westley, California, USA, 1999*; a discarded bale of jeans, waiting to be recycled; the material of the Snøhetta-designed S-1500 chair comes from recycled fishing nets; an e-waste recycling facility in Belgium; the sorting stations inside the same facility.



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