In late May, Chicago’s Community Development Commission agreed to award $96 million in tax increment financing for the massive mixed-use project located between 79th Street and the Calumet River known as South Works. Based on a masterplan by SOM, the SOM-planned project aims to create a new center for South Chicago. Continued on page 10.

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THE UNBILLABLES

DALEY ADMINISTRATION WANTS ARCHITECTS TO CUT FEES

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Frank Gehry’s recent dismissal of green building in general and LEED in particular had the benefit of sparking debate. Blair Kamin quoted the 85-year-old Gehry as saying that the issue of sustainability “is finally a political one,” adding that green buildings “don’t pay back in your lifetime” and stating that LEED gives credits for “bogus stuff.” While I could not agree more about the need for greater political action to advance a green agenda, Gehry’s remarks were shockingly simplistic and tone deaf.

Certainly LEED can be criticized—certified Silver parking garages, anyone?—but Gehry, as the country’s best-known architect, is in an unrivaled leadership position with unmatched access to the public’s attention, and he does the profession a disservice by speaking so reductively. One can guess at his reasons for making these statements—certainly he is not known for sustainability and his office has suffered as much as any in the Great Recession—but with acclaim and notoriety comes a degree of responsibility.

The impact of the built environment on climate change and other ecological crises is undeniable, and LEED has had a greater influence on greening the way we build than any other tool or individual. To return to Gehry’s point about the need for political action, according to the USGBC, LEED standards have been adopted, required, or incentivized in 45 states, mostly at the municipal level. The ratings system’s explosive growth has been due in large part to its application as a legislative standard. Chicago currently has the most certified green public buildings in the nation, a title the city rightfully touts.

Greater attention to the environmental impacts of buildings has also been good for architects. Tens of thousands of design professionals have taken LEED exams, giving them expertise that is valued in the marketplace. Architects and designers are seen as having something important to contribute to business, to building community, and to promoting health and social responsibility.

They also have power to move the market. As thousands of architects, designers, and facilities managers gather in Chicago for NeoCon, it’s easy to see the impact that green design has had on the building products and commercial furnishings industries. Every year, hundreds of new products are introduced by companies boasting of their eco credentials. Will carpet made from recycled fiber or low-VOC-coated caseworks save the planet? Of course not. But I believe well-ventilated, light-filled buildings are more pleasant places to work and live, they often use less energy, and I’d rather my carpet didn’t leave me feeling light-headed. Big changes often come through an accumulation of small ones.

As a late turn in his career, I would love to see Gehry trade titanium for photovoltaics. The need for greener buildings is only going to increase, and while the master form-maker may not be interested in scoring rating points, a high-performance building would help push his work into the next era, rather than letting it stand as emblematic of the last.

ALAN G. BRAKE
CROWNING PORKOPIS

What’s the cliché? You can dress up a pig but it’s still a pig? I can’t remember. Some terrible former governor, who will not be named, used the line a lot. Anyways! The Great American Tower, the newest addition to Cincinnati’s skyline, was recently topped off with a giant tiara inspired by Diana, Princess of Wales. The glitzy tower could be the ugliest building in the Midwest. It’s a toss-up as to whether the Royal Family will add this to its list of really lengthy list of regal embarrassments—oh, Fergie—oh delight in the ghastly tribute! After all, the tower will be the tallest in the city, surpassing the Carow Tower, which reigned supreme since 1930 with its beautiful art deco interiors. The tiara’s (and building’s) design cred go to Gyo Obata, the “O” of HOK. Eavesdrop wonders why Gyo did not look to local royalty, like former mayor Jerry Springer. A skyscraper inspired by guests throwing chairs at one another could be interesting!

PARTY IN THE POMO

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Shannon Stratton, executive director of three walls, the contemporary art incubator and gallery, kindly invited Eavesdrop to their annual party and silent auction being held in Philip Johnson’s postmodern masterpiece building 190 South LaSalle. The so-strange-it-was-fab, event, themed “Office Romance,” took place in the Library, a nuts 40º-floor Cambridge-inspired law library and event space whose stacks are overlit with 80s-tastic green fluorescent bulbs. Among the guests donning faux-cigarettes biffing the Med Men meets Bret Easton Ellis vibe, Eavesdrop stumbled into architects Dirk Denison and David Harris Salkin (a graduate of Tulane’s School of Architecture and URBANbuild). We were grateful for the company, but perhaps we got too comfortable and had one too many Manhattans. The silent art auction was suddenly irresistible, and brought out a competitiveness in Eavesdrop previously only seen during rounds of mini-golf. We walked away with a large-format photograph by the Swiss-born artist Selina Trepp. Shannon, you can send a thank-you note to Eavesdrop, c/o AN.

SEND THANK-YOU NOTES, CASTLE MOATS, AND OLD BILLY GOATS TO MIDWESTEAVESDROP@ARCHPAPER.COM.

GROWTH SPURT continued from front page

Adding a new middle school for girls to the Kingswood School at Cranbrook

One of the earliest and most detailed of the Cranbrook buildings by Eliel Saarinen (and members of his family, including a young Eero) in the 1930s, the original Kingswood School for Girls, according to project architect Brantley Hightower, was designed when Saarinen was in his “Wrightian phase,” creating buildings with an intense sense of craft and a complex array of scales and materials. For a new middle school for girls located where a meadow meets the woods on the 300-acre campus, Lake/Flato were charged with matching the richness of the original on a budget of less than $200 per square foot.

Lake/Flato approached the 48,000-square-foot school in a way they hoped would resonate with Saarinen’s “fusing of craft with the leading technologies of the day,” Hightower said. They especially sought to copy his manner of connecting buildings to the landscape and weaving craft into the fabric of structure, no easy task on a tight budget. Their solution was to cluster classrooms around three commons, each with its own pavilion or “box” that provided a special experience, whether dance studio, stage, or theater, and each with the built-in seating to accommodate those activities. Throughout, “nodes of craft,” often maple elements, were added at terminating points to heighten impact.

Partner in charge Greg Papay noted that much of Lake/Flato’s work is based in climates warmer than the weather on the wind-swept plains of Michigan. In Texas, even large buildings can be open to the outside year-round, while here a more modulated approach was necessary. “We learned from Saarinen about creating cloistered views into intimate spaces, but also across larger views,” said Papay about making the commons open outdoor space but still protected from the elements. Materials had to be simple, but Lake/Flato also wanted them to be both local and textured. They used a masonry concrete block from a local source and composed of an aggregate flecked with Michigan’s own colored stones. A glazed brick that has been used in other buildings, along with judicious touches of copper and warm maple used on the interiors, complete a surprisingly rich palette. The Cranbrook Kingswood Girls’ Middle School, scheduled for completion by November, is situated not far from other recent buildings on the campus including Steven Holl’s Institute of Science (1996) and Tod Williams and Billie Tsien’s Natarium (1999). “We may have had a low budget,” said Papay, “but our aim was to tie into the history while still giving the school all the excitement of the other new buildings at Cranbrook.”

JULIE V. IOVINE

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In Lakeview, a tiny ice cream boutique is tempting Chicagoans with a cheery design and equally sweet desserts. The family-owned company is the first to bring the Taiwanese “snow ice” to the city. After naming the spot for a blissfully happy state of mind, the two siblings set out to find designers that could create a truly fun, colorful, and soft interior. The job was a good fit for Product Architecture+Design, a firm with a notable portfolio of children’s libraries. “We know that these spaces don’t have to be silly, and that they can be whimsical and modern at the same time,” said Dan Pohrte, a principal at the firm. To make the 30-seat eatery appear more spacious, the designers went for a clean and graphic look, where “nodes of craft,” often maple elements, were added at terminating points to heighten impact.

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There’s something different about being enveloped by nature versus merely looking at it, just as cruising down a road on a bicycle stimulates smell, sound, sight, and awareness more than does travel inside a car. For the Serta International Center near Chicago, Andy Metter, senior vice president and principal designer of Epstein | Metter Studio, has taken a sense of being within nature to the workplace, floating atop a 20-acre Illinois prairie site at the edge of a wetland.

According to Metter, the planning strategy is organized in response to the land. “It came out of the notion of the beauty of the landscape and wanting to have a strong relationship to the site; to have a building responding to and growing from the site.”

The mattress company’s principal goal for the project has to do with employee attraction and retention—what Metter describes as Serta’s strength, and a priority that corporate executives strive to maintain. With 65,000 square feet dedicated to office space and another 25,000 devoted to a high-bay research and development facility, the 700-foot-long-by-67-foot-wide building also houses amenities like outdoor work areas and an employee lunchroom with a trellised outdoor wooden deck, as well as a large showroom, a training auditorium, and an employee lounge.

The building’s program is expressed by a consistent interior and exterior massing strategy designed to frame the views. “Each opening gives a sense of prospect that positions the viewer toward the horizon,” said Metter. The attenuated nature of the building (taking the form of an unfolded Z-shape) means that there is plenty of natural and borrowed light with views of both the prairie and wetlands for all employees. Individual thermostats and operable windows throughout the facility provide employees access to fresh air and personalized thermal control of the space.

The new building consolidates five former corporate locations under one roof to streamline the organization’s communication processes and encourage collaboration among departments. Guests and employees access the building by means of a ramp placed at the east and west elevations of the site. Both ramps gently guide visitors to the building’s raised structure and form the recessed entry lobby that Metter designed to “read like a punch through the building, telegraphing the landscape from both elevations.” Other support functions that intersect with the long and narrowly shaped structure, like the stepped training auditorium and conference rooms, project out from the building skin like an open, aluminum-and-glass chest of drawers. “These areas are discrete from the rest of the center’s program, therefore the architecture expresses their distinction,” he adds. Metter negotiates the public and private aspects of the headquarter building through a double circulation strategy. The east elevation corridor, with a view onto the prairie, is zoned for visitors and separated from work areas and proprietary information through the linear placement of translucent, glass-enclosed support functions. The west elevation is intended for office workers, with wide-open spaces, low-paneled workstations, and views looking toward the wetlands. A second-floor showroom overlooks the two-story research facility where employees, wholesalers, and customers are introduced to Serta’s products. Throughout the headquarter building, the interior materials take their cue from the exterior finishes of post-tensioned concrete, aluminum panels, and glass—lots of glass. Inside, the glass walls are clear, translucent, or fluted to mediate privacy and maximize daylight penetration. Black rubber or terrazzo flooring materials separate the floor surface from the pure whiteness of the wall and ceiling planes, furthering the notion of the building floating above the prairie. Inside, private offices and conference rooms receive aluminum-colored sound-absorbing fabric panels detailed to align with the aluminum panels of the exterior. The white, gray, and glass-paneled workstations with black upholstered desk chairs complete the composition in the open areas.

While the architecture and interior envelope are both purposefully neutral, the color inside the building is in constant flux, thanks to the center’s insertion and integration into the natural environment where the sun, sky, and seasonal colors transform the prairie, the building, and the spaces within.

RESOURCES:
Rubber flooring: Norament from Nora Systems
Floor grating: Stainless steel bar stock grating from McNichols
Ceiling system: TechZone from Armstrong
Channel glass: Bandheim
Interior glass walls: Translucent glass from CUDA
Lighting: Microline 30 from Delta Light
Handrail lighting: Luxrail from io
Workstations: Autostrada from Knoll
Desk chair: Life Chair from Knoll
Sofa and lounge chairs: Keilhauer
Coffee Table: Nienkamper
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Wrigley Field may be getting a new neighbor. The planned Addison Park on Clark development, which includes residences, retail space, and hotel rooms located adjacent to the ballpark, has gained the backing of 44th Ward Alderman Tom Tunney. The proposal needs final approval from the Chicago Plan Commission and the City Council Zoning Committee before it can proceed, and the alderman’s support is seen as critical to moving the project forward. The development would bring significant new density to the area, but opponents fear the retail-intensive project could alter the character of the neighborhood. The project would be comparable in height to the historic ballpark and would be built on a combination of surface parking lots and on the site of existing, mostly single-story buildings along Clark Street. In response to concerns from some neighbors and business owners, the developers, M&R, have substantially reduced the scale of the project, which originally included two towers that would have loomed over the field. “It’s been a two-and-a-half year process. The developers have greatly reduced the height and have worked closely with the community development committee to respond to neighborhood concerns,” said Bennett Lawson, deputy alderman for the ward. Designed by Solomon Cordwell Buenz (SCB), the current scheme will include 135 rental apartments, 137 hotel rooms, and over 145,000 square feet of retail space on two levels. “The project will reinforce the vibrant retail corridor,” said John Lahey, SCB’s president. “It’s not a mall at all. It will be a very active street front.” Retail spaces will all be accessed from the street, and second-story spaces will have ground-level frontage as well. The project’s design reflects elements in the neighborhood, including corresponding building heights and brick and limestone elements in the facade. Lahey stressed that the project won’t mimic the historic ballpark. “It will be a contemporary building, not a nostalgic one,” he said. Several buildings that house businesses will be demolished to make way for the project, including the Improv Olympics, a comedy venue. Lawson said the alderman’s office will work to relocate the businesses, some within the new project. Several large billboards will also be removed. “There will be wider sidewalks on Clark Street, new street trees, new alleys, lots of bricks-and-mortar improvements for the neighborhood,” Lawson said. The developers also noted the project’s sustainable features, including green roofs and gardens, bike parking, and LEED construction, along with its location near an El stop and several bus lines. “Shouldn’t we have denser development near transit nodes?” Lahey asked. Lahey agrees that the project will change the character of the neighborhood, though he feels for the better. “Now the site isn’t very urban. It’s a lot of parking lots and single-story buildings,” he said. “A building can clarify and organize a place. It will be a foil to Wrigley Field that will strengthen the fabric of the area.”
On June 20, the 100-acre Virginia B. Fairbanks Art & Nature Park at the Indianapolis Museum of Art opens to the public. Designed by landscape architect Edward L. Blake with a visitors center by Marlon Blackwell, the park boasts woodlands, wetlands, a lake, and meadows, and is dotted with temporary site-specific sculptures that explore the relationship between humanity and the natural environment. The opening roster of artists includes Atelier Van Lieshout, Kendall Buster, Alfredo Jaar, Jeppe Hein, Los Carpinteros, Tea Mäkipää, Type A, and Andrea Zittel (her Indianapolis Island pictured above). Formerly a gravel pit, the park borders the White River and the 52-acre campus of the museum.

Unlike traditional sculpture parks, which typically include permanent works by more established artists, at the Art & Nature Park the museum will commission younger artists, many of whom have not worked at the civic scale. The temporary commissions, which will engage different sites around the park, will also renew the experience for repeat visitors.

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Unlike traditional sculpture parks, which typically include permanent works by more established artists, at the Art & Nature Park the museum will commission younger artists, many of whom have not worked at the civic scale. The temporary commissions, which will engage different sites around the park, will also renew the experience for repeat visitors.
Chicago and Sasaki Associates, the development could eventually include millions of square feet of retail and residential space as well as a series of new lakefront parks, and function as a new center for the city’s South Side.

The public money will fund construction of roads, sewers, and other elements currently absent from the former industrial land. “The TIF money is absolutely necessary for us to move ahead, since there’s no public infrastructure on site,” said Nasutsa Mabwa, a project manager with McCaffery Interests, the project’s co-developer along with U.S. Steel. The most important piece of infrastructure is a new access road, U.S. 41, which will function as a four-lane extension of Lake Shore Drive with a landscaped median. “It’s an important catalyst,” said Phil Enquist, SOM’s partner in charge of urban design and planning. “This will allow access to the lakefront and spur development on a site that isn’t currently being used by anyone.”

The total project area covers 369 acres, approximately 120 of which have been reserved for lakefront parks. The project follows LEED for Neighborhood Design guidelines, so it emphasizes connectivity with pedestrian-scaled streets, along with innovative water management to filter much of the runoff back into Lake Michigan. The project, which would be built out over a 20-to-45-year period, could eventually include up to nearly 14,000 units of housing and a new elementary and high school, as well as extensive retail and some office space, plus a 1,500-slip marina. A smaller tract of land to the south, owned by Solo Cups, remains undeveloped, and no plans for the property have been announced.

The first phase, which McCaffery will begin marketing to retailers at a conference this fall, will include approximately 800,000 square feet of retail and residential space, designed by Chicago-based Antunovich Associates. Located west of the new Lake Shore Drive extension, the first phase will be immediately adjacent to the existing neighborhood. Construction is expected to commence in 2012 following completion of the new access road. The Chicago Park District will build out the new lakefront areas in accordance with the SOM/Sasaki plan. Enquist said some of the building foundations and walls may be retained in the parks to reflect the area’s industrial past.

The team hopes the project will provide new retail, dining, and recreational options for the South Side, an area that has long been overlooked by developers. Enquist pointed out that the site is closer to downtown Chicago than Evanston, and he believes that the South Works development could be comparable in scale and economic importance to Evanston’s downtown. “It’s big enough to have that kind of impact. It’s planned to be a very diverse community, with housing of a variety of sizes and price points. It will be a real neighborhood, not just a shopping center.”

“This area is not well known to Chicagoans,” Enquist added. “Currently, you can’t even access it by car. When people see this land, it will be a big surprise. I’m always knocked over by the beauty of the site.”
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Braving the lightning bolts of an early summer storm, Chicago's intrepid designers and design aficionados came out in force to attend last year's Guerrilla Furniture and Art Truck Show outside Morlen Sinoway Atelier. This year, the event promises to be even more robust, with more than 30 U-Haul trucks registered to showcase wares, and enough coordinated events—14 to be precise—to warrant making a map for the first time in the six-year history of the event.

This expansion is one of many signs that Chicago is primed to support the ambitions of a growing community of designers now calling the city home. With ample space for affordable studios, industrial manufacturing within close range of the city center, three design schools, and a variety of new forums to show design work, Chicago provides all the crucial ingredients for a vital design scene. Not to mention that the Art Institute of Chicago's Modern Wing, now one year old, dedicates the most square footage of exhibition space to design in the country. From that perch, curator Zoe Ryan is spearheading an effort to build a definitive collection by making acquisitions in reverse chronological order. "At the Art Institute," Ryan said, "we're hoping to tell a broader story, including younger designers who are Chicago-based but are very much working in a global arena."

Finding a way to put work out into the world is among the biggest challenges for any designer. Volume Gallery, started by Claire Warner and Sam Vinz, two former employees of Chicago-based Wright, one of the country's premier auction houses for modern and contemporary design, is also forging new territory in this respect. Volume refers to itself as event-based, with exhibitions staged in different locations suited to the project in question. Limited-edition objects at a range of prices in order to make the work accessible for young design collectors are featured as well. Though Warner and Vinz are ultimately interested in representing American design at large, their first two collaborations are with the Chicago-based designers Jonathan Nesci and Felicia Ferrone. "There are so many people doing interesting..."
In a range of scales that take
work with local manufac-
fall, Ferrone is exploring
For Volume’s next event this
a comprehensive collection.”
What we wanted to do as
working on a smaller scale.
“Chicago is becoming a
place less driven by the
pragmatism of the past,
and more about critical
or reflective practice,” she
noted. “The city used to
be full of designers without
an educational training,
and that is really changing.”
Thinkmore, a four-person
studio founded in 2009 by
Hemmant Jha, is one practice
exploring ways to bridge
Chicago’s intellectual and
professional worlds. One of
the first projects for Jha
and his partners, who all
have dual backgrounds in
engineering and design,
was a self-initiated design
for an affordable wheelchair.
The social implications
were significant, and after
a partnership with a local
rehabilitation center was
sloved by legal considera-
tions, Thinkmore estab-
lished a nonprofit called
Wheelwell in order to open
the project to different
collaborators to help bring
a design to market. For
Jha, research labs at uni-
versities offer the benefit
of investment in a design’s
intelligence, so he began
a product design workshop
at IIT this past spring. Both
wheelchair users and venture
capitalists were brought in
to critique the final projects,
and two designs from the
course will continue devel-
oped. “Designing the
object is the fun part, but
it is also a small part,” Jha
said. “In order to get some-
thing like this made and into
the world requires a broader
set of skills and expertise.”
Any profits generated by the
project would be recirculated
into the curriculum at IIT to
fund similar courses.
With growth come finan-
cial needs. Designers and
educators alike hope the city
will offer more support in
the form of grants or recog-
nition. There’s a pervasive
sense that this is necessary
because young American
designers, without a more
established atelier appren-
tership tradition as exists
in Europe, are at a disadvan-
tage to their counterparts
abroad. Recognition also
attracts funding, of course,
and more Chicago designers
are getting attuned to raising
their profiles by traveling
to international fairs. Volume,
Smith, Linder, and others
in the ODL like Michael
Savona, and Bruce Tharp
and Stephanie Munson
of Materious, all made
an appearance in New
York for the International
Contemporary Furniture Fair
(ICFF) this May. An annual
trip to the Milan International
Furniture Fair, where it
is one of few American
schools to show student
work, is a standout aspect
of design activities. Rather
than calling this new
work emerging, however,
Ryan puts it differently:
“Designers, at their best,
are ambidextrous. They
make multiple turns in their
careers, which can all be
said to be very emerging,
in terms of using new
technology or finding new
formal solutions.” In other
words, Chicago’s designers
are on a roll.

SAINTAMIT TOPOL IS A
CHICAGO-BASED WRITER.
THE NEOCON WORLD’S TRADE FAIR PRESENTS COLOR ARRAYS AND A BOLD WAY WITH WHITE AT THIS YEAR’S CONTRACT FURNISHINGS MARKET.

BY JENNIFER K. GORSCHE

1. DAMA COFFEE TABLE by CR&S POLIFORM
   The Dama Coffee Table by CR&S adapts to a range of room configurations and styles. The seamless, solid-wood table is approximately 13 by 18 inches and is available in canaletto walnut and cedarwood finishes. www.poliform.it

2. SEEK ALLSTEEL
   Allsteel’s Seek lightweight chair has three storage configurations, allowing it to be stacked and nested without racks or trolleys. Available in eight colors with optional arms and a cushioned seat, a flexing back and ergonomic design make it a more comfortable folding chair, and a healthier one, too. Seek is expected to qualify for SCS Indoor Advantage Gold certification for air quality. www.allsteeloffice.com

3. LYRA COLLECTION by KI
   The Lyra collection from KI aims to fill a gap between formal and informal furniture. Bases are available in wood or steel, along with several upholstery combinations, allowing the lounge chairs, loveseats, ottomans, and tables to adapt to modern or traditional environments. www.ki.com

4. CURIO TABLE by BERNHARDT DESIGN
   Designed by Claudia and Harry Washington for Bernhardt Design, the Curio table is available in bright or muted lacquered colors, but also in a range of natural wood finishes for a more reserved look. The beveled top is available in 19-, 22-, and 42-inch diameters and is sturdy enough to accommodate glass or Corian surface for high-traffic areas. www.bernhardtdesign.com

5. URBAN METALLICS by CARNEGIE
   The Urban Metallics collection is Carnegie’s newest addition to its Surface IQ wall-covering line of PVC-free surfaces that use only water-based inks and coatings, but still have high abrasion resistance and tolerance for bleach-based cleaners. The line includes a variety of metallic patterns and scales (Midas is pictured), each of which are Cradle to Cradle Silver certified. www.carnegiefabrics.com

6. FROST by CHILEWICH CONTRACT
   Frost is an industrially derived surface available in three shimmering shades, Black, Topaz, and Mineral, with a transparent fiber coating that changes the surface’s appearance depending on lighting direction. With the appropriate backing material, Frost can be used in a variety of ways including as wall-to-wall and tile flooring, floor mats, wall covering, and upholstery fabric. www.chilewich.com/contract

7. RODARTE TEXTILES by KNOLL LUXE
   Knoll’s luxury fabric division collaborated with fashion house Rodarte to create five upholstery and three drapery patterns named after poets and inspired by the fashion house’s runway collections. Auden (pictured) is an ombre pattern printed digitally on woven raffia and is available in four colorways. www.knoll-luxe.com

A BRIGHT OUTLOOK

The Dama Coffee Table by CR&S adapts to a range of room configurations and styles. The seamless, solid-wood table is approximately 13 by 18 inches and is available in canaletto walnut and cedarwood finishes. www.poliform.it
Vein Cut Onyx from Stone Source is available in white or green, each with natural vein patterns and translucency. The 2-centimeter-thick slabs can be used for interior walls and counters, but are not recommended for kitchen countertops. www.stonesource.com

**Enea Lottus Table**

Designed by Barcelona-based design trio Lievore Altherr Molina for Enea of Spain, Lottus tables are available in the full range of Coalesse veneer and laminate colors, with four complementary colors for the painted metal base. Four heights and diameters from 30 to 72 inches allow the table to fit a range of spaces and match several seating options, including Lottus chairs and stools.

**Sava Cvek**

Sava Cvek’s new design for Stylex is a multitask chair that combines engineering and aesthetics to create a versatile design. The chair is available with task or conference arms with a high or mid-back design with mesh or upholstered finishes and low-profile paddles to control height, tension, seat depth, and tilt. www.stylexseating.com

**Dr Desk**

Claudio Bellini’s DR desk design for Italian manufacturer Frevza combines a simple table with a carefully designed desk and storage element. The desk’s legs are carved entirely from solid walnut wood, creating a striking contrast to the optional glasswork surfaces and painted drawers.

www.jofco.com

**Flow Bench**

Designed by LA-based Chris Kabatsi, the Flow Bench from Arktura is formed from eco-composite materials that are suitable for residential and commercial interiors. Available in orange, black, and white, the bench is 72 inches long, and next year will be joined by Kabatsi’s similarly fluid Squall coffee table.

www.arktura.com

**Bram Boo Bench**

Belgian designer Bram Boo’s bench fosters socialization, rest, and work all in one piece of furniture. Four seats arranged in a square create four desktops and multiple ways to face others. The bench is available in red and black.

www.vanerumstelter.com
FRIDAY 18  
EVENT  
Click Flash Cut  
8:00 p.m.  
University of Michigan  
Museum of Art  
525 South State St., Ann Arbor  
www.umma.umich.edu  

EXHIBITION OPENINGS  
Kill Them Before They Multiply  
Columbus Museum of Art  
480 East Broad St., Columbus  
www.columbusmuseum.org  
Minneapolis Institute of Arts  
3400 2nd Ave. South, Minneapolis  
www.artmia.org  
Overview, 2010  
Bruno David Gallery  
3721 Washington Blvd.  
St. Louis  
www.brunodavidgallery.com  
Lloyd Durling  
Laughter Staggers On  
Golden Gallery  
816 West Newport Ave.  
Chicago  
www.goldengallery.org  

SATURDAY 19  
EVENT  
Sublime Party  
5:30 p.m.  
Cleveland Museum of Art  
1150 East Blvd., Cleveland  
www.clevelandart.org  

EXHIBITION OPENINGS  
Sister Corta  
The Jøynæs Revolutionary  
University of Michigan  
Museum of Art  
525 South State St., Ann Arbor  
www.umma.umich.edu  
Looking after Louis Sullivan: Photographs, Drawings,  
and Fragments  
Art Institute of Chicago  
111 South Michigan Ave., Chicago  
www.artic.edu  

EXHIBITION OPENINGS  
Collage  
Thoma McCormick Gallery  
835 West Washington Blvd.  
Chicago  
www.thomamccormick.com  

FRIDAY 23  
EXHIBITION OPENING  
Contemporary Collecting:  
Selections from the Donzis  
Howard Stone Collection  
Art Institute of Chicago  
111 South Michigan Ave., Chicago  
www.artic.edu  

SATURDAY 24  
LECTURE  
Guillermo Kuitca  
2:00 p.m.  
Walker Art Center  
1750 Hennepin Ave.  
Minneapolis  
www.walkart.org  

EXHIBITION OPENINGS  
Alexander Calder and Contemporary Art:  
Form, Balance, Joy  
Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago  
220 East Chicago Ave.  
Chicago  
www.mcachicago.org  

WITH THE KIDS  
You Name It  
10:00 a.m.  
The Nelson-Atkins  
Museum of Art  
4525 Oak St.  
Kansas City  
www.nelson-kins.org  
Family Workshop: Creature  
Capers Scavenger Hunt  
1:30 p.m.  
University of Michigan  
Museum of Art  
525 South State St.  
Ann Arbor  
www.umma.umich.edu  

SATURDAY 27  
EXHIBITION OPENING  
Richard Roth  
and Hilary Wilder  
The Suburban  
120 North Harvey Ave.  
Oak Park  
www.thesuburban.org  

July  

SUNDAY 4  
EXHIBITION OPENING  
Failing Freedom  
Chicago History Museum  
1601 North Clark St.  
Chicago  
www.chicagohistory.org  

TUESDAY 6  
EXHIBITION OPENINGS  
Here/Not There  
Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago  
220 East Chicago Ave.  
Chicago  
www.mcachicago.org  

WEDNESDAY 8  
LECTURE  
Warrington Colescott  
Living Dangerously: The Art of Visual Satire  
5:30 p.m.  
Milwaukee Art Museum  
700 North Museum Dr.  
Milwaukee  
www.mam.org  

EXHIBITION OPENING  
Contemporary X  
Pecha Kucha  
6:00 p.m.  
Contemporary Art Museum  
St. Louis  
www.cmam.org  

EVENT  
Click Flash Cut  
1:00 p.m.  
University of Minnesota  
College of Design  
100 Rapson Hall  
www.walkart.org  

EXHIBITION OPENINGS  
Jef Geys: Archetypes of Love and Loss:  
Portrait Miniatures  
Milwaukee Art Museum  
700 North Museum Dr.  
Milwaukee  
www.mam.org  

THURSDAY 15  
LECTURE  
Laurie Olion  
Finding Lost Spaces  
7:00 p.m.  
University of Minnesota  
College of Design  
100 Rapson Hall  
www.walkart.org  

Rae, Community, and the  
Museum in 21st-Century Milwaukee  
6:15 p.m.  
Milwaukee Art Museum  
700 North Museum Dr.  
Milwaukee  
www.mam.org  

SATURDAY 17  
LECTURES  
Greg Willner, Patrick Crouch,  
Mark Covington, Art Schely-Atkinson, et al.  
Urban Farming: Fiction, Fable and the Facts  
1:00 p.m.  
Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit  
4645 Woodward Ave., Detroit  
www.mocadetroit.org  
William A. Ewing  
Right Time, Right Man,  
Right Place: Edward Steichen  
and the Birth of Modern Photography  
1:00 p.m.  
The Nelson-Atkins  
Museum of Art  
4525 Oak St., Kansas City  
www.nelson-kins.org  

EVENT  
Bus Tour: Devil in the White City  
10:00 p.m.  
Chicago History Museum  
1601 North Clark St., Chicago  
www.chicagohistory.org  

EXHIBITION OPENING  
Arthur Pope and a New  
Survey of Persian Art  
Art Institute of Chicago  
111 South Michigan Ave., Chicago  
www.artic.edu  

SUNDAY 25  
EXHIBITION OPENING  
Henni Cartier-Bresson:  
The Modern Century  
Art Institute of Chicago  
111 South Michigan Ave., Chicago  
www.artic.edu  

WEDNESDAY 28  
EXHIBITION OPENING  
Deconstructed View  
Murphy Hill Gallery  
3333 West Arthington Ave.  
Chicago  
www.murphyhillgallery.com  

SATURDAY 31  
EVENT  
At Wolach  
Hidden Chicago Tour  
1:00 p.m.  
Chicago History Museum  
1601 North Clark St., Chicago  
www.chicagohistory.org  

EXHIBITION OPENINGS  
UMMA Projects:  
Jakob Kolding  
University of Michigan  
Museum of Art  
525 South State St., Ann Arbor  
www.umma.umich.edu  

August  

SATURDAY 7  
EVENT  
The Chicago’s Asian  
Community  
1:00 p.m.  
Chicago History Museum  
1601 North Clark St., Chicago  
www.chicagohistory.org  

TUESDAY 10  
LECTURE  
Carrie Gundersdorf  
Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago  
220 East Chicago Ave.  
Chicago  
www.mcachicago.org  

From Western ghost towns to New York City subway riders, Walker Evans’ black-and-white images influenced 20th-century photography and shaped the way Americans view their country and themselves. “In a career that spanned five decades, Evans radically altered the collective American consciousness,” according to curator James Crump. Finding beauty in banal objects that others would ignore, Evans sought to abandon romantic idealism, working for the Farm Security Administration to document victims of the Great Depression in the rural South. He was attracted to landscapes and buildings, and among his first works was the rarely exhibited study of New England’s Victorian houses, shown in 1932 at the Museum of Modern Art’s first exhibition devoted to the work of a single photographer. Also included are prints from Evans’ trips to Tahiti and Cuba, as well as roadside scenes such as Pabst Blue Ribbon Sign, Chicago, Illinois (1946, above). But the exhibit moves beyond nostalgia, charting Evans’ reexamination by examining his final photographs. Shot with the then-new Polaroid SX-70 in the early 1970s, they conclude the impressive body of work by the St. Louis-born master.  

Walker Evans: Decade by Decade  
Cincinnati Art Museum  
953 Eden Park Drive  
Through September 5 

JEFF GEYS: WOODWARD AVENUE  
Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit  
4645 Woodward Avenue, Detroit  
Through July 25 

Relentlessly fascinated by forms of documentation, Belgian artist Jeff Geys has gathered a meticulous inventory of immediate surroundings, combining strategies of conceptual, educational, and typological investigation. For the Belgian Pavilion at the 53rd Venice Biennale, he asked four acquaintances who lived or worked in a large city—Vilnius, the Czech Republic, eastern France, along with New York, Moscow, and Brussels—to map out one square kilometer, and within that surface search for 12 wild plants growing in the streets, otherwise known as weeds. Named Quadra Medicinale, that interdisciplinary exhibition became the kickoff for Geys’ newest body of work. An expansion as well as a new departure, the project is based in Detroit, specifically the Woodward Avenue corridor. Incorporating plants from 12 intersections beginning at Cadillac Square and ending at Saginaw Street, the installation includes dried plant specimens alongside their scientific descriptions and analyses (including Trifolium pratense, or red clover, above), plus photographs and maps. This rare U.S. exhibition by the artist also features two new films that record an ethnobotany workshop with traditional health practitioners in Bolivia.
Ever the anomaly in the world of architecture—from his early days peddling standardized concrete masonry units to his later foray into geodesic domes—Buckminster Fuller (1895–1983) remains an enigma, even after finally being invited into the inner rings of the architectural pantheon. Following on 2008’s Starting Somewhere, a show centered on Fuller’s epic struggle with the evolution of the Dymaxion House, Loretta Lorance focuses on Fuller’s biography and on the Dymaxion House in Becoming Bucky Fuller, which she declares a “revisionist study.” The other, Fuller Houses by Federico Neder, uses Fuller as an armature to explore ideas and images surrounding his development of the Dymaxion House as something less concerned with an “object than with the project.” As narrow as the former is, the latter is broad. And this concern with the project, Lorance has determined, follows out of Fuller’s failure at producing the object. Lorance argues that Fuller revamped himself as a visionary of domestic architecture when he could not mass-produce his Dymaxion House. Fuller spent the better part of the late 1920s to 1930s developing various prototypes of what eventually became the only two built Dymaxion Houses, which were recently cropped into an exhibition at the Henry Ford museum. Despite his unwavering belief and determination that his designs were the future of domestic architecture, Fuller eventually realized architectural, societal, industry, and most importantly, investor support were not forthcoming. Thus he decided to position himself, according to Lorance, as an idealistic visionary. Fuller’s development as a salesman and a dedicated entrepreneur, for better or worse, is well documented. He tenaciously engaged possible investors, presented questionable patents, and requested that the AIA support his project. The AIA flatly rejected Fuller on the grounds that they do not support mass-produced architecture. Lorance uses these opportunities to discern the factual Fuller from the fictional—such as his presenting the Dymaxion as a project ready for production—by highlighting discrepancies between accepted history and “fact.” However, only in the last chapter does Lorance delve into “revisioning” Fuller’s history. The evidence for this emerges from the autobiographical...

**The School of Dramatic Arts under construction, 1961–1965.**

The tragic that prevailed in much of the world at the time, and before the Soviet-influenced cell-block aesthetic took hold in Cuba. Around 1980, the government began to show an interest in completing the complex. Dulzaides, born in Cuba in 1965, had studied at the visual arts school in the 1980s, but fled Cuba and eventually became an American citizen. In 1999 he visited the campus, where he discovered that the ballet school site had been reclaimed from the jungle overgrowth. While there, he took upon himself to clean out the clogged series of stepped drainage channels that span the building’s rooftop, an act which ultimately motivated the entire project. Central to the show are two 30-minute films. Utopia Possible documents the last decade of Gottardi’s progress—or lack thereof—in trying to complete the Drama School complex. Since 2004, he’s developed four additional concepts for the project; unlike Porro and Garatti, Gottardi redesigns his building numerous times because he felt it had to be a building of today rather than that of half a century ago. (All three architects, now in their 80s, are still active.) In addition to offering a close look at the beauty of the architecture, including footages of Dulzaides cleaning out the drainage channels, the film serves as a cautionary tale of the too-often torturous process of design and construction common to every building project.

Next Time It Rains is less a documentary than Dulzaides’ very personal rumination on the beauty of the National Schools campus, focusing on the School of Ballet and really providing the essence of the exhibition. Sequences of Porro discussing the work with Dulzaides are spliced with those of a ballet dancer improvising in the unfinished building, teenagers clambering over the rooftops, and images of water coursing through the channels. If there’s any deficiency to the show, it’s that you have to do a fair amount of digging to find the full context for the films. There is one introductory wall text in the outer lobby of Madlener House, but the wall cards in the exhibit itself offer little more than the titles and dates of the work. That said, numerous background materials are available, and you’d be well advised to look at them to appreciate the show fully.

Utopia Possible isn’t a show to breeze through quickly. It takes time and contemplation. If you give it that, the image of a place—and of a lost future—comes briefly into view.

**PHILIP BERGER IS A FREQUENT CONTRIBUTOR TO AN.**

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**The Future at Home**

_Becoming Bucky Fuller_  
Loretta Lorance  
MIT Press, $29.95

_Fuller Houses: R. Buckminster Fuller’s Dymaxion Dwellings and Other Domestic Adventures_  
Federico Neder  
Lars Müller Publishers, $39.95

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**Channeling a Better Cuba**

_Utopia Possible: Felipe Dulzaides_  
The Graham Foundation  
Madlener House  
4 West Burton Place, Chicago  
Through July 17
As much as Lorance focuses on Fuller’s personality during the development of the Dymaxion House, Federico Neder focuses on the cultural context happening concurrently to Fuller’s perpetually transforming project. Readers encounter Diego Rivera, Adolf Loos, Frederick Kiesler, and the ever-present Le Corbusier, among others. Fuller Houses categorizes itself around themed chapters on innovation, enclosure, lightness, form, control, and the artifact that the Dymaxion House ultimately became. Each calls upon contemporaries of Fuller to explicate the timeliness of his theories, practices, or their advanced nature. The first, “Flying Fish,” tackles the influence of progress and innovation that ultimately yielded to aerodynamics. As such, Fuller presented the Dymaxion as an engineering and technological feat that reduces friction with the natural environment and reduces the physical labor of inhabitants so they could devote themselves to other, more pleasurable or self-enriching endeavors.

One of the odder pairings is the discrepancy between the stark lines of Adolf Loos’ 1903 apartment and the overly textured and cushioned interior. This was the exact approach Fuller took to make the unfamiliar form of the Dymaxion seem more domestic to potential investors. Neder reveals this as one of the root of the discrepancy between yearning for technological advancement and a cushy lifestyle.

In the chapter “Industrial Dance,” the image of Diego Rivera inspecting Fuller’s Dymaxion Car initiates the conversation between the intertwining of the machine and the organic, such as Rivera represented it in his murals. However, while Fuller’s rounded forms, Neder points out, coincide with aesthetic developments, they really evolve from his technological investigations. The chapter concludes with comparing Kiesler’s Endless House to the Dymaxion House as both projects combine “in a single gesture the sensuality of form and the precision of geometry.” Neder notes that the former failed to escape abstraction and the latter couldn’t escape the limits of technology.

Neder’s final pages continue the vector of these themes into contemporary investigation—the sinuous forms, techno-aesthetics, and prefabrication. Ultimately, both books illustrate that the Dymaxion House at different stages of its development meant something different even to its designer, either as a product of the day or a vision of the future. I found Lorance’s book not difficult to read but difficult to enjoy. Its highly academic tone and structure focuses on personal minutiae and rests well in the hands of researchers. Written chronologically, the book progresses from event to event, strung together with quotes and citations, dry facts over compelling narrative. Conversely, Neder’s book reads as a comparative history that ties together architectural and artistic achievements to create a context of creativity. Anecdotes and disparate references make interesting revelations and connections. These create a richer understanding of the items that intrigued Fuller’s investigations as well as the broader society into which Fuller loosed his provocations.

**James Way is a New York–based writer.**

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**Chicago, Illinois, Oct. 20-23, 2010**

**Chicago Navy Pier**

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It doesn’t take a hard-hat worker to appreciate the raw beauty of a building in construction. And for anyone who has never had the chance to work on the latest high-profile museum, concert hall, or trophy academic building, New York–based photographer Stanley Greenberg captures these structures as they go up, when few would consider them camera ready. His best images, such as this isolated view of a tower-like form that supports Coop Himmelb(l)au’s 2007 Akron Art Museum, frame elements with a detached precision that recalls Bernd and Hilla Becher’s photographs of industrial and vernacular building types. Greenberg reminds us that what lies beneath the skin of today’s avant-garde architecture is often as interesting as what we see on opening day.

An exhibition of Greenberg’s photos, Architecture Under Construction, including images of buildings by Zaha Hadid, Steven Holl, Renzo Piano, Frank Gehry, among others, is on view at the Art Institute of Chicago through September 6. A book with the same title is available from the University of Chicago Press, with an introduction by Joseph Rosa.

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Top right: Untitled, Kansas City, Missouri, 2005 from the Nelson Atkins Museum of Art designed by Steven Holl; Below left: Untitled, Akron, Ohio, 2005 from the Akron Art Museum designed by Coop Himmelb(l)au; Below right: Untitled, Chicago, Illinois, 2007 from the Modern Wing at the Chicago Art Institute designed by Renzo Piano.
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