Two of the four cranes on the skyline in Kansas City are for major Moshe Safdie projects. The projects—the West Edge, a $80 million mixed-use project, and the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts (KCPA), a 285,000-square-foot, $413 million complex that will house the Kansas City Symphony, Lyric Opera, and Kansas City Ballet—are not proceeding with equal ease. On September 25, the

September Surge
Defying the global economic doldrums, numbers released on October 20 by the American Institute of Architects show that last month brought an unexpected jolt of hope for design firms, with billings for the hard bitten continued on page 7

What do you do with an old baseball stadium? Usually, to the chagrin of fans and preservationists alike, the answer is simple: Tear it down. That’s what happened with the Old Comiskey Park in Chicago and Tiger Stadium in Detroit. Indianapolis’ Bush Stadium, however, could face a better fate. Two disparate proposals are currently in the works to renovate and repurpose the nearby 80-year-old ballpark, located in the city’s historic Riverside neighborhood. While one plan calls for converting continued on page 7
In late October, New Jersey Governor Chris Christie cancelled the nation’s most expensive, and one of its most ambitious, infrastructure projects, a new train tunnel linking New Jersey to New York City. Planners have argued for decades that the project is essential to metropolitan New York’s continued growth. But the dismay quickly spread beyond the Jersey Shore. Pundits will debate the political and fiscal implications of Christie’s decision for years to come. While the governor’s move is a major setback for transit advocates, the national picture is not so grim, as progressive thinking on infrastructure is spreading across the country.

I recently spoke with John Norquist, president of the Chicago-based Congress for New Urbanism, about the recent spate of U.S. Department of Transportation TIGER II grants, which include three grants for highway removal projects, among dozens of other streetscape and transit projects. “It’s one of the first times that federal money has been used for highway removal. These three cities decided to do something different, and the federal government selected them to support,” Norquist said. “Ray LaHood’s DOT is willing to look at creative ideas.”

Norquist suggested that political unity—such a fragile concept these days—between mayors, governors, and state DOTs is essential in pursuing federal dollars and in coordinating coherent transportation policy, particularly when it involves innovative thinking. Options like highway removal were completely unimaginable twenty years ago, until progressive planners and designers (including the then vanguard New Urbanists) gave people new ideas and images of the city, which were in turn used to inspire policy at the state and local levels.

It’s indisputable that U.S. transportation policy has long favored cars, trucks, and planes over more pedestrian-friendly modes of transportation. Now a more balanced transportation policy is beginning to take hold. Energy and environmental infrastructure are the next frontier. Here too, are encouraging signs.

Chicago architects are already tackling water, power, and multi-modal transportation systems. With Adrian Smith’s decarbonization program for the Loop, UrbanLab’s eco-boulevards, and Clare Lyster’s O’Hare Super Strip (see page 14), Chicago’s architects are embarking infrastructure as a field for investigation and Chicago itself as a site for continued innovation. Indeed, Chicago, with its famously top-down political structure, would seem an ideal place to implement Burnham-scale thinking. Such ambition will be critical if the course of the Chicago River is ever to be restored to its natural direction (see page 8), a project that has vast implications for the health of Lake Michigan, as well as for the entire Mississippi River corridor and the Gulf of Mexico.

As we have seen in the slow but steady evolution of transportation policy, architects have a critical role in these debates, both as thinkers and image-makers and as citizens. We’ll do our part to make sure the best of these ideas get circulated, and perhaps, ultimately, built.

ALAN G. BRAKE

CHASING THE SYSTEM

Robert E. Thomas

ASSISTANT MARKETING MANAGER

ASSOCIATE ART DIRECTOR

MANAGING EDITOR

EXECUTIVE EDITOR

PUBLISHER

THE ARCHITECT’S NEWSPAPER NOVEMBER 10, 2010

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DEDICATED DECORATOR

The Loop is about to see its game changed with the opening this month of the J.W. Marriott Hotel at 208 South LaSalle. So you can imagine Eavesdrop’s panic when we turned a corner on the way to lunch to see about a dozen fire trucks parked outside of the nearly complete hotel. The historic Burnham building’s conversion is the work of Lucien Lagrange, who happens to be in the middle of a fun trifecta: bankruptcy, dissolving his firm, and divorcing his wife (we’re sure the latter had nothing to do with the fire alarm).

As dozens of people spilled out onto the street from the emergency stairwells, firemen were furiously suitting up and unwinding their hoses. Through the chaos, we did get a glimpse of the new interiors. Yawn! Our attention span waning, we started to stroll off when out of the corner of our eye we spotted a man in the lobby, frantically taking measurements with tape in hand, obviously refusing to let a potentially serious fire keep him from his carpet placing and pillow fluffing. Lucien, if this dedicated decorator works for you, then you might want to consider giving him hazardous duty pay. And, in case you were wondering, the hotel did not burn down. On the way back from lunch, the scene had returned to normal, and the decorator was still on the job.

PATRICK BATEMAN GOES SHOPPING

Volume Gallery, the event-based design space, recently hosted an opening for Felicia Ferrone’s work in the West Loop’s Checker Taxi building. At the opening night of On Space, we were not sure who or what was more attractive: the crowd, the designer herself, or her furniture and other wares. It was a toss up. Ferrone’s work is hot, fit for the setting of a 1980s-excess Bret Easton Ellis novel, in a good way. With a big dose of edginess and glamour, the work felt fresh and innovative, not nostalgic. Many other local designers were in attendance, including Michael Savona. Michael, Eavesdrop would really like one of your “Shhh!” lamps. We would make a similar request to Felicia for her glassware, but its price-point definitely exceeds the bounds of our non-Glamorama expense account.

SEND FRIEnDMEN AND FANCy GLASSWARE TO MIDWEST@EAVESDROP.ARCHPAPER.COM.

WWW.ARCHPAPER.COM

NYC’S LANDMARKS COMMISSION QUASHES GUGGENHEIM KIOSK

Frank Lloyd Wrong

At a public hearing on October 19, New York City’s Landmarks Preservation Commission denied an application by the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation to build a food kiosk outside the entrance of its Frank Lloyd Wright–designed home on 9th Avenue’s Museum Mile. Designed by Andre Kikoski Architect, the proposal called for a teardrop-shaped, double-skinned structure, clad in brushed stainless steel with an outer layer of cast-resin panels. During the hearing, museum officials, including the institution’s council and deputy officer for operations, expressed the desire to clean up the area around the museum, which is popular with food and merchandise vendors, as well as capture some of the revenues that go to the vendors. Kikoski described the atmosphere outside the museum derogatorily as “carnival-like” and “cluttered.”

The proposal called for the roughly 12-by-6-foot kiosk to be placed underneath the museum’s cantilevered entrance portico, with a solid wall facing the street. The only opening in the 9-foot-tall structure would face the bookstore, just north of the entrance, and a series of menu stanchions would guide lines around the curved perimeter. Kikoski argued that the “diaphanous” effect of the steel-and-glass skin would differentiate the structure from Wright’s design, while paying subtle homage to his formal language. Preservation groups ranging from the Historic Districts Council to the Friends of the Upper East Side to Docomomo all rallied against the project. Speaking on behalf of Docomomo, John Arbuckle warned that the kiosk would disrupt Wright’s famed entry sequence—the feeling of compression upon entering the portico followed by the release of the vast rotunda.

The size, location, and permanence of the structure all proved objectionable to the commissioners. “While I admire the design and find the material selection interesting,” said Fred Bland, a commissioner and principal at Beyer Blinder Belle, “at no level can I accept the design. The quality of the museum and particularly the cantilevered entrance would be violated.” Chairman Robert Tierney concurred: “All the standards by which we judge applications are not met in this proposal.”

Kikoski previously designed the eye-catching Wright restaurant inside the museum, as well as a discreet coffee and wine counter within the galleries. Several commissioners suggested that a movable cart, like those of the street vendors lining the sidewalk, would be more appropriate.

AGB

> LINC//ON PARK

APPLE STORE

1801 West North Avenue
Chicago
Tel: 312-777-4200
Designer: Bohlin Cywinski Jackson with Hoerr Schaudt

Taking a cue from its earlier venture, Apple has opened its second store within Chicago city limits on what is perhaps the Michigan Avenue for locals: the North Avenue shopping corridor in Lincoln Park. Apple takes center stage with its architecturally ambitious new building on the triangular site of the North/Clybourn Red Line L station, which they also invested millions in renovating. A new outdoor plaza, the site’s strongest design element, divides the station from the store. The plaza is bordered by three raised planters, and bertoia side chairs and small round cafe tables surround a fountain sitting at grade. The cumulative effect feels worthy of a museum sculpture garden.

The building itself, clad in brushed metal panels, sits on a north/south orientation, with glass walls and entrances at each end and a third facing west into the shared plaza with the EL. If customers tear their eyes away from the products and look up into the soaring room, they’ll find a massive skylight running the length of the building that fills the space with natural light. What they won’t see is the green roof that caps the sleek structure.
The Minneapolis law firm Nilan Johnson Lewis (NJL) wanted an office that would convey a simple message. "They're not your father's law firm," said Sara Weiner, a project architect with the Cuningham Group, the project's designers. For Cuningham, this meant using sustainable design to create an open, collaborative atmosphere, reflecting the company's egalitarian values and its client-centered approach.

Located in the podium of a midcentury modern office building originally designed by Holabird, Root & Burgee with Thorshov & Cerny, the resulting interior has a handsome, relaxed feel. "The design reflects the clean lines of the midcentury building," said Weiner. With lounges and collaborative areas sprinkled throughout the space, the atmosphere is more reminiscent of a hip midcentury residence than a buttoned-up corporate modern office. "We wanted to create places where people could kick back and share the news of the day," she said. Filling two floors, the 77,000-square-foot office is divided into groups by practice areas, which the designers call "neighborhoods," that branch off a central corridor, or "main street." Each cluster has a common area, many of which are outfitted with beverage stations and comfortable lounge seating. Floor-to-ceiling windows offer generous views out to the city, which, since the offices are located in the podium of the building, feels close at hand. "It's really in the heart of everything," she said. "You feel the activity of the city all around you."

Offices are kept at a standard, rather modest size, 10 by 15 feet, to de-emphasize the sense of hierarchy. Custom glazed office fronts, with a geometric pattern of translucent and transparent glass, balance openness and privacy while allowing natural light into the large floorplates. Glass is also used in the systems furniture for administrative staff, which was customized using a system from Haworth. Corner spaces, typically the most coveted offices, are left open for collaborative areas and conference rooms.

Sustainable features include recycled and low VOC materials, certified sustainable hardwoods, bike storage and shower facilities, abundant use of day lighting, highly efficient heating and cooling systems, lighting with occupancy sensors, and locally sourced materials. The designers are seeking LEED Silver certification for the project. According to Weiner, the firm and their clients are thrilled with the new space, so much so that clients have borrowed NJL's conference rooms for their own use.

**RESOURCES:**
- Broadloom carpet: Constantine
  [www.constantine-carpet.com](http://www.constantine-carpet.com)
- Carpet tile: Shaw
  [www.shawfloors.com](http://www.shawfloors.com)
- Paints: Sherwin-Williams
  [www.sherwin-williams.com](http://www.sherwin-williams.com)
- Systems furniture: Patterns and Masters from Haworth
  [www.haworth.com](http://www.haworth.com)
- Solid surfacing: Corian
- Ceiling tile: USG interiors
  [www.usg.com](http://www.usg.com)
- General office lighting: Focal Point
  [www.focalpointlights.com](http://www.focalpointlights.com)
- Accent lighting: Kurt Versen
  [www.kurtnersen.com](http://www.kurtnersen.com)
  Lithonia
  [www.lithonia.com](http://www.lithonia.com)
  Zumtobel
  [www.zumtobel.com](http://www.zumtobel.com)
- Lounge sofas: Bernhardt
  [www.bernhardt.com](http://www.bernhardt.com)
  Keilhauer
  [www.keilhauer.com](http://www.keilhauer.com)
- Lounge Chairs: Coalesse
  [www.coalesse.com](http://www.coalesse.com)
One site is an old bindery. Below: The 12 sites.

associate director now in charge of AHMM's Oklahoma City projects. “We saw an opportunity to take some of our urban knowledge from projects in Europe and apply it in the U.S.” An Oklahoma City native, Scaramucci credits much of the downtown revitalization to a series of publicly funded MAPS (Metropolitan Area Projects) initiatives in the early 1990s, aimed at improving the city’s economy after years of decline. Several components of a core-to-shore project to unite downtown with the Oklahoma River were included in the MAPS 3 proposal passed last year.

So far, the firm has 12 projects underway. Most are clustered in neighborhoods like Automobile Alley, where investors and individuals have bought decrepit brick buildings that were home to the city’s car dealerships and mechanic shops in the earlier half of the 20th century. AHMM is developing designs to convert Mel’s Towing, a two-story brick warehouse, into a condo- tion, high ceilings, and long clear spans—appeal to savvy developers aesthetically, and AHMM will repurpose other original elements to meet the goal of pedestrian-friendly living. At 1100 North Broadway, the firm is working with developer Midtown Construction to convert the former garage to one- and two-bedroom townhomes transforming existing site showrooms to create a parking space for bikes just yet, so reconfiguring parking is a large component of the firm’s multifamily projects there. At 1100 North Broadway, parking spaces will be at 45-degree angles, making them more accessible for visitors to a new ground-floor gallery in the building’s base. Downtown, in the Deep Deuce neighborhood that was once home to jazz legends like the Count Basie Orchestra, Northeast 4th Street and Harrison and Oklahoma avenues form a triangular plot, mostly empty except for a gas station. “It’s a gateway to Oklahoma City,” Scaramucci said, “but it’s completely underused.” After approaching the property’s owner, AHMM was hired to design a 30,000-square-foot retail center called Maywood Flatiron, doubling the usable square footage with a rooftop parking lot, and proposing a dynamic louvered facade to shade full-height glass windows.

Nearby, the firm is working with developer Center City Properties on a four-story, 228-unit multifamily project that will include 5,000 square feet of retail space, and house private parking spaces in an internal courtyard, the rest of which will be landscaped. “This is about taking some of the experiences we gained doing the London 2012 Olympics masterplan, by doing housing that is very dense,” said Scaramucci. A robust natural gas economy has carried the city relatively unscathed through the recent recession and now, thanks in part to underdevelopment that has plagued the city since the mid-80s oil crash, it is poised to become a model of European-style urban planning in the U.S. “Over the last two years, we’ve had the very good fortune to find like-minded and ambitious clients,” said Scaramucci. “It’s a big move for Oklahoma City.”

JENNIFER R. GORSCH

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ONE STUMBLE, ONE SOAR continued from front page

KCBA held its one-year-to completion party, but backers of the West Edge development, a 203,000-square-foot, nine-story project, are singing a different tune. On August 28, the half-completed project sold at auction for $10 million. That bid, as has been the history with this project, fell apart on October 12, and the second bid from the previous owner and original proponent of a mixed-use development secured the property for $9.5 million.

A casualty of the recession, the West Edge development has been marred by delays, cost overruns, and the bankruptcy filing of its initial developer. Its new owner, Cecil Van Tuyl, has yet to confirm if the hotel, office, and retail complex will be completed with the same composition or the same architect. “This was a custom-designed office building like a made-to-measure suit. It is unfortunate that those who the building was designed for are not going to be benefiting from the fruits of their labor,” Safdie told AN.

In the 1990s, Van Tuyl proposed a massive redevelopment at the location of the West Edge project, only to be rebuffed by community opposition. When Bob Bernstein of Bernstein-Rein Advertising created Trilogy Development to develop an office complex for his firm, he learned from this earlier attempt. Through an international competition that required and sought significant community input, the Moshe Safdie project easily navigated the approval process. With its curb cuts limited to a private drive through the center of the site, glass atriums stepping down toward Brush Creek, and the tapering of building heights from high to lower density areas going east to west and north to south, the project was designed to fit into the character of the neighborhood.

Yet down the road and only a few miles to the north, the KCPA has a very different relationship with the city. Shortly after winning the competition for West Edge, Safdie was invited back to Kansas City by Julia Kaufman, daughter of Ewing Kaufman of the Kaufman Foundation and Marion Laboratories, to assist the design of the nascent civic project. Safdie said, “The relationship cemented itself fairly quickly, and within a few weeks I was working on my designs.” Instead of forcing the programming into one multi-purpose event hall, the project contains two venues tailor-made specifically to its users. The two large shells mark the emergence of each venue from a grand foyer and lobby that faces south toward the city. Somewhat protected from the noise and chaos of the downtown skyline, the second primary entrance is an extension of Central Avenue, which becomes the cavern between the two performance halls and provides access from the Bartle Hall Convention Center directly to the north. “I hope this building will change the self-image of the city,” said Safdie. “It is very iconic because it is memorable, it is talked about, and it elicits, I hope, affection.”

GUNNAR HAND
Balmond on the Move

Call it the 40-year itch. At age 67 and after four decades building a global reputation for and at the UK-based engineering firm Arup, Cecil Balmond has announced plans to set up a studio of his own “to make more things.” Reached by phone as he crisscrossed London in a cab, Balmond was happy to discuss his options. After successful art installations in Chicago last year and in Tokyo this year, Balmond said that he felt encouraged to do more installation work exploring “seriality as it relates to forms, ratios, and ideas,” perhaps expanding it to the scale of modular housing.

With more exhibition offers in the pipeline, he has been approached as well about product-design opportunities by a large European manufacturer, who came to him after seeing the 2006 bridge with kaleidoscopic panels that he designed in Coimbra, Portugal. Of this new project, he would only say “it’s under wraps.” Rather than restless, Balmond seems simply eager for the widest range of design work possible, as if working on the Seattle Library and CCTV with Rem Koolhaas and the Imperial War Museum with Daniel Libeskind, among other celebrated buildings, did not offer variety enough. “I’d like to design letterhead,” he exclaimed.

Asked if he had modeled his own career—which has included teaching, writing (his manifesto Informal is now in its fifth printing), and collaborating—after some distinguished figure in engineering history, he said, “No, I don’t follow anyone. There’s a whole collection of wisdom one has gained and absorbed. I get what I can, and move on.”

Informal 2 is coming out next spring. Balmond has garnered co-authorship from architects (Koolhaas at CCTV; Alvaro Siza at the 2005 Serpentine Gallery Pavilion) and artists (Anish Kapoor on the sculpture Temenos and a tower for London’s 2012 Olympics), a feat perhaps unprecedented in contemporary architecture. “I didn’t have to fight for it,” he said. “It just happened as part of the flow.” But he doesn’t see the roles of architect and engineer melding, suggesting it’s a matter of “scale and ambition.”

On routine projects, each practitioner naturally and necessarily remains distinct, with one bringing “scientific rigor” and the other an awareness of “program and past references.” As for his legacy at Arup, Balmond spoke of his role in expanding the firm’s European presence and in pioneering a relationship with the Serpentine Gallery Pavilion, now an influential rite of summer in London. Though Arup employees number thousands in over 30 countries, Balmond’s studio will remain small and concentrated, a maximum of 14 to 16 people with different skills; he already has a philosopher from Oxford on board. “Now that I am free from corporate duties, I can concentrate on my agenda,” he said. “It’s a very good place to be.”

JULIE V. IOVINE
The stadium as junkyard.

NEW LIFE IN THE BUSH?
continued from front page

No-Bid No More?
Rahm Emanuel has declared that ending no-bid contracts for city services and construction jobs would be a central tenet of his administration if he wins his bid to be Chicago's next mayor. “We’ve got to change the culture. We’re in the business of delivering services. This is not about rewarding friends and family members,” Emanuel told the Tribune. Cronyism and corruption scandals have marred the Daley administration, and Emanuel’s reform-minded campaign may be hitting its mark. With several potential candidates having recently opted out of the race, he’s currently considered the front-runner.

High-Speed Rail
Picking Up Steam
In late October, the United States Department of Transportation announced a second round of high-speed rail grants: $230 million to create new intercity rail service from Iowa City to Chicago, and $161 million for service from Detroit to Chicago. Iowa City has not had passenger rail access to Chicago since the 1960s. Speed on the lines could reach up to 110 miles per hour. Higher speeds will allow for more trips between Chicago and Detroit, from three per day up to six trips. Work on both lines is expected to be complete in 2013.

Graham Gets Street Cred
On October 28, more than 500 people attended a memorial service and tribute to the late SOM architect Bruce Graham, the lead architect on the Willis Tower and the John Hancock Center. As part of the celebration, a portion of roadway running to the south and the east alongside Hancock Center was named Honorary Bruce Graham Way.

September Surge
continued from front page
The stadium into an apartment complex, another strives to create Indiana’s first “living building.” The 12,000-seat Bush Stadium, erected in 1931 as Perry Stadium, is rich in history and Americana. The structure was designed by local architects Pierre and Wright, and built by Osborn Engineering, the same firm that brought us Tiger Stadium, Fenway Park, and nearly every other famous ballpark of the first half of the 20th century. Notable for its art deco facade and ivy-covered outfield, the ballpark was a major attraction for the city and state. While primarily home to the minor league Indianapolis Indians, Bush Stadium also hosted two Negro League teams, and played the part of Comiskey Park in the movie Eight Men Out. The ballpark was renamed Victory Stadium during World War II, and finally christened Bush Stadium, after former major league and Indianapolis native Donnie Bush, when the city purchased the stadium in 1967.

With so much history at stake, no one wanted to tear the stadium down when the Indians moved across town to the new Victory Field in 1996. Instead, the ballpark, which is on the U.S. National Register of Historic Places, sat vacant. Though it has recently been used to store traded-in cash-for-clunkers cars, Indiana Landmarks put Bush Stadium on its list of the state’s ten most endangered structures. The designation has more to do with the stadium’s vacancy than any significant structural damage or deterioration.

Partially in response to this desire to preserve Bush Stadium, and with the far-reaching goal of developing the entire corridor along West 16th Street, the city of Indianapolis organized a task force in cooperation with Indiana University, BioCrossroads, and community organizations, among other groups. “The goal of the task force is to bring shovel-ready life sciences projects to the corridor,” said Michael Huber, deputy mayor of Economic Development.

Though check-full with four-square homes and bungalows from the 1910s and 1920s, Riverside remains underdeveloped. It is, however, extremely attractive to the life sciences industry, due in great part to its proximity to Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis. Local developer John Watson is currently working with the city on a proposal for 100-plus apartments and office units that would maintain the original facade of Bush Stadium, but not the stadium itself. Huber says preservationists have praised the design for maintaining the important historic aspects of the stadium.

Ryan Fitzpatrick and the educational nonprofit Crossroads of Indianaapolis are relatively new to the debate, but they offer a unique proposal. Fitzpatrick wants to turn the stadium into Bush Stadium Park, Indiana’s first living building, an entirely sustainable multi-use showroom and laboratory for the life sciences industry. This proposal represents the bulk of Crossroads’ application for the Living City Design Competition, sponsored by the Living Building Institute, a competitor of sorts to the U.S. Green Building Council.

Fitzpatrick and his colleagues are currently finishing their proposal, though they have already met with city officials in anticipation of the contest’s February 1 deadline. “We’re trying to build something that many people have not seen. It’s a challenge for all architects, engineers, and the university,” said Fitzpatrick.

Huber said the mayor’s office is reviewing all proposals, and hopes to make an official recommendation in the next four to five months.

Robert E. Thomas
The fear and furor that has surrounded the intrepid advance of hordes of Asian carp up the Mississippi River Basin has found its focal point in the Chicago waterways. The final battle to keep this dominating aquatic invader out of the Great Lakes—where, if infiltration occurs, they are expected to decimate the fisheries—will happen here. While many strategies are being bandied about the table at the moment, the most provocative by far, and most ambitious in terms of scale of work and repercussions to business and the environment, is a plan to re-separate the Mississippi and Great Lakes basins by re-reversing the flows of the Chicago and Calumet rivers.

While it’s too soon to tell if this would be a feasible approach, the idea has been gaining support. Even now, outgoing Mayor Richard M. Daley has thrown himself behind it. “That’s a great project,” he recently told The Chicago Tribune. “That could be the salvation, maybe, of the Great Lakes.” Studies are currently underway to determine exactly how best to implement this plan—one by the Army Corps of Engineers, another by The Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative (GLSLCI) and The Great Lakes Commission (GLC)—and experts on the matter seem to have a pretty good handle on the necessary basic steps.

The Chicago and Calumet rivers were originally reversed from flowing into Lake Michigan to flowing into the Des Plaines River and from there, eventually, into the Mississippi in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Before that time, Chicago’s sewage went straight into the rivers and the lake, the city’s source of drinking water. Fear of a cholera epidemic spurred the massive civil engineering project, which included construction of control locks at the mouths of the rivers and at Lockport, and the digging of two major canals, the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal and the Cal-Sag Channel. Completed in 1922, the project had the desired effect of moving sewage downstream instead of into the drinking water supply, and also opened up a commercial shipping corridor that remains an enormous economic driver for the region to this day.

The reversal also had some less laudatory effects. Relieved from the danger of poisoning itself on its own effluent, and relying on nature to do the job, Chicago never bothered to disinfect its sewage before releasing it on the world, making it the only metropolis in the United States with that dubious distinction. Today, the city’s sewage receives only the most minimal treatment before being discharged. Rife as they are with fecal coliform colonies, the city’s waterways are peppered with signs warning “Not Fit For Any Human Body Contact.” Chicago is also the only city on the Great Lakes that uses lake water, but does not return it to the source. Instead, it

**Reversing the flow of Chicago’s waterways once addressed 19th-century urban problems. Restoring the natural direction will require 21st-century thinking to cope with contemporary challenges and augment the city’s water infrastructure.**

*By Aaron Seward*
consumes roughly two billion gallons per day and then flushes it into the Gulf of Mexico, contributing massively to the Mississippi Delta’s infamous dead region and at the same time depleting the Great Lakes, which happen to be the world’s largest reserve of fresh water.

So the rational for re-reversing Chicago’s waterways appears to be larger than the cause of ecological separation. “We have a moral obligation to deal with pollution issues locally, rather than sending them downstream,” said Margaret Frisbie, executive director of Friends of the Chicago River and a member of the advisory committee for GLSLCI and GLC’s re-reversal study. “And if we’re diminishing the Great Lakes, what the hell are we doing? We have the technology to change that.” The GLSLCI is calling its plan—which is still in its formative stages (an RFP has lured proposals from six engineering firms, and the organization hopes to have three possible implementation schemes ready by 2012)—a 21st-century system, but there is nothing 21st-century about the technology needed to pull it off. The crux of the issue is two-fold: The first requires keeping the commercial shipping corridor open, whether through large-moving systems, overland transfers, or other methods. The second requires keeping storm water out of the sewers. At the time being, as little as ¼-inch of rain will cause sewage to overflow untreated into the waterways.

As far as the latter is concerned, much work is already underway. Since the 1970s, the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD) has been constructing its $4 billion Tunnel and Reservoir Plan (TARP, not to be confused with the federal financial industry bailout), better known as “The Deep Tunnel.” When completed—in 2015 if everything goes according to schedule—the Deep Tunnel will include 109 miles of tunnels 9 to 25 feet in diameter that will collect combined sanitary and storm sewer flows and convey them to surface reservoirs for storage until the area’s water reclamation plants can treat and safely discharge the effluent. TARP does have its critics, however. “All of the city’s drainage pipes would have to be upgraded and sized bigger for the system to work and not have bottlenecks,” explained Martin Felsen of UrbanLab, a Chicago research-based architecture and design practice that has worked on proposals for the region’s water issues. “Most people’s homes only have 4-inch pipes. Having a deep tunnel a mile away is not going to relieve the pressure.”

Another answer to storm water management is replacing the city’s vast tracts of impermeable surfaces with surfaces that either retain water or allow it to infiltrate directly into the ground. One way of accomplishing this is through green roofs, and Chicago has been aggressive in promoting this solution. While City Hall’s green roof may be the most high-profile of these projects, Chicago now has approximately 21 square feet of permeable surfaces either finished or under way, covering 7 million square feet—roughly double the amount of floor space in the Willis Tower. An even more significant measure would be to institute a porous paving system for the city’s streets and parking lots. Chicago has already taken a step in this direction with its Permeable Alleys initiative, a pilot project that installed rigid grid pavers over gravel in the alleyways of a Northside neighborhood. Eventually more than 2,000 miles of alleys could be surfaced with permeable materials. The MWRD is also in the midst of developing the Cook County Watershed Management Ordinance, a new county-wide storm water plan (currently each municipality is responsible for its own). In its present draft, now up for review, the ordinance recommends mandating permeable paving surfaces for all new development.

Keeping the commercial shipping corridor functioning in the midst of ecological separation and re-reversal is as at once a daunting undertaking and a locus of potential progress. The ship canals—where the new infrastructure would most likely need to be installed—flow through rust-belt Chicago, areas of economic depression and abandoned industry, communities that are hungry for something new. Building new transfer sites, where goods and people would be forced to pause before moving on, could create a de facto financial stimulus. “It would be the equivalent of putting in a station on a railroad, or a CTA stop,” said Felsen. “All of a sudden, you get a lot more development.”

All in all, re-reversing Chicago’s waterways seems possible, especially considering they were reversed in the first place a century ago. And while it may be too late to turn back the Asian carp invasion (the species’ DNA has already been found in the Chicago river, and one of the fish was reportedly caught in Lake Calumet), there appear to be plenty of other urgent reasons to see the project through. The GLSLCI and GLC’s study will be out in 2012, but it may be too late to see any real movement on the project anytime soon. “We are two nonprofit organizations,” said Dave Ulrich, executive director of the GLSLCI. “What we say does not have the force of law. If we come up with good ideas, they would have to be folded into the legislative process and Corps of Engineers process.” Still, momentum is building. The Environmental Protection Agency recently stated it would like the Chicago River to be clean enough for swimming in coming decades.
DIARY

THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER NOVEMBER 10, 2010

Wednesday, November 10

LECTURES

Ingrid Millet: Mies for Senior Living
5:30 p.m.
AIA Chicago
35 East Wacker Dr., Chicago
www.aiachicago.org

Thomas L. Wolff
Stewardship and Design in the Urban and Agrarian Landscape
6:00 p.m.
Illinois Institute of Technology
3360 State St., Chicago
www.iit.edu/arch/events

Ed Uhle
The Making of Millennium Park
7:00 p.m.
Walker Art Center
1750 Hennepin Ave.
Minneapolis
info.walkart.org

EVENT

African American Chicago: Exploring Bronzeville, Hyde Park, and Kenwood
9:00 a.m.
Art Institute of Chicago
220 South Columbus Dr., Chicago
www.artic.edu

Thursday, November 11

LECTURE

Chicago Foundations: An Essential History
12:00 p.m.
AIA Chicago
35 East Wacker Dr., Chicago
www.aiachicago.org

FRIDAY 12

CONFERENCE

New Technologies, Alliances, Practices
8:00 a.m.
AIA Chicago
35 East Wacker Dr., Chicago
www.aiachicago.org

SATURDAY 13

EXHIBITION OPENING

Touch and Go: Ray Yoshida and His Spheres of Influence
10:30 a.m.
Sullivan Galleries
Institute of Chicago
School of the Art and His Spheres of Influence
108x392

EVENT

Forgetten Chicago Tour
5:00 a.m.
Art Institute of Chicago
220 South Columbus Dr.
Chicago
www.artic.edu

Tuesday, November 16

LECTURES

Home Base: Michael Darling, Michelle Grabner, and Lane Relyea in Conversation
6:00 p.m.
Museum of Contemporary Art
220 East Chicago Ave.
Chicago
www.mca.chicago.org

Mark Friedlander, Dan Boochever, et al.
Risk Management Tool Kit
11:30 a.m.
AIA Chicago
35 East Wacker Dr., Chicago
www.aiachicago.org

EVENT

Langston Hughes Elementary School Tour
4:00 p.m.
240 West 104th St., Chicago
www.aiachicago.org

WEDNESDAY 17

LECTURE

Robert Bruegmann
The Architecture of Harry Weese
12:15 p.m.
Chicago Architecture Foundation
224 South Michigan Ave.
Chicago
www.architecture.org

SYMPOSIUM

Kick-Start Your Design Business
9:45 a.m.
AIA Chicago
35 East Wacker Dr., Chicago
www.aiachicago.org

EVENT

Greenbuild 2010
8:00 a.m.
McCormick Place West
2301 South Lake Shore Dr.
Chicago
www.greenbuildexpo.org

Thursday, November 18

LECTURES

David Getsy
Operating: Scott Burton, Public Art, Performance Art, and the 1970s
6:00 p.m.
Art Institute of Chicago
111 South Michigan Ave.
Chicago
www.artic.edu

Alberto Alessi
1951–2010. The Phenomenon of the Italian Design Factories and the Alessi Case
6:15 p.m.
Milwaukee Art Museum
700 North Art Museum Dr.
Milwaukee
www.mam.org

EXHIBITION OPENING

Art of the Table
Milwaukee Art Museum
700 North Art Museum Dr.
Milwaukee
www.mam.org

Friday, November 19

EVENT

AIA Detroit Honor Awards
6:00 p.m.
Lawrence Technological University
Lea Auditorium
21000 West 10 Mile Rd.
Southfield, MI
www.aiami.org

Saturday, November 20

LECTURE

European Design
Within Reach
1:30 p.m.
Milwaukee Art Museum
700 North Art Museum Dr.
Milwaukee
www.mam.org

EXHIBITION OPENING

An Intuitive Eye: André Kertész Photographs
1914–1969
Detroit Institute of Arts
5200 Woodward Ave.
Detroit
www.dia.org

Saturday with the Kids
Build Your Own Gingerbread House
10:30 a.m.
Art Institute of Chicago
111 South Michigan Ave.
Chicago
www.aiachicago.org

Tuesday, November 30

LECTURES

Gingerbread House
10:30 a.m.
Art Institute of Chicago
111 South Michigan Ave.
Chicago
www.aiachicago.org

LECTURES

Gallery Talk: David Schutter and Anthony Elms on the Work of Luc Tuymans
6:00 p.m.
Museum of Contemporary Art
220 East Chicago Ave.
Chicago
www.mca.chicago.org

LECTURES

John Vinci and Ward Miller
Celebrating the Complete Architecture of Adler & Sullivan
5:30 p.m.
AIA Chicago
35 East Wacker Dr.
Chicago
www.aiachicago.org

December

Wednesday, December 1

LECTURES

Gingerbread House
10:30 a.m.
Art Institute of Chicago
111 South Michigan Ave.
Chicago
www.aiachicago.org

Thursday, December 2

LECTURE

Katharine R. Taing
Echoes of the Past: The Buddhist Temple Caves of Xiangtangshan
6:00 p.m.
Art Institute of Chicago
111 South Michigan Ave.
Chicago
www.aiachicago.org

Saturday, December 4

LECTURE

Lynn Gabloni
Wallcoverings: Then and Now
10:00 a.m.
Chicago Architecture Foundation
220 South Michigan Ave.
Chicago
www.aiachicago.org

SYMPOSIUM

Home Light: A Celebration of Stained Glass
10:45 a.m.
Art Institute of Chicago
111 South Michigan Ave.
Chicago
www.aiachicago.org

Thursday, December 3

EVENT

Annual Meeting and Holiday Party
5:30 p.m.
AIA Chicago
35 East Wacker Dr., Chicago
www.aiachicago.org

Friday, December 4

LECTURES

Anthony Rubino: Modernism on Main Street
12:00 p.m.
AIA Chicago
35 East Wacker Dr.
Chicago
www.aiachicago.org

Richard Burger
Discovering Manhattan Culture: Ancient Temples of Peru
6:00 p.m.
Art Institute of Chicago
111 South Michigan Ave.
Chicago
www.aiachicago.org

Michael Conforti
The Clark and American Museums Today
11:00 a.m.
Minneapolis Institute of Arts
2400 3rd Ave. South
Minneapolis
www.artsmia.org

SATURDAY 11

EXHIBITION OPENING

Hyperlinks: Architecture and Design
Art Institute of Chicago
111 South Michigan Ave.
Chicago
www.aiachicago.org

Saturday, December 5

LECTURE

Bill McHugh:
Roofing Codes in Chicago and Illinois
12:00 p.m.
AIA Chicago
35 East Wacker Dr., Chicago
www.aiachicago.org

Monday, December 6

LECTURE

Mark Jarzombek
6:00 p.m.
University of Illinois Chicago
College of Architecture
Gallery 1500
845 West Harrison St., Chicago
www.arch.uic.edu

Monday, December 13

LECTURE

Zak Hoskins
6:00 p.m.
Chicago Architecture Foundation
35 East Wacker Dr., Chicago
www.aiachicago.org

Monday, December 20

LECTURE

Katharine R. Taing
Echoes of the Past: The Buddhist Temple Caves of Xiangtangshan
6:00 p.m.
Art Institute of Chicago
111 South Michigan Ave.
Chicago
www.aiachicago.org

Tuesday, December 21

LECTURE

Katharine R. Taing
Echoes of the Past: The Buddhist Temple Caves of Xiangtangshan
6:00 p.m.
Art Institute of Chicago
111 South Michigan Ave.
Chicago
www.aiachicago.org

During a three-week residency at the center, French photographer Philippe Durand photographed the outskirts of Chicago where industry and nature intermingle. Shutterstock factories and cracked concrete give way to invasive species and prairie grasses. Materials are transformed over time as nature slowly reclaims the now altered landscape. Durand then compiled nearly 20,000 of these images into a large photo mural called Rust and Flowers, showcasing landscapes that few visit, a terrain usually bypassed on roads to city, suburb, or countryside, a terra incognita excluded from the wind- shield view.
When we hear the clarion call for sustainability, threats of dystopia often follow: diminishing food and water supplies, expanding arid lands, rising sea levels, erratic weather, pandemics, flotillas of waste, not to mention waves of crude oil soaking our Gulf shores. In reaction, we are bombarded with lists of new standards, sustainability measuring systems, and the green-ness of new buildings and products. It’s enough to make your head spin.

Architecture straddles a fine line between waste and rejuvenation. Buildings consume tremendous amounts of energy—74 percent of electricity consumption—and produce massive amounts of waste, 65 percent by output. Simultaneously, architects and planners have been initiating wide-ranging initiatives, from net-zero buildings to high-density, transit-oriented developments, to offset environmental scourging.

Thomas Princen, who teaches social and ecological sustainability at the University of Michigan, has authored several sustainability-oriented books, and his latest goes to the heart of the matter. Treading Softly: Paths to Ecological Order (MIT Press, $22.95) strikes a balance between beauty and practicality. sausage of the ubiquitous Dutch libation, upon seeing his green bottles strewn about Caribbean beaches in the early 1960s initiated a cam-

Princen declares his book is for “those who know but haven’t acted. However, more facts and figures, inspiration for those who know the problem is in the grounding.”

Rematerial: From Waste to Architecture, Alejandro Bahamón and María Camila Sanjines, both based in Barcelona, introduce each building or installation with overview information, the material strategy, and detail images, all in succinct and easy-to-survey spreads. Each project concludes with a diagram of its rematerial process, which, while easy to grasp, glosses over the technical aspects of a resourceful guide.

Various authors introduce each section with an essay that grounds the strategies of the projects that follow. Anneke Bokern tells the story of how Fredy Heiniken, the magnate of the ubiquitous Dutch libation, upon seeing his green bottles strewn about Caribbean beaches in the early 1960s initiated a campaign to redesign his beer bottles into a form that could be used to build homes. John Habraken, the then-young architect in charge of the design, relays the process that yielded the WOBO, or World Bottle, a glass block-like bottle successfully used in a housing prototype, as well as the marketing politics that ultimately killed their mass production.

While many projects are private, a number of public projects, mostly installations, populate these pages. Jean Shin, in her 2003 installation Penumbra at the Socrates Sculpture Park in Queens, New York, collected fabric from broken umbrellas to create a sunshade, the metal hopefully recycled.

Students, interestingly, completed many of the projects, often as coursework. Rodrigo Sheward, a Chilean architecture student, conceived and built a particularly poetic project, an observation post in Villarica, Chile, using the remains of trees locally felled some thirty years before. These projects are exemplary in that they allow tomorrow’s practitioners and researchers the hands-on experience so desperately needed for exploring unconventional means and methods.

Both books target larger audiences than architects and environmentalists, but this populism lacks resourceful depth. Rematerial inspires through rich illustrations, diagrams, and photos, but doesn’t offer detailed processes or specifications that readers could easily implement in their own projects. The book resides somewhere between the glossy coffee-table book and a manual. Treading Softly does just that: when it comes to hard evidence. Still, both books successfully inspire and point the way to a cleaner, more sustainable future, if we start reimagining our roles and materials.

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This proposal for O’Hare Airport in Chicago takes the current $15 billion O’Hare Modernization Program (OMP) as a starting point to imagine the airport not just as a transportation terminal but as a multi-programmed urban landscape that caters to travelers as well as a regional and local population that comes to the airport to shop, play, and work. A subsurface mega-strip formed by the new parallel runway configuration stretches across the 3½-mile width of the airfield, connecting the existing airport terminals on the east side of the airfield with the proposed new terminal on the western edge. The strip hosts three large program clusters that aggregate around the terminals, linked by the CTA blue line, which, with the highway, is extended across the strip and into the city’s Northwest suburbs.

East Zone
Research of route flow shows that 34 percent of flights in and out of O’Hare are to destinations within a 1½-hour radius of Chicago. Given the high demand for regional connections, the east cluster zone by Terminal 5, the international terminal, provides for a large high-speed rail interchange with other metropolitan transportation connections supported by hotels and conference facilities and a regional commuter university.

Mid Zone
Positioning amenities underground acknowledges safety measures imposed by air traffic control and flight paths and also provides acoustic isolation. Large voids are carved out of the thickened strip to allow light and air into the subterranean spaces. For example, a central void in the “mid-cluster zone” hosts one of the primary collective spaces of the project, a 45-acre public park that acts as a gateway from the lower level parking layer to Terminals 1, 2, and 3, the airport’s busiest spaces.

West Zone
Since 1996, the O’Hare Noise Compatibility Commission has spent $435 million on noise abatement programs in the surrounding neighborhoods to address the significant and dangerous noise levels in and around O’Hare. The program cluster on the west edge of the strip is zoned for institutional use and accommodates the schools, religious institutions, and community programs currently located on the periphery of the airfield in areas above the FAA’s 65 DNL (Day-Night Average Sound Level). The cluster is linked to parking and the CTA, allowing easy access to outlying residential areas.

Super Strip is a both a practical and visionary model that presents the airport as an integrated metropolitan ecosystem. Smart programming initiatives respond to the very real problems—noise, pollution, and expansion—associated with airport facilities, while incorporating parallel transportation systems ensures that the airport operates as an efficient crossover between regional, national, and global territories. Together, these amplify O’Hare’s significance as one of the primary transportation landscapes in the Great Lakes region.

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