Carpet-industry members are ramping up efforts to improve material recovery programs across the U.S., as a decade-old national agreement signed by stakeholders, federal, state, local government agencies, and nonprofit organizations is about to expire.

Launched in 2002 as an industry-government effort to reduce carpet waste, the Memorandum of Understanding for Carpet Stewardship (MOU) will be renegotiated in time to reach an updated agreement by 2012.

“We’ve learned so much about carpet recycling in the last ten years. We’re more efficient, more effective, and with better outcomes for the environment,” said Dale Scott, a spokesman for the Alliance for Rug Recycling (ARR). The alliance is one of the MOU signatories.

“With the increased awareness and widespread acceptance of carpet recycling, we see a great opportunity to build on the MOU and expand it into the next phase,” said Katie Anderson, manager of sustainability at Interface, another MOU signatory.

“Many MOU signatories have continued to make this a priority, despite the recession,” said Scott. “This is a testament to the stakeholders’ commitment to this program.”

Carpet industry leaders believe they have the technical infrastructure to make recycling more widespread, and they have the business interest to make it a success. They have a clear roadmap to get it done.

In the meantime, some of the MOU signatories have updated their recycling programs. The National Rug Institute (NRI) and the Carpet and Rug Institute (CRI) have greater knowledge about carpet waste and are working with manufacturers, retailers, and consumers to expand its recycling efforts. They have taken on the responsibility of providing better data to the MOU signatories to help create the new MOU.

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After decades of population decline and racial strife, how did Chicago rebound and avoid the "Detroit Scenario," the hemorrhaging of people, resources, and jobs that has struck so many Midwestern cities? That is the question DePaul political scientist Larry Bennett takes up in his fascinating new book, The Third City (University of Chicago Press). Bennett chronicles Chicago’s rise, or perhaps evolution is a better word, from a declining industrial powerhouse into the second tier of global cities—ranking among cities like Amsterdam, Milan, and Sydney—and just below New York, London, and Tokyo—which, according to the Chicago Council on Global Affairs, are “the engines of growth for their countries and the gateways to the resources of their regions.” Bennett sees the transformation as ongoing but given the distressingly slow pace of economic recovery (and at a particularly grueling crawl for design professions), Chicago seems to be at a crossroads. Should we assume that the city’s resurgence will continue, that the Great Recession is just a brief detour on the road to progress? Or will we settle into a Japanese-style "Lost Decade," or worse, will the Detroit Scenario take hold?

Building sites and concrete shells stand as relics of the economic boom. The South and West Sides are sorely in need of economic development. Sites like the old Michael Reese Hospital grounds stand clear and idle, waiting for compelling plans.

Bennett argues that such moments of citywide introspection can—and must—be productive. He claims that Chicago is America’s most “self-conscious city,” which has helped make it a hotbed of sociological and urban insight. It’s also been a site of continuous architectural and urbanistic innovation. From the World’s Columbian Exposition to the recent wholesale dismantling of the Chicago Housing Authority’s towers in the park, Chicago wills itself into new forms, new neighborhoods, and new ideas following periods of crisis.

My sense is that the odd feeling of suspension that many of us feel, and the accompanying navel-gazing, won’t last long. With the Chicago mayoral election slated for February 22, the New Year will be a time to reengage, ask tough questions, and put forth bold new ideas. We at The Architect’s Newspaper look forward being a venue for some of those ideas as we celebrate our second year in the Midwest. In the meantime, I suggest The Third City would make an excellent gift for all the urbanists in your life. It has definitely gotten me thinking.
DEAR JEANNE, STOP STALKING ME

Greenbuild was in town and, while my editor and publisher were attending the sessions at McCormick Place, Eavesdrop just went to the parties. The first was at the Chicago office of Arup. We exit the taxi and expect to enter a showy feat of impressive engineering, but no—it’s just a plain old office in an old building on Wacker. We check in, enter to win an iPad (we didn’t), hang our coat up, and bump into Jeanne Gang and Mark Schendel. If you follow this column, you would know that she’s everywhere, at every party, all of the time, or so it seems.

The only problem is that she really is delightful, and Eavesdrop is starting to sound like Blair Kamin in the early part of 2010: Jeanne this, Jeanne that, look at Jeanne in a big straw hat.

AINT NO PARTY LIKE AN AN PARTY

The Architect's Newspaper co-hosted a party with Buro Happold, Graphisoft, American Hydrotech, Dow Building Solutions, and Adaptive Building Solutions the following night at the Modern Wing of the Art Institute. Party mix and sherbet punch was there not. There were open bars, two buffet stations, and passed hors d’oeuvres! And hundreds of well-dressed party-goers, proving that engineers and architects aren’t all cardigans and pleated black khakis. Among the ranks were Casimir Kujawa of Kujawa Architects, Zurich Esposito of AIA Chicago, and Buro Happold principal Craig Schwitter. But the juiciest moment came when a design-bird landed on our shoulder and whispered that a certain well-respected local power-house that we’ll call Joan of Art because of the hairdo sported in a recent magazine profile will be leaving her post. You heard it here first!

DON'T CROSS THE KIN OF A CONQUISTADOR

Bad blood between two respected Boston architects, Monica Ponce De Leon and Nader Tehrani of the firm Office dA, has forced them into arbitration. According to The Boston Globe, Nader alleges he’s been locked out of the office after Monica changed the locks during a recent power grab. She was given a $1 percent ownership stake so that their practice could have an edge as a minority-owned, female-driven firm. Is Monica (by day the Dean of Architecture and Urban Planning at Michigan) kin to Juan Ponce De Leon, the Spanish explorer who brought us Puerto Rico, the great state of Florida, and the Fountain of Youth? If so, it might explain the turf-marking.

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Recreating The Past - Shaping The Future

Another Daniel Burnham building has been Lagrange-d, that is, adapted into a luxury hotel by Lucien Lagrange Architects. First it was the green terra cotta–clad Hard Rock Hotel, and now the new JW Marriott in the former Continental and Commercial National Bank building. The entrance to the hotel has been sheathed in a three-story glass wall that gives passersby views into the brightly lit, marble–clad lobby. It provides a clue to the interior: little of Burnham and the bank remains, replaced with modern luxury and, well, a Marriott.

A handsome Marriott it is (and with a $306 million price tag, one would hope so). The lobby explodes with imported Italian marble and five space-filling, hand-blown chandeliers. The requisite intimate lobby bar and front desk areas are flanked by two sweeping staircases that lead to the hotel restaurant and conference center. They scream: “Take your wedding photos on me!” At the center of the building is the barrel-vaulted ballroom with atrium above. Unfortunately, the glass ceiling has been replaced with acoustic tiles, but the space is still dramatic and filled with more hand-blown glass chandeliers. Hand-craftsmanship can be found within the rooms as well. The wooden furniture came from the Amish in Ohio.

RYAN LAFOLLETTE

A CONQUISTADOR DON'T CROSS THE KIN OF
RENAISSANCEURBIA

Since the waning of the City Beautiful movement in the 1900s, the construction of large, classical civic buildings has become a rarity. Postmodernism may have briefly rekindled interest in the classical language but it is unusual—if not somewhat astonishing—to see a full-fledged classical building as the centerpiece of a new civic square. But such is the Palladium, the Center for the Performing Arts in Carmel, Indiana, modeled on Palladio’s Villa Rotunda with detailing picked up from the Viennese Secessionists.

The 154,000 square foot Palladium will contain a grand 1,600-seat concert hall, and it is intended to be active most days of the year. For architect David M. Schwarz, the project’s prominence and its site suggested the opportunity to do something really grand. “It needed to be an object building, something with four sides,” he said. So Schwarz turned to one of the world’s most recognizable buildings for inspiration. “I never thought I’d get a chance to take a shot at reinterpreting the Villa Rotunda. For me, it’s a dream come true.”

Washington, D.C.-based David M. Schwarz Architects has a diverse portfolio of typologies and styles, but they have designed several large concert halls in various historical styles, including the Schermerhorn Symphony Center in Nashville, Tennessee and Bass Performance Hall in Fort Worth, Texas. Still, the Carmel building stands out. “It’s among the most unusual projects I’ve ever worked on,” he said. “The goal was to create a cultural focus for a suburban community, a community that has much more sophisticated views than most suburban areas.” Historically, he added, most concert halls were located in dense urban centers, so the chance to do a building in the round is especially unusual. With an exterior of Indiana limestone, the building anchors a newly created civic square. Two additional theaters sit across from the Palladium. Residential buildings with ground floor retail and restaurants will line the perimeter of the square. “People will be able to walk to the center for a show or even bike up during the day for a matinee,” said Steven Libman, president of the center. Combining classical panache with contemporary savvy, the center also connects to the 17 mile Monon bike trail, linking Carmel directly to Indianapolis. While other cities may opt to invest in avant-garde designs by renowned architects to make a civic statement, Schwarz and Libman agree that this historicist design resonates in Carmel. “Every community is different. This is a very traditional community,” Schwarz said. He also argues that classical buildings are often less expensive to build than cutting edge designs. “It’s often a matter of weighing the quality you can get for the money you can spend,” he said.

“When people see this building, built from Indiana limestone, it’s just a tremendous expression of civic pride,” Libman said. The Palladium, which will open to the public on January 22, and the larger square, which is under construction, presents a radical makeover for a downtown previously characterized more by parking lots than grand edifices.

There was less money to spend on the interior, so Schwarz used paint to decorate the hand-plastered walls with 18th-century Robert Adams-influenced motifs. “We used color to create a highly detailed and articulated space,” he said. Libman and Schwarz credit Carmel’s mayor James Brainard with spearheading the entire project, as well as for driving its neo-traditional planning. “There are many major cities that have put pride on,” Libman said. The Palladium which will open to the public on January 22, and the larger square, which is under construction, presents a radical makeover for a downtown previously characterized more by parking lots than grand edifices.

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busy highway: not exactly a conducive environment for a school with a mission to teach students environmental consciousness. Further complicating matters, the cash-strapped city had a very tight budget of only $8 million for the project.

The Chicago office of the architecture and engineering firm CDM, led by design principal Eric Davis, took an innovative, no-frills approach to address both the site and budgetary constraints. The sandy site cannot take the weight of masonry. In response, Davis’ design uses lightweight reengineered building systems, particularly insulated metal panels clipped onto a metal frame. Normally, these panels run vertically and the frames run horizontally. Davis, who has been designing schools since the 1980s, knew that horizontal girts make an enticing ladder for young climbers. By flipping the composition onto its side and running the panels horizontally, the ladder disappears, and the direction of the window frame captures views of the surrounding landscape.

The building’s three volumes turn their back on the unsightly vistas via a horseshoe layout that opens up on the wetlands and the lake beyond. A simple shed roof pitches upward, leaving a generous wall on the courtyard side. Reinforcing the wetland and lake palette, Davis chose green, tan, brown, and blue from standard panel color choices.

“In some cases, it’s pattern-making, and in some cases, it’s strategic,” said Davis. He noted that the windows in classrooms for the smaller students are placed at their eye level. Dark charcoal bands at the top act as solar collectors that preheat the makeup air before it reaches the furnace. A garage door in the gym/assembly room opens up to the grasslands, and a portable stage can move out into the dunes. Davis said he takes the trinity of “reduce, reuse, recycle” seriously. All of the panels are demountable with bolts, rather then welding. The intent is for the school itself to act as a teaching tool and lab for conservation.

“The kids in Gary face a lot challenges,” he said. “I think this school helps them see things beyond their immediate community. There’s something of a display before them. We’re turning the school and the environment into a much more hands-on experience than they’re used to, rather than feeling that this world is foisted upon them.”

TOM STOELKER

The archived works of noted American photographer and preservationist Richard Nickel will soon have a new home at the Ryerson and Burnham Libraries at the Art Institute of Chicago, thanks to a donation from the nonprofit Richard Nickel Committee. Nickel is probably best known for documenting the architecture of Louis Sullivan and Dankmar Adler. A supremely dedicated preservationist, he died tragically in 1972 while attempting to salvage architectural elements from Sullivan’s doomed Stock Exchange building.

According to Ward Miller, director of the Richard Nickel Committee, the first part of the collection, which mainly focuses on Adler and Sullivan, has already been moved to the Libraries. Materials pertaining to the work of other noted Chicago architects, including Frank Lloyd Wright, Burnham, Root, Holabird, Roche/Holabird & Root, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, Bertrand Goldberg, C.F. Murphy, and Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, will be relocated in the coming months. This donation of about 15,000 photographs, negatives, drawings, and documents was timed to coincide with the very long-awaited publication of The Complete Architecture of Adler & Sullivan, a photographic tome of over 800 images that was begun by Nickel and photography professor Aaron Siskind at the Illinois Institute of Technology in the early 1950s.

ALYSSA NORDHAUSER

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The multifunctional prefab pod can be reconfigured and linked to other pods. Below: the 12.5-acre site in Kenya’s Rift Valley.

SHIPPING OUT TO AFRICA
continued from front page健康 initiatives—showcased a prefabricated community center that it hopes will become a model for simple, high-quality vernacular architecture.

The community center was designed by architect Philippe Barriere, founder of the Philippe Barriere Collective, with help from William Zahner of A. Zahner Company, an architectural metal and glass fabricator; the structure will remain in Kansas City for the next few months on display to raise awareness and money. In mid-2011, it will be dismantled and sent to Kenya for reassembly by local workers trained by a contingent from Zahner. Zane Wileman, executive director of CTC, said his organization “is about education and empowerment, so we work with the local population to help them build themselves out of poverty.”

A proponent of multi-transitional growth housing, Barriere said his design is slated to be the first of many such installations on the Kenyan site. As funding allows through partnerships and donations, structures will organically grow into each other over time. Said Barriere, “Each prototype is organized to create a rhythm in which they eventually reach each other to make a coherent whole.” Wileman explained that these structures would serve as a hub for future development.

Zahner and Barriere have worked together on other projects, and the design is again the product of their collaboration. They posed the question of what is the easiest, cheapest, and simplest archetype to build, which turned out to be the arch. Each prototype (community center, medical facility, sewing school/factory, children with special needs facility, multi-purpose recreation facility, and a public library/internet cafe) introduces what Barriere called “high simplicity” to local development.

“This first project allowed us to test construction, cost, and scalability of each structure as it grows,” Zahner said. All structures are scheduled for completion in phases by 2013. Until then, the 12.5-acre site in Kenya’s Rift Valley is being prepared with a water well, landscaping, and a soccer field.

GUNNAR HAND

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Memphis Makeover

The National Civil Rights Museum (NCRM), located at Memphis’ Lorraine Motel where Martin Luther King, Jr. was assassinated in 1968, will undergo an estimated $20 million renovation updating its facilities and exhibit spaces. Spearheaded by D.C.-based design firm Howard+Revis, the project marks the first renovation since the museum’s opening nearly 20 years ago.

“When the museum opened in 1991, we were the first museum to chronicle the modern civil rights movement’s history,” said Tracy Lauritzen Wright, the museum’s director of administration and special projects. “Since it was the first exhibit to closely examine this history, there was a motivation on the part of the designers to put in a lot of information, so it is very text-heavy. It’s time to update our presentation methods and tools.”

Working with local firm Self + Tucker Architects, whose principal Juan Self worked on the original NCRM design for D.C. firm McKissack & McKissack, Howard+Revis will add the multimedia and artifact displays that have been lacking from the museum’s exhibits, in spite of a significant number of donations over the years. Although it was not conceived as a collecting institution, said Wright, “people felt compelled to donate and share their own experiences.”

The museum is also developing its own oral history archive as a major part of the new exhibits. “It’s unusual for a project to be put out and have the exhibit designers be the prime contractor, but they wanted the design to flow from what the exhibit and media needs are,” said Howard+Revis principal Jeff Howard.

With nearly 220,000 visitors last year, more than twice its initial numbers, the popular exhibits—the Rosa Parks bus and a sit-in lunch counter—may have to be rearranged to improve traffic flow. The museum’s total footprint will remain around 60,000 square feet. In the theater, a new sliding screen will allow visitors to exit alongside photography of civil rights marchers after viewing an introductory film. In 2002, the museum annexed the nearby Young and Morrow boarding house, in which King’s convicted assassin James Earl Ray stayed, with a connecting underground tunnel and amphitheater. The design team will create a more cohesive campus for the two buildings, adding annex facade signage to correspond with a new entry portal and second-story glass overlook on the motel side. Because the Lorraine facade—designated a historic site by the Tennessee Historical Commission—is the museum’s most significant artifact, signs and pathways direct visitors to Room 306, where King was staying at the time of his assassination, will be improved. Outdoor listening posts, sculpture, and banners will give the museum more of a street presence, whether open or closed. “The site is a pilgrimage site and people show up when the museum is closed, or at night,” said Howard.

Though some new exhibits will be open in time for the NCRM’s 20th anniversary next year, construction will be staggered over four years to allow the museum to remain open during much of the renovation. The goal is to keep the Room 306 exhibit open throughout, reinforcing the historic importance of the place where King was shot. “Our president Beverly Robertson likes to say that the site has transformed from a site of tragedy into an educational triumph,” Wright said.

AHOY, NORTHERLY ISLAND PARK!

Seven years after Chicago’s Mayor Daley sliced the runways of the Meigs Field airport on Lake Michigan, a framework plan prepared by Studio Gang Architects and JHR has been released to guide the transformation of Northerly Island into a nature park over the next several decades. As Chicago’s largest offshore open space at 91 acres, the new park will feature ecologically diverse landscapes including forests, savannahs, prairies, wetlands, a reef, and a lagoon with a sunken ship.

“Northerly Island is a very unique urban open space with an equally unique location,” said Chicago Park District CEO Timothy Mitchell in a statement. “We have an incredible opportunity to lay the groundwork for future generations and eventually develop this site into a multi-seasonal park that will potentially rival Millennium Park, New York City’s Central Park, and London’s Hyde Park.”

Officials hope the juxtaposition of rugged landscapes with the skyline will create an destination where visitors can swim, kayak, or take in a concert. The plan includes an amphitheater with a green roof that doubles as an ice rink in winter.

EXPANSIVE NUCLEUS

After a two-year delay brought on by the recession, the University of Louisville is moving forward with the first phase of a planned bio-medical research campus, dubbed the Nucleus. Located in downtown Louisville, the project is expected to generate 8,700 jobs. Laminated, Judd, Rapp, Chovan and SmithGroup designed the first 160,000 square foot laboratory and office structure to begin construction this spring. The $20 million project represents the university’s ongoing effort to attract life science and wellness business to the city. “This first building is a catalyst for companies that will take homegrown research from the lab to the marketplace,” said U of L President James Ramsey in a statement. With financing and commitments for 60 percent of the building space secured, work can proceed. Construction is expected to be complete in 2012.
CHICAGO INVENTED THE SKYSCRAPER. CAN IT PIONEER THE BEST URBAN SUSTAINABLE-ENERGY STRATEGIES AS WELL? BY ANN LOK LUI
Building Owners and Managers Association Chicago (BOMA), an organization that represents nearly 300 Chicago commercial buildings including the Aon Center, the Willis Tower, and the Hancock Center, has partnered with the Illinois Science and Technology Coalition (ISTC) and other groups interested in smart-grid technology. According to BOMA engineering consultants, the downtown buildings had jointly reduce usage by 200 megawatts by linking into smart-grid technologies—an amount equivalent to the production of a fully functioning coal plant.

“In a much more decentralized grid, each building can function as a power plant,” said Roger Frechette, president of PositiveEnergy, a consulting firm launched by Adrian Smith + Gordon Gill Architecture (AS+GG) following the development of their so-called Decarbonization Plan for the Loop. “Some days the buildings are consuming, some days they’re producing.” AS+GG’s plan also includes a smart-grid initiative and intends to reduce net carbon emissions by 100 percent by 2020.

On a large scale, a smart grid—where the supply is distributed to many sources—would provide more reliable energy. Currently, the U.S. alone loses $100 billion on average each year to blackouts and energy failures, according to an IBM consumer survey. If a transformer fails somewhere down the line, a smart grid could instantly pull energy from other locations with excess. Funding the smart-grid project, however, which will cost millions in retrofitting and research, is no simple task.

In July, Chicago building owners seemed to have found a lucky break. Along with ISTC and the Citizens Utility Board, BOMA signed a memorandum of understanding with the Republic of Korea to bankroll the multimillion-dollar development-and-research initiative. Public and private Korean groups, including LG Electronics and KT Corporation, were encouraged to submit again. For others, the upcoming smart-grid RFP will be an opportunity to invest in Chicago’s green nest egg.

Researchers at Illinois Institute of Technology and University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, on the other hand, are still receiving funding from South Korean groups including KESRI, the Korean Electrical Engineering & Science Research Institute. In July, the university signed three memoranda of understanding with the Republic of Korea to develop smart-grid technology and workforce training programs. IIT has long been a frontrunner in smart-grid research; the campus itself runs on a smart grid called Perfect Power, which cost $12 million to implement.

“We’re looking at creating more efficient buildings,” Barbeau said. “We’re not looking for a virtual power plant.” As a private resident, the smart grid could allow you to use cheaper off-peak energy to charge your car, run your washing machine, or manage your appliances that are using the most energy. Further, with a photovoltaic on your roof or a wind turbine in your backyard, you could sell extra energy back to the grid, to a “Geek Squad” trained to come to private residences to retrofit electricity monitors to the new communications backbone.

“It’s all hands on deck,” said Frechette. “In terms of involvement, we’re going to need to look at how walls are put together, we have to look at glass, roof insulation, and the tightness of building skins—it’s all important.”

Chicago’s historic skyline has always been a source of pride for city residents. And while few new buildings are currently going up, building owners have developed a plan to capitalize on the latest advances: Smart-grid technologies that will convert the city’s iconic skyline into what backers call a “virtual green generator” by retrofitting highrise buildings and the existing electrical grid to a new hyper-connected intelligent communications backbone. Simultaneously, researchers at local universities, among them the Illinois Institute of Technology and the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, have been developing their own cutting-edge smart-grid technology.

“We want to make Chicago a hub for smart-grid manufacturing and deployment,” said Andrew Barbeau, the managing director of the Center for Electricity Innovation at IIT. “Energy generation, delivery, and management are a trillion-dollar marketplace, and we are really trying to make Chicago a center for that.” Chicago has long been a leader in innovation for electrical utility and power industries, he added, even when the West Coast was attracting much of the software and tech jobs. “Chicago never gave up on what its strengths are, and is prepared to make a comeback,” he said.

In fact, the Windy City is a likely birthplace for what could be the largest ever smart-grid pilot. It has a captive market of building owners—interested in reducing their utility bills and attracting green-conscious tenants—cheek-to-cheek with top electrical engineering universities. Public support and cooperation from local utilities has also made for fertile ground. The Chicago Climate Action Plan, launched in 2008 by Mayor Richard Daley, plans on retrofitting 60 percent of industrial and commercial buildings by 2020.

And while cities in other countries, such as China and Dubai, are rapidly growing in population and new construction where sustainable design choices are a natural fit, Chicago’s commercial high rises means that their reductions are proportionally bigger than in private homes.


Facing page: Adrian Smith + Gordon Gill Architecture analyzed carbon emissions in the Loop. The buildings coded in green emit the least carbon, yellow the second least, orange the third, and the red buildings emit the most carbon per square foot.
Available in three sizes, Messenger is a conference cabinet that doubles as a writing surface. Laterally sliding doors are made with SilverPro glass board, on which whiteboard markers can be used. The cabinet’s interior can be equipped with a second SilverPro writing/projection surface or an LED, LCE, or plasma screen.

www.abstracta.se

Dedicated to revitalizing traditional crafts in Japan, Nendo partnered with potter Mitsuke Masagasu to design a ceramic speaker with unique graphic appeal. Its red-glaze designs are fused to a 1-millimeter-thick ceramic substrate with a precise, computer-controlled manufacturing technique normally used for LED bulbs and other heat-emitting internal components, creating a visually distinctive wall-mounted speaker compatible with a range of devices.

www.nendo.jp/en

Sony is expanding its line of high-brightness 3LCD business projectors with a new fixed-installation model called VPL-FX500L, which delivers 7,600 lumens of color light output with one lamp, but has a second automatic backup lamp for a total lamp life of 8,000 hours. Suitable for university lecture halls and corporate auditoriums, the white projector blends into the ceiling when mounted.

pro.sony.com

Wilkhahn has introduced the third generation of its Interactable, a 37-inch-high table with an integrated 50-inch interactive screen. When connected to a compatible computer, the surface allows for group work on project plans and engineering drawings. The tabletop is made from barrel-shaped MDF, in a variety of finishes, atop a powder-coated aluminum frame. A smaller ConsulTable is also available. A smaller ConsulTable is also available.

www.wilkhahn.com

Viewing the kitchen as another living room, SieMatic has introduced its new tall S2 multimedia cabinet, which can integrate an audiovisual system, developed with T+A, and the SieMaticGrid user interface. The handle-less cabinet can become an iPod dock, CD, DVD, TV, and radio, with internet access and other individually configurable options available, in addition to integrated storage for high-tech components.

www.siematic.com

THE ART OF PRESENTATION
SMART TECHNOLOGIES ARE TRANSFORMING THE POWER OF SHOW AND TELL.
BY JENNIFER K. GORSCHE
DECEMBER

THURSDAY 16
Lecture
Express Talk: European Design Since 1985
12:00 p.m.
Milwaukee Art Museum
700 North Art Museum Dr.
Milwaukee
www.mam.org

Architecture of the Air
7:00 p.m.
Walker Art Center
1750 Hennepin Ave.
Minneapolis
www.walkerart.org

EXHIBITION OPENING
50/50
Audience and Experts Curate the Paper Collection
Walker Art Center
1750 Hennepin Ave.
Minneapolis
www.walkerart.org

EVENT
Winter Solstice & Christmas at Lilly House
6:30 p.m.
Lilly House & Madeline F. Elder Greenhouse
Indianapolis Museum of Art
4000 Michigan Rd.
Indianapolis
www.imamuseum.org

FRIDAY 17
EVENT
Robie House After Hours
6:00 p.m.
Robie House
5757 South Woodlawn Ave.
Chicago
www.gowright.org

MAM After Dark:
Euro Bash
5:00 p.m.
Milwaukee Art Museum
700 North Art Museum Dr.
Milwaukee
www.mam.org

LECTURE
Chicago Cabinetry: Views from the Street
2:00 p.m.
Art Institute of Chicago
111 South Michigan Ave.
Chicago
www.artic.edu

EXHIBITION OPENING
David Kroll
New Paintings
325 West Huron
Chicago
www.zollaliebermangallery.com

SATURDAY 18
EVENT
Screening of Chicago-Scope & Conversation with Tom Palazzolo and Kelly Shindler
6:00 p.m.
Price Auditorium
Art Institute of Chicago
111 South Michigan Ave.
Chicago
www.artic.edu

SUNDAY 19
EVENT
Highlights Tour: Forgotten Treasures
1:30 p.m.
The Cleveland Museum of Art
11150 East Blvd.
Cleveland
www.clevelandart.org

FRIYDAY 7
EXHIBITION OPENING
Project Onward, The Nathan and Kyoko Lentner Foundation, El Valor, and Expectations
Judy A Sallow Gallery
300 West Superior St.
Chicago
www.jasalowgallery.com

Two Person Show:
Yong Jin Han & Jung Jin Lee
Andrew Bae Gallery
300 West Superior, Chicago
www.andrewbaegallery.com

SATURDAY 8
EXHIBITION OPENINGS
Talia Chetrit and Daniel Gordon
Tony Wight Gallery
145 West Washington Blvd.
Chicago
www.tonywightgallery.com

Matthew Metzger
Tony Wight Gallery
145 West Washington Blvd.
Chicago
www.tonywightgallery.com

SUNDAY 9
EVENT
Geek’s Guide to Wright’s Robie House
10:00 a.m.
Robie House
5757 South Woodlawn Ave.
Chicago
www.gowright.org

TUESDAY 11
EXHIBITION OPENINGS
The Fulcrum Lost its Feather: A Collaborative Work by Daniel Evans and Shu-Mei Chan
SiaFA Gallery
University of Indiana - Bloomington
1201 East 7th St.
Bloomington
www.indiana.edu/sofa/

Thems: Images of Separation
Kendall Gallery
Kendall College of Art and Design
17 Fountain St. NW
Grand Rapids, MI
www.kcad.edu

EVENT
Old House Workshop
7:00 p.m.
Goodman Atwood Community Center
149 Waukesha St.
Madison,
WI
www.goatwoodcenter.org/

WEDNESDAY 12
LECTURES
Relics at Saint Chapelle in Paris
6:30 p.m.
The Cleveland Museum of Art
11150 East Blvd.
Cleveland
www.clevelandart.org

JANUARY

WEDNESDAY 5
LECTURE
Art in Focus: Picasso’s Artist Connections
1:30 p.m.
The Cleveland Museum of Art
11150 East Blvd.
Cleveland
www.clevelandart.org

Wisconsin’s Own:
The Chicago Connection
12:00 p.m.
Lecture Hall Gallery
224 South Michigan Ave.
Chicago
www.artic.edu

EVENT
Tour: The Arts of Oaklawn Rahn-West Art Museum
810 North 8th St.
Manitowoc, WI
www.mamtoowo.org

FRIYDAY 4
EXHIBITION OPENING
Project Onward, The Nathan and Kyoko Lentner Foundation, El Valor, and Expectations
Judy A Sallow Gallery
300 West Superior St.
Chicago
www.jasalowgallery.com

SATURDAY 5
EXHIBITION OPENINGS
Toneta Khoi, Art of the Yoruba People
Ingeborg & Armand J. Andraus
University of Michigan
1000 Geddes Ave.
Ann Arbor
www.umsl.edu

THURSDAY 13
EVENT
Pre-performance Tour: Gob Squad’s Kitchen
6:45 p.m.
Walker Art Center
1750 Hennepin Ave.
Minneapolis
www.walkerart.org

EXHIBITION OPENING
When After Comes Before at the Ar.d Gallery
Anchor Graphics
600 South Michigan Ave.
Chicago
www.columb.edu/adgallery/

SUNDAY 16
LECTURE
The New Weston Wing: Transforming Japanese Art at the Art Institute of Chicago
2:00 p.m.
Pittsburhh Auditorium
Minneapolis Institute of Arts
2400 Third Ave. South
Minneapolis
www.artmia.org

TUESDAY 18
LECTURE
Gallery Talk: “The Lunatic Fringe” with Barbara Brown Lee
1:30 p.m.
Milwaukee Art Museum
700 North Art Museum Dr.
Milwaukee
www.mam.org

FILM

Goat Island Film Screening & Talk with Mark Jeffery, Sarah Best, and Lucy Cash
6:00 p.m.
Hyde Park Art Center
5020 South Cornell Ave.
Chicago
www.chicagofilm.org

WEDNESDAY 19
LECTURES
Planning & Zoning: Annexation
6:00 p.m.
University of Missouri-St. Louis
J.C. Penney Conference Center
1 University Blvd., St. Louis
www.umsl.edu

Chicago’s Lake Shore Drive: Urban America’s Most Beautiful Roadway
12 p.m.
Lecture Hall Gallery
Chicago Architecture Foundation
224 South Michigan Ave.
Chicago
www.architecture.org

EXHIBITION OPENINGS
Style as Substance
Bond Hall Gallery
University of Notre Dame
Notre Dame, IN
www.nd.edu

The Truth is Not in the Mirror
111 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago
www.mam.org

HYPERLINKS:
ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN
Art Institute of Chicago
111 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago
Through January 20, 2011

For much of their respective histories, modern architecture and design were considered separate if related disciplines. Architects may have routinely branched out to furniture design, but the boundary between fields still often seems static. As we progress into the 21st century, however, the separation becomes less and less stringent. Responding to this apparent shift in paradigm, the Art Institute of Chicago has assembled more than 30 projects and proposals that “illustrate the potential that is inherent in more open-minded ways of working that encourage innovative new directions, fresh thinking, and discovery.” Hyperlinks: Architecture and Design, on view through January 20, 2011, pulls from an internationally diverse group of individuals and firms working in varied media. The exhibition and accompanying catalogue are structured around ten different “hyperlinks,” or disciplinary intersections such as Hyper-Digital and Hyper-Narrative, which are intended to “function like citations, providing footnotes that prompt exploration.” Among the works applicable to all ten hyperlinks is French designer Matali Crasset’s proposal Spring City in Mexico (2008, above).
Every now and then, a book arrives that is not just a handsome presentation of information, but also a completely satisfying aesthetic object. This is the case with Handcrafted Modern by Leslie Williamson. Her photographs inside designers’ (mostly) midcentury modernist homes capture something of the inhabitants and their pattern of living. But they reveal something more—something of the life of the designer of the space.

Williamson created the book because she couldn’t find anything like it in the basement of San Francisco’s William Stout Books, where she used to buy design titles. She tracked leads to all kinds of modernist designers, but time and expense and the devastation of the 8 projects. Finally, early in the process, she decided that she would include houses that were either currently lived in by the designer or kept the way the designer left them when alive. A few of the houses have been newly documented over the last several decades, like the Eames and Gropius residences, but whether the house already has a public life or not, Williamson’s thoughtful yet informal style captures something fresh.

Even the Eames house, one of the most modern and best known of the residences in the book, acquired a handcrafted quality after Charles and Ray Eames were done filling it with their collections. I have never seen an image of their nightstand (with Ray’s bobby pins visible) or a close-up of the bookshelf. Meanwhile, several names in the book were new to me, like the unusual works of sculptor J.B. Blunk and woodworker and metalsmith John Kapel. Blunk’s sensuous sculptures fit well in his rough-hewn Inverness cottage, while Kapel, a furniture designer, uses wood to tailor a precise house in Woodsicle. Williamson also discovered Irving Harper before The New York Times brought his colorful and whimsical paper sculptures to light. Danish American furniture designer Jens Risom’s house appealed deeply to me, while Eva Zeisel’s antique-laden public rooms were a complete surprise. Rather than shooting starch-sharp magazine images where all of the objects have been rearranged, Williamson records the rooms as she finds them, with minimal disruption.

This is not a decorator’s book. It is a storyteller’s book, one for people who want to look deeper into the lives of 20th-century designers and travel vicariously with the photographer as she describes her visits. The linen cover and the layout complement the photographs, while Williamson’s personal text adds another layer of insight. There are no formal portraits of the inhabitants. The portrait is found in the space. Williamson is not afraid to share her stumbles or disappointments. As she writes in her introduction, “Perfection is supremely uninteresting to me.” She regrets that she didn’t get around to shooting Ike Gropius’ cookbook with notations on how “Gropi” liked his duck à l’orange prepared. She tells the story of the towel with his inked name hanging in the bathroom: “He was no longer an icon of Modernism.”

Blair Kamin has been a salient voice in the field of architecture and urban planning for several decades now. In addition to being The Chicago Tribune’s leading authority on architecture, he is also a contributing editor to Architectural Record and was given the Pulitzer Prize for Criticism in 1999. His latest book, Terror and Wonder: Architecture in a Tumultuous Age, is a highly informative and accessible survey of the architecture and planning of the past decade, a period indelibly marked not only by the tragedies of 9/11 and the devastation of Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans, but also more recent concerns about the importance of environmentally sensitive design practices, as well as renewed concern about our nation’s infrastructure.

In light of these circumstances, Kamin’s recent book highlights the triumphs as well as the inevitable failures of architectural design in the decade following the turn of the millennium. As Kamin argues, the development of design is not a singular trajectory, but a more complex interplay of different political and cultural undercurrents.

Through 51 of his columns from The Chicago Tribune and other relevant publications, Kamin provides his readers with a retrospective look at the diverse developments affecting the nature of contemporary architectural discourse. The author begins with his response to the effect that the loss of the Twin Towers had on New York City’s skyline, and ends with an editorial reflecting on President Obama’s turn to developing our infrastructure by funding transportation systems instead of iconic structures denoting the primacy of Western democracy. Kamin’s collection of editorials convey the changing nature of aesthetics in response to extant socio-political forces.

By looking back at writing from the middle of 2001 until today, Kamin teases out the underlying logic imbedded in the birth and departure of iconic structures in the United States and abroad. Postscripts added to the majority of the columns find an adhesive that binds this logic together, allowing his writing to be charged with new meaning and relevance in light of the events that exceed the date of each article’s original publication.

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Turning from the decades of excess predating 9/11, we can begin to look at a future of design that accounts for the shifting needs of society. Skeptical of the propagation of modernism to be commodified, Kamin nevertheless suggests that green architecture informs a marked change in our culture’s attitude of visual decadence and fiscal responsibility in the aftermath of the economic downturn.

His critique is one that extends beyond the physical facades he analyzes into the broader context of socio-economic activity. Poignant and timely, his survey underscores the importance of thinking critically about design in a time when opulence becomes a liability and natural disasters demand the reorganization of our nation’s fundamental priorities.
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MEGA-CHURCH MELTDOWN

Crystal Cathedral Ministries, the gleaming Southern California mega-church conglomerate, has filed for bankruptcy, citing pressures from creditors and deep shortfalls in donations to its Hour of Power television appeals.

Once a pioneer in media ministries, thanks to the gentle charisma and entrepreneurial fervor of its founder, Reverend Robert Schuller, the Crystal Cathedral defined destination architecture in its era, with glass-sheathed buildings that pushed upward from the flat landscape by Richard Neutra and Philip Johnson, and a later addition to the Garden Grove campus by Richard Meier.

Those improbable architect-client combinations were rare cases where modern and postmodern design could be compatible with Evangelical Christianity. Who knew? As debts mount, could those structures have been part of the problem, and could they now be sold and put to other use, or seized by angry creditors? The ministry’s future did not always look so grim. In 1955, the Iowa-born Schuller of the Reformed Church of America found a religious dimension in suburbia’s motor culture, before Orange County became a suburb. He turned a local drive-in movie theater into the country’s first drive-in church on Sunday mornings when he preached from the roof of a concession stand, and his wife Arvella played the organ by his side. Transforming a place that the movie industry categorized as a teenage “passion pit” into a sacred space required an act of faith and a $39 rent every Sunday. The wager paid off.

Schuller also bet that commissioning Richard Neutra in 1968 to build a glass drive-in/walk-in church one mile away from Disneyland would give the ministry a unique profile. It did. Worshipers drove to the church with the high steeple and to the parking lots with terraced sight lines, and televised services began in 1970. Even with the church in bankruptcy, the Hour of Power still airs globally every Sunday.

As the ministry grew, another act of faith sought to differentiate the campus from the sea of concrete around it. Arvella Schuller was inspired by Philip Johnson’s Fort Worth Water Gardens (1974) and Johnson was hired to design a new glass church that would be larger than the Neutra structure, where TV had taken over much of the space in the same way that residential subdivisions and commercial sprawl displaced the old drive-in theaters. Client and architect found a kinship again.

Johnson, an atheist who called himself “an artist and a whore.,” became Schuller’s architect, and in 1980 the preacher got a new $21 million silvery glass house, the Crystal Cathedral, one of Orange County’s major tourist attractions. Worshippers sat in Johnson’s radiant space during the Hour of Power, or listened in parked cars, or watched it all as television panned from his stage set to fountains outside. The cathedral’s corporate sheen was reminiscent of Johnson’s Pennzoil building in Houston, and upscale enough to convince the congregants that they were the Episcopalians of Revivalism.

By 1990, Johnson added The Bell Tower or Campanile, including melodramatic life-sized sculptures that reminded you that the man who loved modernism also shared cultural roots with the Liberace Museum. Thinks to Armand Hammer (providing introductions to Mikhail Gorbachev) and Rupert Murdoch (satellite access to the former Soviet Union), Schuller’s global reach widened.

So far, none of Schuller’s wealthy patrons has risen to ease the debt, although one might have found the money if Schuller’s message echoed Tea Party rhetoric. A revenue trickle comes from opening its parking lots to the public, yet a worsening crisis could force the Crystal Cathedral back to its roots. “A lot of those drive-ins didn’t make money showing feature films,” said Erica Robles. Possibilities range from flea markets to biker shows, to mergers with Christians who have capital. If I were choosing, the Meier building would be the first on the block. Jim Coleman, the Crystal Cathedral’s creative director and Robert Schuller’s son-in-law, swears that there are no plans to sell any of the campus architecture. “We are faithful people. Remember, the Israelis had their backs against the Red Sea when Moses took them there,” he said.

Where on the dark side might Schuller end up if things don’t work out the way they did for Moses? What if they scheduled an apocalypse, and no cars drove in? Surely, icons for sale wouldn’t be a sin. God knows.

ART AND ARCHITECTURE CRITIC DAVID D'ARCY IS A FREQUENT CONTRIBUTOR TO AN ON ARCHITECTURE, TO THE ART NEWSPAPER ON ART, AND TO SCREEN INTERNATIONAL ON FILM.
IT STARTED OUT GREEN, BUT ENDED UP PLATINUM.

The Bank of America building in Midtown, Manhattan is the first skyscraper designed to achieve a LEED® Platinum rating and is billed as the greenest skyscraper in the country. One reason is the building’s floor-to-ceiling glass curtain wall made from Viracon’s high-performance, low-e coating on low iron glass with a custom silk-screen. Viracon worked with the architects and contractors to provide glazing options that met strict LEED Platinum guidelines. But that's nothing new at Viracon. For over 40 years, our customers have trusted us to provide proven sustainable architectural glass expertise without compromising aesthetics or energy efficiencies. To get our thinking on your thinking call 800.533.2080, e-mail glass@viracon.com or visit viracon.com.

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