In an effort to advance his redevelopment plans for north St. Louis, developer Paul McKee is pursuing the purchase of more than 1,200 city-owned properties, including the Pruitt-Igoe site.

Five proposals to rethink the public spaces at Navy Pier have gone on view at the Chicago Architecture Foundation. The finalist teams—AECOM/BIG, Aedas/Davis Brody Bond/Martha Schwartz Partners, James Corner Field Operations, Imelk/HOK/UrbanLab, and Xavier Vendrell Studio/Grimshaw Architects—use a variety of approaches to revitalize the historic pier, which has long been a favored destination for tourists. Organizers hope revitalizing the pier’s public space will

Mayor Rahm Emanuel, himself a one-time ballet dancer, has long been a vocal supporter of the arts. Now City Hall is coordinating an extensive outreach effort to check Chicago’s creative pulse, seeking comment on the city’s first new cultural plan in more than 25 years.

After his election in February 2011, Emanuel directed the Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE) to revamp the Chicago Cultural Plan, which was created in 1986 under Mayor Harold Washington.

DCASE launched a website in January to coordinate its efforts. They are expected to produce a draft plan by early summer.

“The arts are political,” said attorney Michael Dorf, who directed the process that created Mayor Washington’s plan. “They enrich us, they enrage us, they move us to action. And anything that does that is political.”

Formerly special counsel to Sidney R. Yates, chairman of the congressional appropriations committee, Dorf wanted to democratize cultural planning with the 1986 planning process. Instead of press conferences and backrooms, he said, the city should borrow from the basics of grassroots organizing.

It’s an approach Chicago’s current cultural commissioner, Michelle Boone, has revived for the 2012 plan. With the help of social media, Boone

Located just east of Millennium Park, and connected by Frank Gehry’s serpentine BP Bridge, Grant Park North is getting a dramatic makeover by Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates (MVVA).
New Solarban® R100 solar control, low-e glass.
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WANG SHU NABS ARCHITECTURE’S HIGHEST HONOR

Pritzker Surprise

Chinese architect Wang Shu has been awarded architecture’s top prize, the 2012 Pritzker Architecture Prize, marking the first time the $100,000 prize has selected a Chinese laureate. Wang Shu is known for combining traditional Chinese materials and building techniques with modern forms and sensibilities, often recycling bricks and tiles to form a patchwork mosaic in his building facades.

Wang Shu founded Amateur Architecture Studio (AAS) with his wife Lu Wenyu in 1998 where he has taken an outspoken stance against architecture that he perceives as destroying vast urban and rural landscapes. Wang Shu said in a statement. He is also professor and head of architecture at the China Academy of Art in Hangzhou, China where in 2007 he designed the Xiangshan Campus to incorporate millions of roof tiles from destroyed traditional houses.

“Destined to fail: Rust Belt cities without rail,” the influential blog Rustwire argued that recent funding decisions by the Federal Department of Transportation have effectively condemned many struggling Midwest and Northeast Cities to a slow death. Rail, the piece said, is essential to the revitalization of these cities. And yet, the Feds recently dashed Detroit’s dreams of a 3.4-mile light rail line, indicating lower-cost bus rapid transit (BRT) was more feasible in the cash-strapped Motor City. Chicago, too, is going for BRT rather than expanding the L system (though that was the project for which the Chicago Transit Authority was seeking funding). “While better than nothing, BRT’s do not have the ‘wow’ factor of rail,” the editorial declared.

Rail is costly to build and operate, but it has a well-documented track record as an economic development tool, even if it is not a cure-all. In St. Louis, the population is still falling, down 30,000 people according to the last census. Along the city’s decade old light rail lines, however, neighborhoods are gaining density and economic vitality, according to analysis from NextSTL. So the question becomes, how serious is the federal government about investing in struggling urban centers?

Like countless other political questions, the two parties seem to be on completely different planets on this issue. The transportation bill recently passed by the majority Republican House would have decimated funding for transit (it has stalled in the Democrat-controlled Senate), and Republican governors in Ohio and Florida scuttled the Obama administration’s high-speed rail plans in those states. In California, high-speed rail is on the chopping block.

The rail picture is not entirely gloomy for the Midwest. Cincinnati recently broke ground on a new streetcar line, and high-speed upgrades are underway on existing passenger lines in Missouri, Illinois, and Michigan. When the economy collapsed in 2008, some argued the big three auto companies should be partially retooled to build rail cars as part of a new green collar economy. That idea seems almost laughable now.

It is all even more dispiriting given steadily rising gas prices, which are expected to climb to record levels this summer. The Obama administration has failed to articulate the necessity for a more balanced, diversified transportation policy in face of soaring prices at the pump. As a result, the road to economic recovery could be bumpy, or even impassable.
The Architect's Newspaper March 7, 2012

OPEN> SHOP

HERITAGE BICYCLES GENERAL STORE
2959 N. Lincoln Avenue
Tel: 773-245-3005
Designers: Michael Salvatore with Suzy Genzler Tomcho, Interior Designer

After spending three years helping to launch the retro-chic bike label Bowery Lane Bicycles in New York, Michael Salvatore has returned to his Chicago roots to open Heritage Bicycles General Store, combining his bike manufacturing business with the city's first Stumptown coffee shop. Salvatore is bringing boutique bike fabrication back to the city after a more than 30-year absence once Schwinn left town. The Lincoln Avenue store reflects the classic design of Salvatore's Heritage Bicycles line with wood-paneled walls and reclaimed wood tables and coffee bar. Bikes are clearly present in the design, including a chandelier built of bicycle rims, but Salvatore wanted the overall effect to be understated. "It's not as obvious as a bike shop. We tried to bring bikes into the store in a subtle way," he said.

Working with New York–based interior designer Suzy Genzler Tomcho, Salvatore brought a vintage aesthetic to the shop. The fifth-generation Chicagoan filled the shop with finds from his family’s basements, bringing a turn-of-the-century feel to the sunny storefront on a major bike-commuting artery. Tomcho said the design was meant to evoke a sense of neighborhood culture, creating a place where cyclists could meet around a cup of coffee and begin their rides across the city. **

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A BURST OF BLUE

New York–based HollwichKushner (HWKN) has been selected for this year’s MoMA PS 1 Young Architects Program. Their proposal, called Wendy, uses standard scaffolding to create a visually arresting object that straddles the three outdoor rooms of the PS 1 courtyard. Tensioned fabric coated in smog-eating paint provides shelter and programming areas, including a stage, shower, and misters. “Their proposal is quite attractive in a number of ways. It’s very economical in terms of design,” said Pedro Gadanho, the curator of contemporary architecture at the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA). "One object creates a variety of programmatic and ecological conditions and its scale rivals the height of the PS 1 building."

All the materials can be disassembled and reused, and, according to Gadanho, the jury was particularly impressed with the combination of standardized parts (the scaffolding) and cutting-edge technology (the smog-eating coating). “It’s proactive, not apologetic,” he said. “It begins to point to a new way to think about sustainability.” The designers, led by principals Matthias Hollwich and Marc Kushner and project architect Robert May, estimate the fabric will remove as much smog as taking 250 cars off the road. The pavilion will open in late June. Among the five finalists were Chicago-based UrbanLab with Virtual Water, a proposal to collect, clean and recycle rain water on the site, that will be exhibited at MoMA in time for the opening of the HWKN’s pavilion in June 2012. **

FRANK-O-PHONE

But wait! Frank (Francis?) Arvan, is calling for MOCA to buy local. The Detroit-based architect and President of AIA Detroit, disputed MOCA’s choice stepped up on his Facebook soapbox to write: “I am very disappointed the MOCA Board could not find a Detroit Area architect for their upcoming renovation...At a time when our local economy has devastated architectural firms I would hope local organizations and business would look to local talent for their projects.”

EAVESDROP> THE EDITORS

Send gold leaves, unisex tees, and bonnets with bees to midwesteavesdrop@archpaper.com.

COLOSSUS OF ROADS

Following a brief motor tour of New York, the giant replica of Michelangelo’s David is due to roll into Louisville, Kentucky on a flatbed truck later in March. The statue is an exact copy of the original in Florence. Except at 30 feet tall (not counting the 15 foot pedestal) it’s double the size. And, oh yes—it’s gold. Turkish artist Serkan Ozkaya created the piece in foam using a 3-D printer, and stated: “I wanted to use the potential of the 3D model to recreate the most precious man-made object, one which I had never seen for myself.” The blinged-out statue will be erected in a park just across the street from its new owner, the Deborah Berke-designed 21c Museum. Our question: will the citizens of Louisville stay true to Ozkaya’s vision and leave XL David as is—sans fig leaf?

A BOY NAMED LYNN

We heard a rumor that a female architect had been chosen to design the new Detroit MOCA. But it turns out that the winner really just has a lady-like name. We’d like to congratulate the definitively male Lynn Rice, whose firm Rice + Lipka is collaborating on the project with Field Operations, and take this opportunity to salute Evelyn Waugh, Carol O’Connor, and Holly White!

MOMA PS 1 PICKS HWKN FOR ANNUAL PAVILION

HWKN's winning Wendy.
The scope of this planned redevelopment is made public only after McEagle had already secured an initial 1,500 acres of the neighborhood into a highly sustainable, mixed-use model of urban renewal.

Most of the properties are now empty. The area is sparsely populated and primarily offers barren lots and crumbling structures, but McEagle ultimately plans to transform 1,500 acres of the neighborhood into a highly sustainable, mixed-use model of urban renewal. Announced in 2009, the scope of this planned redevelopment was made public only after McEagle had already secured an initial 800-acre foothold in the area.

McKee’s proposal includes infrastructure, up to 10,000 residential units, 5.5 million square feet of retail and office space, and multi-modal transit options like 20 miles of bike and pedestrian paths and a trolley system.

Shepherding this endeavor has proven to be arduous and is increasingly fraught with complex issues, including the potential displacement of remaining residents. Further, a critical 33-acre grouping of parcels for the redevelopment district is the location on which the Pruitt-Igoe housing project once stood. Abandoned for more than 30 years, the site was home to one of the country’s most notorious modernist experiments. It is now a dense forest surrounded only by the sprawling empty lots and underused buildings that have come to define much of St. Louis’ north side.

This nationally important site, which serves as a poignant reminder of both the promise and the failings of large-scale urban renewal and architectural theory, will likely be purchased by the Northside Regeneration organization for less than $1 million. McKee plans to locate the retail core of his redeveloped district on these parcels. Despite the cool reception McKee has received from some of the public and local media, the City of St. Louis sees no mismanagement or misleading intentions on the part of McEagle or the Northside Regeneration organization as they continue to purchase large swaths of land. Jeff Rainford, who serves as chief of staff for St. Louis mayor Francis Slay, recently told the St. Louis Post-Dispatch, “We’re not giving him these properties. We’re not selling them at a discount. McKee is buying them for what we think these properties are worth.”

BRIAN NEWMAN
PIER REVIEW continued from front page: spaces will make it a world-class destination for residents as well as visitors, much like Millennium Park and the rest of the lakefront. All the teams are working under the framework of a new master plan, called “The Centennial Vision,” developed by the newly constituted nonprofit Navy Pier, Inc. The Pier had previously been operated by McPier, the exposition company that also operates McCormick Place. AECOM/BIG’s proposal calls for a

seats. In keeping with a mission to leave much of the former farmland untouched, the new auditorium features a six-acre green roof that blends into the rolling landscape, with bridle and walking paths, and water features doubling as geothermal heat sinks, part of an overall sustainability strategy that includes 3,576 geothermal wells.

Structurally, the auditorium employs 4,000 tons of steel (from Belgium and the United States) spanning 270 feet and supported by one transfer truss. The column-free auditorium will thus have clear sightlines to a large 45-foot-by-80-foot LED screen. Dedicated primarily to annual conferences and staff corporate meetings, the screen works interactively for audience members with personal tablets.

JULIE V. IOVINE

ARCHITECT: CUNINGHAM GROUP
CLIENT: EPIC SYSTEMS
LOCATION: VERONA, WISCONSIN
COMPLETION: FALL 2013

FLW 2.0
The Frank Lloyd Wright Historic District in Oak Park expanded its boundaries to encompass another 444 homes, bringing the total number in the district to 1,728. According to a report on TribLocal.com, the proposal for redistricting was put forth in 2005 because the original 1970s districting didn’t include many structures now considered historic. There has been a bit of pushback from residents concerned about the cost of maintaining a historic structure and a tepid reception to dealing with the Historic Preservation Commission for changes or additions.

PLAN FOR TRANSFORMATION 2.0
The new crew at the Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) is set to revamp the original Plan for Transformation for public housing, which has been slowed by the soft real estate market. The CHA will be joined in the effort by the city, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, and the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation. In a statement the authority said that it was about to enter an “intense information gathering and input process,” in other words, a series of meetings with the community to gather new ideas to complete the plan. They even adopted a wordy moniker that sounds more like an app: Plan for Transformation 2.0 Resident Input Sessions.

CINCY STREET CAR 1.0
The ground was broken for the Cincinnati Street Car on February 24. The Queen City is revamping the underground utilities and replacing the antiquated water main before laying the tracks that will link Downtown to Findlay Market and the trendy Over-the-Rhine neighborhood. It will eventually link to the University of Cincinnati, and the zoo. Late last year, the $95 million project got a $10.5 million infusion from TIGER III funds allocated by the U.S. Department of Transportation.

PEVELY COMPLEX 0.0
The Pevely Complex in St. Louis is about to face the wrecking ball after the Planning Commission voted to approve plans by St. Louis University to build a new medical facility on the site. Preservationists’ voices were heard, but with the exception of one lone voter representing Mayor Francis Slay, the rest of the commissioners were not moved by arguments that the former dairy factory, listed on the National Register of Historic Places, was worth saving. With SLU threatening to leave for the suburbs, the commission caved and allowed a newer design to land on the urban site. The four factory buildings and one iconic smokestack will fall once the university receives approval for one final permit.
FORMER SOM PARTNER STARTS INTERNATIONAL CITY PRACTICE
ON HIS OWN

With much of the world urbanizing at an unprecedented rate, Chicago architect Peter Ellis sensed an opportunity. “There is, I believe, a gaping need for a practice devoted to the planning and design of new cities,” Ellis said. A longtime veteran of SOM, Ellis recently left the firm where he was a consulting partner to found Peter Ellis New Cities, a 20-person architecture/planning/urban design practice with offices in New Delhi and Chicago. While at SOM, Ellis planned Jaypee Sports City in India, and he is overseeing its construction in his new practice. “Not many people can say they planned and then built a city for a million people,” he said. Focusing on planning new cities and carrying those plans through to the design and construction of its architecture and infrastructure sets his practice apart. “An urban master plan begins to die the moment it hits the shelf,” he said. “There is the need for a few hundred new cities in the developing world.” India has proven to be fertile ground for Ellis, both in terms of building out Jaypee Sports City, but also in attracting talent. “There are tremendous amounts of U.S. and European-trained Indian architects who are returning for new opportunities,” he said. Staff members rotate through both offices, so they stay connected both to the project on the ground as well as to U.S. design culture. Ellis hopes to reshape existing cities in the U.S. as well. The firm is currently pursuing planning commissions in Los Angeles and Memphis, TN. In Los Angeles, the firm is submitting a proposal for a sustainability plan for Downtown, while in Memphis, Ellis and his team are responding to a call for a new airport city. “It’s really exciting to see cities across the country embracing smarter, more sustainable planning,” he said. Ellis is at least the third senior SOM architect to leave and start a Chicago-based practice in recent years: Adrian Smith left in 2006; Thomas Kerwin in 2010. SOM has a mandatory retirement age of 60. “SOM is committed to advancing the firm generation to generation,” and that’s a laudable goal, he said, noting that many architects “don’t really become fluent as a designer until [their] fifties.”

An early retirement age may have made sense for the previous generation, but less so now. Ellis is quick to express his admiration for SOM. “It’s such an amazing organization full of brilliant individuals.” Ellis is focused on the environmental and demographic challenges we face in the present and near future. He believes purpose-built cities are key to sustainable growth. “We can build cities so they use 30 to 50 percent less energy and water than existing cities,” he said. “The technology is there. It’s about harnessing it and integrating into coherent systems.”

ROCK AND RIBBON continued from front page

While Millennium Park draws on Beaux Arts planning, the Van Valkenburg design follows the curving lines established by Gehry’s footbridge. “You can fold more program into curving geometries,” said Matthew Urbanski, a principal at MVVA. “You’ll have a very different experience from a conventional skating rink,” he said. “We’re planting evergreens that can be interspersed along folds of the ribbon.” The climbing mountain will also add to the variety of activities along the lakefront. “Vigorous activity makes parks usable in cold weather.”

While much of the lakefront parklands is flat, MVVA’s design calls for an undulating topography, with bowl-shaped hills to create more intimate gathering spaces within the landscape, as well as an artificial climbing mountain. “You’ll have a very different experience from a conventional skating rink,” he said. “We’re planting evergreens that can be interspersed along folds of the ribbon.” The climbing mountain will also add to the variety of activities along the lakefront. “Vigorous activity makes parks usable in cold weather.”

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COVER-UPS

NEW CEILINGS THAT DON’T JUST HIDE THE WORKS, BUT ALSO ADD ACOUSTICS AND EASY RECONFIGURATION TO HIGH PERFORMANCE. BY JENNIFER K. GORSCHE

1 SONO PANEL
HIGHTOWER GROUP

Designed by Swedish design firm Claesson Koivisto Rune, HighTower’s Sono panel is manufactured from bentwood birch profiles (available finished or unfinished) over a black stained wood frame and recyclable polyester fiber. Rated for Class C sound absorption, the 24-by-48-inch panels are typically used for vertical applications but can be attached to suspended ceilings with additional hardware.

www.hightoweraccess.com

2 WOVIN WALL ACOUSTIC
MOOV ACOUSTIC

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3 INTEGRATED CEILINGS AND WALLS
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4 ECOPHON MASTER SOLO S
CERTAINTEED

CertainTeed’s new Ecophon Master Solo S suspended ceiling panel is manufactured from 75 percent recycled high-density fiberglass. Rated for Class A sound absorption, the panels can be suspended in a variety of configurations and easily integrated with light fixtures. The visible surface is finished with Akutex FT, a finish offering 85 percent light reflectivity and 99 percent light diffusion for more natural light distribution throughout interiors.

www.certainteed.com

5 MICROPERF PANELS
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www.ceilingsplus.com

6 GLADIUS PANEL
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Sculpture: Eyns, Thomas H. Sayre, N.C. Museum of Art
AN’s annual resource list may be published every year but it is never the same. Painstakingly drawn from extensive interviews by our editors with the architects and builders of the best architecture of 2011, these names are the too-often unacknowledged cornerstones that guarantee the quality and excellence of today’s architecture. We both herald and share them with you.
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La Dallman Architects
James Dallman,
effect.”

“The Silbonit cement board rain screen at the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee Hill Center incorporates a number of different colors of board to create a modeled effect.”
James Dalman, La Dallman Architects

THE END RESULT: WEST LOOP LAW OFFICE ACCURATE PERFORATING 4240 ARCHITECTURE

“The masonry work by Dunlap & Company at Central Middle School was noticeably well done. It’s becoming something of a lost art.”
Robert Benson, 4240 Architecture

“The end result of the perforated screen on the West Loop Law Office was precise. Accurate Perforating was fantastic to work with. We resolved a lot of details on the fly.”
Robert Benson, 4240 Architecture
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“We used very simple furniture from Blu Dot in the gallery and offices. It keeps the focus on the art.”
Susan Conger-Austin, Susan Conger Architects

“The Bulthaup kitchen system is very flexible. We were able to integrate it into the architecture in a very seamless and elegant way.”
Vincent James, VJAA
“The Live Roof system at the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee Hill Center has been very successful. We chose that green roof system because its shallow, lightweight, and easy to maneuver; and it has a seamless surface quality once it is in place.”

James Dalman, La Dalman Architects

“The Gravelpave parking lots at the Hiawatha Maintenance Facility served as a beta test for city public works. It’s performed very well, and I think we’ll see more of it in Minneapolis.”

Steve Maurelli, RSP Architects

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FEATURE

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The human voice
perfectly throughout
the space without
any amplification.
They really rose to
the challenge.”
Christopher Gibbs,
John Ronan Architects

“Portico Group
of Seattle did the
exhibition design
and the landscape for
the Minneapolis Zoo
entrance pavilion.
They really helped
create a unified
visitor experience
inside and outside
the building.”
John Ronan,
John Ronan Architects

“Threshold
Acoustics helped
make the perform-
ance space at the
Poetry Foundation
a great place to
hear readings.
They isolated the sound
so that you can hear
the human voice
the challenge.”
Christopher Gibbs,
John Ronan Architects

Each end of
the Composer’s Studio
is a large scale, lift/
slide door from
Archispec. It’s industrial
strength combined with
German Engineering so it
slides effortlessly,”
Brian Johnson,
Johnsen Schmaling Architects
CALENDAR

MARCH

WEDNESDAY 7
LECTURE
Robert Brougmann
AIA St. Louis Scholarship Trust Lecture
6:30 p.m.
Steinberg Auditorium
Sam Fox School of Design and Visual Arts
1 Brookings Dr., St. Louis
samfoxschool.wustl.edu

THURSDAY 8
LECTURE
Ken Tracy
Sampling Devices
12:30 p.m.
Rapson Hall
University of Minnesota
89 Church St. SE
Minneapolis, MN
design.umn.edu

SATURDAY 10
EVENT
Keith Fuller
Whitman
8:00 p.m.
Meditranea
Graham Foundation
4 West Burton Pl.
Chicago
grahamfoundation.org

SUNDAY 11
LECTURE
Freida Testagrgias
Expanding the Field of Vision: Modern Art in Nigeria and Cultural Diplomacy in the Mid-Twentieth Century
2:00 p.m.
The Detroit Institute of Arts
5200 Woodward Ave.
Detroit
dia.org

MONDAY 12
LECTURE
Marilyn Minter
6:00 p.m.
Rubloff Auditorium
The Art Institute of Chicago
230 South Columbus Dr.
Chicago
artic.edu

WWW.ARCHPAPER.COM

WEDNESDAY 14
LECTURE
Sarah Banister
Better for Haunted—Victorian Houses and the Modern Imagination
6:00 p.m.
Fullerton Hall
The Art Institute of Chicago
111 South Michigan Ave.
Chicago
artic.edu

THURSDAY 15
LECTURE
Barbara Barlotta
The Parthenon—How Innovative Is It?
Classical Art Society
The Art Institute of Chicago
111 South Michigan Ave.
Chicago
artic.edu

FILM
Conversations at the Edge: A Space In-Between
(Sara Ludy, 2010–12)
75 min.
6:00 p.m.
Gene Siskel Film Center
412 North State St.
Chicago
artic.edu

FRIDAY 16
LECTURE
Carlos Leite
San Paulo Sustainability Indicators: from informal territories to the intimacy of architecture praxis
12:00 p.m.
AIA Chicago
35 East Wacker Dr., Chicago
www.aiachicago.org

SATURDAY 17
SYMPOSIUM
Working with a Green Architect
Panel Discussion
Nancy Barr, Michelle Andonian, Carlos Diaz, et al.
7:00 p.m.
The Detroit Institute of Arts
5200 Woodward Ave.
Detroit
dia.org

MARCH/APRIL 2012

WEDNESDAY 21
LECTURE
Claudia Bernardi
School of Art and Open Studio of Perquin, El Salvador
6:30 p.m.
Steinberg Auditorium
Sam Fox School of Design and Visual Arts
1 Brookings Dr.
St. Louis
samfoxschool.wustl.edu

THURSDAY 22
EVENT
Lora Luis, AIA, RIBA
How to Benefit from Social Media within the Architecture & Design Community
5:30 p.m.
Porcelanosa Showroom
149 Merchandise Mart Plaza
Chicago
www.aiachicago.org

THURSDAY 23
LECTURE
Leonard Parker
An Architect's Architect
6:30 p.m.
Rapson Hall
University of Minnesota
89 Church St. SE
Minneapolis, MN
design.umn.edu

SUNDAY 25
EXHIBITION OPENING
Capturing the Sublime: Italian Drawings of the Renaissance and Baroque
The Art Institute of Chicago
111 South Michigan Ave.
Chicago
www.aiachicago.org

MONDAY 26
LECTURE
Adam Budak
3:00 p.m.
Steinberg Auditorium
Sam Fox School of Design and Visual Arts
1 Brookings Dr.
St. Louis
www.samfoxschool.wustl.edu

TUESDAY 27
LECTURE
Thomas Christoffersen
5:00 p.m.
Knobloch School of Architecture
Ohio State University
275 Woodrow Ave.
Columbus, OH
knowlton.osu.edu

NONE

FRIDAY 30
SYMPOSIUM
Digital Desires: Technology at the Intersection of Natural Culture, and Meaning
Gregg Pasquarelli, Thomas Auer, et al.
6:00 p.m.
Steinberg Auditorium
Sam Fox School of Design and Visual Arts
1 Brookings Dr.
St. Louis
samfoxschool.wustl.edu

EVENT
Unveiled: International Vintage Poster Fair: Seven Deadly Sins
Chicago Cultural Center
77 East Randolph St.
Chicago
www.artic.edu

APRIL

SATURDAY 1
LECTURE
Louise Cort
Painting with Pottery in the Peacock Room
2:00 p.m.
The Detroit Institute of Arts
5200 Woodward Ave., Detroit
dia.org

TUESDAY 4
LECTURE
Karen Lewis
5:30 p.m.
Knowlton School of Architecture
Ohio State University
275 Woodrow Ave.
Columbus, OH
knowlton.osu.edu

WEDNESDAY 5
FILM
Detroit Revealed on Film: Louder Than Love
(Tony O’Annunzio, 2011),
130 min.
7:00 p.m.
The Detroit Institute of Arts
5200 Woodward Ave., Detroit
dia.org

SATURDAY 8
LECTURE
Bernard Tschumi
Concept and Material
6:00 p.m.
MTCC Auditorium
Illinois Institute of Technology
301 South State St., Chicago
il.it.edu

TUESDAY 11
LECTURE
Jonathan Barnes
5:30 p.m.
Knobloch School of Architecture
Ohio State University
275 Woodrow Ave.
Columbus, OH
knowlton.osu.edu

BARBARA KERTON
6:30 p.m.
Steinberg Auditorium
Sam Fox School of Design and Visual Arts
1 Brookings Dr., St. Louis
www.samfoxschool.wustl.edu

Hernan Bas
In Conversation
7:00 p.m.
The Detroit Institute of Arts
5200 Woodward Ave., Detroit
dia.org

URBAN VISION:
AMERICAN WORKS ON PAPER, 1900–1950
Indianapolis Museum of Art
4000 Michigan Road
Indianapolis, IN
March 30–September 30

An upcoming exhibition at The Indianapolis Museum of Art’s Alliance Gallery will explore the ways in which artists dealt with the rise of industrial modernization and urbanization. In the first half of the 20th century, rapidly changing cities served as inspiration for new portrayals of human expression within these new environments. “The spectacle of metropolitan life” is presented through 25 works from IMA’s print collection, including lithographs, etchings, and engravings from well-known artists such as George Bellows, Child Hassam, Edward Hopper, Reginald Marsh, and Isabel Bishop. The exhibition will display the art along-side vintage construction photos from the Chicago and New York skyscraper boom, providing context for these early interpretations of the city. Pieces from lesser-known artist and architect Gerald Kenneth Geerlings, whose aquatinted technical drawings of the emerging cityscape highlight the juxtaposition of emotional romanticism and technological progress, will be on display at IMA for the first time since 1970.

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SARAH MORRIS:
POINTS ON A LINE
The Wexner Center
1871 North High Street
Columbus, OH
Through April 15

Points On A Line, a 2010 film by artist Sarah Morris, takes two iconic buildings as its central characters, Mies van der Rohe’s Farnsworth House in Illinois and Philip Johnson’s Glass House in Connecticut. Commissioned by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, which owns both properties, the film is a meditation on the relationship between the buildings—Johnson, an acolyte of Mies and inspired by Farnsworth drawings, happened to complete his New Canaan house first—and the structures as they exist today. But it is the relationship of the architects themselves that becomes Morris’ narrative thread, serving as a springboard to explore their other architectural overlap: Johnson’s glamorized corporate interiors for the Four Seasons, the power-broker restaurant in the base of the Mies-designed Seagram building in Manhattan. Points on Line underscores how our perception of a space is affected not just by its design but also its mythology.

WWW.ARCHPAPER.COM
Fears about tall buildings

Ninety-nine years ago, Dr. Adolphus Knopf petitioned the New York City Commission for certain building limits to ban “disease-breeding, death-trap skyscrapers” south of 23rd Street. Today, fears about tall buildings persist, revolving less around hygiene and more around exit strategies. Yet most city-dwellers are still comfortable enough with skyscraper technology to spend days and nights on high. Not content with urbanites’ relatively passive—if better-informed, post 9/11—acceptance of "taller buildings, Kate Ascher, author of The Works: Anatomy of a Skyscraper..."

Ascher’s short introduction to the history of tall buildings covers the New York City skyline, its architects and managers, and the glass behemoths of the Metropolitan Style, the super-tall towers of Asia and the Middle East. Condensing the narrative into the first four pages of the introduction is no easy task, yet Ascher does so with clarity, authority, and a commendable editorial eye for what to leave in and what to keep out.

From there, the book begins literally from the ground up, recounting the life of a skyscraper. Along the way, she peppers the text with anecdotes, some well-known in the architecture community but others surprising pieces of tall building trivia. Though Disney’s thrill ride Tomorrowland” echoes an innate fear of uncontrolled descent, there are no cases of an elevator free fall causing death. Even when an elevator in the Empire State Building plunged over 70 stories in 1960, the cab operator’s life was spared thanks to the compressed air in the shaft beneath the cab, combined with a pile of several cabbies who cushioned the fall.

The Heights dispels myths expected but intriguing details—like the fact that operator booths of the cranes that build super-tall buildings are sometimes decked out with TVs and fridges. But one can’t help but notice the dissection of scientific, sociological, and economic realities of building tall, the book, though never condescending to the reader, underscores the dominance of function and finance in the mainline effort of building a skyscraper. Ascher identifies the public as the most visible part of the building, something that has historically correlated to a certain absolute ownership of a tower by an architect (Mies’ Seagram Building, Norman Foster’s Gherkin, etc.), but the author’s approach also clearly exposes everything that architects can’t and don’t do.

Accessibly written and well illustrated with copious diagrams, The Heights pleasantly lures the reader through—like your middle school textbook, makes it very hard to do anything but retain the presented information. It’s a level of handholding that won’t perfectly suit some but others may find overly pedantic. But Ascher did not write in the tone of a foreprofessional architect, and for what The Heights claims to be, it is decidedly successful. It’s not marketed as a book for children, but it could be, and one that different ages grasp with different levels. Like a good student of the school of skyscraper, Ascher knows the benefit of explaining where one-sentence definitions explain “key concepts” that have been the subjects of dissertations. The goal here is basic understanding, and The Heights, like your middle school textbook, makes it very hard to do anything but retain the presented information. It’s a level of handholding that won’t perfectly suit some but others may find overly pedantic. But Ascher did not write in the tone of a foreprofessional architect, and for what The Heights claims to be, it is decidedly successful. It’s not marketed as a book for children, but it could be, and one that different ages grasp with different levels. Like a good student of the school of skyscraper, Ascher knows the benefit of explaining where one-sentence definitions explain “key concepts” that have been the subjects of dissertations. The goal here is basic understanding, and The Heights, like your middle school textbook, makes it very hard to do anything but retain the presented information. It’s a level of handholding that won’t perfectly suit some but others may find overly pedantic. But Ascher did not write in the tone of a foreprofessional architect, and for what The Heights claims to be, it is decidedly successful.
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sah.org/2012
Kiyonori Kikutake, 1928–2011

Sporting a floral necktie, Kiyonori Kikutake—considered the most inventive, dogged, and systematically intelligent member of the Metabolism movement, which flourished along with Japan’s fortunes from the 1960s to the 1970s—stands on a Tokyo rooftop in front of a model of his latest floating city. It is 1968 and Kikutake is 40. With his eyes squeezed shut and his hands spread out like a spiritual medium, he seems to be straining, desperately trying to conjure the project into reality: a colony of his alma mater, Waseda University, out of the ferocity of his passion rather than feudal—but they were in fact dystopian preparations for worst-case scenarios. In Metabolism 1960, the group’s manifesto, Kikutake wrote: “It is incorrect to say that the most sure means to live is to cling to the land…. The civilization of continents has accumulated bloody struggles in human relations established within the limited land.” Projects like Ocean City and Tower Shaped Community—tubular towers over 900 feet tall into which capsules plug “like leaves”—were, he thought, necessities for an overcrowded planet on the brink of disaster. In 1961, with Disaster Prevention City, Kikutake proposed a flood-prevention scheme for Tokyo’s Koto Ward, a grid of 20-foot-high piers, safe from the waters of Tokyo Bay.

While plotting Metabolism and conducting unsolicited experiments with oceanic and aerial architecture, Kikutake built prolifically. In the 1960s, he completed the A-shaped Izumo Shrine Administrative Building; the Miyakonojo Civic Center (an auditorium that fanned out like a seashell, or an ear); and the Toko-en Hotel (a somehow delicate form of Brutalism, with a nod to tradition in its terraced form). At Expo ’70, the apothecary of Metabolism and the culmination of Japan’s postwar economic and moral rehabilitation, Kikutake built the iconic Expo Tower, a skeletal framework with move-nets plugged in, from which the public could look out over the city of the future. Expos in 1970s Japan were true laboratories: at the Okinawa Ocean Expo in 1975, which celebrated the landing over of the islands from the United States to Japan, Kikutake was finally able to build on the sea. His Aquapolis, the Japanese pavilion, was a floating, oil-rig-like structure the size of a city block. Meanwhile, Kikutake was also taking on the land with his Strataform Structure Module, a giant A-frame into which individual, American-style detached houses can be plugged. From 1972 to 1992, Kikutake collaged Strataforms all over the Japanese archipelago: in the shadow of Mount Fuji, in the countryside, in dense cities, straddling highways, and finally, with the Ecopolis in the Amazone jungle. The Ministry of International Trade and Industry, willing to sponsor potential solutions to Japan’s shortage of land and housing, paid for the construction of a 1:1 prototype, which Kikutake subjected to earthquake and fire tests. The real thing was never built.

When the oil crisis struck in 1973 and Japan’s economy contracted for the first time since the war, Kikutake, like other Metabolists, looked to the Middle East for commissions. He proposed floating factories for the Tigris and Euphrates rivers in Iraq and for Libya’s coast; for Jeddah and Abu Dhabi he designed, but never built, giant floating hotels. When Japan started booming again in the 1980s, Kikutake, now sponsored by a telecommunications company, was ready with another floating city, this time to accommodate one million people. In 1986, when Rem Koolhaas designed the Hyperbuilding for Bangkok, he didn’t realize that the project, originally initiated by Kikutake and his Hyperbuilding Research Committee, was in fact a direct continuation of the same Metabolist obsession with artificial ground that Kikutake had been pursing since the late 1950s. For determination and longevity, Kikutake’s had few equals.

Last fall at the Mori Museum in Tokyo, Kikutake took part in a symposium with his fellow surviving Metabolists Kenji Ekuan (the industrial designer responsible for the Kikkoman soy sauce bottle) and Fumihiko Maki (now building Tower 4 at the World Trade Center in New York). Kikutake, 83, had to leave early. He rose to his feet, shuffled to the front of the stage and wagged his finger playfully at the 1,000-strong audience. “You have come here today and listened to us talk about Metabolism,” he said. “But please don’t think you have understood anything, ever.” It was his last appearance in public before returning to Hawaii; he passed away just before the New Year.
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