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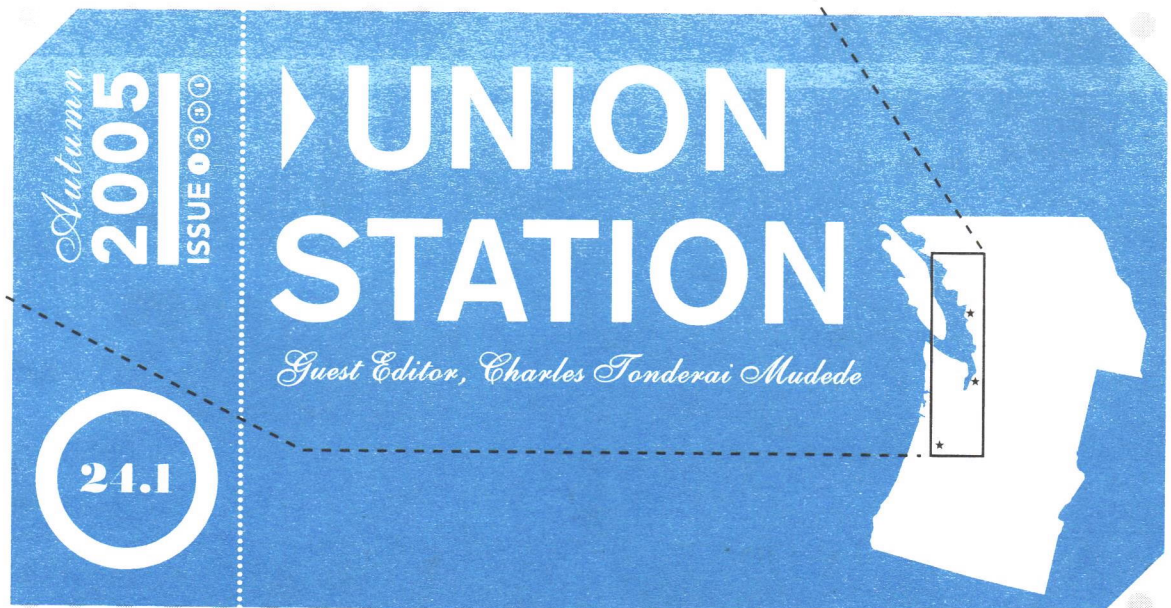
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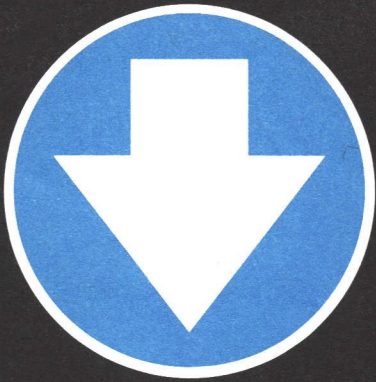
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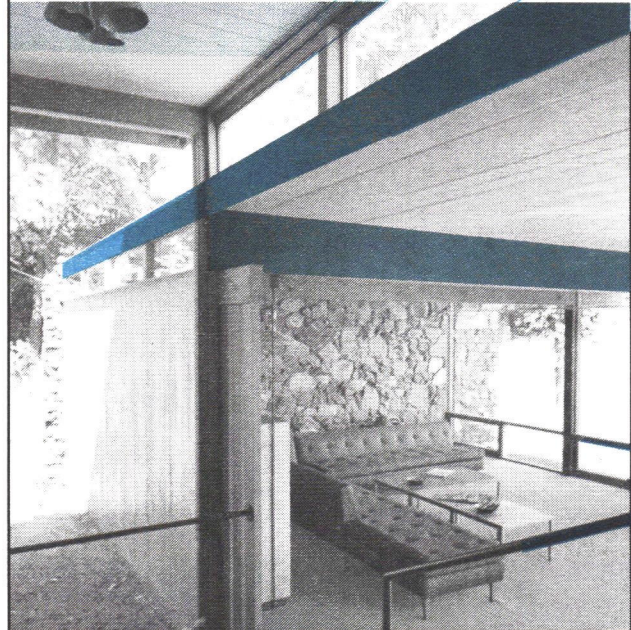


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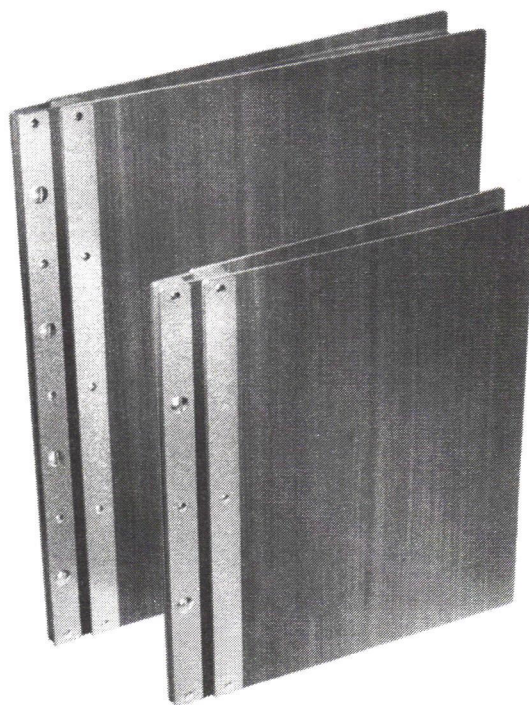
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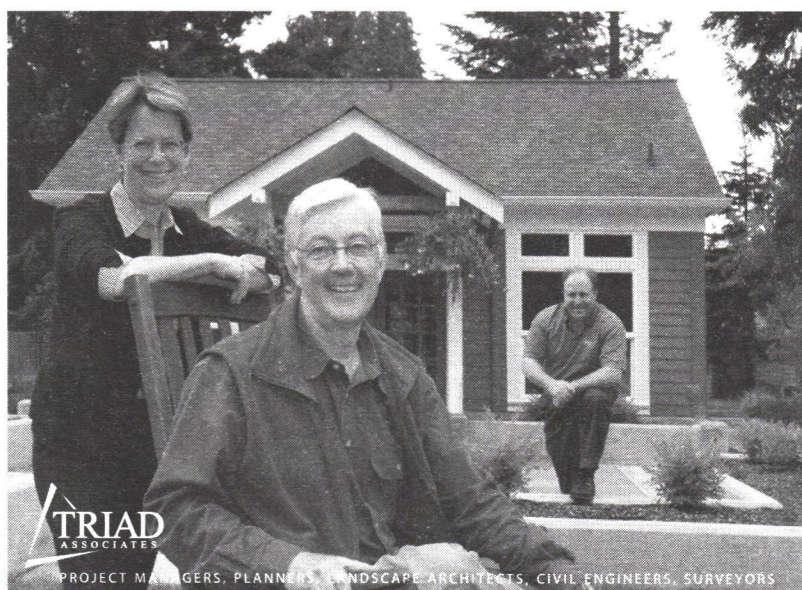
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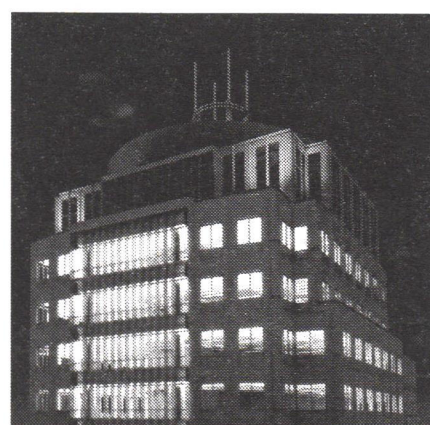
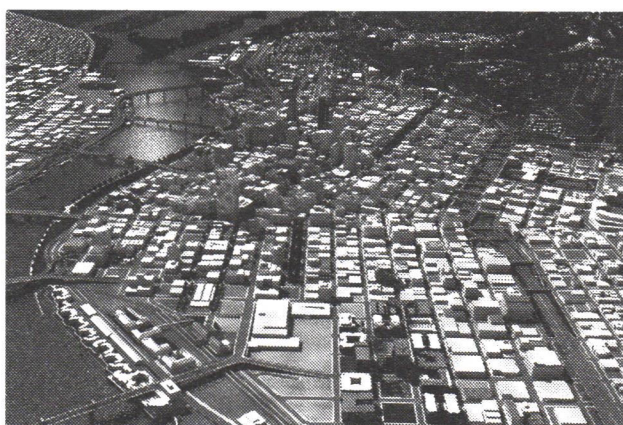
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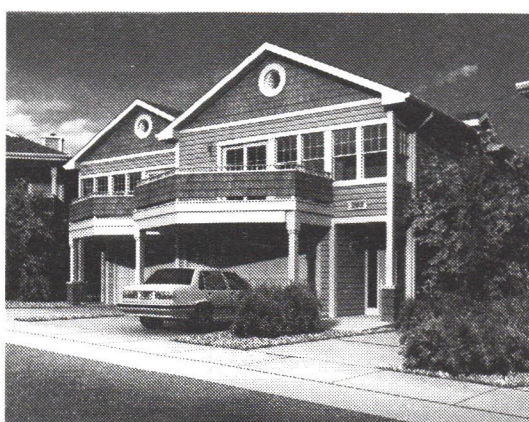
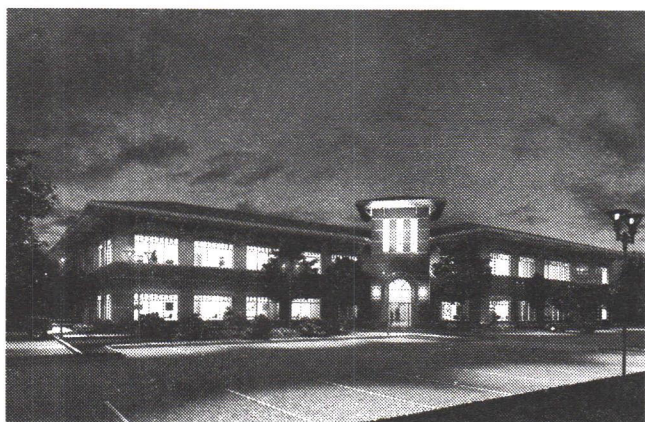
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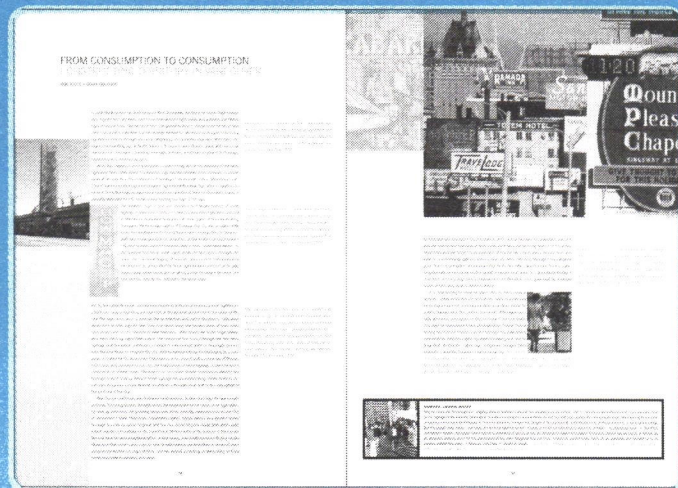
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CORRECTION:

Our sincere apologies to the contributors for omitting the photo credits on "From Consumption to Consumption," which appeared in our Summer '05 issue. We're always indebted to the artistic contributions that are made to the magazine, as their visual presence certainly elevates the written content. The credits are as follows. Left: Bowmac Sign Today-Daytime. Photo by Fujita Neumann. Right, top: View toward Downtown Vancouver from the Granville Bridge, 1950s. Photo by Fred Herzog and courtesy of Presentation House Gallery. Right, below: Photograph of the photographer Foncie Pulice at work near the corner of Granville & Robson, ©1969. Taken from "The Just Past Photographs in Vancouver" exhibition catalog. Photo courtesy of Presentation House Gallery.



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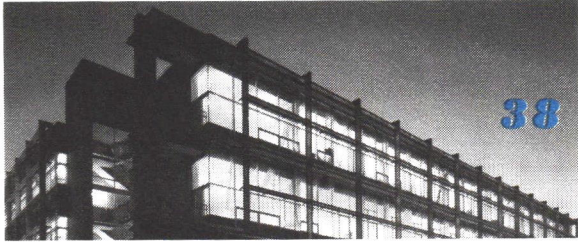
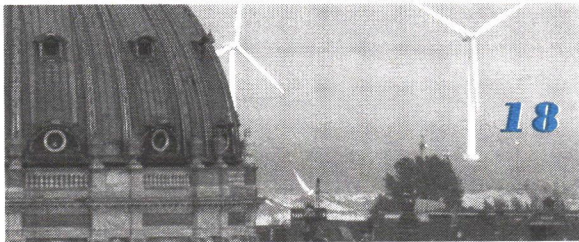
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ISSUE 24.1: UNION STATION

Guest Editor, Charles Tonderai Mudedu

The Pacific Northwest Corridor has three main train stations – Pacific Central Station, King Street Station, Union Station – that were built during the peak of the Railway Age, fell into neglect after World War II, and since the '90s have made a steady return to public life. Presently, the stations have the potential to transform the cities of the corridor into one urban realm. The following essays examine the fixed histories and open futures of the train stations.

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TAKE SIX GABLES AND A CORNICE...

To the Editor:

I'm writing in response to Weber + Thompson's letter in *ARCADE's* Summer 2005 issue; a kinder, gentler but no less outrageous version of the litigious one they wrote the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* after my review of 700 Broadway (Apr. 12, 2004). I'd like to counter their continued claims of factual errors, challenge their demoralizing view of the architectural profession and bring to light the chilling affect that bully tactics have on public discourse.

For context: the gist of my review was that, while not the most egregious design in town, the project is a prime example of how mediocre architecture drains Seattle's vitality. The *P-I* received a letter from Weber + Thompson threatening legal action for irreparable damage to their reputation. In a nutshell the complaint was that the article failed to mention that the firm was cut out of the design and construction process and that the client, contractor and neighborhood design review board (everyone but the plumber) was to blame for the design. To add another twist, the allegations were made by the (then) President of the Local Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, Kristen Scott. Ironically, just a few months earlier the National AIA advanced me to the College of Fellows for contributions I made to the profession over 10 years as an architectural journalist.

There are several problems with the firm's complaint. While now distancing themselves from the project, Weber + Thompson was happy enough to take full credit up until the review appeared. It was displayed prominently on the firm's website (a source I used in preparing the article) with no disclaimer as to the authorship of the design, in fact there was a photograph of the project, well under construction, along with a description of its "elegant façade of masonry." The firm's name also appeared on a large sign at the site throughout construction.

What is more disconcerting is the smoke screen Weber + Thompson blew, apparently to save face, as they continue to insist that the problem with the review was not the actual criticism – "we agree with much of it" – but that it endorsed the idea that architects have ultimate control over a project. There was nothing in that article, or any other one that I wrote, suggesting that architects are omnipotent. Architecture is a collaborative process and through talent, creativity and sheer determination many architects work with difficult circumstances to create projects that are a credit to the profession and a welcome addition to the city. Instead of making threats and pointing fingers, take responsibility: do directors or chefs blame the key grip or the sous chef when they get a bad review?

What undercuts Weber + Thompson's claim that they were wronged is their own portfolio of work; 700 Broadway is not unique in its mediocrity. Did they have the same difficulties with clients, contractors and neighborhood design review at Galer Gardens on Queen Anne, the Bel Air Apartments in Edmonds and The Eastlake under I-5 south of the University Bridge, just to name a few projects?

As demanded in their letter, a meeting was held at the *P-I* with the firm's three partners: Blaine Weber, Scott Thompson and Kristen Scott. Weber's opening remark was that they agreed with the review but took exception to the idea that they designed the building. Scott drew on her authority as president of the AIA to tell me "You should know that architects have no control over their work." Made in front of the *P-I's* Managing Editor and the Arts and Entertainment Editor, her statements undermined the case that architecture deserves at least a portion of the coverage allocated gardening, food or television. The *P-I's* response was that the paper stood by the column and would not print a correction or retraction because there was nothing to correct or retract. The *P-I* indicated it would welcome a letter to the editor or an op-ed piece (as they did from NBBJ in response to a review of their Fremont project) but Weber + Thompson never submitted one and never stepped down from their threat.

As a freelancer (\$325 per article) my main concern was that the *P-I* cover my legal expenses if Weber + Thompson sued me personally, as well as the newspaper. I asked my editor if I should call a lawyer and he indicated that I should. At my lawyer's urging I asked repeatedly if the *P-I* would indemnify me but never got a definitive 'yes,' just legalese that "as long as our interests did not diverge..." I soon learned that a freelance art critic left the *P-I* for the same reason. Lawsuits against critics do happen and the First Amendment protects expressions of opinion, but the problem is that frivolous lawsuits consume money, time and energy. When my editor suggested that perhaps I not mention the names of firms in future reviews to avoid pissing anyone off, I decided it was time to leave. (I'm an architect and decided to start my own practice.) A few months later the *P-I's* new architecture columnist called to ask about my experience with the paper. He said he was also freelancing and the *P-I* would not indemnify him either but jokingly added that he had no assets to lose. I wish him well.

It's too easy to conclude that I just wasn't nice enough for Seattle but it runs counter to the overwhelmingly positive feedback I received from architects as well as the general public. Not everyone agreed with what I said but for the most part they respected that I was sticking my neck out by stating an opinion. At a time when it is becoming increasingly difficult to have open discussions about political and religious differences we should at least be able to talk about buildings, and the impact they have on our city, without fear.

Sincerely,
Sheri Olson, FAIA

To the Editor, Blaine Weber, Scott Thompson and Kristen Scott:

This is laughable and should be an embarrassment to the authors. The essence of the article is that Weber + Thompson bear little to no responsibility for the quality of the work that comes from their office, choosing instead, to scapegoat myriad excuses. In the design profession, we all have the same constraints, same challenges, same prescriptive review process and the same stingy clients. The 700 Broadway project was not a disappointment for any of these reasons, it is a disappointment because it came out of their office. The project, as Sheri Olson rightfully pointed out, is on par (rather sub-par) with all of the work that they produce. They are bad architects and they need to stop. Please STOP! Please stop hurting Seattle.

Sincerely, Seriously.
Jeff Goupil

P.S. If this is their scapegoat letter for 700 Broadway, I can't wait to read the one for the Cristalla.

To the Editor:

Like many of my colleagues, I have been following the story around 700 Broadway, Weber + Thompson, the article by Sheri Olson in the *P-I* and your coverage very closely. I applaud you for taking this subject on and also for understanding the importance of what is going on here: This is about architectural contributions (or the lack thereof) to the city and how they are being evaluated by the public and within the profession. It's not about: Why another building design went mysteriously sour and how I didn't do anything wrong.

In the case of 700 Broadway we're looking at a building in a prime location, which every architectural company with a sincere interest in inspired and responsible urban design and good architecture would drool over! The product delivered is a disappointment to say the least and now has to be endured by Seattleites for decades to come. When the *Seattle P-I* came out with the article, "On Architecture: Mediocre apartment-retail building misses an opportunity to be a star" (Apr. 12, 2004), it published a legitimate and necessary critique written by a nationally renowned architectural critic, Sheri Olson, FAIA.

In an article in *the Stranger* (Aug. 5, 2004) Erica Barnett described how principals of Weber + Thompson, including Kristin Scott, Scott Thompson and Blaine Weber, allegedly wrote a letter to the *P-I* in which they declare not to be responsible for the failed design of the building. According to the article, Sheri Olson leaves her position as a freelance writer for the *P-I* subsequent to the pressure initiated by this letter.

This reaction to a critic by Weber + Thompson is unacceptable and should never happen again! Architects and their work in this city have to be open to public scrutiny. We are NOT working in a vacuum. Our work impacts everyone in this city. Not just our clients. If it's really so tough to make a good project happen under the given circumstances, maybe Weber + Thompson should consider the old trick of saying "No thank you" to a client...or is that too much to ask for???

Sincerely,
Carsten Stinn, Architect

To the Editor:

The principals of Weber + Thompson offer a didactic exposé of the architectural process that completely misses the source of angst generated within the design community.

Every firm has difficult clients and unsuccessful projects. How we as architects publicly handle our failures is an insight into both our academic training

TAKE SIX GABLES AND A CORNICE...CONTINUED

and our professional credibility. We endure a unique educational process that is unlike any other discipline, hanging our work on the wall for all to see and discuss. Through the public critiques of our best efforts by our professors and peers, our response is part of a dialogue that can be traced back centuries as the method by which we learn about architecture. This is how we get better. Many lessons are learned as we intellectually discuss our projects in school, but none is more important than how to take criticism. We may agree or disagree with another's thoughts about our work, but it's important to discuss what has been done. The same holds true in the professional world: to change the rules of the game strikes at the core of our values as architects and disregards our processes, long-standing methods and traditions.

The principals of Weber + Thompson have thumbed their noses at the methods and practices that are essential to our training and the practice of architecture. To do so while two principals were standing officers in the Seattle Chapter of the AIA, as President and Ethics Committee Chair, diminishes both the integrity of the AIA and the individual architects involved. To continue the academic analogy, it's as if Blaine Weber, Scott Thompson and Kristen Scott received negative criticism about their project, took it personally and without grace, then tore their drawings off the wall and stormed out of the studio. Furthermore, they then met behind closed doors and threatened the professor who offered the criticism. This is an affront to all who have graduated from architecture school, all who practice the profession and all who believe that intellectual discussion, debate and criticism of architecture is essential to its vitality.

Christopher Patano, AIA
Patano + Hafermann Architects

To the Editor:

We cannot sit silent while the Weber + Thompsons and Matt Driscolls of the world mess up our city. Driscoll at least doesn't attempt to seek legitimacy through AIA membership and involvement. Weber + Thompson counts among its partners the chair of the AIA Ethics Committee(!) and a past AIA President. This makes them hypocrites as well as bad designers.

Thank you for your consideration.
Joe Herrin, AIA

BELLTOWN SUCKS

Dear Mr. van der Veen,

As someone who has lived in and written about the Seattle neighborhood you discuss, I took great interest in your piece "Belltown Sucks! and the Pearl District Jams." For me, your piece begs one simple question: How did the Denny Regrade come to be known exclusively as Belltown? Historically, Belltown comprised the stretch of First and Western Avenues between Virginia and Wall Streets. A pronounced berm separated it from the main portion of Denny Hill, which rose eastward from Second Avenue. The narrow strip from First Avenue to the waterfront was platted to pioneer William Bell. The main hill, meanwhile, was platted to Arthur Denny – hence the two place names.

The Belltown and Denny Hill distinction became further marked in 1897 when First and Second Avenues were regraded. When the regrading of Denny Hill occurred a decade later, the area came to be called the Denny Regrade. Throughout the ensuing decades Belltown continued to have an identity of its own, apart from "the Regrade," as people called it.

Even as condos sprouted up faster than blackberry tendrils in the 1990s, the neighborhood remained the Denny Regrade. Only in the past few years has the entire area been designated as Belltown. This renaming came about, I suspect, through developers' scheming – though the City, no doubt, sprang for the red "Belltown" banners that hang from every lamppost. The true Belltown always enjoyed a bohemian caché that eluded the Regrade, and now this caché has been turned into a chi-chi marketing makeover of the Denny Regrade. Even the community paper has gone from being the Regrade Dispatch to the Belltown Messenger.

This erasure of history underpins your Belltown Sucks! thesis. I couldn't agree with you more about the spoiled opportunity for this district. A friend who owned a 70K closet condo in the Seattle Heights tower recently had to fork over huge maintenance fees to re-sheath the building after its original vinyl covering failed to breathe properly. As someone who has lived in several of the neighborhood's old apartment buildings, I rue every Notice of Proposed

To the Editor:

"Take Six Gables and a Cornice and Don't Call Me in the Morning" is the saddest attempt at justifying a firm's credibility. Instead, the piece was a long condescending lecture that threw blame at every party and process that is part of getting a building constructed. The integrity of the work should be first and foremost. Weber + Thompson's excuses lead me to believe that the office must not have a good design process that will carry the work through the obstacles listed. For the sake of all of us architects and designers, I urge W + T to please take responsibility for their work and stop embarrassing the profession of architecture.

Kristi Paulson

To the Editor:

I read the comment submitted by Weber + Thompson, "Take Six Gables..." (ARCADE 23.4), as a continuation of avoiding responsibility for the design at 700 Broadway – and especially their role in Sheri Olson's decision to leave the P-I.

Criticism is fundamental to our profession and the actions taken by W + T in the face of critical comments by a nationally respected journalist are not acceptable. I do agree that it's important that we educate our community on the value of good design and the requisite process to achieve it. After Ms. Olson's article, W + T decided not to respond in what could have been an intelligent, or even humorous rebuttal, choosing other interests over dialogue on important issues. Issues of review boards, shifting clients and shrinking budgets, are the REALITY of the work architects do and many of us have a hard time believing that these challenges are "new" to the leaders of that firm.

No matter what commentaries are offered for curious judgment and questionable values, the fact of their actions remains. I hope the attention to this event serves not as a discouragement, but as an incentive for more critique and more dialogue in the future.

Cameron Hall

Land Use Action sign that goes up since it invariably means, as you say, another "giant Christo installation for generations." While the old apartment buildings have been spared, other old buildings have not. In August, the Teamsters offices on Denny Way, a peculiar yet lovely gold-brick structure, will be razed. Seattle's disregard for its architectural heritage seems, indeed, part-and-parcel of its neglect of its history in general.

You can argue for economic revitalization, but at what cost? Last Friday night, four young Turks in a Hummer hurled insults at me as I crossed the street, inadvertently delaying their right-at-the-light to the valet parking in front of the South Beach-like nightspot they raced to. In years past I might have been approached by a lone panhandler asking for spare change. Guess which encounter frightens me the most.

I've often regarded the Denny Regrade, in Faulkner's terms, as my "postage stamp of native soil" – my writings on it include a story collection set in a low-rent apartment building and a novel about the Denny Hill regrading – yet the trendy new incarnation of the neighborhood as "Belltown" fails to incite the imagination as it once did.

Sincerely,
Peter Donahue

ARCADE welcomes letters and comments from readers. We reserve the right to publish such correspondence unless they're indicated to be not for publication. Submissions should include the writer's name, address and telephone number. Until further notice, all qualifying letters and comments will be published, though ARCADE reserves the right to edit for space and clarity, and will send the writer an edited version prior to publication. Send e-mail to kelly@arcadejournal.com, faxes to 206 623 7005, or postal mail to Letters to the Editor, ARCADE, 1201 Alaskan Way, Pier 56, Suite 200, Seattle, WA, 98101-2913.



The grove precinct of the Olympic Sculpture Park looking east.

OLYMPIC SCULPTURE PARK

As of June 6, 2005, construction of Seattle Art Museum's Olympic Sculpture Park (OSP) is officially underway. Art- and nature-loving urbanites will be roaming the Z-shaped plains of Weiss/Manfredi Architects' innovative design by mid-2006. The New York firm was selected from a large, international candidate pool for its inter-disciplinary approach to public projects and its dedication to the site's specific environmental needs.

OSP covers 8.5 acres of prime Belltown waterfront in three parcels, long abused by industrial applications. Sloping west from Western Avenue at Broad, the raw space is interrupted by Elliott Avenue and train tracks before reaching the shore. Weiss/Manfredi's solution features three distinctive, native landscapes – an evergreen forest, a transitional deciduous grove and a shoreline habitat, including a terraced kelp garden – which function as "galleries." Viewers follow a Z-shaped route from a pavilion on Western Avenue to the water's edge.

City, county and museum officials, along with environmental groups, look to OSP as a primary example of the possibilities for public space when art and nature set the agenda.



*Kreielsheimer Promenade at Marion Oliver McCaw Hall, Seattle.
Winner of the 2005 ASLA Award of Excellence.*

SEATTLE'S NATIONAL DESIGN AWARD FINALISTS

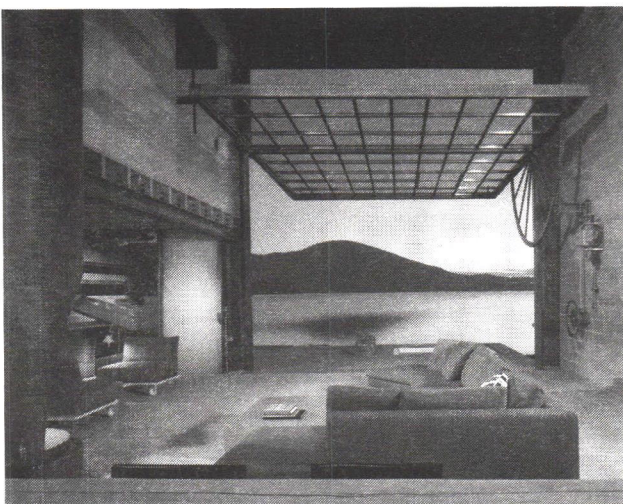
The Smithsonian Institute's Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum in New York, NY celebrates the many facets of the design profession with its annual National Design Awards. In mid-June the Lifetime Achievement, Corporate Achievement and Design Mind winners were announced, along with 18 finalists in six categories: architecture, communications design, landscape design, interior design, product design and fashion design.

ARCADE congratulates Tom Kundig and Kathryn Gustafson for their nominations in architecture and landscape design, respectively.

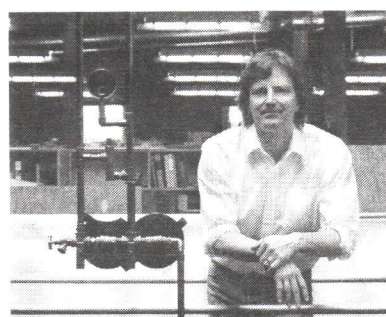
As a partner in Olson Sundberg Kundig Allen Architects in Seattle, Kundig attracts attention for the physical and aesthetic purity of his residential and commercial designs, which often include salvage and craft materials. Gustafson splits her time between two firms, Gustafson Guthrie Nichol in Seattle and Gustafson Porter in London. Her work spans the globe and ranges in scale from one to 500 acres, consistently engaging people in the experience of space and nature.

Winners will be announced October 20, 2005, during the sixth annual National Design Awards gala. Richard Meier will serve as chairman of this event, held at the Cooper-Hewitt Museum.

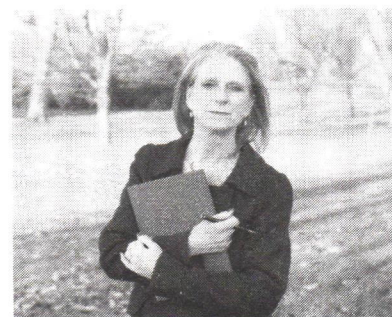
Kelly Igoe is ARCADE's Editorial Assistant. Victoria Reed will return to Short Takes in the December issue.



Interior of Chicken Point Cabin.



Tom Kundig.



Kathryn Gustafson.



Green Proclamation for Seattle

By Liz Dunn, Bert Gregory, Susan Jones & Kollin Min

Cities are the hope for the future of humankind and nature.

Seattle is part of a global convergence of people taking action locally to improve the health of the planet. Together, block-by-block and street-by-street, each neighborhood can change the world. We all know the power of acting locally, even while our global direction seems difficult for most of us to influence.

As citizens we pick up our litter, recycle our cans and newspapers, take one less shower and turn off the lights we aren't using, inspiring our neighbors to do the same. At the regional level, we already understand the power of doing things together. The Puget Sound area is known internationally for our regional recycling infrastructure, our defined growth boundaries, and our commitments to cleansing lakes and waterways and greening public buildings.

While the efforts of individual households are important, Seattle's backbone is our 33 neighborhoods. Once households join forces to decide what they want to accomplish, change really happens fast. Over the last decade dozens of neighborhoods have collaborated to create more pedestrian-friendly communities, with traffic calming devices and improved sidewalks, more green spaces and street trees, P-patches and organic farmers' markets, children's play areas and better lighting. We believe Seattle is ready for the next level.

What if our neighborhoods came together to install green roofs on their blocks? Or a way to utilize their storm water – possibly to irrigate those P-patches – before it clogs up our city stormwater systems and the bay? Or a way to harness sunlight to illuminate playgrounds at night? Or a bike lane that led to a beer garden created in an underutilized street – a kind of FlexStreet?

We know we need to accommodate more people in our city if we hope to protect our remaining farmland and forests. But what if

neighbors rallied to ensure every new development creates net benefits for their community? What if we "raised the bar" for Design Review by asking for more ambitious design, sustainable systems and tangible contributions to the public pedestrian realm (sidewalks, streets, plazas and parks)? Likewise, what if everyone used his or her individual market power – when buying a home or renting an apartment – to demand a product that is easy to look at, fun to live in, relies on sustainable energy, reduces waste and is located and conceived to support a pedestrian-intensive car-free lifestyle? What if we engaged the developers in our community to be part of each block, street or neighborhood's vision for sustainability?

What if every neighborhood had a Greenwatch group – okay, so we lifted it from the Blockwatch program! – a group of folks looking out for the greening of their neighborhood? And what if the City recognized their hard work with matching grants, or even annual awards commending their achievements? How about commemorative signs at a community's perimeter – 'This is a GREENWATCH neighborhood.' Commitment to the environment deserves to be recognized. Plus, bringing people together to tap their passions and explore creative ways to improve a neighborhood is a lot of fun. Imagine what we can do collectively.

A passionate group of Pacific Northwesterners – over 80 engineers, architects, contractors, developers, city officials – have taken a total of four trips together to places like Copenhagen, Malmo and Berlin. Organized by International Sustainable Solutions, the self-funded research trips have demonstrated what groups of individuals can do to commit to and create change. The destination cities are organized around acting locally, and oh, by the way – saving the planet. Their citizens have demanded that city governments take action – and support communal goals. Inspired by them, we've decided to take action ourselves.

We urge the Mayor of Seattle to consider reaching out to the neighborhoods and creat-

ing a GREENWATCH program. We urge the City to coalesce the many existing greening programs that Seattle has in place, and add to them. We urge the City to create incentives in the form of matching grants, or enlarge the criteria to create Business Improvement Associations (BIAs), or Local Improvement Districts (LIDs) that focus on sustainable solutions for individual neighborhoods.

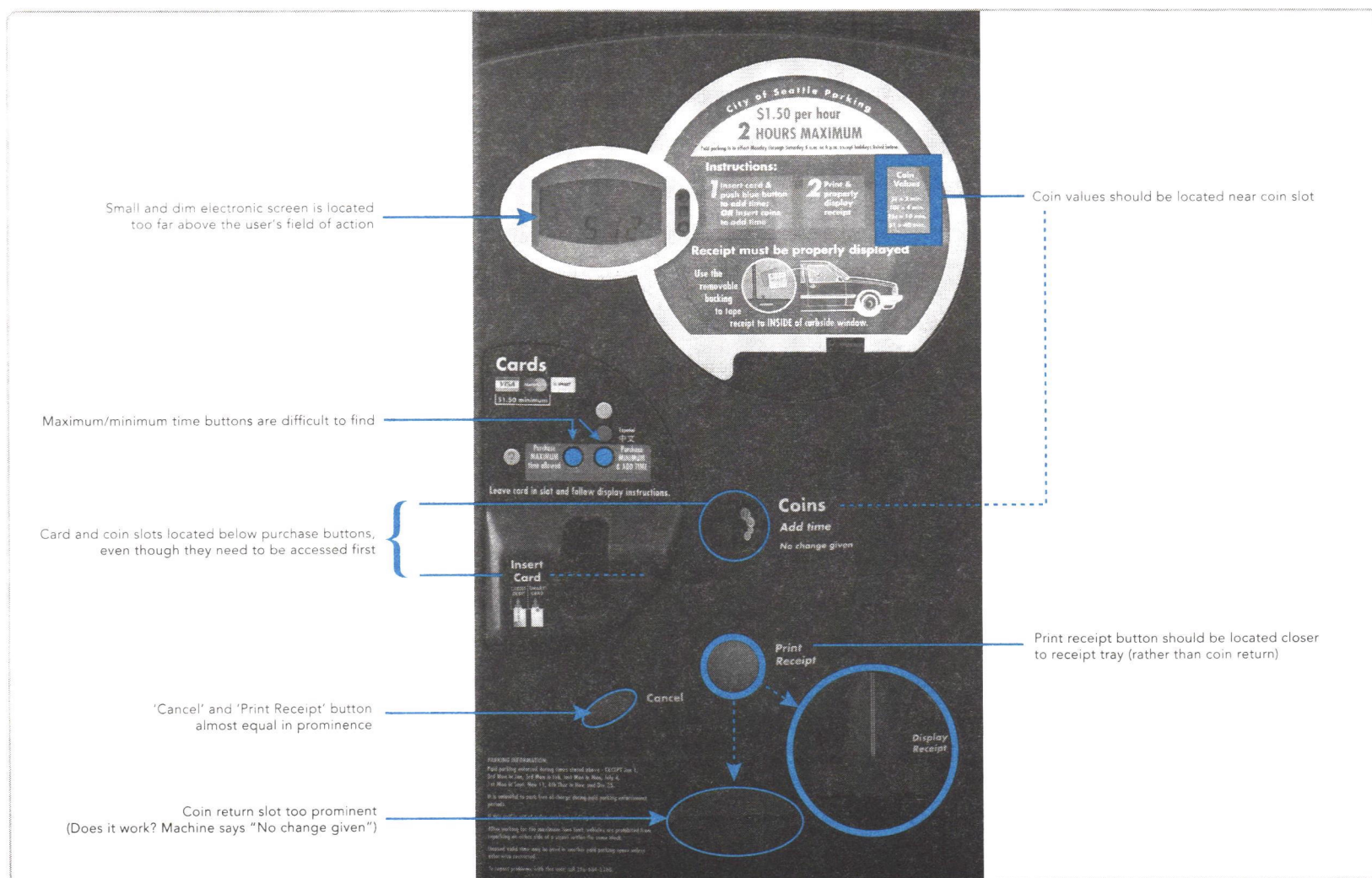
While we don't want to be prescriptive, believing each neighborhood should develop the approach that works best for it, we've generated some ideas that could qualify neighborhoods for Greenwatch Awards:

- Installing one Green Roof per block
- Installing one Photovoltaic Panel per block
- Creating Bike Lanes on neighborhood arterials
- Initiating a neighborhood FlexBike program
- Constructing a FlexStreet
- Initiating a Carbon Neutral Neighborhood program
- Initiating a Stormwater Neutral Neighborhood program
- Recognizing blocks with LEED-certified buildings or blocks with twice as many people as cars!

We commit to collaborate as individuals, neighborhoods and citizens, to innovate positive changes in Seattle with these goals. Together we can change the world. Thank you.

Signed by: Jack Avery, Lesley Bain, Jeff Bates, Mark Brumbaugh, Don Carlson, Patricia Chase, Mark Cork, Peter Dobrovolny, Jim Duncan, Denise Fong, Glen Gilbert, Patrick Gordon, Debra Guenther, Catherine Hart, Jane Hendricks, William Justen, John Kennedy, Graham McGarva, Guy Michaelsen, Jim Mueller, Peter Ostrander, Andrea Ramage, Dick Robison, Ron Rochon, Ann Schuessler, Mark Simpson, Monica Smith, Ken Unkeles, Scott Wyatt

Note: for more information about sustainability research trips, please see www.i-sustain.com.



Pay to Park

By Karen Cheng

Unlike most people, I actually like the fact that the world is becoming digital and automated. As a control freak, I like checking out my own groceries (I bag them exactly the way I want). I like "paying at the pump" (no more surly clerks!). And even though it causes some friction with my husband, I spend a fair amount of time on Ebay. (Well, no marriage is perfect.)

Despite my early-adopter status, I'm not happy about the new city parking meters. I recognize the key benefits touted by officials: convenience (pay with a credit card), reliability (eliminates broken meters), increased space (less cluttered streets). I'm even okay with the rate increase – and the little psychological games (studies show that users buy more time than needed at the new pay stations.) And even the Big Brother aspect doesn't worry me (the new meters communicate back to the police, sending meter maids to expired permits). No, my complaint deals with, of course, design.

First of all, the signs pointing to the kiosks demonstrate a classic design error – trying to communicate too much. Signs are a single message medium; drivers are an already distracted audience that can't process multiple inputs. Just use the big 'P' – a symbol already embedded in the consciousness of all citizens over the age of 16.

Then, there's those lousy drawings of a credit card and coins – obviously a direct client request. Some committee member (sadly, there's always a committee) must have insisted on including a visual reference to the New!

More Convenient! payment method. Then, a different committee member insisted that *Coins are still a payment option.*

Of course, only graphic designers are offended by bad signs. But even non-designers know when they've had a bad user experience. Quite a few citizens have posted complaints about the new kiosks. Aside from crazy ranting ("Parking should be free!") the main problem seems to be poor mapping of the instructions to the purchasing process.

For example, the first step (which is really two steps with options) tells you to insert your card and press a blue button – or to insert coins. (The card and coin slots are located below the blue buttons even though they need to be used first.) And, there are two blue buttons to choose from – one for the maximum time, one for the minimum. You have to press the minimum button repeatedly to add more time in fixed increments. Not an obvious methodology; no wonder most people just buy the maximum time.

The second step is to "Print and properly display the receipt" – again, two steps disguised as one. Since the first buttons were blue, it would be nice to mention the green color of the last button, even though green isn't the best choice for a final step (green=go). But why quibble about parallel structure when there are bigger problems to worry about. For example, why not locate the print button closer to the printed receipt tray, rather than the coin return? Like adjectives, buttons should be near the objects they modify.

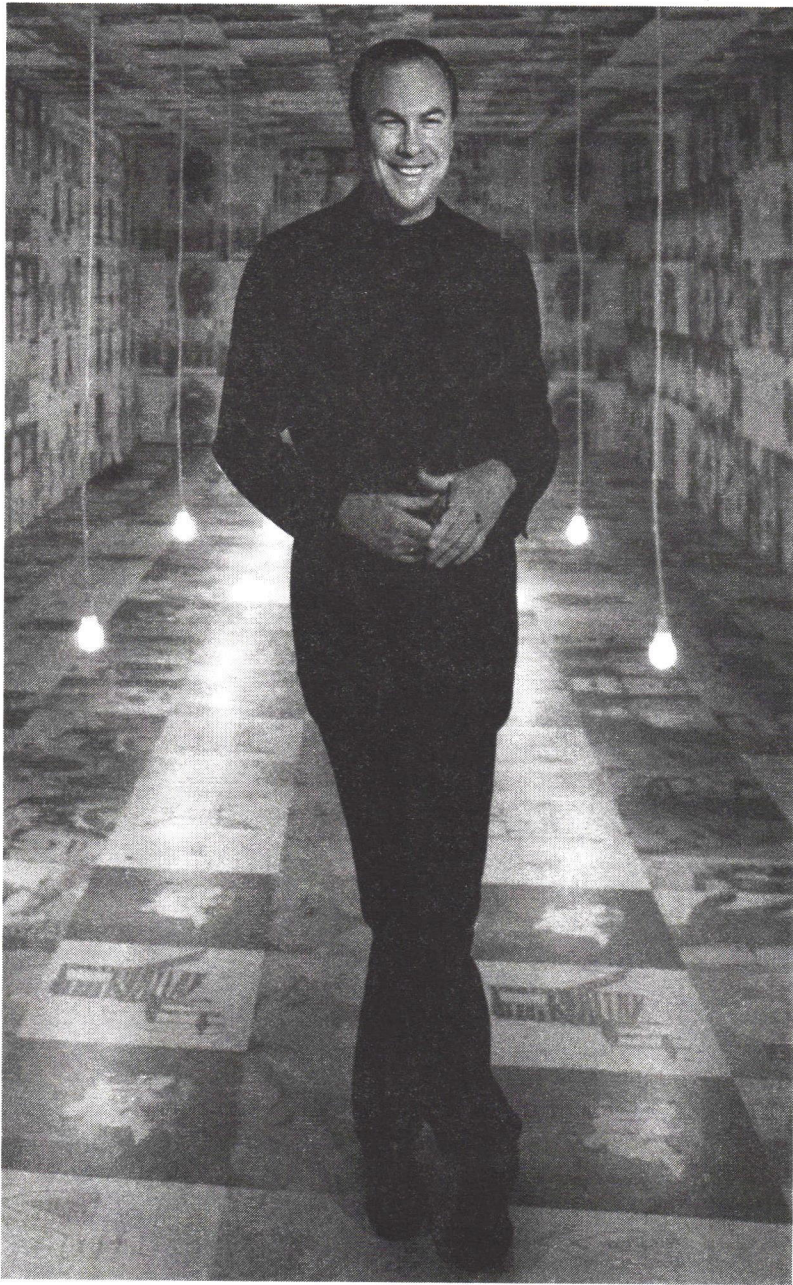
Some of these interface problems could have been solved by an ATM-like screen and keypad. A larger text screen could consolidate all instructions into a series of prompted steps, eliminating back-and-forth reading/doing. Additionally, it can allow users to select their native language. A companion keypad could also allow for direct entry of the desired parking time – or a menu of fixed time choices. Either structure eliminates the artificial maximum/minimum time construct.

It's too bad that the usability of this very public product received such little attention prior to implementation. Instead, the city chose to employ "Meter Greeters":

"Meter greeters are the ambassadors of pay stations! These pay station experts circulate through neighborhoods where pay stations have recently been installed, helping new users get over any first-time user technology hurdles that may exist. They can be easily spotted in their red vests and hats."*

Unfortunately, I'm not eager to be accosted by strangers when I'm downtown trying to park. In fact, I actually avoid the plaintive "excuse me" cries of individuals who approach me when I'm under the viaduct. No, I'm afraid that I would rather have an interface that doesn't need to be explained. Kind of like the old parking meters.

Karen Cheng is a professor of Visual Communication Design at the University of Washington. She is also a practicing designer whose work has been recognized by the AIGA, Communication Arts, Print and I.D. Magazine.



Robert Wilson

Douglas McLennan

This story probably ought to come with a disclaimer. Robert Wilson is a lot of work, and frankly I'm not sure he's worth it.

I don't like a lot of his ideas. I don't believe what he says. And I think he's a pretentious, self-indulgent bore. Aside from that, Mrs. Lincoln...

Okay, so that's out of the way. Here's the boilerplate: Robert Wilson is an acclaimed theatre designer/director, hero of the late 20th-Century avant garde, who has made a career of creating striking, original works for the stage. They don't look like anyone else. They converse in their own vocabulary. And they inhabit a logic known only to Wilson himself. He brings an architect's aesthetic to his stage spectacles and a choreographer's eye to his sense of movement.

His sets for "Einstein on the Beach," his collaboration with Philip Glass, are unforgettable. Just as Glass' cascading musical repetitions bend time, forcing you to come inside their structure, Wilson visually riffs off what you're hearing, resetting that structure. It's great eye/ear dialogue.

At his brilliant best, Wilson's a creator of dazzling original stage portraits, and he has imposed these on classic stage works, including numerous operas, reinventing their visual frames. If he were a composer he'd probably be more interested in the musical ideas and structures than the visceral sound color. As a director his eye guides his sense of drama.

The problem is, to get to the good stuff you often have to endure long boring stretches of self-important twaddle that seem to hang on only the flimsiest of artistic pretexts. Maybe this isn't so much a problem when he's tending to a classic that imposes its own sense of time on

him. But in his own work Wilson isn't the kind of artist who starts with content; first he imposes a frame (let's make a 3- or 6- or 12-hour opera, and the structure's going to be this...). Only then comes the idea. Very abstract, and often seemingly random and mundane.

And you have to fill the time somehow. It's not so important that the content carry the work (or even that it be interesting, for that matter). Instead the work fills up the allotted time rather than existing only for as long as it takes to say something interesting. Sitting in the audience it's easy to feel abused. Resentful.

Structure is a useful artistic tool, essential even, but it's tempting to say Wilson fetishizes it. Most artists start with some sort of frame, but it's ultimately a balance of ideas and form. Wilson's work, on the other hand, can seem dreadfully out of balance. Why is this man wasting my time? Why does he think that some ill-chosen random thought that came to him because he had to fill space should impose itself on the rest of us? Why should we be interested?

WILSON TALKING ABOUT HIS WORK

ISN'T NEARLY SO INTERESTING AS THE
WORK ITSELF. HE'S GREAT EXPANSES OF
PRAIRIE, NARY A MOUNTAIN IN SIGHT.

The answer, it seems, is that it's part of a context that helps make the good ideas seem that much better; you appreciate the mountain more with the prairie around it to make it stand out. Wilson talking about his work or drawing conceptual sketches of his work isn't nearly so interesting as the work itself. He's great expanses of prairie, nary a mountain in sight.

But his collaborators are no lightweights: Glass, Susan Sontag, David Byrne, Iannis Xenakis, Lou Reed... He goes for classics: Ibsen, Wagner, Brecht, Shakespeare, Mozart, Dostoyevsky, Gluck... The mundanity, it seems, is a pose, conscious choice, part of creating a landscape in which the better ideas are set off by those that aren't.

Still, the man himself is frustrating. Landing an interview with him is a tedious process of sending bio, clips and a pitch. He won't be pinned down to a time until the day of the interview. When you call the assistant's cell phone at the appointed time, there's no answer and no voice mail. At midday when you've given up (and are feeling grumpy), you're summoned to a meeting on an hour's notice. When you show up he fails to appear until half an hour later, when he's already late for another interview.

(A point of interjection: If I were a busy artist, I'd probably want to make sure that if I was doing an interview with someone, they knew enough to write intelligently about my work. Why invest the time if the interviewer isn't any good? I can respect this.)

So I tag along in the taxi and wait at Wilson's suggestion while he does his radio interview. When he finally comes out, he says we have five minutes for our interview. Now this will be meaningful, I think. The first question, about drawing threads through his work, results in a long recitation of "first I did this, then I did that, and then..." Nothing you couldn't get from a bio. A question about how deceptively complicated the simplicity of his design is for the Noguchi exhibit showing at the Seattle Arts Museum gets some all-purpose answer about surfaces that he's used countless times before.

I'm waiting for my hint of mountain, but after a disparaging comment about the banality of American culture and a "Europe is much more interesting," he indicates it's time to wrap it up. Hmnnn... Sometimes a prairie's just a prairie.

Douglas McLennan is the founder and editor of ArtsJournal.com, the daily digest of the arts world.



BELLEVUE ARTS MUSEUM: 36,000 sf
ARCHITECTS: Steven Holl Architects
ASSOCIATE ARCHITECTS: Sclater Partners
ORIGINAL OPEN DATE: January 13, 2001
INTERIOR REMODEL
ARCHITECTS: Sclater Partners, with consultation from Steven Holl
LIGHTING DESIGN: Candela Architectural Lighting
RE-OPEN DATE: June 18, 2005
 Bellevue, Washington, USA

Crafty: Steven Holl's Building Protests

Jen Graves

The architectural conversion of the Bellevue Art Museum was not about transforming a contemporary art museum into a craft museum. It was about persuading a building that's ambivalent about spectatorship to become a museum. That didn't work, on the contrary.

The attempt at greater form-function harmony has instead brought atonality with a cause. BAM has become even more the anti-retail space that architect Steven Holl intended, internalizing a protest of the upscale passivity that surrounds the museum.

It is ironic, but the newly conservative program helps the urban building turn more sharply from the middlebrow fantasyland of Bellevue. The more traditional visual consumption – necessary for a craft museum, not the "See, Explore, Make Art" center that BAM once was – has irritated Steven Holl's idealistic building to the point it has raised its voice.

The result is that nowhere else in the region is this volume of dialogue occurring between a museum building and the way objects are presented inside it. As the viewing experience has become more regimented by the vitrines and pedestals of craft, so Holl's oddball, dramatic and asymmetrical spaces have more implied authority to undermine it.

When the building opened in 2001, it was immediately the weirdest museum around. All the world's temporary walls and track lights weren't going to tame its inner freak. It was designed using the concept of "tripleness," emphasizing active participation. The first floor was largely for gathering. Most of the second floor was for art classes and artist studios. Only the third floor, with its long, tall, narrow galleries, was devoted exclusively to typical viewing. Holl called BAM an "art barn."

He considered its soaring, wildly varying rooms flexible.

They're not, really. They foreground themselves, imposing intense shapes, often directing the gaze more than one way at once, keeping the spectator alert. Take the lobby, an oval atrium that results from the airy joining of the museum's sides, which resemble two slices of melon. The eye swims round the room, never falling to rest on the end zone of a corner or a flat wall.

Craft guru Michael Monroe, now director, has not been able to halt the reeling unpleasantness of the lobby as a viewing chamber. Peter Pierobon's helix of bronze chairs and Chihuly's climbing anemone are sucked into the vortex, along with potted plants and scattered fleshy and crawly artworks engaged in a futile struggle for their sovereignty.

Whether art has "worked" in these idiosyncratic spaces has depended on the particulars of the artworks, which ranged broadly in BAM's previous incarnation. Craft is a more reliable sculptural experience – which is not a coded way to say it is monotone, because it is not – in that it usually is not flat, and draws the viewer in for close, detailed views, framed by the right angles of cases or bases.

Those frames are angular bodies in their own right, and at BAM they bristle against curved walls, huddling in awkward bunches. Avoiding stubbed toes requires conscious navigation. It's a disruptive experience, but one that opens the possibility of more vigorous imaginative navigation, too, by heightening awareness.

BAM's diversity of spaces makes it like a small city inside, constantly offering alternative perspectives. Monroe's energetic modifications

and packed opening installations accentuate the splendid lack of uniformity. We get three very different ways of looking at Albert Paley's nouveau designs: in a tall, introverted gallery with low-hanging track lights, in a cozy sunroom, and in a diffusely lit hallway. In another environment entirely, Pilchuck glass sparkles under black ceilings with exposed piping and silvery track lights.

The biggest structural alteration is the addition of a false foyer at the top of the stairs on the third floor. It turns the top deck into a museum within a museum, highlighting the climate change of the ascent, since the third is the only floor with strict climate control. Adding to the surreal sudden refrigeration is the fact that the slender, 25-foot-tall galleries are acoustically like tunnels. It's hard to believe this is the same building as the open-air downstairs.

With temporary walls, presentational graphics and lighting choices, Monroe has made the third floor the most like a traditional museum, its corridors segmented into intimate precincts where sculptors and anthropologists alike explore the culture of tea.

Outside BAM's front door, three red columns by Julie Speidel match the façade in color. They stand in a triangle pointing to the entrance, mirroring the plaza Holl carved on a corner of Bellevue's main drag, which turns the museum's face away from the mall. The installation is sleepy with conformity, but inside, BAM teems. Here, craft becomes a contemporary adventure.

Jen Graves is a cultural reporter based in Tacoma, WA. She covers the arts for The News Tribune and her work has appeared in publications including Variety, Newsday and Flash Art.

John Fleming and Barbara Swift recently sat down with former Seattle Mayor Paul Schell to discuss the collective responsibility of city building. The following is the first of a two-part interview. The rest of their conversation will be printed in ARCADE 24.2, Dec. 05.

HISTORY AND ALLIANCES

BS: On this issue of leadership in the next generation. I hear people say, "We need another Jim Ellis."

PS: —No you don't. I like Jim but that was from a different time. There were ten people in the Rainier Club who could decide what ought to happen. Now, fortunately and unfortunately, nobody runs City Hall and there is no establishment. There is no media leadership on issues. It has been redefined as gossip. The nature of governance has changed. You don't hire a press office to run an open office. To stay in office you hire somebody to manage the media — a PR person. There is no context or perspective. My own feeling is, "Do it anyway."

JF: How can the design community participate in the process as decision makers?

PS: There is a lesson from history — in the late '60s and early '70s the focus was, "How do we build a great city?" There were social, transportation and political issues involved in finding a community consensus about what this place could be and should be. Then the conventional wisdom was to build more freeways. We had a road being planned around the city, around downtown. Pioneer Square was to be parking lots. The Market was considered a rat-infested slum to be torn down for high-rises. In the middle was Forward Thrust, an establishment solution — broad-based, multi-issue campaign that got people thinking. Unfortunately, the transportation system failed.

At the time there was a loose alliance of people who cared about the freeways — the League of Women Voters, the arts and the design constituencies. It was a combination that pushed through lots of initiatives. Everybody helped everybody else. The artists helped fight the freeways, and the freeway people helped support the arts. It built a community consensus around, "What kind of city do we want to be?"

There was a healthy media involvement. First Argus, then Seattle Magazine, and then the Weekly. Civic discourse was a great part of Seattle life. It isn't broken now. We are struggling to find a new way to have that civic discussion.

Looking to the past for the strategies may not be the right thing, but you can model the approach. One which is broad and community-based keeps the language and ideas open across disciplines, sympathizes with other issues and is not single focused. This holds true today. We've broken ourselves into communities of special interest, and it's a my-way-or-the-highway attitude rather than finding a reasonable middle ground, building a constituency and going for it.

JF: Is the question: How do you rebuild that energy?

PS: In the late '60s and early '70s we had the good fortune of having some visible adversaries. The Downtown Seattle Association (then called Central Association), Mayor Wes Ullman and the newspapers were promoting freeways. The kids writing the stories in the papers weren't. That made it easy to say, "We need a change because this direction isn't the right one."

There are some natural alliances for building a great city such as the environmental community. Good environmental policy should encourage density. Environmentalists should be our strongest allies. The number one issue for making growth work is increasing density in the city.

There are other logical alliances. We are a city that is 80 percent Democrat, but we are also conservative, liberal and populist. Labor is a powerful force in our city, as are the environmental and neighborhood communities. There already is an alliance between Labor and the environment that came out of the WTO. There's no one dominant force.

You have to work the press. It's letters to the editor and letters to the council. In City Hall, when you get ten letters individually written on an issue, you think, "The world's coming to an end." With emails it is easy to do. They all read emails.

In order to have the allies you need, you must open lines of communication across disciplines. Invent new ways to talk to each other. Imagine if you were insulted, confused or made to feel stupid. How do you think the average person feels? I think you need to find a way to communicate to the broader community. Write letters in Dick and Jane language. Architects — don't take this the wrong way, I love architects — but they have their own language. In order to be a good communicator you have to put yourself in the skin of the person you're talking to. Interdisciplinary dialogue is critical.

**RIGHT NOW IT IS A BURDEN,
POLITICALLY, TO HIRE GOOD
ARCHITECTS AND GOOD BUILDERS.
YOU COME ACROSS AS ALOOF,
ELITIST, EXPENSIVE AND ARROGANT.**

Celebrate the common rather than the uncommon — that's the bigger challenge. Not to put down the art, you need that to inspire good design, but you need to understand the major job of the profession is helping us build communities, create shelter we can afford and preserve the environment that we share. Those are all broader goals of the profession but too often the honor awards are given for indulgent projects. Give an award for affordable, livable and inspiring projects.

When I was mayor, one of my first efforts was to describe what I hoped for Seattle: A city of choices. The more choices you have for your life experience the richer and better your quality of life. The more choices you have in housing style, education, restaurants, and theaters. That's what makes a great city.

Neighborhood planning in Seattle had been launched when I came into office. There was a reaction to the term "Urban Village", a planner's term. Good concept, bad communication. "Urban Village" – scared the hell out of people. If it had been said, "Look, we all need to understand that if our region is going to maintain the things we love about it, then we need to take some density." When we got into it we found that at least half of the neighborhoods were willing to take added density and they recognized that it made sense to do it in the neighborhood business districts. Help them come to the conclusion that this is in everybody's common interest, and make it in the context of the community – don't preach to them about what's good for them.

PUBLIC SERVICE, POLITICS AND LEADERSHIP

PS: The world of politics has changed from public service to a nasty little game of power. It is all about making celebrities of our leaders. The way you survive in this process is, don't do anything. Certainly don't take any risks. Manage the events of the day as they hit the television stations.

The way you survive in politics is not to be a leader. You run around and find out where the crowd is going. You don't start new initiatives.

Right now it is a burden, politically, to hire good architects and good builders. It is not politically smart. You come across as aloof, elitist, expensive and arrogant. I got all of those epithets thrown my way. The peoples' places ought to be as good as the millionaires' places. I think it is a good long-term investment to do it right the first time and not have to do it again.

The politicians can get behind you if you're bringing the mob to them. Don't expect them to go lead the mob. Don't expect it to come from the papers. The politicians are survivors and the press, critics. You're not going to get leadership from the politicians or reinforcement or support from the press. That's life.

EDUCATION

PS: It's critical for students to think about how they fit in. The task of building strong communities ought to be led by people who understand the linkages between healthy communities, healthy environment and how the two can work together.

BS: I don't think architectural education supports the systems approach or constructive multidisciplinary work. Without this architects will find themselves without power.

PS: In many ways it's not constructive to have architecture students sitting in an academic setting. They are learning a trade. There are some obvious benefits to the traditional arts and sciences approach, but they aren't getting the skills they need to be successful as part of community

YOU'RE NOT GOING TO GET
LEADERSHIP FROM THE POLITICIANS
OR REINFORCEMENT OR SUPPORT
FROM THE PRESS. THAT'S LIFE.

leadership. They aren't even teaching the people in the profession to be good business people or how to relate to clients. In the real world nobody does anything by themselves. To be really good you need to understand the goal of the client and the money.

PS: Bradner Gardens is a wonderful example of architecture and design helping build a community, and provide immense satisfaction, loyalty and understanding. If you had a hundred of those you'd change the city. You really want your neighborhoods to have a whole different feel. Neighborhood design as opposed to downtown design has to be different. This should be part of the basic strategy of creating a city of choices. I think Seattle, by and large, is on track.

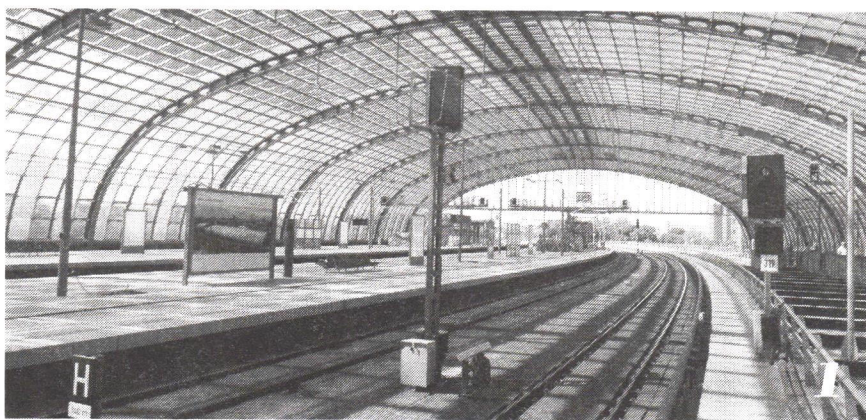
JF: Who are the most likely leaders? Is it developers?

PS: The architects ought to become developers. Some of them should go to business school. It is the investor developer who assembles the players, rents the money, rents the architects, rents the lawyers and pays for all of that. Architects could play that role, maybe better than anybody. It gets back to how the profession sees itself. Are we the on-high gods who will tell you what is good design? Or are we getting our hands dirty being part of the team, making some compromises in order to help the whole product come out the best it can?

ACTION

PS: Become blunt and put things into a frame the average person can understand. This is a critical first step. Get a common language to influence the community. Build alliances, find communication strategies that bring the issues down where the average person can understand how it will impact them. Do it in a way that doesn't dazzle them, but moves them.

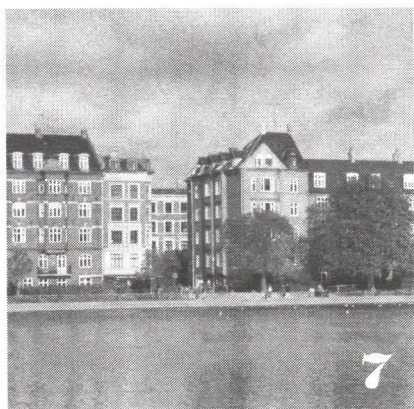
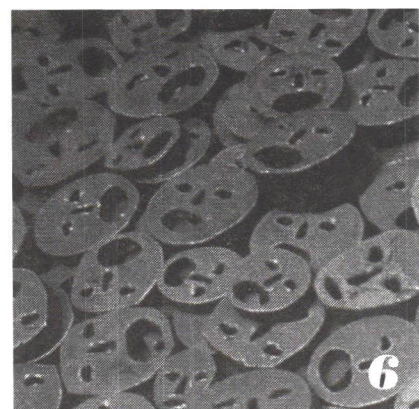
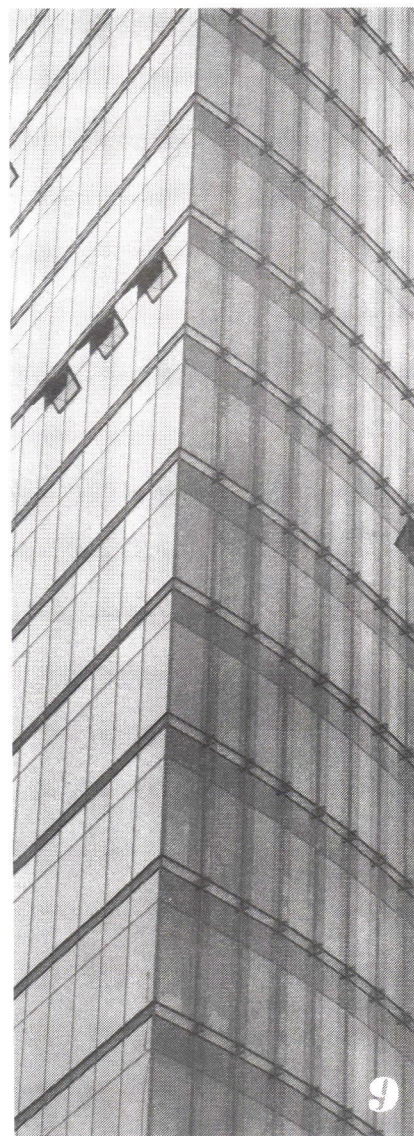
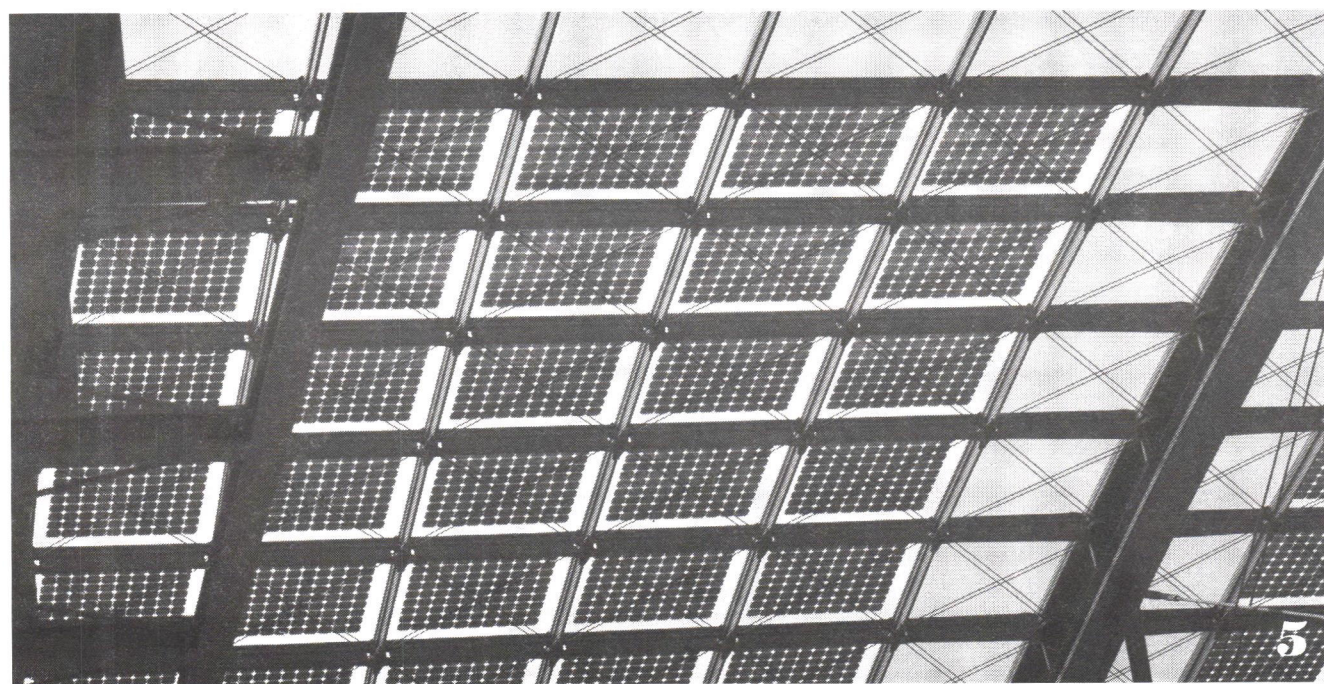
John Fleming is a partner with rbf Architecture in Seattle. Barbara Swift is the principal of Swift & Company and a big fan of civic leadership, alliances and action.



URBAN FABRIC IN COPENHAGEN AND BERLIN

Photography by Jim Mueller © 2005. Jim Mueller is Managing Partner of JC Mueller LLC, a developer of sustainably designed urban projects. Jim has worked on numerous projects in the United States, Europe and Asia. More photos and information can be found at www.jcmueller.com





1. Lehrter Central Train Station, Berlin, architects: von Gerkan, Marg and Partner; 2. Copenhagen taxi; 3. Middelgrunden Wind Farm, Copenhagen; 4. Shopping and parking on the Stroget, Copenhagen; 5. Lehrter Central Train Station, detail; 6. "Fallen Leaves" at the Jewish Museum, Berlin, architect: Daniel Libeskind; 7. Multifamily waterfront housing with lakefront promenade, Copenhagen; 8. Public FlexBike, Copenhagen; 9. Operable windows at Sony Center, Berlin, architect: Helmut Jahn



UNION STATION

Guest Editor, Charles Tonderai Mudede

The three train stations embedded in the three major cities of the Pacific Northwest – Vancouver, Seattle, Portland – are in the processes of being resurrected. And now many of us are waiting: Will they (can they) bring together the main centers and make for all of us one big urban reality?

This feature package is not a professional study of this possibility, or a hard look at its feasibility, or a useful estimate of the losses and benefits of increased intercity travel. It is instead a soft experiment by five writers (myself, Bess Lovejoy, Matthew Stadler, Nic Veroli and Amy Kate Horn) and a photographer (architect Jerry Garcia). A soft experiment that puts some of these emerging energies into a language that drifts between what has happened in the (real/unreal) past and what can happen in the (real/unreal) future. For us, something is definitely happening, and so we must look at this something and say something about it.

THEORY

THE FUTURE AS A GRAND ILLUSION

Charles Tonderai Mudede &
Nic Veroli, the Seattle
Research Institute

"'We really believe that King Street Station is sort of at the center of the wheel in all this redevelopment,' Anderson said. That's what they were saying nearly 100 years ago."

—Seattle Post-Intelligencer, Monday, July 9, 2001.

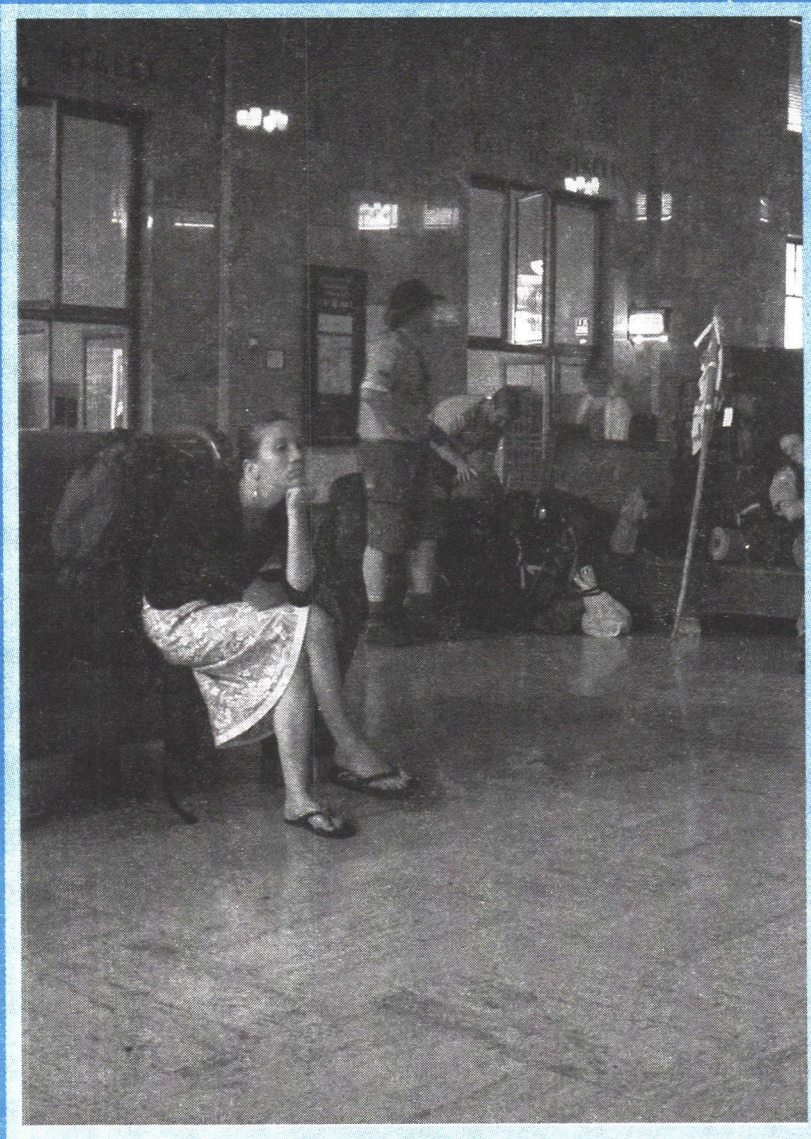
In the 19th century the architecture of The Future was made of glass, concrete and steel. Its locations were the science fair – exemplified by London's "Crystal Palace" – the commercial arcade (the ancestor of the shopping mall) and the midwife of modernity itself: the train depot. Here the entrance of the city is no longer over the moat but through the arch of the train station. In fact, more frequently than not, at least in this country, it is the train station that makes the city rather than the city that builds the train station. It becomes the equivalent of what the cathedral was to medieval architecture. The train station is the temple of The Future.

The great peak of the Train Age in North America is World War II: gasoline rations make the use of the train more popular than before or after the war. The post-war world marks the decline in the use of trains. The train station is abandoned in favor of the airport, which becomes the new fetish. In an effort to survive, stations like King Street Station in Seattle try to make themselves over into airports by removing the crypto-medieval grandeur of the 19th-century train station. Styrofoam and plastic replace marble and wood. Since the definition of the future is that you have to wait for it, the place in which you wait must reassure you that the future will indeed arrive there. Needless to say, the airportization of the train station does nothing to slow its decline. If anything, that decline is accelerated by the mistake that was '60s functionalism. By the '80s we have post-industrial cities whose emblem is the decaying train station.

The last decade saw the prodigal sons and daughters of the middle class return to modernity's ancestral home: the urban core. The train station got a second chance; in city after city, projects were drawn to restore its former grandeur. Inner city and inter-city travel would get a Roman Imperial bath-house as imagined by the great bourgeois architects of the age of steam.

But all of this happens in the mode of what could be called the "future posterior." We are looking back at how the past looked at the future. Our future, in short, is an eternal repetition of an image of the future that never was. The truth, however, is that today, as yesterday, the future never was. (This is certainly the case with Vancouver, BC's Pacific Central Station.) Nietzsche declared the Death of God in 1886. Today we must declare the death of The Future. Our image of The Future, that is to say the image which we have inherited from the 19th century, is co-extensive with our present. We, citizens of the early 21st century, embody the dreams of the 19th century. While we dream of them, they are dreaming of us.

Founded in 2001, the Seattle Research Institute is an association of Northwest writers, intellectuals and artists seeking socially engaged inquiry. SRI produces and promotes well-orchestrated collusions between experimental aesthetics and revolutionary thought.



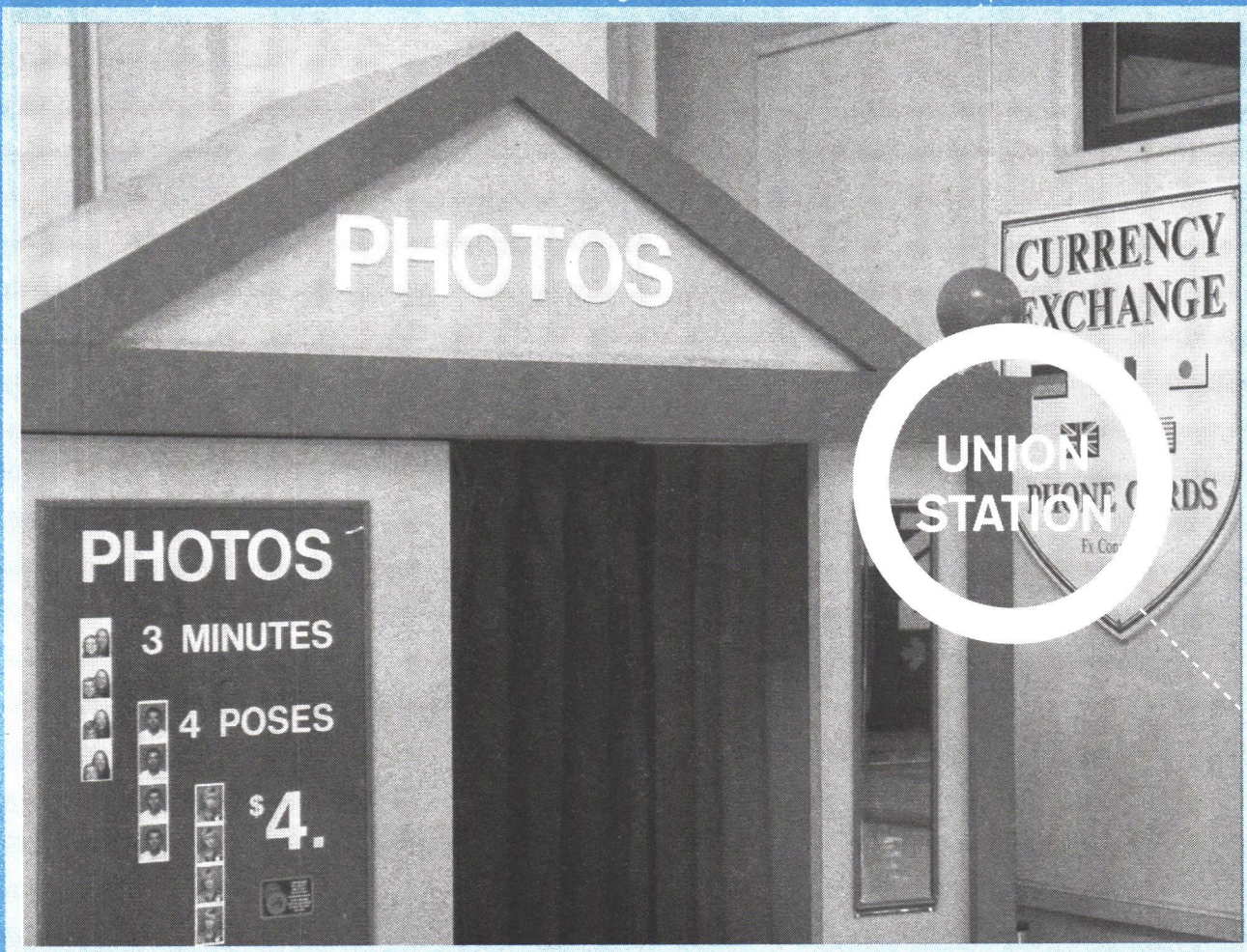
Modernity used to be about a belief, or really a faith, in The Future. In the 19th century The Future was an unlimited promise of technically engineered well-being, comfort and cure from all illnesses. Luxuries that were then for the few would become accessible to the multitude. Jules Verne was the prophet of the age of space travel and Karl Marx the messiah of the machine as savior of Humanity.

Somewhere toward the end of the second millennium we lost a direct relation to The Future. We stopped dreaming. For every disease we had cured, new and often more lethal ones appeared. Poverty had not vanished, and levels of inequality increased. And war proved to be endless. In short, the dreams of Jules Verne were replaced by what we now have: the nightmares of Orwell. It is not 2001 that has come to pass but 1984. Big Brother is watching you. In the ruins of the future, we have turned back to the past and all of its brilliant promises. We are now suffering from a profound longing for the 19th century's future.

ARCHITECTURE OF WAITING: VANCOUVER

Jerry Garcia





Vancouver

DOCUMENT

#1

PACIFIC CENTRAL STATION, VANCOUVER, BRITISH COLUMBIA

Bess Lovejoy

VANCOUVER THEN

Canada has created itself in opposition to two things: the wilderness, and the United States. Canada's relationship to the U.S. is challenging for outsiders to understand, unless you've grown up with a powerful and psychotic sibling. But Canada's relationship with the wilderness is familiar, characterized by a logic in which rationality and civilization must reign over wildness. Pacific Central Station was born under this logic, but its life has long since crumbled under the weight of these oppositions.

Until the railways laid their steel grid of tracks through the heart of the wilderness, it was impossible to think about Canada as a nation. In this huge country, with so much land and so few people, the construction of the railways had to do with the construction of selfhood. Pre-rail, Canadians were imprisoned by gigantic mountains and wide plains, a dark continent of ice and forests.

Canada's first Prime Minister, Sir John A. Macdonald, understood that this kind of isolation was an impossible condition in which to build a nation. So in 1881 he founded the country's first transcontinental railway, Canadian Pacific (CP). Railway stations went on to form the germ of almost every Western Canadian town, with their dominant architectural forms linking the stations to the castles of Europe (and so to history and civilization). The stations and the trains they brought were fantastic machines of progress, pumping out profit, industry and development. In fact, we can easily imagine the residents' collective sigh of relief as the first train pulled into their town's new station: finally, they were saved from nature.

Canadian Pacific's main competition came from the Canadian Northern Railway (CNR), owned by two ambitious opportunists, William Mackenzie and Donald Mann. Mackenzie had been a teacher and politician before becoming part-owner of the Toronto Street Railway. Mann, having studied to be a Methodist minister, instead became a contractor who helped build the Canadian Pacific Railway through the Rocky Mountains.

Their struggle to build a station in Vancouver was initially a struggle against Macdonald's Canadian Pacific, which then controlled all the main access routes into the centre of the city as well as much of its land. The CP line was

very difficult to parallel, and the men had difficulty finding another route. They established a provisional station on the outskirts of the city, then sat and waited. Soon another idea occurred to them: instead of fighting against CP, they would do what Canadians do so well – fight against nature.

The city owned lands on False Creek, an inlet encircling the eastern edge of downtown. In 1912 Mackenzie and Mann presented city council with an ambitious proposal to "rescue the land from the sea" by draining part of the creek, building a sea wall and constructing elaborate freight and passenger facilities on what had been the creek bed. City council agreed to sell the necessary land to CNR for \$1 and, in exchange, CNR agreed to build an electrified tunnel into the station, a large trans-Pacific steamship service and two grand railway hotels, one with not less than 250 rooms.

Curiously, city council's approval meant there would be two union stations sitting side by side on False Creek: CNR's, and the Great Northern Railway's Vancouver terminal. This apparent lack of logic didn't seem to bother anyone. Work was to begin in just ninety days, and to be completed in five years.

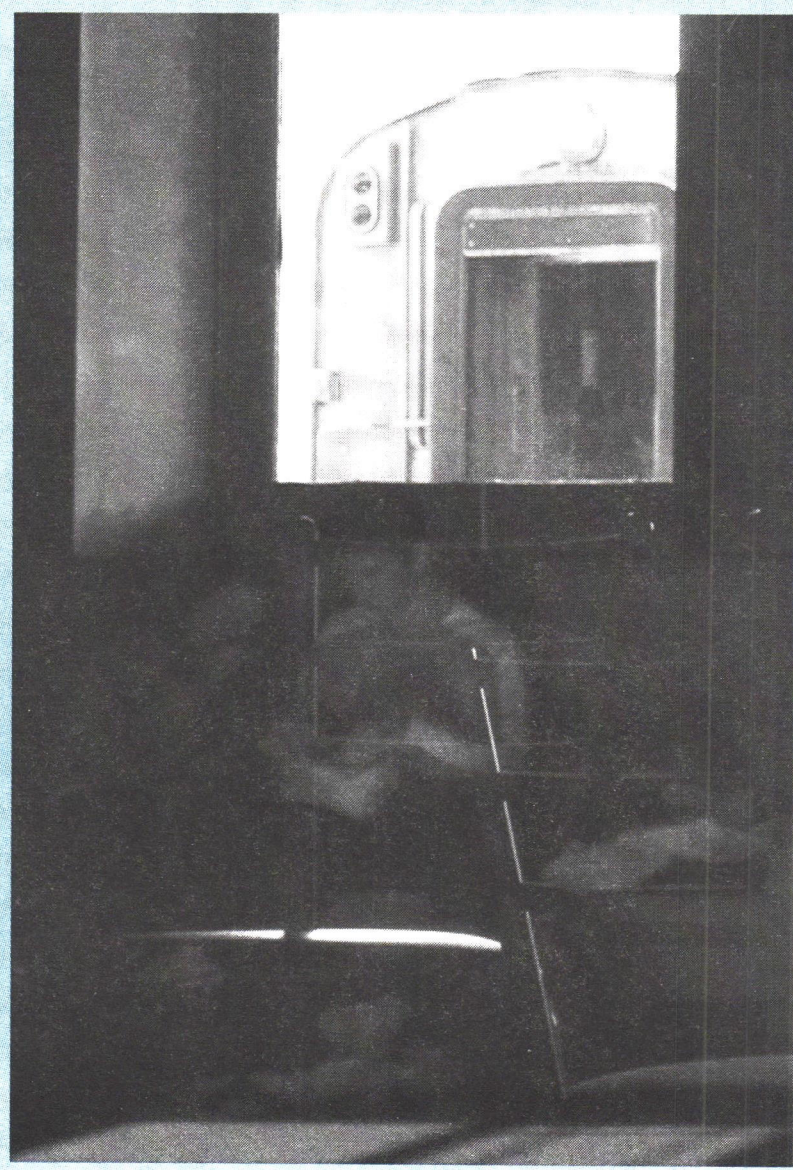
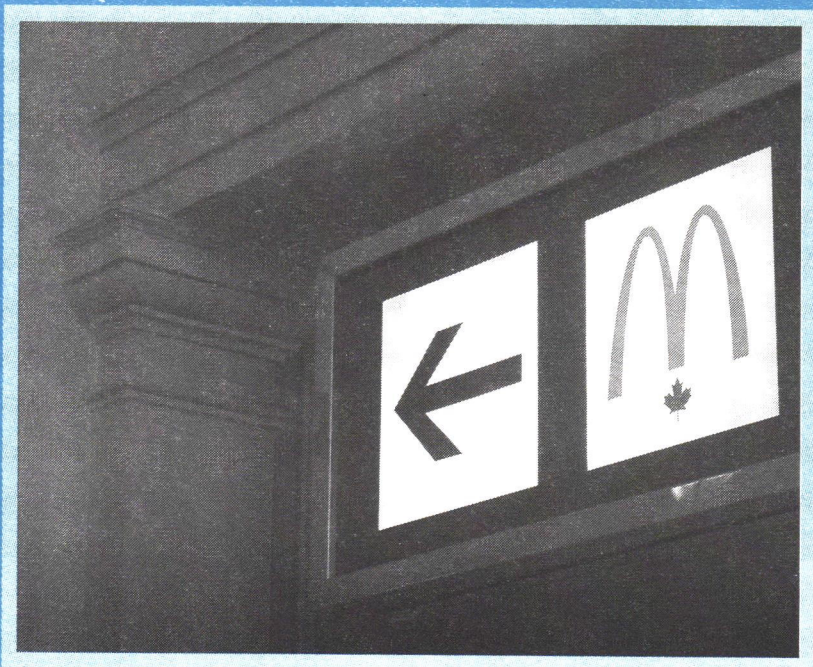
But global and national financial conditions changed in the lead up to the Great War, and the somber Edwardian classicist building, designed by the Winnipeg firm Pratt and Ross, helped bankrupt the Canadian Northern Railway. The federal government, perhaps a little too in love with its machines of nation building, had decided to back a third major railway into the West. Neither the credit market (used to float these enormously expensive projects) nor the population of passengers could support all three lines. Forced to conserve resources, Mackenzie and Mann had to channel all their funds into the building of the main line, and work on the Vancouver terminal was suspended.

It took an order from the federal Board of Railway Commissioners for the company to complete the station. By then, construction of the tunnels into the station had been abandoned. CNR never built the hotels. Little was done to develop the shipping service.

Heavily indebted and unable to repay construction costs, the company asked for financial aid from the government. In exchange for funds the

"There is a practicality and serviceability about its accommodation with buses that may be typically Canadian, but at any rate prevents the Vancouver station from lapsing into dreams of railroad days gone by. Admittedly there is a McDonald's restaurant on the concourse, but the station timepiece and dark stained benches and soaring ceiling are never seriously challenged about their railroading credentials."

On Pacific Central Station by James Latteier.



federal government gained control and CNR was nationalized on September 6, 1918, when Mackenzie and Mann resigned. Pacific Central's opening was a long-delayed climax – the station's doors did not open until November of 1919.

VANCOUVER NOW

Pacific Central disappears from the history books soon after its birth. Now, when people in Vancouver discuss the railroad buildings their city has left standing, they are more likely to talk about the old Canadian Pacific Terminal that perches on the waterfront. At the edge of the glittering Burrard Island, this Beaux-Arts building (built between 1912 and 1914 by the Montreal firm of Barott, Blackader and Webster) serves as the last stop on the SkyTrain line and as a ferry terminal to the wealthy suburb of North Vancouver. Its traffic consists of tourists and affluent commuters with laptops. The building's façade is well maintained, and frequently used as the backdrop for film and fashion shoots.

By contrast, Pacific Central is now ignored, despite being both the city's Amtrak and Greyhound station. The majority of the city's residents rarely step foot inside. In a city far better connected to the Pacific Rim than the rest of the Northwest, travel by train seems a nostalgic relic best left to old-timers, while bus travel is the preferred mode of transients.

For the rest of the city's residents, there's no reason to go near Pacific Central. Since the Georgia Viaduct's construction in the '70s, the slice of Main St. near the station has been disconnected from downtown, and is more of a transfer point than anything integrated into the rest of the city. Despite the brief florescence of the city's black community between the 1910s and the 1960s (see the work of Vancouver writer and historian Wayne Compton, especially *Bluesprint*, on the life of this community), and its proximity to a once-vibrant Chinatown, the station retains little historical luster.

The dining hall has been turned into a McDonald's. The large clock in the centre of the main arch disappeared sometime after the '50s (no one knows where). The triumphal arch motif of the main entrance looks faintly forlorn, the exterior stonework covered in plant growth and water stains. The best thing about it is that it directly neighbors the SkyTrain station, which means you can immediately go somewhere else. The station simply doesn't register on the city's radar. Local historian John Atkin sums up the situation best, in a Stein-esque phrase: "It's just kind of there, but it's not really there."

Even the sea has returned. Atkin explains that the portion of False Creek under the station was never actually drained, but much like the area on which King Street Station in Seattle stands, is just filled with sand and silt: the upper end with soil from the Grandview cut, the lower end with sand from English Bay. When the tide comes in, the sand fills with water, pressing against the base of the building. Atkin says the building is often damp. According to one local reporter, it has been known to flood.

Great sums have been spent to improve the interior. In 2003, VIA completed major renovations, including the expansion of the passenger lounge, improved access to the departure terrace and new ticket counters. But the façade – planned to possess so much grandeur – has been more or less neglected. Atkin says that a repair crew once made the mistake of washing the building, then covering it and leaving, which resulted in a network of rot and water stains. Despite the designation of the building as a heritage site a few years ago, little has been done to address these problems.

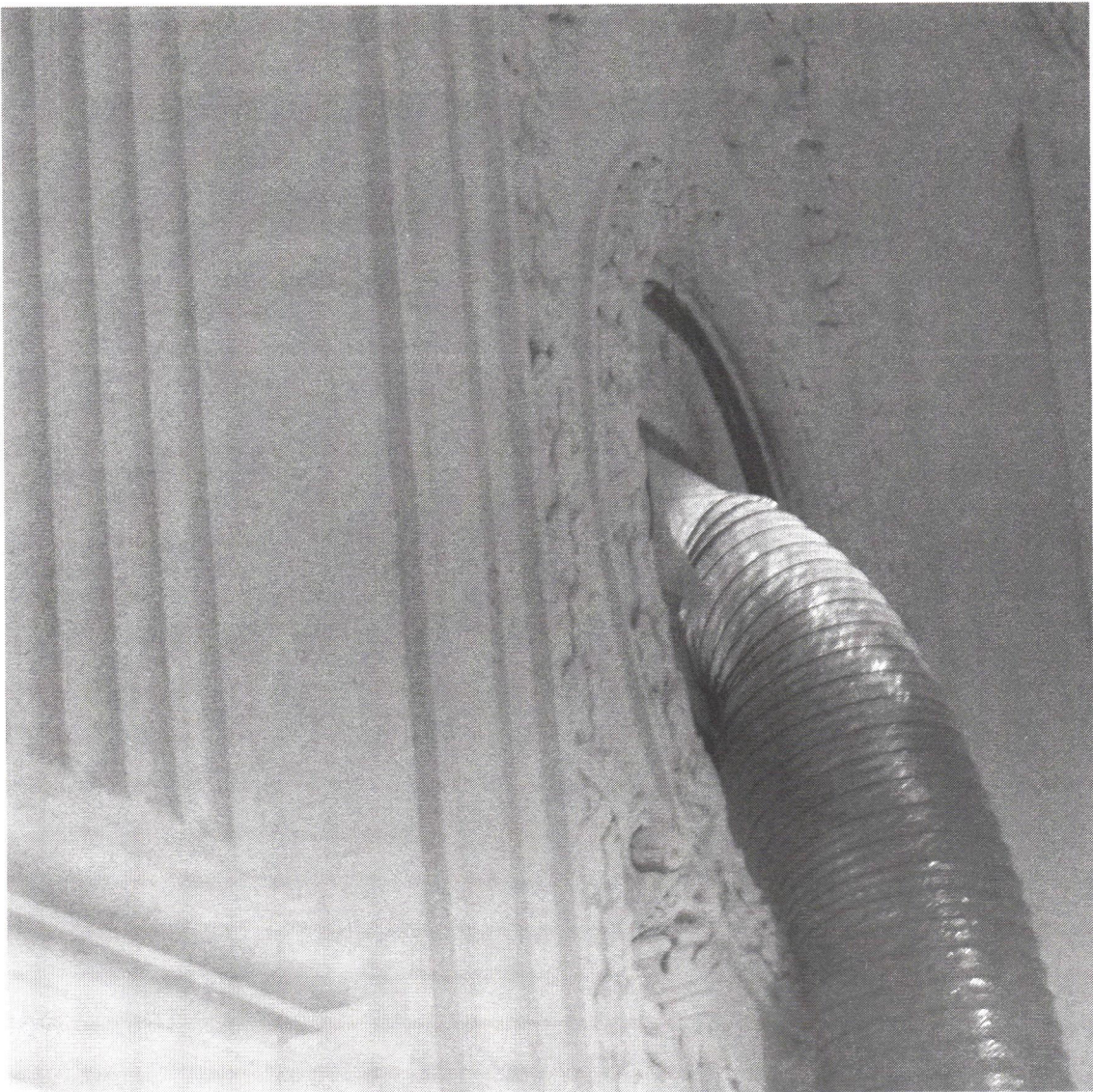
Railway stations, built to symbolize the dream of a great nation, make little sense as globalization erodes the power of the nation state. In Vancouver particularly, where 40 percent of the city's inhabitants were born elsewhere, the dream of a nation has assumed a new complexity. Gone is the notion of a homogeneous group with a shared culture or language – Canada is now trumpeted as a place of safety in "diversity." What then can the railway station symbolize? The logic of the station now is a logic of waiting, for another time, another place, another dream. Atkin says, "One day, once they figure out what they're doing with the [False Creek] flats, it will all come together."

This attitude is particularly Vancouver. Writing in *The Vancouver Review*, critic Paul Delany has said: "More than any city I know, Vancouver encourages people to direct their fantasies and desires into a transformed future. The dream of the journey to the furthest West survives, even if its fulfillment always recedes, incomplete or unsatisfied. Yet no one seems troubled that futures they used to imagine never arrived, or arrived in disappointment. Who cares, so long as there are other things still to look forward to?"

Bess Lovejoy estimates that she has taken the train between Seattle and Vancouver close to 75 times over the last eight years. Her work has appeared in *The Stranger*, the anthology *Politics Without the State* (the Seattle Research Institute), and *The Tyee*. She is the former visual arts editor of *Resonance* magazine in Seattle, and the former editor-in-chief of Vancouver's alternative weekly, *Terminal City*.

ARCHITECTURE OF WAITING: SEATTLE

Jerry Garcia





UNION
STATION

Seattle

DOCUMENT

#2

KING STREET STATION, SEATTLE, WASHINGTON

Charles Fonderai Mudele

The construction of King Street Station was financed by empire builder James J. Hill, the Canadian-born president of Northern Pacific Railway. Charles Reed and Allen Stem designed the red brick building. The station was built between 1904 and 1906, and what distinguished it from other surrounding structures was the 250-foot clock tower that rose mightily from its main entry. The tower was a replica of the 325-foot Campanile di San Marco (St. Mark's Bell Tower) in Venice.

Built in the 9th century, the Campanile dominates what the 18th-century conqueror of Venice, Napoleon, famously called the "drawing room of Europe," the Piazza of San Marco, the civic "heart of Venice." Initially the Campanile was used as a lighthouse; it guided merchant and military ships by means of a golden angel with wings that glittered as it turned in the wind. In 1609, Galileo used the lighthouse to explain and demonstrate his invention, the telescope, to a doge (governor of Venice), showing him the moons of Jupiter. The Campanile was a tourist destination on the day it collapsed, July 14, 1902 – two years before the construction of King Street Station began. The Campanile was rebuilt and reopened in 1914, eight years after its double was completed. In the 1100-year history of the Campanile di San Marco there was a moment, a space of eight years, when the only place you could see it was in Seattle.

Classical and ancient Italy dominated the architectural imaginations of Charles Reed and Allen Stem. New York City's Grand Central Station, which they designed for the Vanderbilts and completed in 1913, looks like a Roman bathhouse for giant gods; and the Livingston Depot Center in Livingston, MT, which Reed and Stem completed in 1902, has a colonnade so faithful to the ornate world of the Italian Renaissance that one would not be surprised to see, on a bright and breezy afternoon, Galileo strolling up and down it, waiting for a train to take him to Yellowstone Park, only 50 miles from Livingston (a town entirely created by James J. Hill). But when it comes to ancient Rome, nothing beats the crumbling interiors of the famous and long-abandoned Michigan Central Station in Detroit – the city that should be for architects of today what Italy was for architects of yesterday. (Any education in architecture is incomplete without visiting the magnificent post-industrial ruins of Motown.)

The reason why Hill duplicated Campanile di San Marco is obvious: it told laborers, prospectors, investors who had just arrived at King Street Station that this was a place where anything could happen. The opportunities in Seattle could match (even surpass) your wildest dreams. All you needed was the will of James J. Hill and you could drill a tunnel through a mountain and force a seemingly impossible connection to exist between rough and wet Seattle and fabulous Venice – the birthplace of modern capitalism.

There was another connection to be made between Seattle and Venice. For centuries, on Ascension Day, the doge of Venice would go to the Porto di Lido and cast a ring into the sea, as a symbol of the city's mastery over the waters of the lagoon. This ritual could also have been performed to the same effect from the tower of King Street Station, as it was built on a tidal-land. An image of what the area was like before the basin was filled with earth dug up from the deepening of Duwamish shows that the men who wanted to make money in Seattle were as determined as the merchants who made money in Venice.

The clocks on the tower have been dead for some time. Though it is impossible to know what day they died, and also whether it was post or ante meridian, we do know that the clock on the east side stopped at 5:20:47; the clock on the south side stopped at 11:05:55; the clock on the north side stopped at 6:20:55; and the clock on the final side, the west-side, stopped at 11:05:55. The reason for the station's deterioration was the birth of the automobile. After the end of World War II, King Street Station, like most major stations in America, went into decline. In the '60s, there was a concerted attempt to modernize. Its soaring neo-classical ceiling, fluted columns, majestic marble wainscoting, bulbous chandeliers, dramatic balcony, galaxy of brass fittings and terrazzo and mosaic floors were either covered up or removed. Automatic doors were installed, the ceiling was lowered, wooden high-backed benches were replaced with chrome and plastic seats, wood-framed windows were transformed into steel-framed windows.

Many of us today look back at this modernization effort with total horror and shock – why would anyone cover up all that beauty and splendor? But in

all honestly what were the architects of the time supposed to do? The train station was dying, and its look, its Italian and classical details, represented an era that was seemingly gone for good. If the train station was to survive then it had to look like a future station. This was the space age: the Space Needle was just completed (1962) and replaced King Street Station's campanile as the symbol of the city's achievements and ambitions. (Incidentally, The Space Needle was inspired by the concrete TV Tower Stuttgart in then-West Germany.) If King Street Station was to have a role in this bold new world then it had to shed (or hide) its dated look.

The modernization effort, however, did little to slow the coming death of King Street Station. In 1969, a microwave system was fixed to the glass-tiled pyramid that peaks the four clocks. The micro dishes were to the tower what the crown of thorns was to Jesus, as he stumbled toward his grim end. In 1970, fewer than 400 daily intercity passenger trains were in service [in the United States], down from a WWII high of approximately 20,000 (Great Northern Railway Page). By the '80s, King Street Station was on the verge of expiration. But in the eleventh hour, in 1992, it received a reprieve; transportation professionals began to take a serious interest in the train station's remaining potential, its location. Like other stations around America, King Street Station was ideally situated (close to downtown, close to Chinatown, close to the sports stadiums, close to the industrial district and so on), and it was big enough to accommodate an intermodal plan that many hoped would liberate the city from its tiresome dependency on road transportation.

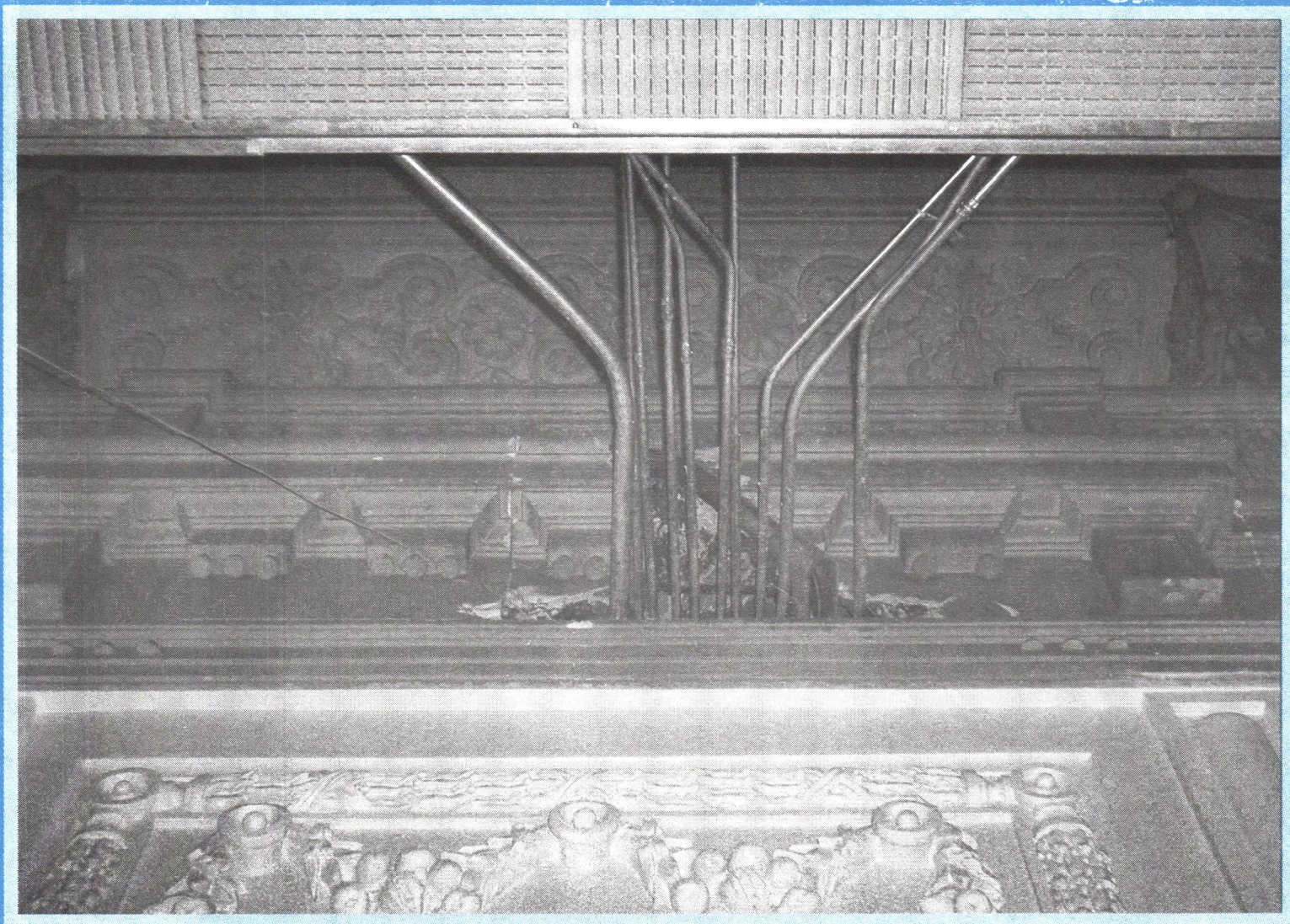
This was going on all over America, with the much admired remodeling and intermodalization of Union Station in Washington, DC in 1988 setting the example. Some stations, however, did not live long enough to be saved by redevelopment. The magnificent Michigan Central was such a station; by the '90s, it was not only dead but a hardcore ruin. Today, a plan to remodel

Michigan Central would be as useful (or meaningful) as a plan to remodel the temples on the Acropolis. The amount of use value that has vacated the once mighty building is so vast that the city of Detroit can't afford to demolish it. All that remains, and what we must admire, is the spectacle of its decay – a crumbling, a decomposition of the noblest order. The lives of other train stations were saved by their becoming something else; for example, Union Station in Tacoma, which was also designed by Reed and Stem in 1911, was converted into a federal courthouse in 1992. And so where people once waited for trains to arrive, people now wait for judgment to be passed.

The true turning point for King Street Station occurred in 1995, when the line between King Street Station and Pacific Central Station in Vancouver, BC was reopened – it had been dead for 14 years. The Spanish-built bullet train, the "latte and cream in the woods"-colored Talgo, connected Seattle to its younger sister city, Vancouver, and its older brother city, Portland. It is on this line – its three stations completed in the Golden Age of train travel, and embedded in their cities, near their Chinatowns – that we hope to build a new, and united urban space. Train stations are always the architecture of hope. A hope for the future.

If the transcontinental railways of the early part of the 20th century were necessary for Canada to see itself as a nation, then intercity railways of the 21st century will be necessary for our region to see itself as wholly urban.

Charles Tonderai Mudede is an associate editor for the Stranger. He was born in an Africans-only hospital in Que Que (now called Kwekwe), Rhodesia (now called Zimbabwe) in 1969 – Kwekwe was, and still is, a steel town, much like Charles Dickens' Coketown. Mudede is also an adjunct professor at Pacific Lutheran University, and his work has appeared in The Village Voice, Sydney Morning Daily and The New York Times, among others.



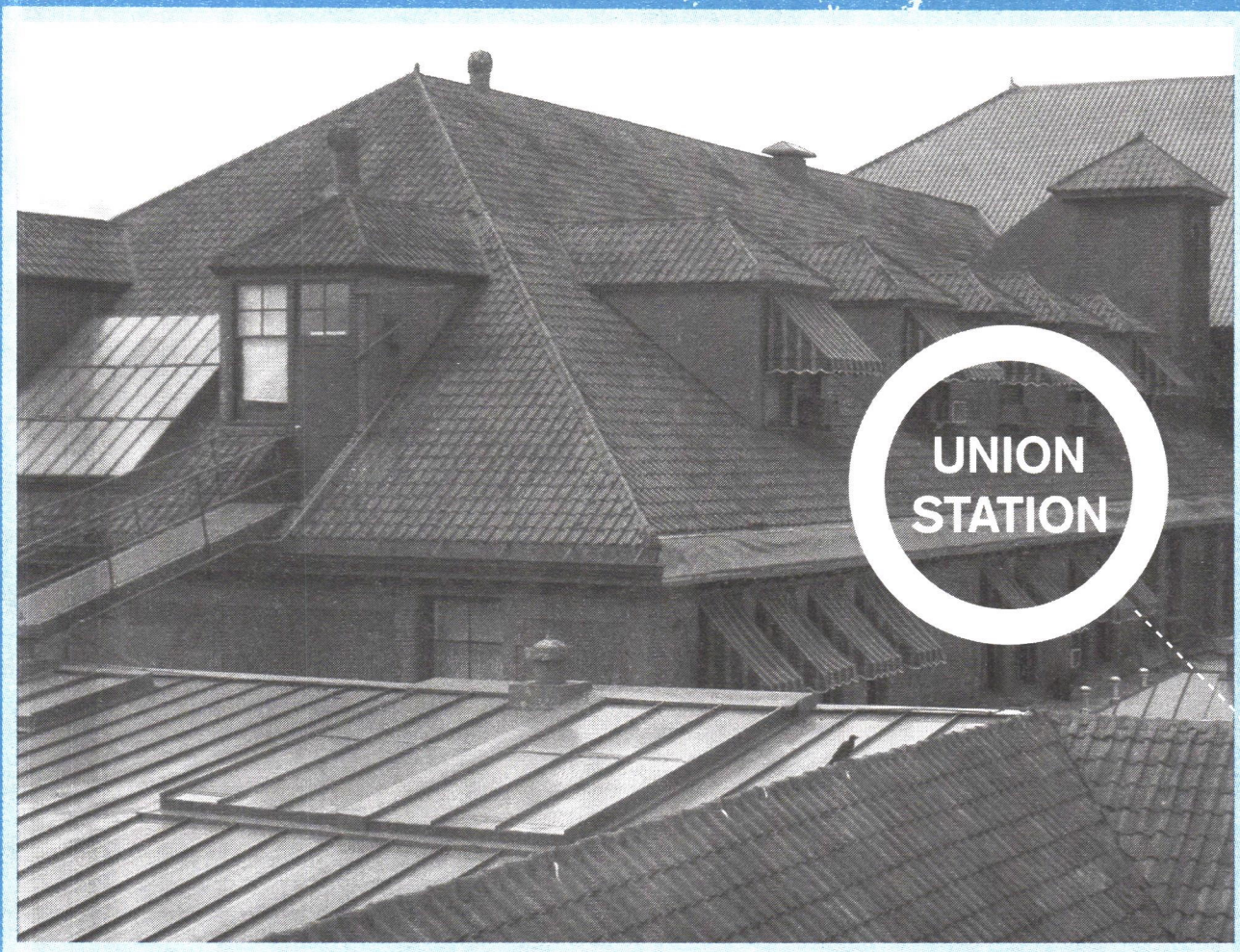
"Tail pieces and garlands, exquisite ovals where triangular doves preen themselves or one another, boudoirs embellished with 'poufs' in gold and black velvet, are now no more than the intolerable witnesses to a dead spirit."

Le Corbusier, Towards A New Architecture

ARCHITECTURE OF WAITING: PORTLAND

Jerry Garcia





Portland

DOCUMENT

#3

UNION STATION, PORTLAND, OREGON

Matthew Stadler

I live in two cities: Portland, OR and a larger, sprawling metropolis that gathers around the north-south interstate highway and crosses political boundaries from Oregon, through Washington, and into Canada. This latter city is not a municipality, but more a shared pattern of living. Richard Jensen, my business partner at Clear Cut Press, calls it "VbStoPe," meaning Vancouver, Bellingham, Seattle, Tacoma, Olympia, Portland, and Eugene. But VbStoPe is not limited to these municipalities. Rather, their names suggest a kind of spine or channel that shapes VbStoPe as it gathers and disperses across a varied terrain. VbStoPe's concentrations are difficult to map. Nowhere in this city is there a permanent center, and nowhere can one be said to approach an edge. If the industrial past gave us the territorial 19th century city, the future is giving us VbStoPe.

Portland's Union Station offers many pleasures, but above all else it is a reliable conjoining of my two cities. I stand there, as if in Howl's magical moving castle, prepared to move into Portland or VbStoPe – which is to say, into the past or the future – with the ease of turning a knob on a door.

There is the obvious fact that the train departs from this station. Eight times a day, the permanent rolling stock of VbStoPe rumbles to a halt at these doors, lacing the air with its acrid brake smoke, and sits waiting for its cargo of citizens to board or disembark. And there is the more important fact of Union Station's architecture. In a remarkable century of smart choices, the architects who shaped the station have all hewn to a kind of formal clarity that leaves room for unexpected futures. Every stage of the city's evolution has made its mark: from the boastful ambitions of 1896, to the social strains of ungainly growth between the wars, to the high egalitarian ideals of 1930s modernism, to the reactive constraints of the post-WWII period, to the city's chimerical hopes for downtown "renewal" that came with late 20th-century urbanism. Historical Union Station is neither preserved nor torn down. Rather, it accommodates history in an even-handed present that remains open to emerging futures, such as VbStoPe.

The design had its origins in financial collapse and compromise. What was originally planned to be a triumphant piece of 19th-century bombast – Henry Villard's 1882 Great Northern Railroad terminus: a sprawling neo-

Romanesque depot with symmetrical wings that covered twelve city blocks (the largest train station in the world) – became a graceful two-block station after bankruptcy, floods, global financial collapse and 13 years interceded to upset Villard's plans.

Villard's gigantism perfectly expressed the prevailing mythos of the embryo cities of the 19th-century west. Portland's ascendancy demanded such a building, but bankruptcy put the fate of the station into the hands of a Kansas City firm, Van Brunt and Howe, whose concerns were mainly pragmatic and budgetary. A rail bridge built in 1888 dictated a new site, closer to the river (on 5,000 pilings and landfill that was dumped to fill a swamp called Couch Lake); the budget was reduced by 1/3; and negotiations with the city's swiftly proliferating tram companies and two-partner railroads shaped compromises Villard could never have envisioned.

When Union Station (then called Grand Central Station) opened on Valentine's Day, 1896, the depot stretched along two city blocks, forming a kind of elbow that opened gently, south and west, toward downtown. The only feature retained from the original plan was a square central tower that, unlike King Street Station's copy of the Venice campanile had no direct referent. The tower's neo-Romanesque rectitude and sparseness of detail evoke the older towers of Siena or Florence (cities often cited by Portland's early planners), while below it the station's sweeping, curved rooflines, deep overhanging eaves and ornamental bracing suggest the Italianate. The whole conjures the kind of mongrel assemblage native to older cities, where time has heaped style upon style.

Rhetorically, the station stood for Portland's preeminence ("the finest rail station west of St. Louis," *The Oregonian* reported), a fondness for Italy, and also a kind of New England thrift and modesty that was fast becoming the city's self-image. Critics praised the low cost (\$1 million), superior safety features and painstakingly neutral interiors. "There has been no attempt," the newspaper applauded, "at anything elaborate. The aim has been on the part of the architects, to bring about the most harmonious results, with a few modest neutral colors, low in tone. Beyond that there are but a few simple lines on walls and ceilings."



"The future, the future, the future is here"

Model 500

This modesty might have become boring, but the clarity of the building, and the variety of life in it, made a plain vessel into a vibrant conduit through which the future of the city poured. Union Station welcomed the multitudes: from 1905, when the Lewis & Clark Centennial Exposition catalyzed a doubling of population, to 200,000; to WWI, when the mobilization and return of American soldiers compounded that steep rate of growth; and WWII, when a booming shipping industry, coupled with the return of GI's to West Coast ports, vastly complicated the social mix of the city. At each turn, the station accommodated huge numbers. (In the 1920s 90 trains a day came and went, from 6 a.m. to 11 p.m.; by 1944 the number exceeded 100, serving 4.8 million passengers each year.)

Heavy use took its toll early and delivered Union Station to its most crucial turn. In 1927 the railway hired A.E. Doyle & Co. to redesign the depot and the project fell to a young designer named Pietro Belluschi. Belluschi, just four years away from his masterful Portland Art Museum design, saw in the depot a kind of nascent modernism that his work could bring to the fore. He removed the iron columns from the central waiting room,

reinforced the ceiling grid of heavy beams, and clad the interior walls in travertine marble. In conjunction with less visible interventions (dormer windows in upstairs offices, a rationalizing of the roofline), Belluschi's frank interior gave the station a more intentional neutrality – a kind of contextual modernism – that both honored the building's origins and bestowed an egalitarian dignity on everyone who passed through.

Belluschi's shepherding of this essentially democratic space into a modern idiom gave the city an entryway that would welcome the future even while it echoed the past. It became that rarest of architectural spaces: a contemporary building. This quality, more than any accident of function or site, is what makes Union Station a reliable vessel for our travels in VbStoPe.

As winning as the Belluschi redesign is, one cannot be surprised to find that it has had its adversaries. In 1943, Portland, anticipating a post-War return to high unemployment and economic depression, hired New York planner Robert Moses to produce a general plan for revitalizing the city. In addition to massive highway projects and the reorganization of the city's river port, Moses proposed razing Union Station and building a "modernized" facility nearer to the docks. The Moses plan was adopted but never fully carried out, and Union Station went untouched.

In the 1980s, when passenger service fell to two trains a day, the local animation giant Will Vinton Studios (fresh off their triumph inventing the "California Raisins") proposed converting Belluschi's depot into a Disney-esque theme park called "Claymation Station," to celebrate the studio's amusing characters. This time Union Station was saved by the Portland Development Commission's (PDC) 1987 purchase of the facility. PDC preserved the station for rail use (anticipating Amtrak's 1998 launch of the new Cascades run, eight trains a day), extended the downtown transit mall to reach it, and directed a strategy of investment in

high-density housing nearby that catalyzed what eventually became the Pearl District. Later this summer, the area's restoration will take a further turn with the opening of nearby Tanner Spring Park, an "abstracted wetlands" evoking Couch Lake that will "pull back the industrial urban fabric of the city to reveal the natural landscape that once existed at the site." And so the 19th-century landscape returns to us as a built environment.

Honoring the past is all well and good, but any built environment that does not also honor the future should be torn down. Through its sheer tact and intelligence, Union Station accommodates both; VbStoPe is audible there, amidst the old broadcasts of Portland. Through a kind of egalitarian frankness this building has made room for both the beautiful and the despised – which is to say, the future.

Matthew Städler is a novelist and editor of Clear Cut Press. His writing about architecture has appeared in Nest, Domus, Archis, Widerhall and elsewhere.

PRAXIS

THE FUTURE AS NECESSARY

An Interview with a Citizen of VbStoPe, Amtrak's Paul Clements

Amy Kate Horn



"The angel would like to stay, awaken the dead, and make whole what has been smashed. But a storm is blowing in from Paradise; it has got caught in his wings with such a violence that the angel can no longer close them. The storm irresistibly propels him into the future to which his back is turned, while the pile of debris before him grows skyward. This storm is what we call progress."

—Walter Benjamin

King Street Station is at rest on a drizzly Tuesday afternoon. A boxy silver Empire Builder slumbers after a 46-hour haul from Chicago's Union Station. At the platform's edge, a sleek Talgo TPU train awaits a 5:45 p.m. departure. This dozen-car convoy should be destined for Eugene, the southern limit of the Amtrak Cascades route (Vancouver, Seattle, Tacoma, Portland, Eugene, and points in between – VbStoPe) but tonight track repair work will cause it to terminate in Portland. The belly of the Spanish-built Talgo is configured ingeniously: Adjacent cars share common wheels for a smooth ride, and a gravity-based tilt-system allows the train to take curves safely at high speeds. The skin of the train reflects the natural environment with stripes of clay red and pine green; graceful fish fins decorate its tail. Inside the lounge car, the design is gentler: mauve curtains, lavender upholstery on cushy flip-down seats, real wood trim, copper accents. Outside the oversized windows, a massive I-beam supporting the platform's canopy bisects the view of Qwest Field and its expansive parking lots, Occidental Avenue's brick warehouses and the rear end of Pioneer Square.

As a bistro-car manager rattles bottles and stocks the kitchen behind us, Paul Clements, a Seattle-based Product Line Supervisor for Amtrak, sits down to tell me what it's like to work on the trains of the Northwest corridor.

WILL YOU DESCRIBE YOUR DUTIES ON THE TRAIN?

On this corridor, my duties are much different than they might be on a long-haul train, where you're more like the manager of a hotel/restaurant/resort going down the track. Here, my duties are more involved with customs and immigration issues, passenger service as far as boarding and detraining people, taking care of people with special needs, that sort of thing. I do the scenic announcements, check-in, passport check... it's different every day. I also work in the office, selecting movies, working with magazines and promotions. It's a part-office, part-road job, about 50/50.

WHAT KINDS OF PEOPLE ARE ON THE ROUTE BETWEEN PORTLAND AND SEATTLE? CAN YOU COMPARE THEM TO THE PEOPLE WHO RIDE BETWEEN SEATTLE AND VANCOUVER?

When I work on the weekends, the demographics are twentysomething, single [between Portland and Seattle]. It's almost like a singles' bar. Most of those people would like the side-by-side seats. They don't want the four [seats facing each other around a table]. On the north end, we don't have enough fours. Going north, it's more discretionary travel – we don't get the business travelers. On the south end, it's younger travelers, it's transportation [for them]. Price is an issue. They're a little more concerned with being on time and things like that. On the north end, people are more just onboard to have a good time.

HOW DOES YOUR SCENIC COMMENTARY DIFFER ON THESE TWO STRETCHES?

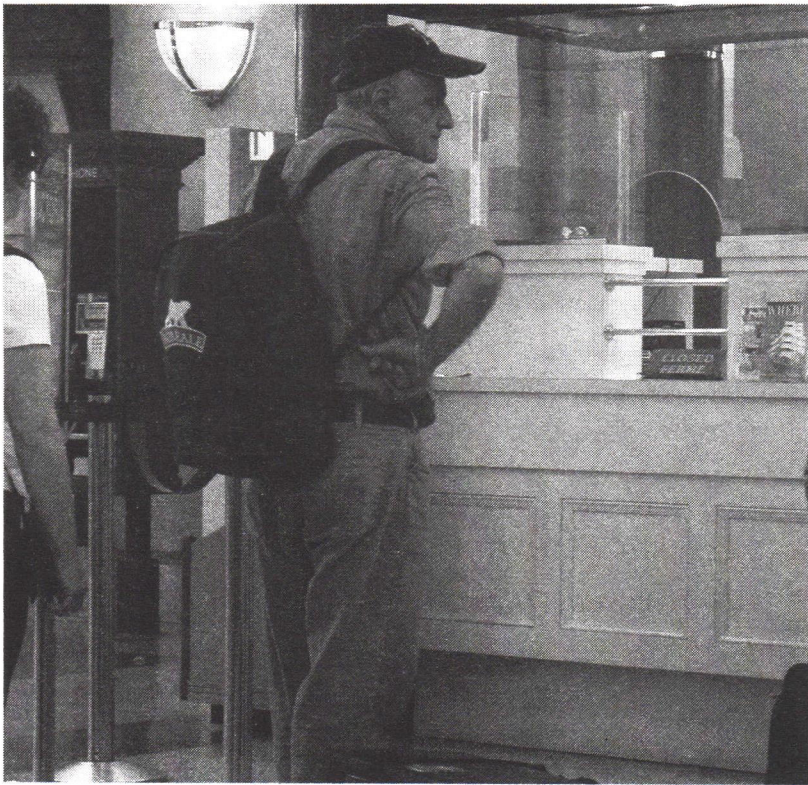
Well, [between Portland and Seattle,] the films we show take up a big portion on the trip. So you really don't have a lot of time. And then before the movie or after the movie, you basically have Tacoma to Seattle – but there's not a heck of a lot to say. Puget Sound doesn't require a lot of explanation. You might say, "Those are the Olympics in the background." But on a short-distance train, where most of your people are local, they already know all of this.

WHAT EXACTLY DO YOU POINT OUT ON THE TRIP BETWEEN SEATTLE AND VANCOUVER?

I try to point out the things that are not obvious... and I point out the mountain peaks, because many of the travelers are seeing these mountains for the first time. It's odd to think of people seeing the Space Needle for the first time... I'll sometimes point out the diving at Edmonds because I do scuba. I point out if there's an aircraft carrier in Everett. I point out the Ship Canal. I point out a couple of my favorite places, and I'll say, "You don't have to own a waterfront house to have coffee along the shore; come along with us and enjoy coffee and the view." Somebody once said that when you take the train you see the very best, pristine countryside, and you see the working industrial side of the city, the backyard of the city. You see all this pristine beauty, and then the ugliest part of the city. It's an interesting balance.

SOMEONE TOLD ME THEY ONCE HEARD YOU DESCRIBE THE SKYTRAIN IN LOVING TERMS.

You must be thinking of an announcement I made about it. I wouldn't say I described it in loving terms, but I do describe it in a very supportive way: "Here is a transit link that can serve you." I point it out when we cross their bridge because they have this very modernistic bridge, and then I reiterate that you can get around town with one ticket on all modes of travel (Sea Bus, city bus, SkyTrain – one ticket does it all). SkyTrain is convenient, affordable, friendly... I have commented that their transit system and the SkyTrain are the envy of many of us in Seattle. They've built it, they've had it, they've expanded it; they're so far ahead of us.



"James J. Hill [1838-1916] was the Empire Builder who started with nothing but a vision of the future."

—Christopher Muller's 9th grade research paper.

WHAT DO YOU THINK OF PACIFIC CENTRAL STATION IN VANCOUVER?

I like that it's more of an international terminal – it's got the transcontinental Canadian trains – but yet it's kind of like an outpost because it's way up here in the Northwest away from everything. The station itself is a "middle monumental" structure – not huge like Kansas City or DC – but it's very imposing and very solid looking. I like Vancouver because it's international, and the travelers on the train to Vancouver are often 50 percent not North American, and I really like that. It's a very vibrant station, too. Not very many people know this, but there are benches in there from Vancouver's Great Northern Station before it was demolished. The plain benches are original to Pacific Central, but the frillier ones – they have some fancy inlay or carving or something along the top – those are from the old Great Northern Station.

WHAT'S YOUR OPINION OF THE CITY OF VANCOUVER?

I'm very fond of Vancouver. I like that it's so close and yet it has a little bit of the feel of an international-class city. It's very cosmopolitan. I don't overnight much, but the last time I overnighted there, I was on my way to a party – I believe I was on Denmon Street – and I noticed that people were

strolling the streets. It was very European; how people there stroll at night, and I heard a dozen different languages. I was just there and watched the night scene and skipped the party, which was unlike me.

LET'S MOVE SOUTH. FROM YOUR POSITION ON THE TRACKS, DO YOU PREFER THE ARCHITECTURE OF SEATTLE OR PORTLAND?

For both, the approach is through the industrial, back side of the city – the working grit of the city. And of course they both arrive in interesting, historic neighborhoods. But you don't see a heck of a lot of that through the windows. Once you get past the stadiums [in Seattle], it's pretty boring and industrial. You've got the old Milwaukee station, which is now Starbucks... In Portland, there used to be the mounted police headquarters right next to the station, and I'd point that out. But there's not a lot to see coming into either of those cities [on the train].

TELL ME YOUR IMPRESSION OF THE TRAIN STATIONS IN SEATTLE AND PORTLAND.

I definitely like Portland's better than Seattle's. Seattle's King Street of course has a lot of historical renovations underway and more planned, but with all the rosettes and cornucopias... I find it a little too fancy. I like Portland's. It's solid, with nice lines, and that great clock tower and neon. Sometime in the '80s, I remember coming through Portland on the Coast Starlight and they were selling pins and doing fundraisers to fix the clock – it was a community-based effort to renovate the clock tower. Portland's station is my favorite, architecturally and functionally.

ARE THERE LESSONS FOR URBAN PLANNERS AND ARCHITECTS THAT CAN BE LEARNED BY LOOKING AT THESE THREE CITIES FROM THEIR RAILS?

Vancouver decided a long time ago that they were not going to bulldoze huge swaths across their town to build freeways. They thought instead, "To control sprawl and to maintain the livability of the city, we're going to build mass transit." They were successful, but I know now they are having issues with capacity and are looking at what to do next. The Puget Sound area has tried several times to move public transportation forward, but it seems to stall all the time. Portland, they've made the plans and moved forward... And now that the pool of federal matching funds has dried up, Seattle is getting a late start. I don't think there are many cities of this size that are this far behind in transit.

I think Canada was able to move forward because they said, "We need this; we're going to do this." And they wouldn't allow dissent. It's gonna happen here, it's got to, because the supply of oil has already peaked worldwide, some claim, and so if demand is going up with the economic activity in Asia and India... the demand is going up while the supply is going down. Anybody who's studied supply and demand knows that fuel prices will eventually go sky-high. Trains have a much brighter future, especially if we can get through the current funding issues.

Amy Kate Horn is a copyeditor, dancer, teacher and freelance train rider.

Thoughts of Transit: Grand and Central

By Paul D. Miller (AKA DJ Spooky)

"When the train starts, and the passengers are settled
To fruit, periodicals and business letters
(And those who saw them off have left the platform)
Their faces relax from grief into relief,
To the sleepy rhythm of a hundred hours.
Fare forward, travellers! not escaping from the past
Into different lives, or into any future;
You are not the same people who left that station
Or who will arrive at any terminus"
—T.S. Eliot, *Four Quartet*

It was all about synchronization. The schedules, the paths of kinetic movement carved into the everyday world of commuter culture. Think of it as a kind of chaos underlying the surface of a

world of standardization, or even better, of the calm beneath the turbulence of an invisible storm.

Every day the traffic increases, and every day the amount of links between people and places, the dots connecting lives that would otherwise never touch. The space of public culture, private expression – all in anonymous conflict. Grand and Central, a cathedral of commerce for all of the dispossessed souls that passed through it. Grand Central – from 1869 with American Manifest Destiny as its source code, the central lines of flight – think lines connecting dispersed points of urban interaction – unpack the meaning and drift into the space, think of a time guided by the rails, seeing how the linear script unfolds, and you get a hidden glimpse into all of the core myths of the 20th century.

Collapse of space, acceleration of cultural

development. Forced interaction in small spaces. The tedious sense of being "almost there." The feeling that you will never really arrive at your destination until suddenly, at the edge of desire, the station arises from your reverie, already packed to capacity with people who know nothing of what you are looking for. They're just certain that, they, in their own way, are looking for something, too. They're just not sure what.

Paul D. Miller (DJ Spooky) is a conceptual artist, writer and musician working in New York. His written work has appeared in *The Village Voice*, *The Source*, *Artforum*, and a host of other periodicals. Miller's first collection of essays, *Rhythm Science*, was published by MIT Press in April 2004, and was included in several year-end lists of the best books of 2004.



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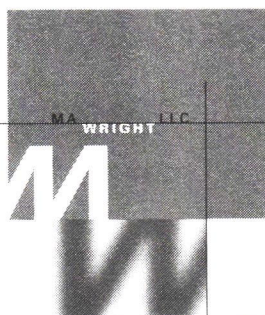
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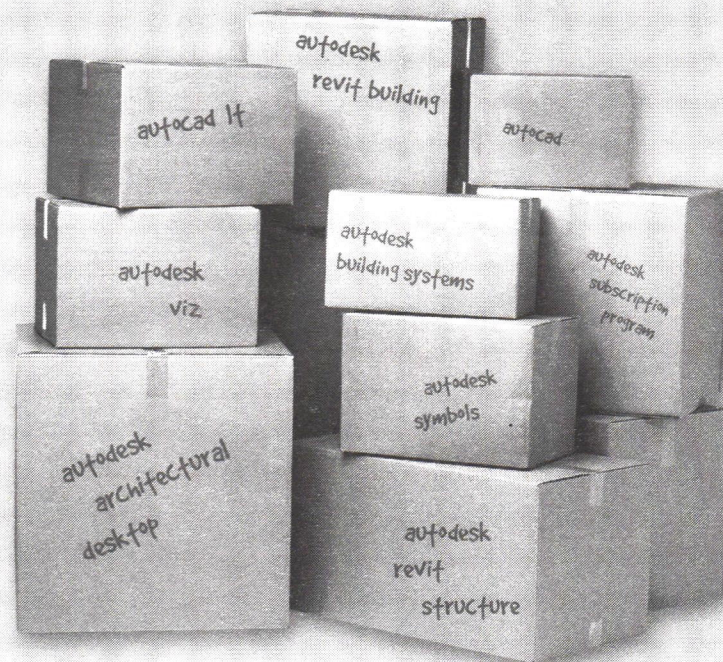
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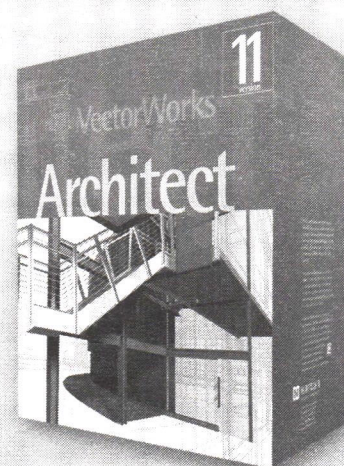
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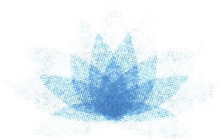
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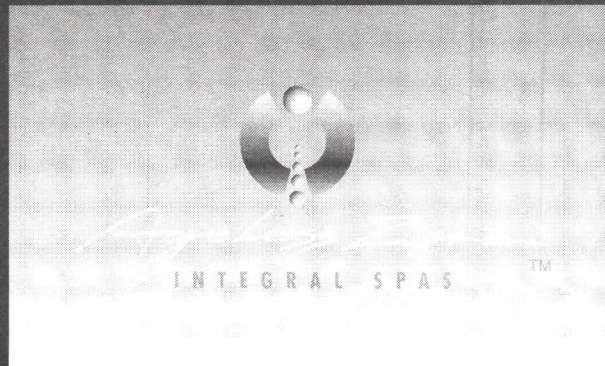
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MAKING FACES

BY A FREELANCE ILLUSTRATOR CALLED PETER ARKLE WHO LIVES IN NEW YORK

Here's some INK.

Here's some INK in a shape resembling a Hollywood celebrity.

I am a drawing of ANGELINA JOLIE.



Of course, in REALITY, her face isn't made up of a few black shapes:



She's more complicated than that, so I had to be careful.

LOOK WHAT HAPPENS WHEN EVEN JUST THE INK REPRESENTING HER EYES IS MOVED UP A BIT



I am not a drawing of ANGELINA JOLIE.

Hair is usually easier than facial features. With hair I get to be far more relaxed and scribbly.



A few extra lines representing hairs here and there do no harm.

HOWEVER, EXTRA LINES ON THE FACE CAN BE A PROBLEM

I am a drawing of ANGELINA JOLIE'S mother.



WARNING:

Hair isn't always easy. I often need to remind myself that I am trying to draw an overall impression of someone's hair—not each individual hair. FOR EXAMPLE, LOOK AT THIS DRAWING OF A WELL KNOWN DOMESTIC MOGUL



I'm a drawing of MARTHA STEWART in disguise.

SMALLER PORTRAIT SHOWING THE WHOLE FAMOUS HEAD:

I'm a drawing of TOM CRUISE...



Now I'm a drawing of regular MARTHA STEWART.



AND BE CAREFUL WITH FACIAL HAIR. Look at this famous chin:



THE DOTS REPRESENTING THE STUBBLE ARE OK AT THIS SIZE. BUT SEE WHAT HAPPENS WHEN I TRY TO DRAW A



...with a strange disease. AAAGH!

HIS STUBBLE DOTS ARE ALMOST THE SAME SIZE AS HIS EYEBALLS!

Poor guy. No wonder I prefer to draw people who aren't famous...

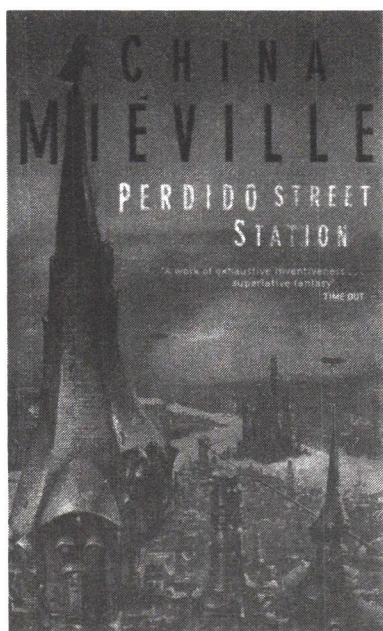
...LIKE MYSELF:



NO ONE KNOWS IF I AM A BAD DRAWING OR NOT.

Power Station: A Review of the Transportation Hub in China Miéville's **Perdido Street Station**

Steven Shaviro



China Miéville's *Perdido Street Station* is an urban fantasy novel: a description that might seem oxymoronic if your only idea of "fantasy" comes from Tolkien. But in fact that's what it is. The novel is set in an imaginary world filled with monsters and magic; but this world is described with a richness of detail, and density of character and incident, that recalls 19th-century realist fiction. The novel is set, specifically, in the city of New Crobuzon, a sprawling, vibrant and filthy metropolis that is something like Dickens' London, and something like Third World cities of today – but in which human beings live cheek by jowl with cactus people, insect people and other fantastic sentient races, all of

whom are menaced by the twin evils of a cruel, authoritarian-capitalist city government and the predations of the "slake-moths": nightmarish monsters, psychological vampires who can suck your mind dry and leave you an inert Terry Schiavo-esque husk.

Perdido Street Station is as memorable for its places and its architecture as it is for its incidents and characters. The central physical and symbolic locus of the book is the train station itself, which gives the novel its name. Perdido Street Station is a "great disreputable leviathan building," the very heart of the city of New Crobuzon. The station is a world unto itself: a "mountainous landscape of slate and clay," filled with "spires and spiral iron staircases...dormer windows...hidden rooftop courtyards." Commuter railways stretch out from the Station in every direction, transporting crowds to the most widespread quarters of the city; a spider's web of "skyrails" stretches out from it, too, a network of cable cars used by the police and militia for surveillance, crowd control and rapid deployment.

The station is less a single building than a ramshackle conglomeration of structures that spread out from the central terminal like some suppurating fungus. Parts of it are scrupulously maintained, while other parts have fallen into disrepair and ruin. And parts of it are heavily traveled and heavily policed, while other parts are abandoned, perhaps even unknown. The architecture is pre-modernist: ornamental and often non-functional, the result of hundreds of years of unplanned accretion. The

result is an eclecticism and horror-vacui overdetermination that almost seems postmodern.

The western façade is grandiose and imperial, a massive, imposing structure that speaks Power and Authority. Entering the station through its main gates, from the commercial square it overlooks, you are reminded that you live in a City-State whose authority is absolute, where dissent and disobedience are completely proscribed. Power in New Crobuzon is emblematic and cruel (I'm tempted to say, pre-Foucaultian), and this is reflected in the massive architecture of Perdido Street Station as well.

But other parts of the Station are not as imposing, and not as well defined. The eastern stretches, especially, degenerate into a maze of entrances and passageways, with portions rotted away or burned out, totally deserted or inhabited only by vagrants, drunks, drug addicts and the terminally unemployed. This is the underside of New Crobuzon's splendor and wealth: the detritus, the remainder, left behind by capitalism's "creative destruction," and by the triumphant march of authoritarian power.

The novel's climax takes place at nighttime, on the roof of Perdido Street Station. A ragtag coalition of political activists, eccentric scientists and other, not-quite-human forces manages to destroy the monstrous slake-moths (although confronting the authoritarian central government remains an unfinished project, to be taken up again by Miéville in his novel *Iron Council*, a sequel of sorts set in the same fictional world). Complex circuits and feedback loops of electricity and psychic energy set in motion a "crisis engine": a device that pushes the processes and potentials of the universe to a "profoundly unstable... paradoxical, unsustainable" point, where the basic Heraclitean and Marxist ontological insight – that everything is basically flux and change, that stability is only temporary, that forms only exist on the verge of breaking down – becomes manifest in a flash of exuberant energy. The crisis engine is an anti-architecture, a space-time of pure potentiality, and as such the antitype of Perdido Street Station itself: the fluid erasure of its massive imposingness.

Steven Shaviro is the DeRoy Professor of English at Wayne State University. He is the author of *Doom Patrols: A Theoretical Fiction About Postmodernism, and Connected, Or, What It Means To Live in the Network Society*.

Perdido Street Station

By China Miéville

880 pgs. Pan MacMillan. \$14.

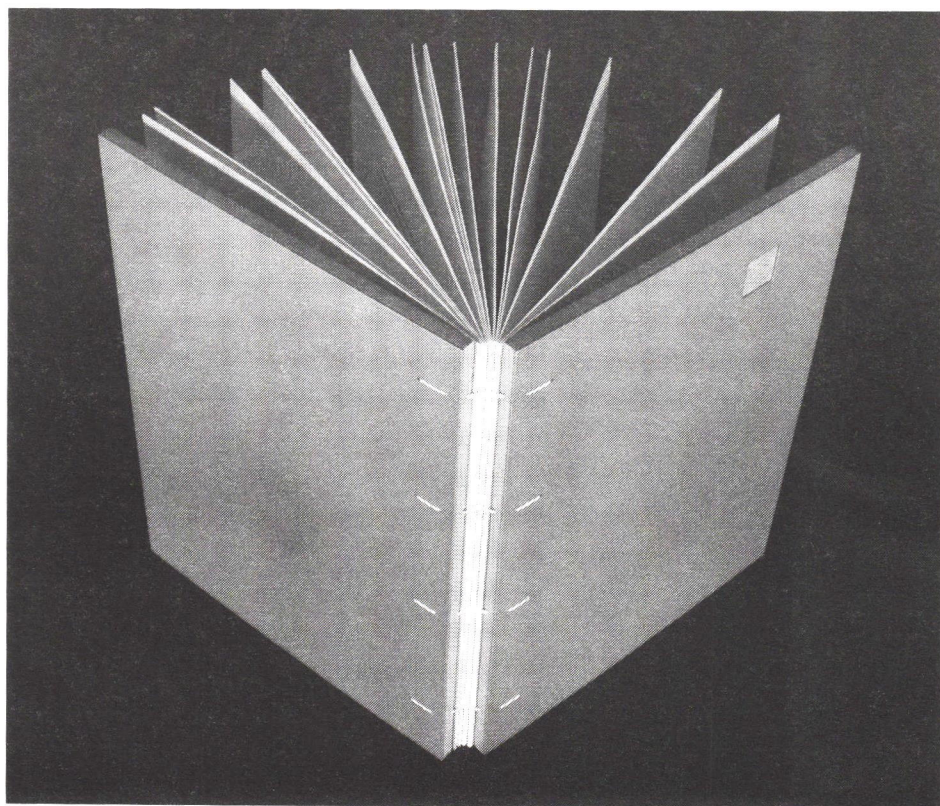


Something Lived, Something Dreamed:

Urban Design and the American West, by William McDonough

JM Cava

32 pages. 10" x 7.5". Red Butte Press. \$700.



The American West. John Wayne, the Rocky Mountains, Black Elk, the Grand Canyon, Freedom, Individuality and the True Heart of an imagined America. This grand romantic notion of the untamed frontier, with its still abundant open space and powerful landscapes is driving a current wave of western expansion. Billionaires are buying vacation ranches in Montana and land values from Oregon to Arizona double in value in less time than it takes to sign for a loan. And where there is money to be made, the new pioneers destroy anything standing in their way: forests, mountains, atmospheric layers, you name it. This is the American West of today; a real estate free-for-all destined to become a wasteland of pallid anonymous suburbs fueled by an economy of gargantuan toxicity and waste.

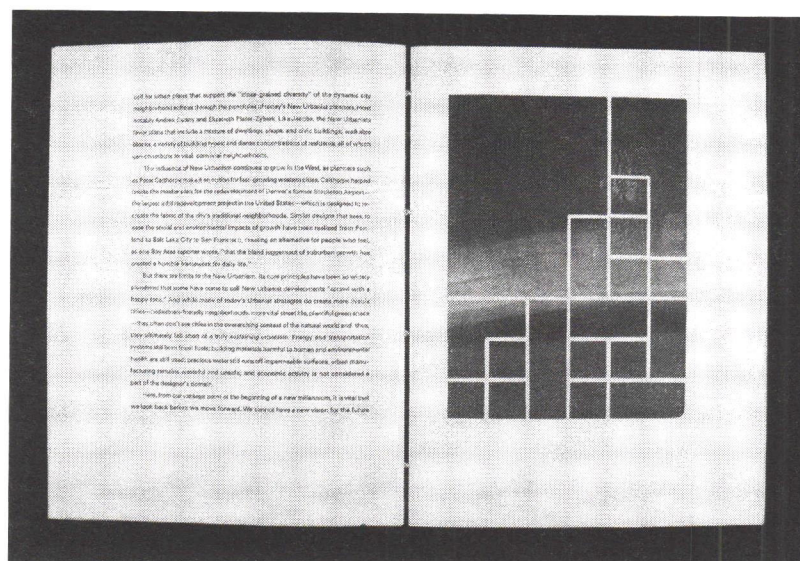
This is the setting of William McDonough's latest book, *Something Lived, Something Dreamed: Urban Design and the American West*. William McDonough – by now a household name – is the architect-turned-sustainability-superman whose mission is nothing less than deflecting the entire train of human production traveling at top speed towards a cliff of poisonous self-destruction onto an alternative Elysian track of natural harmony. His secret weapon is the "cradle to cradle" paradigm in which everything we make is either biodegradable or part of an infinite industrial "upcycle" replacing our current "cradle to grave" approach of "downcycling" everything into lower-grade, toxic products. Sure, and why not get rid of war, poverty, famine and disease at the same time? But McDonough and company, through their powers of conviction, intelligence and sheer chutzpah are walking their talk, going so far as to create materials that are so clean in their manufacturing process that they can – with some misgivings from Wolfgang Puck – be safely eaten.

McDonough already has several books to his credit, but in *Something Lived...*, this Uberarchitect has created a real Uberbook. Here, sustainable design cleans up and joins the world of high art through the rarified format known as "limited-edition fine press books," or livre d'artiste if

you went to college. For those of us buying remaindered paperbacks at Barnes and Noble, this book is not one to stick in the beach bag next to the half open bottle of suntan lotion, for this is a work of art with the requisite low numbers – only 140 exist – and high prices – \$700 – that seem to be the last clear definition of the term. Resulting sticker shock might be assuaged by comparison with Frank Gehry's latest book on his Disney Concert Hall, which is now in stores for a cool \$8,500. McDonough's book is published by the twenty-year-old Red Butte Press of the University of Utah, whose books of fiction, poetry and critical essays are anchored in the American West. Artistic descendants of William Morris's Kelmscott Press, these sublimely handcrafted artifacts hark back to a time when every artisan-produced book was an object to be reckoned with.

Somewhat in this tradition, Victoria Hindley – a Seattle book designer and art director – commissioned McDonough's essay and proceeded to design the artistic shell to contain his text, collaborating with over fifty people from around the United States and Italy. Every material used was conceived in the spirit of sustainable design, some of them fabricated exclusively for this book, which took a full two and a half years to complete.

Along with the written text are three original letterpress monoprints by Washington artist Chris Stern, playing off McDonough's reference to the American city grid suppressing the wondrous natural variations of the West. The text itself is printed on cotton and chemical-free paper specially manufactured in Italy by Magnani, paper makers since before Botticelli. The sheets are hand folded, collated, punched and protected with Japanese sekishu paper, adhered with natural wheat paste. Printed on a hand press, the whole thing is bound with unbleached Irish linen thread and finally covered in sheets of a prototypical sandblasted, anodized and recycled aluminum developed by the R & D department at Alcoa (McDonough notes that "aluminum is one of the most recyclable materials on the planet"). These are laminated (with a reversible, water-based, low-VOC adhesive, of course) to gorgeous thin planks of recycled wood taken from a California Sycamore tree (that's *Platanus racemosa*, for you grads) rescued from a city sidewalk demolition site. Beginning to get the picture? And if that weren't enough, this whole Meisterstuck comes inside yet another construction, an EskaLuxe (Dutch composite board)



box with more natural, unbleached, moisture-balanced, acid-free, recyclable cloths, fibers and whatnot than you can shake a recycling bin at. And, should you be justly afraid to actually touch this object, thoughtfully included is a pair of white gloves, in case, like me, your friends' hygienic habits are in some doubt.

At this point I say, who cares what's in this exquisite thing; it could be *Reflections on Canned Tuna* by Morris the Cat and I'd be fine with it. But

**FROM ANYONE ELSE, THIS
WOULD BE THE PIPEDREAM OF
AN ECOLOGICAL POLLYANNA,
BUT MCDONOUGH KNOWS HIS
CAPABILITIES, AND YOU CAN
BET HE ISN'T BLUFFING.**

McDonough's essay, despite being mere paper inside this cathedral of a binding, is a thoughtful, well written and carefully researched plea for a sensitive approach to the American West and by extension the planet. Though somewhat predictable, he weaves in such voices as Jaime Lerner, John McPhee, Peter Calthorpe, J. B. Jackson, Elizabeth Meyer, F. L. Olmstead and Jane Jacobs to construct his textual cloth which decries the Jeffersonian grid carelessly laid across the country. With its predilection for mapping territory in the abstract, the grid simultaneously suppresses any individual characteristics of the land itself that would lead to more sensitive settlement patterns. As one might expect, McDonough further reminds us of our absurd Euro-centric insistence on confronting Nature as an enemy to be conquered, rather than as an ally in achieving harmonic balance and planetary longevity.

From anyone else, this would be the pipedream of an ecological Pollyanna, but McDonough knows his capabilities, and you can bet he isn't bluffing. The only weaknesses here are occasional unwitting promotional plugs for his own buildings, having the effect that none-too-subtle product placements have in an otherwise well-crafted movie; unwelcome intrusions of one world into another. McDonough fans will recognize shades of *Cradle to Cradle* and *The Hanover Principles* here, but overall this essay is fresher and brighter than his other writings, with more reflection and less grinding of the sustainability axe.

He intelligently points out that Jefferson's grid – a fairly low-level technology imposed over the rich variety of the western landscape – removed the land's "here-ness" from our immediate living experience, thereby encouraging the identical anemic developments we encounter everywhere. What McDonough misses, however, is the fact that our ubiquitously wired technology is now threatening to separate us still further from the land with an electronic grid of potentially even greater consequence than Jefferson's simple lines on a map. For, as the writer Sven Birkerts reminds us in *The Gutenberg Elegies*.

"...a communications net, a soft and pliable mesh woven from invisible threads, has fallen over everything. The so-called natural world, the place we used to live...can now

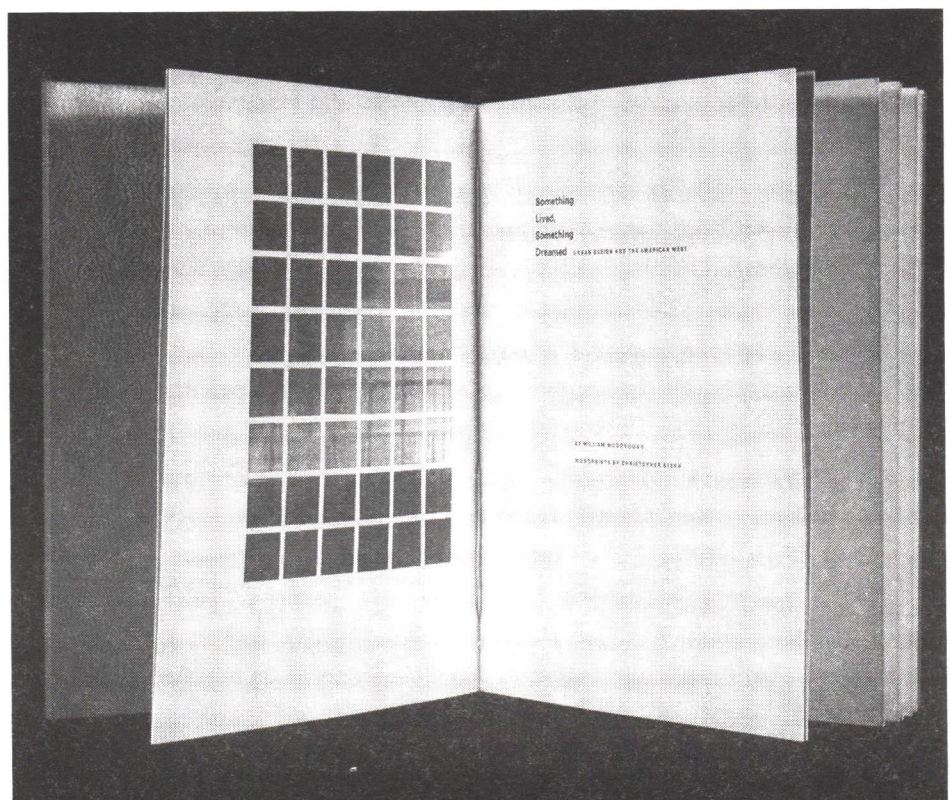
only be perceived through a scrim. Nature was then; this is now. Trees and rocks have receded. And the great geographical Other, the faraway rest of the world, has been transformed by the pure possibility of access. The numbers of distance and time no longer mean what they used to. Every place, once unique, itself, is strangely shot through with radiations from every other place. 'There' was then; 'here' is now."

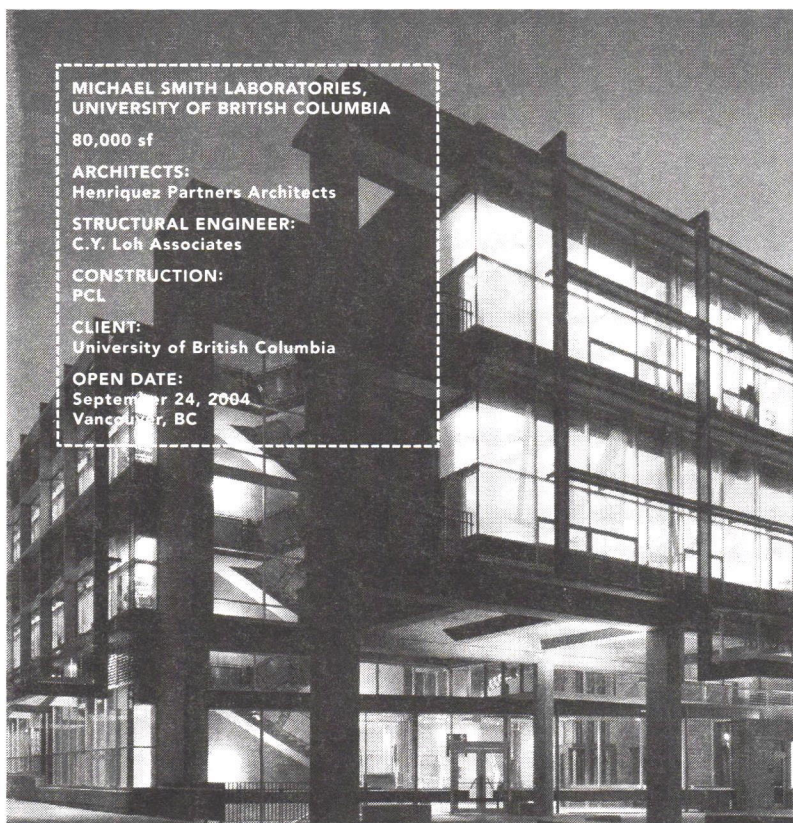
For all McDonough's ecological maneuvering, this dominant technology may be unwittingly dragging him two steps back for each forward ecological move he makes.

As Birkerts further remarks, "Fifty years ago the human environment was still more or less the natural environment. We had central heating and labor-saving devices and high-speed travel, but these were still only partial modifications of the natural given. It is the natural given that is now gone. Now, for better or for worse, we move almost entirely within a regulated and mediated environment. Our primary relation to the world has been altered."

This is crucial, for if we become fundamentally unable to discern the unique characteristics of a territory, we will be unable to apply any of McDonough's principles to develop such land appropriately. The other large missing components of the formula are the basic tenets of capitalism – wherein real estate sales carry no greater responsibilities or stewardship than refrigerator sales – and the enormous size of 21st-century corporations, where single entities purchase and develop thousands of acres at a single moment in time. And so, even as McDonough enlightens Fortune 500 CEOs on new eco-profit paradigms and manufactures building materials we can heartily consume for dinner, some re-connection with the depth of present experience is a *sine qua non* of his vision, for how can we know a place if we've never "been" there? If this awareness can be reclaimed (Birkerts suggests art as the redemptive vehicle), implementing McDonough's principles of ecological urban growth could be, as my foreign friend who loves American slang says, "a walk on cake." Until that time, perhaps builders, developers and architects will at least build their gridded, unresponsive and destructive new towns out of McDonough's edible ecological materials. Then when we've woken up enough to see that they need to be torn down, recycled and replaced, we can all sit down with a few good bottles of Beaujolais and eat them.

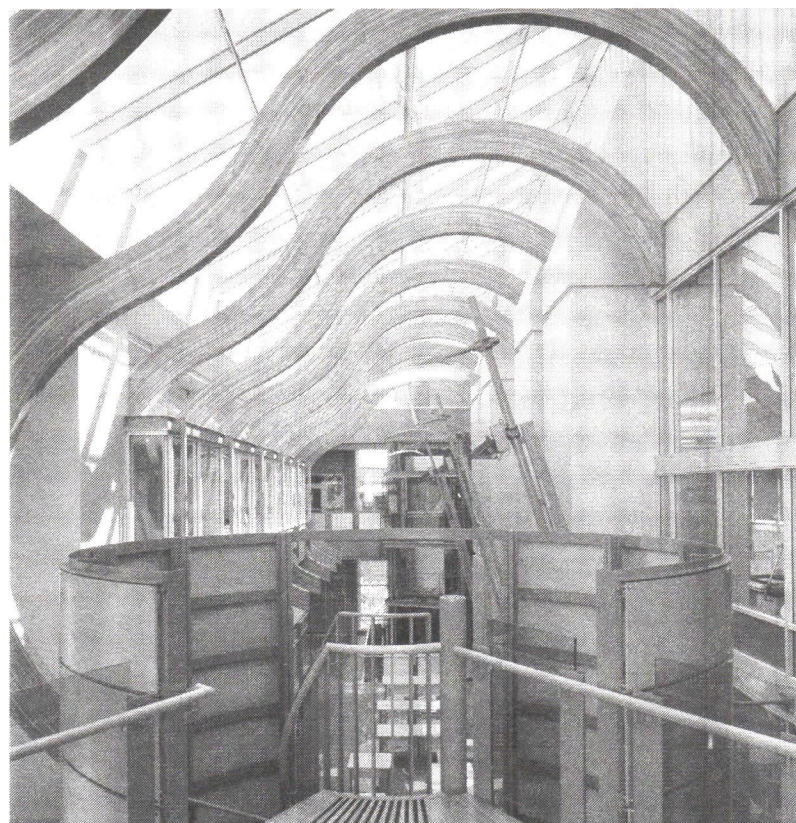
JM Cava is an architect in Portland who teaches, writes and designs buildings and gardens.





**MICHAEL SMITH LABORATORIES,
UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA**
80,000 sf
ARCHITECTS:
Henriquez Partners Architects
STRUCTURAL ENGINEER:
C.Y. Loh Associates
CONSTRUCTION:
PCL
CLIENT:
University of British Columbia
OPEN DATE:
September 24, 2004
Vancouver, BC

Front façade of Smith Labs at night, showing the mural sandwiched within its glazing, its curving lines depicting DNA sequences from a key experiment by UBC's late Nobel-winner.



Sky-lit atrium of the Smith Labs features large rib-like glulam beams; top of the sculptural stair tower in the foreground.

City Building: Vancouver

Gold Medal Ideas From Architect Richard Henriquez

Trevor Boddy

Vancouver architect Richard Henriquez has been named 2005 winner of the Gold Medal of the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada, his profession's highest award for lifetime achievement as a designer.

One of the most impressive facts about Henriquez' win is that he and his firm – Henriquez Partners – are having one of their best years ever. The range and quality of work currently being produced under his direction demonstrate that the accolade is not just a retroactive acknowledgement of his 35 years making buildings in Vancouver, but equally a recognition of what is happening in his office right now.

Touring the Pender Street offices where he and his staff of 20 work, the diversity of Richard Henriquez's current projects is impressive: he is putting the finishing touches on a book for Douglas and MacIntyre on his career as architect and artist; researching the "Genome Project" – an exhibition about the global dispersal of his Iberian Jewish family after 1492; overseeing the massive Woodward's redevelopment; and designing a dozen major institutional buildings all over the Lower Mainland. Also amongst this avalanche of large-scale design, he has fashioned an innovative house in Shaughnessy.

Born in Jamaica in 1940, Richard Henriquez first arrived in Vancouver in 1967 and completed his apprenticeship at the small but influential design firm of Rhone and Iredale. Henriquez and then-partner Robert Todd generated attention and awards in 1975 for Water Street's Gaslight Square, a brick-screened contemporary courtyard office building which brilliantly complimented its heritage neighbours.

Henriquez' design for Sinclair Centre was completed over the next decade, an entire city block of heritage structures adapted for the federal government, with a new high-end shopping arcade at its centre. The 1990s saw Ivo Taller and Henriquez's son Gregory come on as partners, as well as such acclaimed buildings as the BC Justice Institute in New Westminster.

But the best way to appreciate why Henriquez has been named winner is to take a close look at his two most recent major Vancouver build-

ings. The Michael Smith Laboratories at UBC and the BC Cancer Research Centre at 10th and Heather are both gold medal performances. The ideas behind these buildings demonstrate Henriquez' continuing range and depth as a designer, and why he has won the national acclaim of his peers.

The Michael Smith Laboratories run south of the UBC Bookstore, forming the west face of East Mall. Henriquez' breaks UBC's prior pattern of pavilion-like academic buildings set back from its main streets. His design lines up a continuous wall of building right on the lot line, creating a more urban and visually continuous edge that is already influencing subsequent buildings by other campus architects.

The screen-like main façade of the building along East Mall is a model of clarity, handsomely proportioned and crisply detailed. A brightly-colored graphic representing a re-sequenced run of DNA base pairs – as modified in an important experiment by Smith – is sandwiched between the façade's glass panes. Best viewed at night when lit from within, this is an appropriate visual symbol for an institution dedicated to high level inquiry into genetics. Henriquez' intention was "to keep the building as light as possible, both in terms of its construction, and the visual qualities within."

Inside, a small lecture theatre is shoe-horned elegantly into a tight space off the lobby, while above two stories of laboratories flank one side of an airy atrium and offices for researchers line the other. Multiple curving sections of glulam beams tie these differing sides together, uniting the atrium's walls, skylights and balconies like so many taut ribs wrapped around essential organs. Sentinel-like, sculptural stair towers anchor each end of the atrium space.

Such uncharacteristically strong visuals for a research centre come directly out of Henriquez' personal regard for UBC's Nobel-winning scientist, and the patient curiosity at the heart of his work. "I only met Smith once, and that was just a few weeks before he died," the architect paused to smile, then indulged in a Yiddishism, "but even then, he was a real mensch!"

New Work

The completed building bearing Michael Smith's name is also a real mensch – filled with personality and humanity, alive to possibility and hope.

While touring Smith Labs, Henriquez spoke of his current research into his own widely-dispersed family, from their origins in Portugal, through Spain, then on to the New World and other places of refuge after the forced exile of the Jewish community in the late 15th century.

"The thing I most want to do now is finish the 'Genome Project,' because it is what I might call an 'ancestor-scape' – the kind of reverse history that has always interested me – going from where we are now back to what formed us." Linking the work that goes on at the UBC lab with this auto-biographical planned exhibition, Henriquez says, "we are all looking for patterns, for finding ways to make the invisible visible."

Henriquez demonstrates a similar sympathy to both the philosophy and pragmatics of scientific research in his new high-rise headquarters for the BC Cancer Research Centre, designed in association with IBI Group Architects.

In the first cycle of publicity since this striking building near Vancouver General Hospital opened, much has been made of the over-sized "petri dish windows" marching up its sides. These visual icons do communicate some of the work that goes on within the Research Centre, and enliven and de-institutionalize the idea of the laboratory – a building type that often intimidates the public, even researchers themselves. But there is more to them than this.

Unusual for his generation of architects (he picked up his Bachelors at Manitoba in 1964, and Masters at MIT in 1966), trained in the austere regimes of modernism, Henriquez often works with accessible symbolism. In previous buildings this has included a tree growing out of the roof of the Eugenia condo tower on English Bay, and over-sized replicas of surveyor's compasses holding up the front door canopy of The Presidio, another condo tower near Stanley Park.

But the most impressive thing about the BC Cancer Research Centre's petri dish windows is not their sign-like function on the outside, but how they enrich the daily lives of researchers and technicians toiling over laboratory benches inside.

The work spaces Henriquez has crafted for those searching for a cure here are nothing less than stunning, each given a pulse of natural light. This interior light is warmed by wood accents of custom millwork. With surprising touches like these, Henriquez humanizes and demystifies the researcher's task.

The layout of the floors allows easy interchange between research work that takes place on computers in individual offices behind glass walls detailed with chromosome patterns and, just down the hall, the research work that takes place in fully-equipped laboratories. Even these hallways terminate in windows with vistas rather than blank walls, and all rooms have operable windows, the architect bragging, "in 35 years I have yet to design a sealed building."

For an institution charged with the sobering task of beating one of our deadliest diseases, Henriquez has shaped some of the brightest and most optimistic work spaces in town. According to architectural collaborator David Thom of IBI Group, "Richard has insights like a gifted child – I constantly ask myself, where did that idea come from? But then he turns around and puts a building together with incredible discipline – he has just an amazing mind."

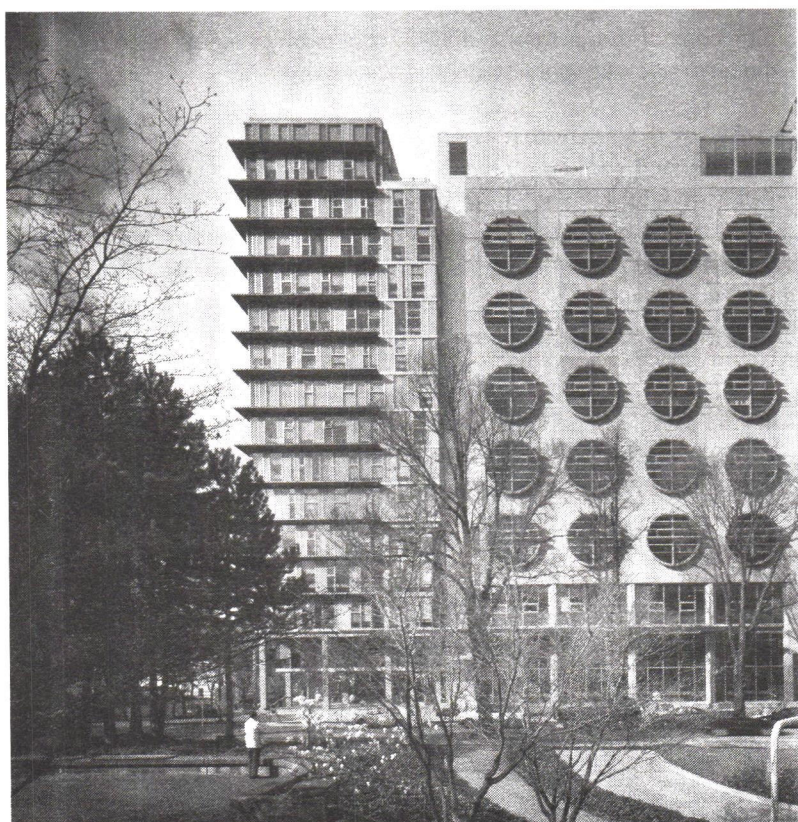
Not only exploiting natural light, Henriquez also designed for the future with innovative "interstitial floors" that allow for easy updating of laboratory and communications technology. "These floors within floors," says Henriquez, "allow mechanical equipment to be changed without disturbing the experiments in the labs themselves, as some of these set-ups need to continue for years."

On the city blocks to the west and south, planning is currently underway to transform the precinct of the Vancouver General Hospital with up to a billion dollars of new health-related facilities. Just as he did with the Smith Labs at UBC, with the BC Cancer Research Centre Richard Henriquez has set the bar high to fellow architects and planners who will follow him in this changing zone.

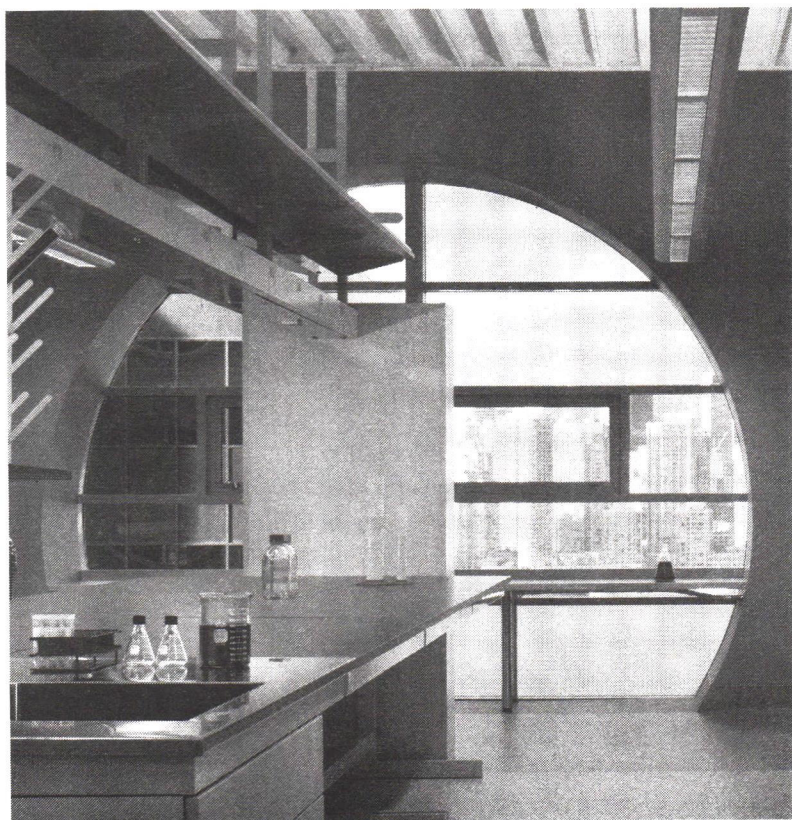
Both buildings aim for the gold and get it. With a commitment to ideas that makes their designs seem inevitable, the two are outstanding contributions to the life of this city from a Vancouver architect with rare social, technical and artistic vision.

Trevor Boddy is a Vancouver urban designer, architecture curator and historian, currently architecture critic for The Vancouver Sun—trevboddy@hotmail.com.

BC CANCER RESEARCH CENTRE: 230,000 sf
ARCHITECTS: IBI Group / Henriquez Partners, Architects in Joint Venture
STRUCTURAL ENGINEER: Glotman Simpson
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT: Durante Kreuk Ltd.
CLIENT: BC Cancer Foundation
OPEN DATE: March 1, 2005, Vancouver, BC



South elevation of the BC Cancer Research Centre, showing petri-dish inspired windows to the right, and to the left researcher's office windows, their shape and rhythm patterned on Chromosome-6.



Interior view of BC Cancer Research Centre laboratories, the large circular window flooding the work space with natural daylight.

DYEING FACTORY: 31,500 sf
OFFICE BUILDING: 15,750 sf
ARCHITECTS:
 Hutchison & Maul
MECHANICAL ENGINEER:
 Flack + Kurtz
NATURAL VENTILATION STUDIES:
 RWDI
STRUCTURAL ENGINEER:
 Magnusson Klemencic Associates
CONSTRUCTION BEGINS:
 Fall, 2005
 Guangdong Province, Southeast China

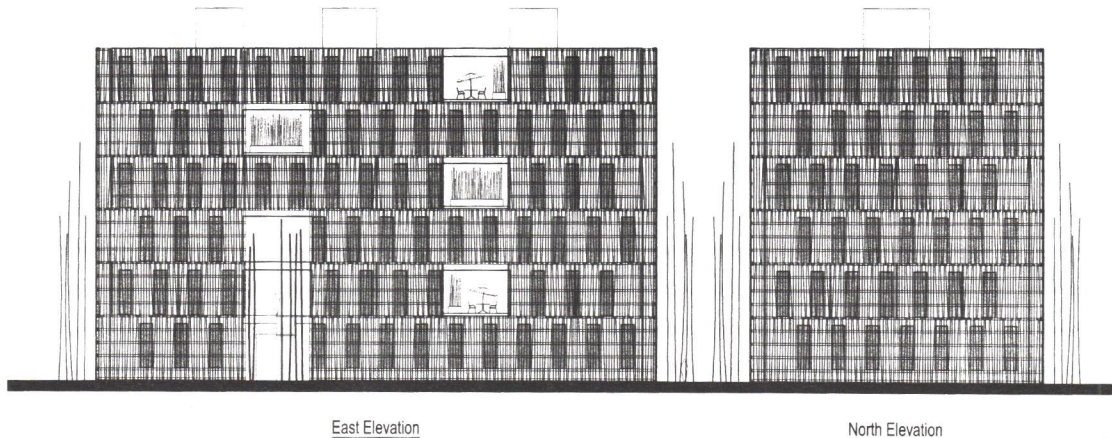
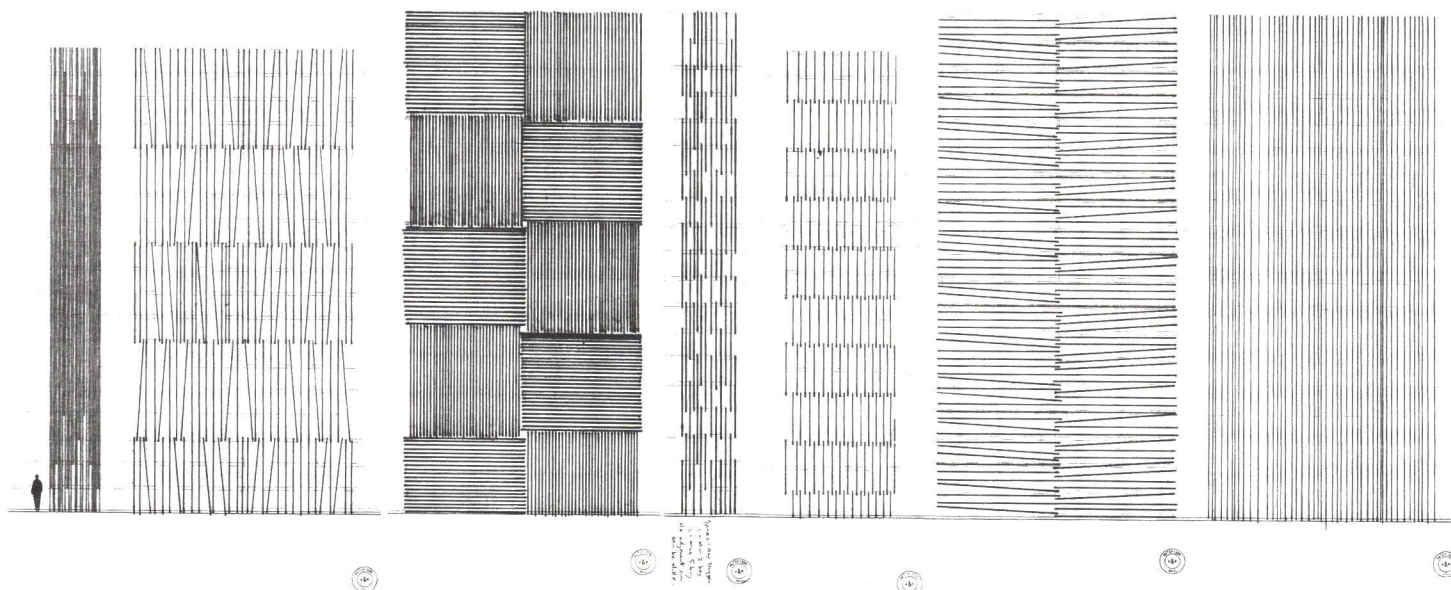


Image at top: Office building elevations
 Image at bottom: Bamboo studies



Rational Design: Zhongshan Dyeing Factory

John Fleming

Robert Hutchison and Tom Maul opened a small architectural studio in the Fremont area of Seattle in May of 2001. They had helped found a collaborative group called Rectifier a few years earlier to undertake conceptual projects in Seattle. By moving on their own they hoped to expand the conceptual thinking to more real world projects.

Robert and Tom are rational thinkers. Both got their start in engineering. Both moved on with degrees in architecture which allowed an expanded view on reason; reason in structure, reason in the program and reason in how to approach human comfort. If you know how things work, how things go together, how people live and work, then you may better understand how to design the buildings we inhabit.

This rational exploration finds its place in the recent projects Hutchison and Maul have undertaken in Zhongshan, China. When assuming the design responsibility of a new dyeing factory and office building, they found many of the decisions had already been made. It seemed clear that cast-in-place concrete was the tried and true material and method and they best not deviate from the slab, column and beams most common to buildings of the region. In addition, the owner had already laid out a plan for how the buildings would be organized on the site and how the factory operations and circulation would work. It worked on past facilities and the owner saw little reason to change this in any substantial way.

What was left? The façade of the buildings and the workers' environment. The beauty of Hutchison and Maul's rational design approach is how it used the façade to create a more comfortable and pleasant working environment for the workers. Exploring the façade meant exploring patterns and materials. Was this an exploration in aesthetics? Yes, but these aesthetic decisions worked hand in hand with ideas about sun control and ventilation. What will the building look like and how

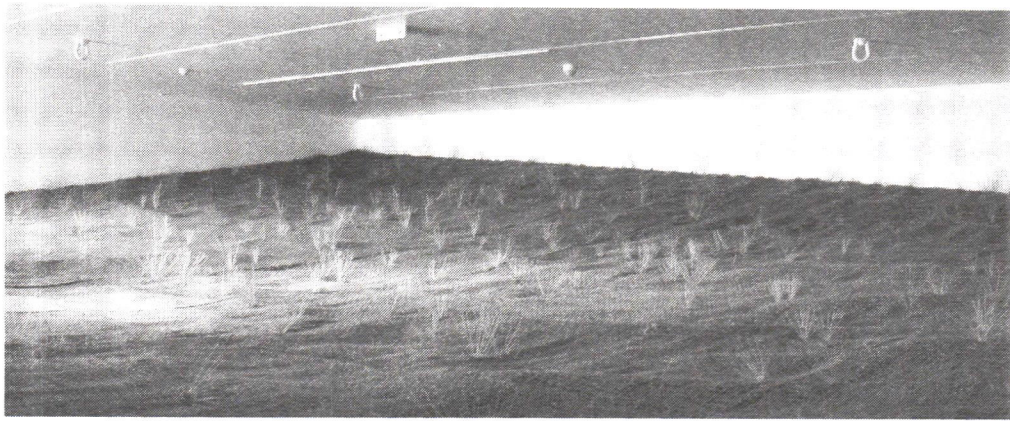
might the façade affect the natural lighting and temperatures inside? RWDI Engineers of Toronto used computer fluid dynamic (CFD) models to perform natural ventilation studies of the factory building. Based on these studies, large intake louvers were positioned on the north and south sides of the factory to draw in cool exterior air, while four rooftop exhaust monitors expel hot air.

Bamboo is the ever-present scaffolding material of China. To Robert Hutchison and Tom Maul, these temporary bamboo structures felt like the most beautiful thing about the Chinese buildings they saw. Why not design the bamboo as a permanent feature? They have incorporated bamboo into the façade of the dyeing factory buildings. They believe the resulting depth and shadow will equal comfort and beauty. This decorative approach to pattern influences the natural light levels and temperature inside the buildings.

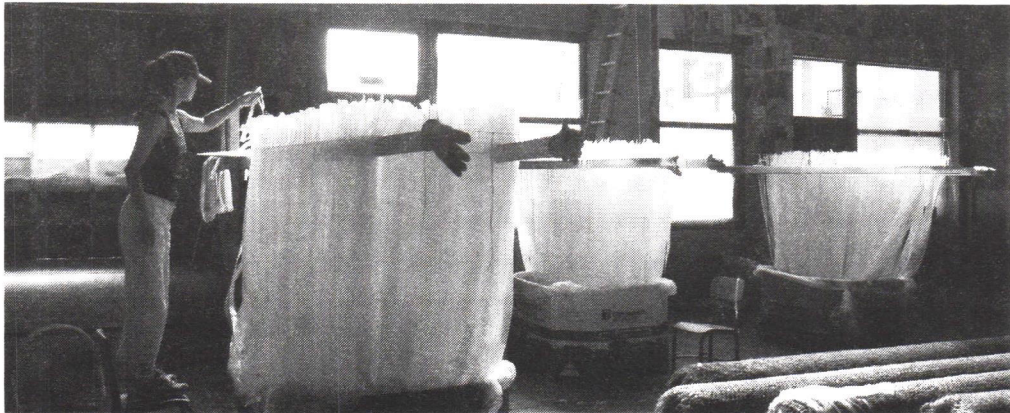
The wall plane behind the bamboo screen is fabricated from ceramic tile panels; the open-closed pattern in this wall plane enriches the entire feel of the façade. What might be called a big dumb box becomes quite rich and mysterious.

Decades ago the box seemed a threat, a boring menace. Architects aspired to break out of the box. Thinking outside of the box may be the over-used mantra of many designers today searching for a new spin on creativity. Hutchison and Maul's Dyeing Factory in Zhongshan, China shows us that we can keep the functional and economical advantages of the good old box while applying logic, reason and creativity to the skin. Maybe beauty is only skin-deep. Maybe the clothes are where beauty resides, that is if they are as wonderfully rich as these natural bamboo clothes.

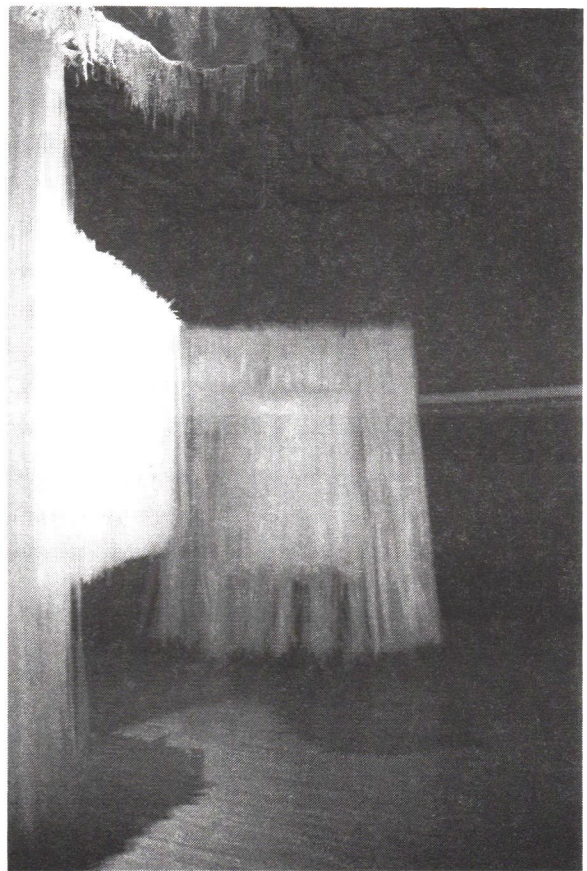
John Fleming is an architect based in Seattle in partnership with rbf architecture. Please send comments to jfleming@r-b-f.com.



Regrade Mezzanine view.



Annie Han in her studio working on Footing for Minus Space.



Footing

Project Diary: Minus Space

Annie Han and Daniel Mihalyo

Annie Han and Daniel Mihalyo began Lead Pencil Studio in 1997 with the idea that architecture and the fine arts need not be mutually exclusive. According to their Web site, LPS represents "A new voice in the emerging field created from the interdisciplinary overlap of architecture and site specific art... The [resulting] spaces, objects and buildings...establish new territories that surprise and alter perceptions."

On August 19 the Henry Art Gallery opened just such a site-specific installation by the Studio. The installation explores how the topography of the Gallery site has been shaped and reshaped through generations of half-completed master plans. The installation superimposes the virgin site conditions through the current architectural space. The sloped plane of the reformulated grade spans the full dimension of the gallery and extends outward into the exterior courtyard.

ARCADE was able to listen in on Han and Mihalyo's investigative process through the following excerpts from diary notes taken in preparation for the installation.

John Fleming

MARCH 2005: The Groundwork

We start the week with multiple site visits to absorb the qualities of the East Gallery, including existing, pre-existing and latent elements. Combing through the UW Special Collections archive produces a dizzying history of overlapping master planning gestures spanning nearly 100 years. The bronze George Washington statue has been relocated at least four times in the vicinity of the Henry front door during the last 100 years.

The museum staff has called to request a show title and images for their newsletter, but the installation idea will need to come first. To kick-start the process, we pour some drinks and put out some anchovy olives and sudden-

ly the allure of the museum's construction sequence and excavation prove irresistible. We follow an intuitive trail concerning the pre-museum site conditions, existing topography and foundation excavation to begin the process of finding a suitable subtext for a show which we provisionally title *Minus Space*.

APRIL 2005: Fieldwork Observations

Architecture seems to be a process of continual refinement through decisions, where certain gestures divert all possibilities that come after. But in the case of the East Gallery, we are quite interested in revisiting the decision to excavate the gallery and probe the sectional relationships to the adjacent subterranean spaces.

It remains difficult for us to strip away the influence of Gwathmey's building as an object and treat the space as a site. This space has a non-place quality, surprisingly bereft of context, orienting daylight and organic materials. The ability to see the space from both above and below is its best quality and will provide for two separate experiences of the installation.

MAY 2005: Formwork & Layout

After dwelling on the sectional properties and topography changes we are struck by the mass of earth removed. There is an undercurrent of something lost and longing to be found. More questions...

So far, everybody on the museum-side is comfortable with the lack of detail and general ambiguity of the final product. After a rain-storm we notice water dripping from the Henry garage ceiling and greenish stains on the columns nearby...

JUNE 2005: Material Procurement

We've sourced some decent items out of the local surplus yards and the site survey stores. Stake whiskers, visquene, nylon netting, geo-textile fabric, rebar tie-wire and hex wire

netting. We'll need a big dirty place to pre-assemble. July is looking intense...

ARCADE called. They are interested in knowing more about our installation, including the difficulty of expressing the form and content of the final product prior to assembly. The installation's precise physical form is largely unknown at this point and will continue to remain in flux. To our surprise, everyone is embracing this ambiguity.

JULY 2005: Fabrication

Needing a large "column-free" place to pre-manufacture the installation membrane, we send out multiple feelers. Miraculously, Liz appears and offers the use of an old warehouse which is empty now, but will be renovated in six weeks. Whew, lucky break! The anxiety of the approaching install date has led to the hiring of two architecture grads to help in the laborious pre-assembly. Though we worried about losing touch with the process, it turns out to be essential in accelerating the process.

AUGUST 2005: Installation

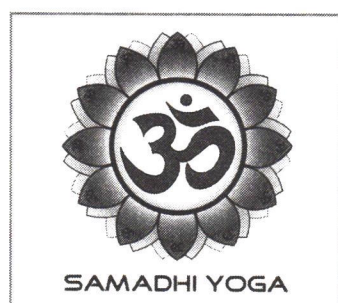
Though the timing couldn't be worse, we attend an arts conference the first eight days of August in upstate NY. In some ways we imagine that it would be good to get away and step back, but the thought of losing a week sickens us. We arrive back on August 9, harried and largely un-rested. The membrane is complete and loaded onto our truck for the first delivery of material to the Museum. The fabrication of the ghost footings are taking twice the time than we had hoped, but amazingly there is light at the end of the tunnel. Six days left to go.

Lead Pencil Studio is Annie Han and Daniel Mihalyo. The Henry exhibit also presents new work from the studio's forthcoming book on foundations, recent photography, drawings, models and a snapshot slide show.

Yoga Logos

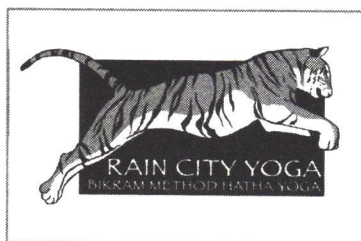
Jane Radke Slade

You can tell nearly all you need to know about a yoga studio by its logo. I'm about to blow my cover as the "new student" in your yoga class... After practicing yoga for fifteen years, once I start hearing things like: "Jane, here's how you can make this pose a little more challenging..." I take it as my cue to find a new studio. And I'll bet I'm not the only one out there who wants to escape the attentive gaze of her guru. Here's my crash course in interpreting the Seattle yoga logos.



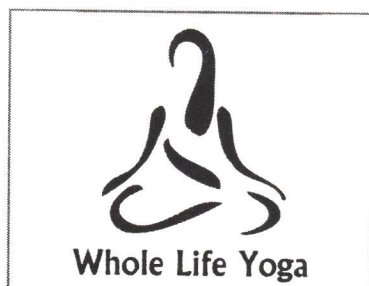
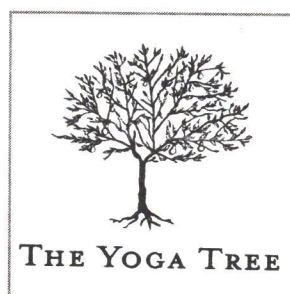
There are several studios on Capitol Hill, but my favorite is Pike Street's Samadhi Yoga. I presume the pretty pink and purple flower logo is a lotus. I imagine that the unfamiliar curvy black script inside it contains ancient wisdom that will be imparted to me during classes there. And Samadhi delivers on its logo's promise. It's very ashram-y and peaceful, while still delivering the required workout.

Years ago, I attended classes at Rain City Yoga, on Roosevelt near Scarecrow Video. Great neighborhood, but the studio has since gone Bikram, also called "hot yoga." Why are people attracted this? I'm the type who loads her bike onto the Metro bus in order to go up a hill.



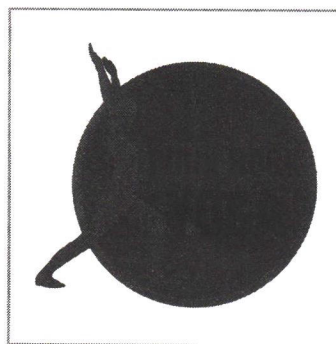
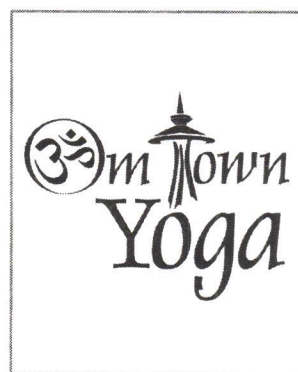
One time I tried to ride my bike up Capitol Hill and the stress of it caused me to vomit right in front of Bauhaus Books & Coffee. My chest feels tight at the thought of doing yoga in an over-heated room with a bunch of other sweaty yoginis. Rain City's logo features an aggressive, lurching tiger. If you're the type who signs up for triathlons and actually completes them, rather than just reporting the entrance fee as a charitable donation for the related cause, you might also like hot yoga.

There are many yoga studios in Seattle with far more reasonable logos. Yoga Tree in Fremont features a really full, pretty tree in their logo; a straightforward tree. It reminds me of my geeky husband's "fractals" video, in which it is explained that each limb of a tree is a mini-version of the whole tree and this somehow explains how, even though the world feels chaotic, it really all fits together nicely. Their Web site exhorts you to "breathe deeply...awaken..." I can do that.

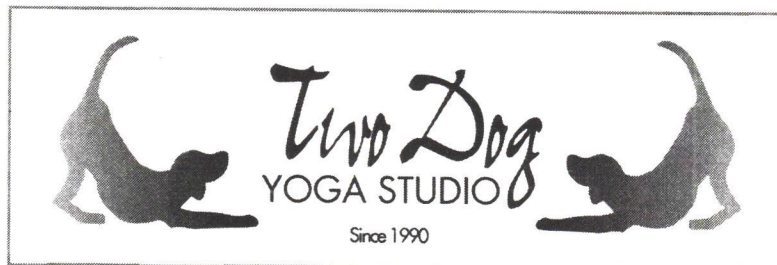


Santosha Yoga in Madison Valley offers "yoga for everyone." The barely-there brush-stroked feminine figure on a brown background looks like an idealized version of me-as-yogini. Whole Life Yoga in Greenwood also features a familiar brushed-stroked woman (again, me) in the Seated Lotus position. These two studios are definitely on my list of future yoga haunts.

I notice a trend: the less edgy the neighborhood, the less intimidating the logo. Over in cheery Bryant, northeast of University Village, there is OmTown Yoga. Those clever yogis over at OmTown have graffitti'd the "T" in "Town" into a Space Needle! Now, that's cute, and a cute yogi is not a mean yogi. A similarly friendly logo belongs to Two Dog Yoga in North Seattle. It features two dogs facing each other as they stretch in the Downward Facing Dog position, butts in the air. The studio could be in a strip mall, but I'd give it a chance based on the logo.

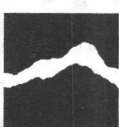


A decade or two ago I might have gone for Punk Rock Yoga downtown on Fourth & Stewart. Classes take place in a dimly-lit all-ages music venue, so nobody would notice if I were slacking. The logo shows a silhouette engaged in a fairly easy standing pose, but if the name itself doesn't put you off, the dark purple and black color scheme should. Their Web site promises a "bat cave atmosphere." Consider sending your goth teenage daughter.



My final recommendations are these. Look for a logo that indicates a serene approach to yoga. If the logo features an animal, it should be a domesticated animal. Vegetation should be full, not overly pruned. You can get away with introducing yourself as a "new student" for about two months, three tops. After that, if you want to fly under the radar like me, you'll need to switch studios.

Jane Radke Slade will not disclose her current yoga studio. We suspect she is practicing with a DVD in her living room.



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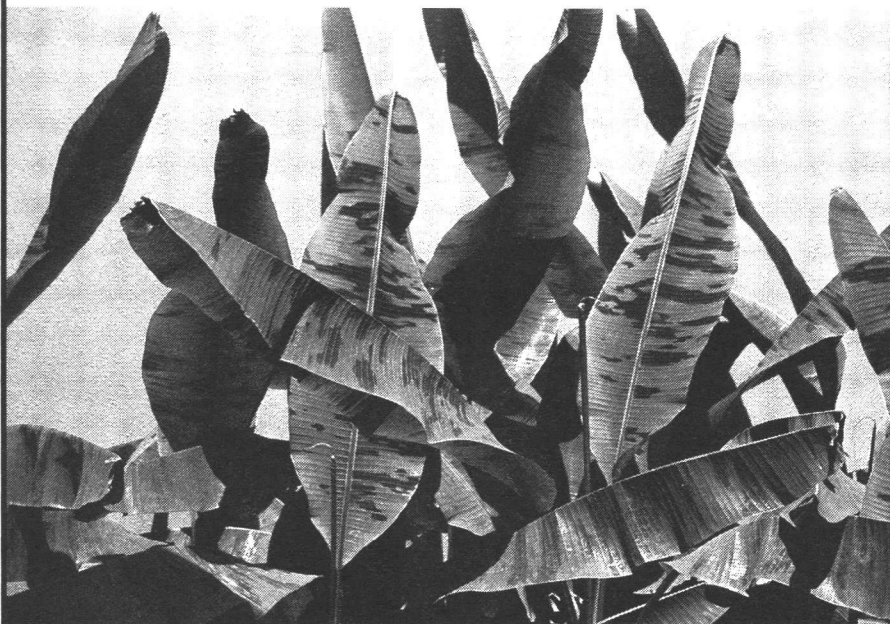


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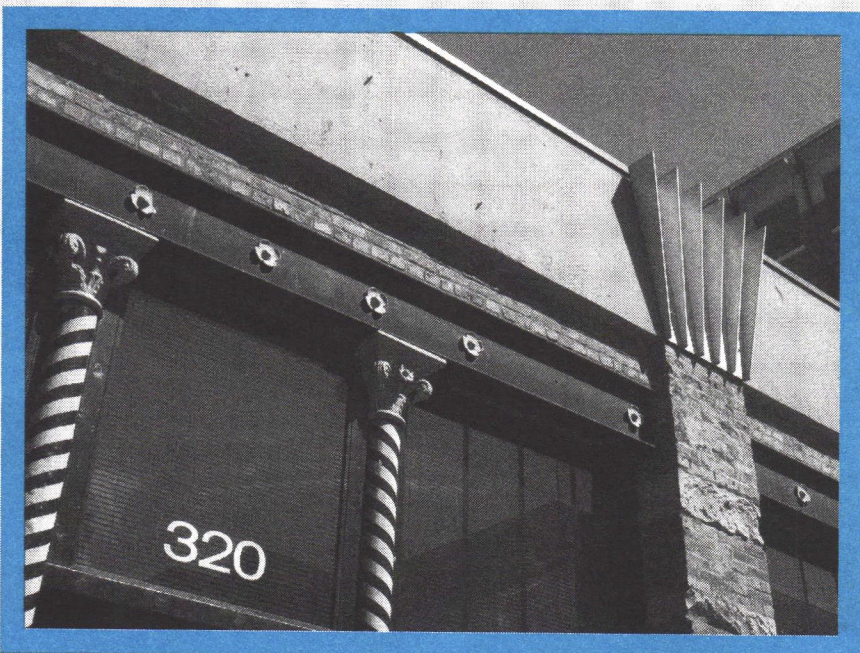
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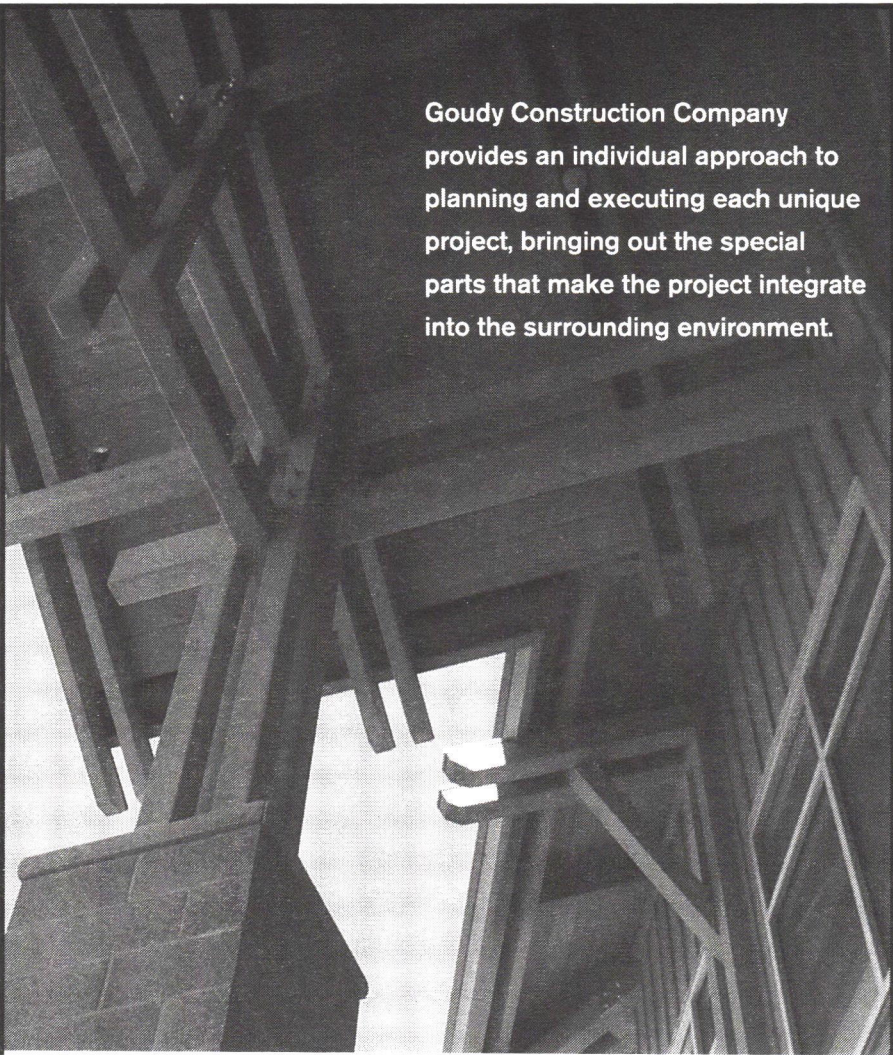
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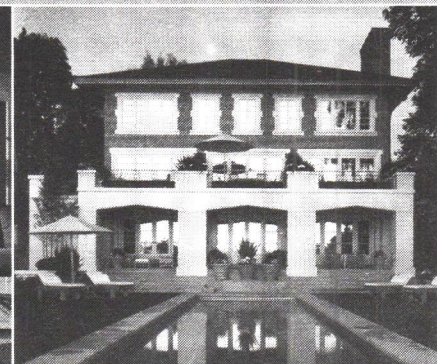
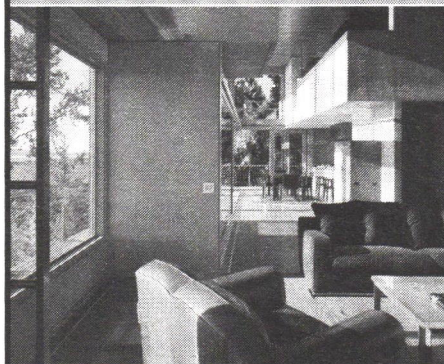
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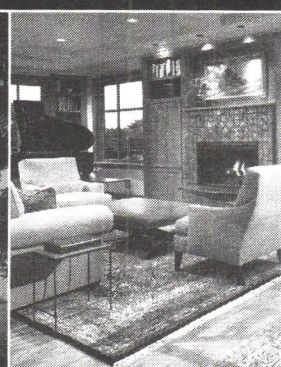
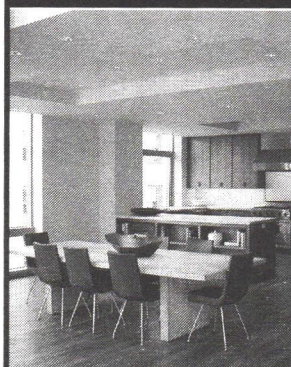
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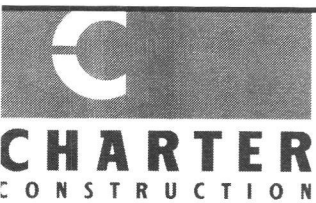
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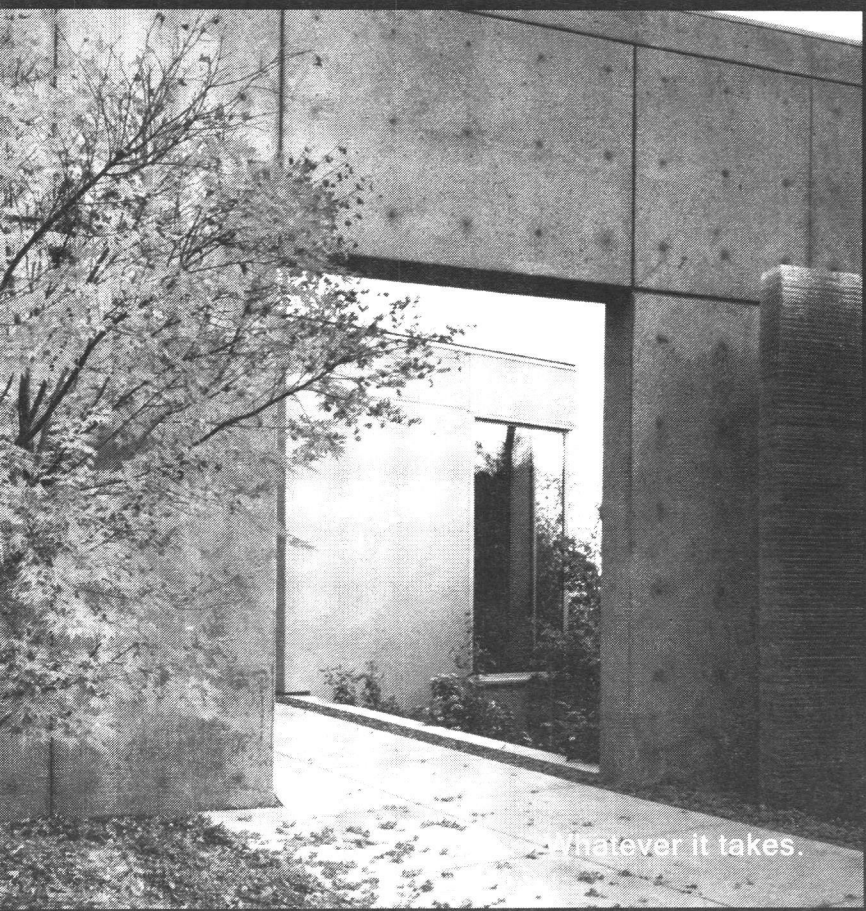
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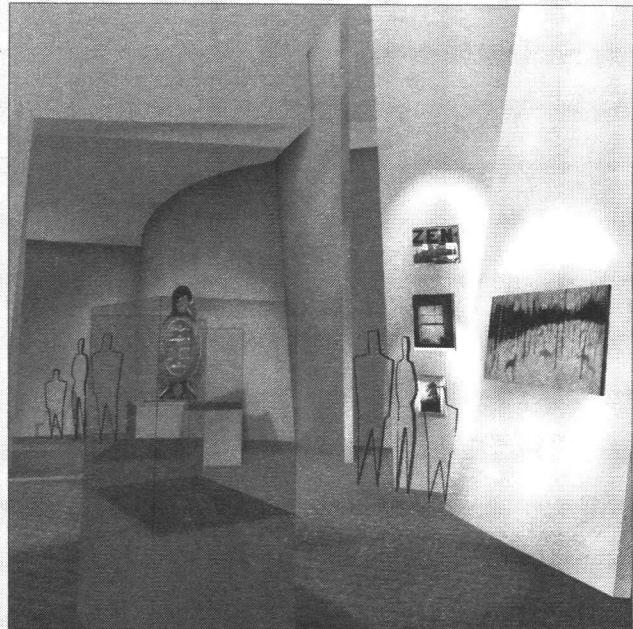
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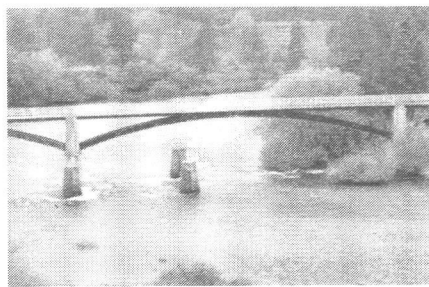
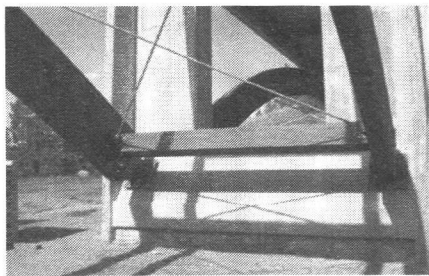
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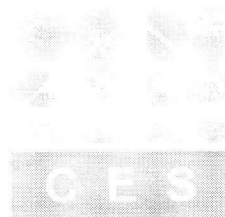
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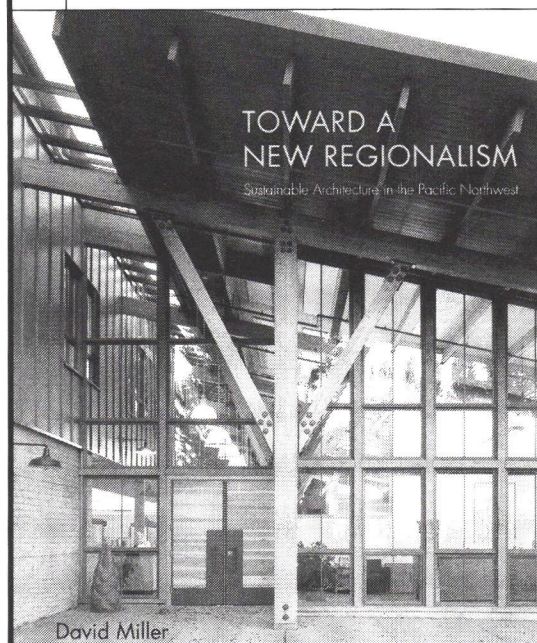


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