REFRACTION

REFRACTION examines how the events of 2020 and 2021 have forged new lenses and perspectives by which we understand our place in the world, and represents where ARCADE as an organization is impacting and inspiring positive change in our architecture, design, and arts communities.

The past year has provided added time for reflection, interrogation, examination—and refraction—all of which ARCADE has used to identify new and expanding areas for impact through mentorship, diversification, and accessibility.

Mentorship

We, the board, were inspired by the University of Washington College of Built Environments’ zine Craeft, a student-led publication not unlike the ARCADE of bygone eras. Our partnership with Craeft contributors and editors allowed both of us to share audiences and reach new ones, exchange expertise and style, and explore each other’s publication concepts.

Building upon this, in 2022, we plan to increase the support and structure available to emerging writers through mentorship programming including hands-on participation in the publication process, editorial support, and spaces for more emerging arts, architecture, and design writers. The intent is to seek out and foster new talent, writing styles, and diversify the voice of ARCADE. We hope that by increasing our dedication to mentorship, we will expand access to the “hows” and “whys” of producing a professional journal. This all to provide a supportive experience to interested candidates, thinkers, and movers in the Pacific Northwest and, maybe one day, nationally.

Diversification

In 2020, we began tracking the demographics of our contributors to measure and evaluate the diversity of ARCADE’s voices. As many organizations discovered during this time, we realized that in order to accurately reflect our community, we needed to implement new methods of outreach and shift our internal priorities. We are dedicated to soliciting more representation in the voices defining our publications and our organization so that ARCADE can serve our community in the most inclusive way possible.

Going forward, we are committed to increasing the number and perspectives of contributors by benchmarking our current practices and setting targets for improvement. Because of this exploration, ARCADE is proud to announce that all contributors, editors, and designers are now receiving compensation for their work and we will continue to compensate artists, writers, and designers as one of many ways to activate the value we hold for this community.

Accessibility

Past issues of ARCADE are now fully digital and available through the US Modernist website. This archive serves to preserve ARCADE and allow for the organization’s impact to extend beyond the publications. As part of this initiative, we are now transitioning away from a subscription model to ensure ARCADE’s greater accessibility to a wider audience.

As you can see, we are proud to share our reflections on ARCADE’s past year, and even more excited as we look ahead to where we’re going. Laced throughout the organization’s initiatives around mentorship, diversification, and accessibility, we are expanding ARCADE’s impact with the publication of a second book: Paul Hayden Kirk and the Puget Sound School. Please stay tuned for the release date and surrounding programming!

It was wonderful to see so many of you at the Seattle Design Festival and look forward to hopefully seeing each other in person more often in 2022.

Rebecca Hutchinson and Ruth Bakeko, for the ARCADE Board

DO WE CONSIDER OURSELVES ARTISTS? We are certainly at home in the company of artists and have done a fair amount of work for and with them. But we view ourselves more as craftsmen in the classical sense, and craft, when done at a certain level, can approach the sublime. But the pride we take in our work comes more from interpreting someone else’s vision, from solving problems thought to be unsolvable, from the trust we have earned from the most demanding of clients.
Letter from the Feature Editors

"It's no use going back to yesterday, because I was a different person then." - Lewis Carroll, Alice's Adventures in Wonderland

There was a lot going on in September, 2020. As students at the University of Washington, all of our classes were being held online, and it was difficult to communicate or connect with our peers in an informal way. Normally, we could gather at the end of the week at our college happy hours to chat and unwind, but that was no longer an option. We all quickly learned that you couldn't replace in-person experiences with Zoom. It just wasn't the same.

This is what inspired Cræft, a student-led zine aiming to incite dialogue around modern-day topics through experimental, reflective, and innovative means. Cræft founders Emily Crichlow and Claire Sullivan are recent graduates of the University of Washington where Cræft started as an experiment by Emily and Claire in college. The desire to publish the work of Cræft was inspired by Emily and Claire's experiences working with designers, architects, and artists to establish a platform for new voices in architecture and design.

Emily Crichlow and Claire Sullivan

Over a year later and there has been space to reflect on those uncertain times. While we never would have wished for them, if not for the circumstances of 2020, the desire to publish Cræft may not have arisen. The issue of ARCADE features stories similar to ours, where on those uncertain times brought out new, unexpected solutions. "Refraction" and "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland" were the themes of this issue of ARCADE and the last issue of Cræft, respectively. These were ways of engaging in conversations and expressions that were free-form and unjudged. Difficult times brought out new, unexpected solutions.

"Refraction" and "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland" were the themes of this issue of ARCADE and the last issue of Cræft, respectively. Touching on the ways our design community has been processing and integrating this strange (and, now, strangely normal) time has occurred so differently for each of us - redirecting our functions, clouding certain beliefs and bringing others to light. Whether that be gathering turned commercial, launching art exhibits or photography books, or revisiting places and people from our city's design past. And through it all, new buildings have sprung up, children have gotten older, and we look with a hopeful eye to the future. Alongside these selected features, this issue also includes two of our favorite submissions to Cræft's most recent zine by Trina Denuccio and Jeremy McGlone, selected by the editors at ARCADE and Cræft.

This issue may look a little different to you, and, if that's the case, then we've achieved what we set out for with this multi-faceted, paradigm-shifting collaboration between ARCADE + Cræft. As we asked our contributors to consider how the events of 2020 have fostered new lenses and perspectives by which we understand our place in the world, we also sought to refract ARCADE itself through those lenses. What do these selected features, this issue also includes those favorite submissions to Cræft's most recent zine by Trina Denuccio and Jeremy McGlone, selected by the editors at ARCADE and Cræft. We all quickly learned that you couldn't replace in-person experiences with Zoom. It just wasn't the same.

Emily Crichlow and Claire Sullivan

Crafter founders Emily Crichlow and Claire Sullivan are recent graduates of the University of Washington where they received their Masters of Architecture degrees.

Emily is currently studying industrial building preservation and reuse as a part of her Yale travel fellowship. Following, she will be interning with Cube Architects in Copenhagen, Denmark. Claire is currently studying experimental with creative modes of representation and how that impacts our perceptions of architecture and design.

www.clairesulu.com

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By the end of the following week, the pandemic had arrived. What followed in the next year became a test of my dinner party proposition, as my kid became my primary pupil who not only partook in dinner time, but in regular morning lessons. Splitting his time between my home in Philadelphia and his other parent’s in Vermont, we established a routine that blocked his lessons, face-to-face or FaceTime, into my morning, along with my running, work, meetings, and creative practice. At first, I improvised. In one lesson, I showed him how math was everywhere, using measuring cups, pictures of shells, and the golden ratio, and explaining the parabolic graph of the Covid infection rate. He loved it, and I did too.

I got serious about teaching him to read. I spelled out first grade level words with letter tiles. We practiced with sight words and phonetic flash cards. We made a “word flash quiz” that consisted of a song that started with a Marvel and the golden ratio, and explained the parabolic graph of the Covid infection rate. I improvised. In one lesson, I showed him how math was everywhere, using measuring cups, pictures of shells, and the golden ratio, and explaining the parabolic graph of the Covid infection rate. He loved it, and I did too.

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One afternoon, I interrupted him drawing to show him how to draw orthographically: top, side, front view, and a section to imagine what’s inside. He pushed my drawing aside and continued with his own. Exasperated, I showed him how to draw a spline and spin it into a vase that was 3D printed. He was interrupted until asked when it would be okay to watch screens.

By November, I felt like a failure. After eight months, I had watched my reading ability improve, then slip. The panic in which I had tried to keep control of the practice we were all in was real. I was exhausted. It wasn’t just the fear that wasn’t working. There was an underlying anxiety about the future possibilities of my practice, and also one. With no public show in sight, or even hope of one in the foreseeable future, my whole world was starting to shift. I knew I didn’t want to keep doing what I had been doing in my creative practice, but didn’t know what to do next. So, I decided to take an arts writing class.

My kid hated it when I had class. On Wednesdays, he would lead him through his bedtime routine, while I sat perched over my computer in the living room. One night during this, as he was bathing, he overflowed the tub in what felt like a dramatic protest. I snapped off Zoom, cathartically screamed my disappointment, helped him sop up the mess, then rejoined the call. The following week’s class happened in peace.

In the arts writing class, we worked on our artist statements. Leading up to the final feedback, I had been polishing two paragraphs of text that read as you would expect: materials, techniques, and schools of thought. It was all still more or less true, but it felt disingenuous. Nights before the final class, while making dinner, my kid came up to me with a whiteboard in hand, to show me a drawing of a B-17 airplane: front, top, side, back view, section. How gaudy! Impressive. An orthographic drawing.

I redrafted my artist statement and added another paragraph:

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Standing before the tower, I am immersed in light's play. The same wonderment from childhood envelops me. An image of a cloudburst overhead and its dynamic movement, implicit in the building's design, offers a reminder of the pressures of that material world, while at the same time it is an appeal to deeper instincts. The tower is, in a way, a metaphor for the pressures we face in life and the need to cut a path through them, much like an encounter with an unfamiliar landscape.

The psychic lens governing the internal world reacts to the tension evoked by the disarray of angular forms, evoking the pleasures and terrors that light and its absence can evoke. The interplay of light and shadow is a fundamental aspect of the tower's design, which is achieved with the exact same elements used in the residential floors. The spectrum of color cast on the enclosures of my childhood was a liberating glimpse into making the unseen visible. Likewise, the abstract mosaics of light emanating from Rainier Square Tower suggest a similar approach to the unknown.

As the child of multiple generations of lens grinders, my toy chest was filled with prisms and lenses. I would insert the palm-sized glass objects into wooden block assemblages in what I now see as early architectural efforts. If the light struck the maquettes just right, the prisms cast tantalizing color spectra on a nearby wall. I recently recalled this delightful memory of childhood play after visiting the newly constructed Rainier Square Tower (designed by NBBJ), whose pleated aluminum panels, scattered across four elevations, absorb and reflect light in a mesmerizing dance.

The tower reveals its gratifying complexity slowly, as one approaches from a distance. On the skyline, its slender silhouette and considerable height distinguish it from other buildings. As one draws nearer, the texture formed by the angular panels presents itself. Although the panels' characteristics remain undecipherable, the surface emulates the dazzling effect of light and wind on water across the building's elevations. This surface texture was what resonated most strongly with me. High-rises announce themselves with broad gestures, based on form, rhythm, and repetition; Rainier Square Tower subordinates these elements. Apart from the east elevation's dramatic scoop, the tower instead emphasizes texture, with hundreds of faceted panels that benignly suggest raindrops. When viewed from oblique angles, the facades form otherworldly landscapes—ones that can evoke memories of childhood, dreams, or form. The tower’s mottled light is an appeal to the deep-seated realm beneath the armature—that of our emotions.

The effect is created by just three panel types, each faceted with angled planes splayed in different directions to absorb and reflect light from their mica-enhanced aluminum surface. The two asymmetrical panels are rotated 180 degrees to increase visual variety. Immediately below the elegant cloud-like cornice formed by the panels, twenty residential floors are defined by a tight alternating sequence of panels and double windows that stagger as the floors descend. In contrast, the panels on the office floors, which comprise the tower's lower half, are more dispersed and possess a rhythmic sequence clearly distinguishable from the residential floors.
VOODOO CHILD ON A LANDSCAPE SCALE: JIMMY HENDRIX PARK

By Gregory Scruggs

Gregory Scruggs is an award-winning independent journalist who writes about built, natural, and cultural environments. From his home base in Seattle, he has reported or conducted research on over two dozen countries and contributed to publications like The New York Times, The Washington Post, Guardian Cities, Bloomberg CityLab, Metropolis, Monocle, Next City, US News & World Report, Thomson Reuters Foundation, and Fast Company.

The staccato rattle of a drum line pierces the air. The colorful spectacle of a drill team brightens the street. The regal bearing of Buffalo Soldiers transforms a grassy field into a parade ground. A multiblock parade converges on a park bearing the name of Jimi Hendrix, Seattle's longest-running parade and a rally point for Seattle's Black community.

And the larger-than-life visage of Jimi Hendrix presides over it all. These moments from Seattle's Umoja Day of Unity Parade & Festival, held in August 2021, mark the fifth consecutive year that the city's longest-running parade has set its terminus at Jimi Hendrix Park, 2.5-acre public space in the Central District named for the Seattle-born rock icon. Hendrix's home in the Central District, alternately referred to as the Hendrix House, was formally christened in 2002, the potential for a historically and culturally resonant public sculpture long languished as an asphalt parking lot until its 2017 inauguration, unveiling a design by Seattle-based Monique Avidano.

Fundraising and bureaucratic hurdles slowed the process of turning the parking lot into a park that would serve as both a neighborhood amenity and a front yard for the former Colman School, now the Northwest African American Museum. But the eventual construction of a public space marked a departure not only for the city's African American community, but also for the local government, which in 2015 turned the parking lot into a temporary bazaar, where West African vendors could sell their wares. The 2017 inauguration of Jimi Hendrix Park was an event of civic and cultural significance, as civic leaders and cultural organizations celebrated the park's role as a gathering place for Seattle's Black community, as festivals and events took place there.

Despite the musician's international renown, he has received comparatively little public recognition in his birthplace. His childhood home was torn down in 2008, despite conservation efforts. The park opened, local Hendrix enthusiasts insisted, as a declaration of Seattle's commitment to honoring its Black history and culture. With a 12-foot sculpture of Hendrix as a young man by sculptor Elizabeth Tisdale and a sidewalk statue at the corner of Broadway and Pike. These historical markers could be contemplated only at the scale of a park, where visitors could wander through the park's winding pathways, past statues and plaques that tell the story of Hendrix's life.

Seattle was the farthest destination of the Great Migration, the early twentieth century movement of an estimated six million African-Americans, who fled from the rural South to the urban North and West, in search of economic opportunity and an escape from the terror of Jim Crow segregation. The Hendrix family, like many others, was forced to leave their homes in the rural South and move to the city, where Hendrix was born in 1942. His parents, James and Altha Hendrix, were eventually married in the Central District.

The decision to dedicate a marquee public park, with contemporary landscape design and open space for large gatherings, to one of Seattle's few Black cultural icons proved an act of civic courage. The park is a testament to the city's willingness to honor Black cultural figures, even those, like Hendrix, who were raised poor and ultimately died young from a substance abuse problem. They, too, are worthy of a place in the civic landscape, and a public eager to reclaim its history will vote with its feet—marching, dancing, and stomping along to a guitar solo.
FRAMES IN A CHANGING LANDSCAPE

By Pine Knoll Design Build

Pine Knoll Design Build (PKDB), located on Pine Knoll Farm in Gig Harbor, WA, is a collective of seven students – Grady Foster, Kristian Sundberg, Kellie Kou, Jeremy McGlone, Hannah Simonsen, Pedro Ramos, and Nev Granum – pursuing their respective Master of Architecture degrees at the University of Washington. Pine Knoll Farm was purchased in 1978 by trailblazing UW Architecture alum, Mary Lund Davis. PKDB works to continue her legacy of unbridled creativity.

Above: frame collage by Nev at PKDB.

What happens to a community when it is devoid of physical context? As seventh year architecture graduate students at The University of Washington, we were subjected to precisely this scenario when COVID-19 took hold. In a landscape devoid of physical context, we were subjected to precisely this scenario when COVID-19 took hold. In a world where our previously considered frames were no more than abstract ideas, we realized the physical manifestation of ideas and space through the creation of Pine Knoll Design Build (PKDB). Such a recontextualization of our online education may be understood as the refraction of frames; what was once rigidly contained within digital screens became released by our collective imagination and the surrounding landscape. With this grew a conviction in PKDB’s mission of collaborative handwork, craftsmanship, materiality, and our rediscovery of a connection to physical place and to one another.

We explored and manifested these ideals through a series of constructed frames carefully placed throughout Pine Knoll Farm in Gig Harbor, WA to help us understand our place in a post-2020 world. Through the creation of these frames, we breached the Zoom format and discovered a novel ingenuity and resourcefulness. Each frame utilized foraged and repurposed materials, many taken from previous projects that had existed on the farm over its 120-year history. While each PKDB member designed their own frame, the goal was to represent our collective reframing and transition—from the immateriality of Zoom, towards a newly precious tangibility.

Above: frame collage by Nev at PKDB.

Pine Knoll Farm (PKFB), located on Pine Knoll Farm in Gig Harbor, WA, is a collective of seven students – Grady Foster, Kristian Sundberg, Kellie Kou, Jeremy McGlone, Hannah Simonsen, Pedro Ramos, and Nev Granum – pursuing their respective Master of Architecture degrees at the University of Washington. Pine Knoll Farm was purchased in 1978 by trailblazing UW Architecture alum, Mary Lund Davis. PKDB works to continue her legacy of unbridled creativity.

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above: frame collage by nev at pkdb.

what happens to a community when it is devoid of physical context? as seventh year architecture graduate students at the university of washington, we were subjected to precisely this scenario when covid-19 took hold. in a world where our previously considered frames were no more than abstract ideas, we realized the physical manifestation of ideas and space through the creation of pine knoll design build (pkdb). such a recontextualization of our online education may be understood as the refraction of frames; what was once rigidly contained within digital screens became released by our collective imagination and the surrounding landscape. with this grew a conviction in pkdb’s mission of collaborative handwork, craftsmanship, materiality, and our rediscovery of a connection to physical place and to one another.

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above: frame collage by nev at pkdb.
Yonder Cider's radical redistribution of private space for social good has been reconfigured through the “Stay Healthy Streets” campaign. Together, this new subculture space typology radically reconnects the neighborhood on community accessibility and economic opportunities. Yonder sets a precedent for entrepreneurial incubation and neighborhood revitalization. The company has generated a level of neighborhood and city support that seems near impossible for a business to achieve in a traditionally leased storefront. The transparency of Yonder's approach has allowed the community to participate in their evolution. This was on full display when Yonder Cider joined together on September 4th to celebrate the grand reopening of the Bale Breaker and Yonder Cider taproom in Ballard.

You would have been hard-pressed, back in February 2020, to believe that a detached garage in Seattle’s Phinney Ridge neighborhood would become a destination for hard cider to families on their evening stroll. This was a literal truth. However, it became a reality as the unrelenting wave of COVID-19 pandemic forced families to find opportunities to adapt cities, neighborhoods, and pedestrian zones to this unprecedented social change. Yonder Cider is a radical redistribution of private residential space for public use as a social justice innovation introduced by the adversity of the COVID-19 crisis, which paves the way for future community resiliency via bottom-up economic opportunity in our neighborhoods.

Yonder Cider co-founder Caitlin Braam and her team had been developing the opportunity for some time when land use measures were put in place. In March 2020, as the pandemic was unfolding, Braam decided it was time to realize her business and forgo leasing a traditional storefront. For future businesses that was a temporary storm. These plans would all change when Braam hunkered down and had a realization one night early in the pandemic, and her father-in-law connected how Fird Avenue had become The City of Seattle had recently approved twenty-five new neighborhood greenways to “Stay Healthy Streets.” By August 2020, the South Seattle neighborhood greenway was soaring parallel with Greenwood Avenue and Phinney Ridge Greenway, which was designed for community use, as one of the newly opened greenways. It was her comment, “Why don’t you just sell cider out of your garage?” that sparked a radical idea.

Braam recognized that, seemingly overnight, Fird Avenue had transformed from a hollow suburban street into an active and bustling pedestrian thoroughfare. The only pieces missing from the new community network were destinations that would promote safe social distancing during a time when many were looking for new ways to interact and gather. This would be that missing link? Braam was determined to find out.

Since Yonder Cider planned only to distribute cider and not to house any production equipment on-site, obtaining a liquor license wouldn’t be an issue. It was more challenging, however, to convince the Seattle Department of Construction & Inspections (SDCI) that this neighborhood is zoned Single Family SF7500, meaning that single-family homes in the area of SDCI’s jurisdiction are allowed to sell cider, provided they get a special use permit from the city. However, there are provisions for businesses to be run out of a home (Seattle Municipal Code Section 23.42.050), and SDCI confirmed they would not be issuing any violations for the “grey area” during the pandemic; unless a complaint was filed. With this “approval”—or, perhaps more accurately, a turning of the head—it was all systems go for Yonder Cider. Operations grew, so did its fervent community, which found strong support across age groups. As Yonder’s operations grew, so did its fervent community, which played an instrumental role in the company’s success.

The closure was short lived, thanks to a swift response by Seattle City Council in passing the “Bringing Business Home” bill, which provides additional economic support and flexibility for at-home businesses adversely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. City-wide, how can we extrapolate how such a democratic approach could emanate into the community and a neighborhood and cradles of the city. Imagine active pedestrian streets lined with kiosks of delicacies and curiosities, offered by the residents living on the lots behind. How might the residential street serve as its residents’ passport projects were on full display for the community to witness and participate in? And how might the public spaces play an active role in the time to pursue their dreams?

Yonder Bar set a single-day sales record. The surrounding community immediately galvanized around Yonder Bar. In a time when most commercial businesses were shuttering due to COVID-19 lockdowns, Yonder Bar offered a symbol of resiliency and community pride. In a city where seventy percent of the land is single-family homes in response to this unprecedented social change. Yonder Cider’s radical redistribution of private space for social good has been reconfigured through the “Stay Healthy Streets” campaign. Together, this new subculture space typology radically reconnects the neighborhood on community accessibility and economic opportunities.

At the same time, the relationship between the private, semi-public realm and the public street has been reimagined through the “Stay Healthy Streets” campaign. Together, this new subculture space typology radically reconnects the neighborhood on community accessibility and economic opportunities.

By Garrett Nelli

Garrett Nelli is a practicing architect based in Seattle and currently pursuing a master's degree from The Architectural Association (AA) in London. His passion exists at the intersection of architecture, economics, and urbanism and seeks to create new design and implementation strategies to address the broader issues of global society through community accessibility reforms and projects. From these experiences, he is developing a research direction that analyzes the interplay of design, economics, and policy to enhance community accessibility and create new economic opportunities.

Garrett’s work has been recently recognized with the 2017 AIA Seattle Emerging Professionals Travel Scholarship where he traveled internationally by visiting the social practice of community-based architecture projects. His research findings (In the Public Interest: Redefining the Emerging Professionals Travel Scholarship where he was the recipient of the 2017 AIA Seattle Emerging Professionals Travel Scholarship). Garrett is currently pursuing a master’s degree from the University of Washington in Architecture and Planning, with a focus on the role of community design in shaping future community resiliency via bottom-up economic opportunity in our neighborhoods.
By Andrew Blumm and Alison Iwashita

The Living Lanes Master Plan by Andrew Blumm and Alison Iwashita won “Most Daring” in 2020’s The City of Short Distances competition. As part of the Seattle AIA Urban Design Forum and Young Architects’ Forum initiative Towards a Region of Short Distances, the competition sought innovative solutions for prototypical “microneighborhoods.” Urging designers to focus on long-term implications under the 2020 prompt “Seattle:2100,” they urged the entries to focus on walkability and access in ways that foster long-term community growth and development.

Drawing inspiration from the “15-minute city” urban planning concept, amenities that require repeated commutes are relocated to the suburbs. Both have lived in a variety of different residential communities from semi-rural, to suburban, to dense downtown/financial districts. However, each of these neighborhoods had their own problems and deficiencies in accommodating a sustainable and fulfilling lifestyle. We recently relocated to the Pearl District in Portland; a moderately dense neighborhood composed of mostly mid-rise buildings with small ground floor retail. Having commercial uses within a short walk has really changed our lives for the better.

We spend less money at large corporations because the small retail spaces are better suited for local businesses; we get exercise doing our daily activities because we can walk and bike whenever we need to; and there are uncounted opportunities to socialize because we aren’t stuck in our cars. Most importantly, the money we do spend goes to families in our neighborhood, and we tend to have a little extra spending money since we don’t have the added expense of a car, gas, maintenance, and insurance.

When it came to the design of Living Lanes, we asked ourselves: What is the best way to introduce small retail spaces into an existing neighborhood which looks nothing like a 15-minute city. The reclamation of already existing auto space and frivolous lanes was a logical choice. We designed it to be a catalyst for organic growth from nearby homeowners who wish to participate or augment the new economic and social activities of their neighborhood.

Examining successful cases of reduced auto dependency, a common thread is the notion that de-incentivizing auto use must begin with reducing the capacity of roads. This is contrary to most programs in the US which focus on reducing the number of drivers. Our proposal lowers road capacity while recognizing that many people rely on commutes to fulfill basic needs such as grocery shopping, daycare, and education. The proposed design, a horizontal strip of community and retail space, places services, social life, and recreation opportunities within a modular linear building in the middle two lanes of a four-lane suburban road. The building can be added on to indefinitely and doubles as a shelter for the pedestrian walkway below. The approach simultaneously relocates unproductive space, provides suburbanites with access to necessities, and injects economic investment into small and otherwise unextraordinary places. The Living Lane serves as a catalyst for future growth with a relatively small initial investment. Over time, adjacent areas are projected to be more attractive due to services and multimodal transportation options. To accommodate future interest, the addition of ADUs or the division of existing lots is incentivized in nearby areas. Furthermore, residents may want to participate in the neighborhood economy so garages and auxiliary buildings will be rezoned to commercial use, allowing for small businesses like coffee shops or boutique clothing stores to flourish. The subsequent environment would be abundant with opportunity and activity so low- to mid-rise buildings may start to replace single family homes. The project, guided by the Living Lanes Master Plan, helps to change the previously homogenous neighborhood to an increasingly active, equitable, and sustainable community.
Sarah Herda in conversation with photographer Eirik Johnson
A discussion of Johnson’s latest project documenting the demolition of the Alaskan Way Viaduct.
Birk Johnson Sarah

Sarah Hans: Hello, this is not a staged photo. Hans points to a photo on the wall behind her. “I heard, well, it’s not that I felt it was sad...”

and the viaduct is something that I have been wanting to photograph, or this seasonal hunting camp in Alaska that I started finding in the landscape. Whether or not something is found, right?

Both books are “Borderlands.” I bought it at a Museum of Contemporary Photography auction when I first moved to Chicago in 2005.

...not quite there yet. There were many in-between places—where things were becoming what it is now, but not quite there yet. There were many layers of the city were exposed and I realized they were almost two decades of construction, the Alaskan Way Viaduct, the Seattle waterfront, the Seattle Trail, and the downtown perspective. Then you get to the end and there’s a dark space and it is very gritty. These spaces that need use or could be of use.

Some of the book’s most moving images are literally cut by the book—a picture on the side of the book is chopped and incomplete. I was a little bit nervous about this, but it became so much a part of the book. I love the feeling of the book’s edge of the page is chopped and incomplete. I was a little bit nervous about this, but it became so much a part of the book.

Eirik Johnson: Sarah!

It was 2018, beginning of 2019. The viaduct was demolished in two phases and ultimately became both sides of the viaduct.

I started putting things up on the wall in the studio and thinking about things in transition and wondering, “Are things ever really done?” or “Is it just a moment of time?”

The viaduct was demolished in two phases and ultimately became both sides of the viaduct.

You had little clubs, but also antique shops, shelters, and peoples’ apartments, and their little gardens out on the lower deck of the viaduct.

Other images took on their own life and became the title of the book. The T-Rex jaw became the cover of the book. A picture on the spine is chopped and incomplete.

Organizations, among other organizations.

While documenting the viaduct demolition, people flocked down to the waterfront to watch these giant dinosaur-like creatures demolish it—it was so dramatic, cool, and otherworldly to see this thing get torn down in such rapid time. I wanted these images to be powerful, abstract, and black and white. During the pandemic, for example, seeing the viaduct from the lower deck of the viaduct—being that close to the city at that elevated view—that is gone, and we’ll never have that again. That really was the view that I was drawn to—this is what resonated with me. I do not think if I had access to this vantage point I would have traveled to the city at that elevated view. There were many different parts of the city come into view in very close proximity, offering an urban feel that Seattle often doesn’t have.

Eirik Johnson: Sarah Hans!

Hans points to a photo on the wall behind her. “I heard, well, it’s not that I felt it was sad...”

Emily Stoffer: I was a little bit nervous about this, but it became so much a part of the book. I love the feeling of the book’s edge of the page is chopped and incomplete.

Oh, wow. Congratulations!

Sarah Hans is the director of the Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in the Fine Arts. Founded in 1956, the Graham Foundation fosters the development and exchange of diverse and challenging ideas about architecture and its relationship to art, culture, and society. Hans serves as the co-artistic director of the inaugural Chicago Architecture Biennial in 2015, the largest international exhibition of contemporary architecture in North America. She continues to serve on the Biennale’s board of directors, as well as the board of the Association of Architecture Organizations.

“Borderlands” is a book of the viaduct. There are two chapters, two sides of the book, two images on either book ends are the T-Rex jaws, and the nets seemingly suggest a theater—like curtains just opening.

How do you approach making a book?

For me, the identity of the book needs to be tied to the work itself. Borderlands is always a concept of a building, something like a chunk of the earth itself. The book format is led by the content of the work itself.

With this book, I am not trying to do a book about the viaduct, but rather to do a book of the city altogether. It is interesting that a lot of the buildings built when the viaduct was there didn’t really address or think existentially about the walkway, the infrastructure of the city. It was almost like the viaduct was something that everyone was used to. Now they are completely exposed.

When did you photograph the viaduct?

I think it was right at the end of 2018, beginning of 2019. I was very intentional with the project, which had two phases and something became both sides of the accordion book. First, I documented the empty viaduct. Then, I documented the demolition of the thing, which was this grand spectacle.

With the first, I explored the idea of a lost horizon—or a lost panorama—of the city from the viaduct. The area from the lower deck of the viaduct—being that close to the city at that elevated view—that is gone, and we’ll never have that again. That really was the view that I wanted to explore—that is what resonated with me. I do not think if I had access to this vantage point I would have traveled to the city at that elevated view. There were many different parts of the city come into view in very close proximity, offering an urban feel that Seattle often doesn’t have.

Everything in Borderlands is found, right?

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The 2021 Seattle Design Festival took place at Lake Union Park beside the Museum of History and Industry, just north of Amazonia, on a blustery weekend in late August. Hosted by the local American Institute of Architects (AIA) chapter, the festival “celebrates and explores the role and impact of design on urban life in Seattle.” ARCADE made this exploration its theme.

We had a prominent space where we set a blank plywood “canvas” on sawhorses adjoined by shelves displaying dozens of ARCADE back issues. We asked festival-goers to depict their ideal world by drawing, writing, or cutting up magazines and then pasting them on the surface to make a collage. Many recognized ARCADE issues from one era or another and enthusiastically joined in while sharing memories of the magazine. Others discovered ARCADE for the first time, heartened to find a thriving print publication focused on design in the Pacific Northwest. Children were attracted by the colorful compositions taking form and the familiar instructions to cut and paste whatever they created.

People interacted with the collage in different ways. Some casually flipped through magazines, and if an image or headline caught their eye, they quickly cut it out and slapped it onto the canvas. Others went through the issues as if looking for something specific, which they then painstakingly cut out and delicately pasted down. Children grabbed markers and gleefully wrote and sketched over everything.

The resulting collage is a free-form take on “next” by a slice of our community. Using ARCADE issues as a source might seem to focus people on the past and present. Indeed, the pandemic was noted, but most contributors looked beyond it to contemplate a different future.

By Tom Eykemans, Seattle

Tom Eykemans is a design advisor to ARCADE magazine and the founder of Arcosanti in the Arizona desert, which explores design and architecture in an arid environment. He is the founder of the Seattle Art Book Fair and co-founder of the independent Tome Press. He was previously Senior Designer at the University of Washington Press. He was born in Seattle to Dutch parents and raised in Port Angeles, where the mountains meet the sea.

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Thanks to my co-author, I’ve seen photos of the collage that ARCADE crowd-sourced at the Seattle Design Festival. Late August found some of the millennial women in my family recovering from the COVID-19 variant, described by my daughter as “the worst flu.” Everyone recovered, but it showed clearly how—even vaccinated—this thing wasn’t done with us. Yet the country has opened up. I still mask up and I’m waiting for a booster shot, but it feels less constricted here in Berkeley. We’re living with it, in short.

The ideal world on which the ARCADE collage riffs is a mix of optimism and bravado—“Be Bold!”—and an honesty about the problems we face. “Prestige” and “Most Exceptional” mingle with “displacement.” We envision our community’s inclusiveness. We “just want to be normal,” but we know that poetry goes along with rethinking, and that science and art together are the raw material of a “next” worth living.

Festivals are markers across the year. The collage is a banner that reminds us of that day in August when we paused to dream about Seattle, a place always in flux. Design in a city sense has a strong demotic element—what people bring to everything they inhabit, lay their eyes on, patronize or not. Nature lately has been assertive: heat waves, blizzards, viral pandemics. We live now, glancing over our shoulders, wondering what sort of planet our children or grandchildren will inherit. A city takes this all in. Our banner reminds us how in late August we paused to look ahead and how we’re all in this together.
Within the internal machinations of Amanda Knowles’ cities, I see stories; I see a labyrinth. The made and unmade devouring itself like Minos’s maze. Do you know the tale? How in ancient Greece, the craftsman Daedalus hides the beast within the foundations of Crete to sate the monster’s hunger with confusion. That path lives within these drawings - it is the process, a meandering journey of forms that collage and build upon themselves, changing direction and befuddling the maker, the viewer, until we no longer understand what supports what, or where it began or will end.

The poet Homer saw the labyrinth not as a path, but as an edifice. That edifice reveals itself in Knowles’ compositions; her textures superimposed and seeking past the edges of the undercroft. They merge, create a singular form in which we feel the presence of the maze.

Then, a shift. A new tale. Perhaps this is no maze but Babel’s own tower. Do you not see the foundations abandoned? The forms devoid of human life? Its structure unclad and perpetually reaching towards the sky? Here, in the repairs, these temporary frames, lies hope and folly. Progress becomes a relic reaching for the unattainable.

Or better yet, are these not Piranesi’s jails? Where we may steal a glimpse into an unknown world, a space of no scale, housing endless layers of structure, scaffolding, and bracing that die into the paper. Knowles describes her drawings, her structures, as points of departure. They are shifting tales with endless beginnings. Frameworks that allow us to craft our own architectural allegories, brick by brick.
From the author:

"Eka" is a term used in chemistry as a prefix for a discovered, yet unconfirmed element. "Ovo" refers to: egg, hope, regeneration, and family. The word is a palindrome, and so is the date: 12/21. This is the date I felt I would return to the spot in the photo and reunite with family. This piece is a spell, a wish, a prayer – a "reflection" on what is meaningful to me, which is my family and my love for this particular place.

This piece was originally published in the Spring 2021 issue of Cræft, an informal zine led by UW Architecture students Claire Sullivan and Emily Crichlow.

Art by Trina Denuccio

Trina is a Master of Architecture candidate at the University of Washington, with over ten years of experience working with architecture and interior firms in the US and throughout Asia-Pacific. Her work focuses on design direction, project management, fabrication, materials research, architectural history, preservation technology, sustainability, and adaptive reuse. Always interested in place and memory, she sees our surrounding built and natural environments as complex and rich cultural repositories, brimming with information.
In the summer of 2020, my uncle passed away. His memorial service came shortly after—a group of pixelated faces in a video call. Family members boxed-in, both on-screen and in their homes. Good friends felt uncomfortable sharing stories and some didn’t appear at all. The mourning process had been dislodged—flattened—having lost spatial manifestation. Our traditions and memories were too quickly subverted by the available technologies...restrictions. Our grief had no physical space to seep into, no way of relieving or sharing our frustrations and sorrows.

Art and words by Jeremy McGlone
Jeremy McGlone is an architecture graduate student at the University of Washington. Jeremy enjoys visual media, both architecturally as a mediator between idea, object, and space, and more personally as his small way to make sense of the world around him.

In the short time between learning he didn’t have much time left and his passing, my uncle and I shared a series of calls and messages. We discussed life, and we discussed love. We discussed books, movies, and music. We discussed art, resulting in messages now fossilized in my phone which fuel my creativity and certainties. This represents parts of him that he allowed me to keep; to hold onto firmly. I revisit our conversations about sculpture in particular which allows me to connect with the parts of himself left behind. Today, when I discuss Rodin with a sculptor friend of mine, the art my uncle loved during his life feels fitting for my grief—the heavy expressions and sincerity. Busts like a reflection; mourners, units, out of time, cast in place.

Life after, I look out of my window—for once not a digital window, but the rectangle that frames the material world...out of our familiar conceptions of time and space. They become objects from an immaterial world, ready for us to grab.
The first stanza is about our collected conversations, and the feeling of "running" one can fall into when learning about an inevitable passing.

The second stanza recounts the memorial service, where the human ritual of mourning was appropriated by the current social context.

The third stanza speaks towards the refraction of these experiences into something I could bring with me in the transition to the new normal social context.

The last stanza is really a verbal expression of the thesis and name of the piece "prodigal hope". I made the piece for Cræft, to celebrate the ultimate takeaway of the solitude, sadness, and can find some of normal possibility in light of what I can take with me to the world, loneliness, hospital, cancer. I wanted "Life After" to match the yellow of the prodigal hope that's refracted in the graphic.
By Angela Schmidt

A self-described ‘communitect’, Angela Schmidt constructs and meshes ideas to further connection and build cultural relevance by straddling the lines of research, spatial design, and movement. Currently a resident of Seattle, she has lived in Detroit, Brooklyn, and Berlin. Germany before landing in the Pacific Northwest three years ago. When she is not working or along ballot at Dance Conservatory Seattle, she builds with Seattle Design Nerds, cooks vegan food, plays piano, takes excessively long walks, and pampers her pestilent cat, Demon. This is her first foray into editorial writing.

When COVID-19 shut down cultural institutions and performing arts spaces across Seattle and the world at large, the front lawn of the Seattle Asian Art Museum began radiating their energy into the park. Liberated from the physical barriers of a studio, the park’s new open space in early 2020. Enticed by the space’s “freedom,” the group convened in May 2020 and the park became the new gathering point for a handful of diverse dance enthusiasts who staggered themselves in lines across the non-studio-like surfaces of grass and concrete.

Over the next eighteen months, as Seattle and the world shut down, the group, led by instructor Andra Addison, stretched, kicked, and chasséd their way from the park and saw the limestone walkway and grand entrance to express themselves just makes the world a better place,” says dancer Juanita Unger. “Public space is a safe space and felt sense of camaraderie, leading to participation and responsiveness. Though time-specific to COVID, the group’s longer legacy is a model for how public space and cultural institutions can reconsider community-driven engagement and its ripple effects into the wider community.

With the impromptu programming, the Seattle Asian Art Museum’s built presence shifts in focus. No longer the centerpiece, it lands the role of visual art in a medium distinct from the museum’s permanent collection dance. “Let’s see how the audience for the ad hoc ‘entertainment’... We are a little bit on display... Sometimes having an audience is nice,” says Andra Proper, another long-time class participant. “I’ve seen numerous pics and videos of the group pop up on social media accounts and also have had friends send me pics and ask, ‘Is this really you?’” notes Coats.

Forging “all and step” art, at the group’s heart is an inclusive perspective that extends to anyone with a desire to participate without a lot of expectations. “I really love about being in a group is that regardless of these differences we can all get together to enjoy the freedom of moving together,” recalls group leader Lila Chang who was determined to preserve her community of movement artists when the group lost access to their allocated space in early 2020. Enticed by the space’s “freedom,” and the stage-like layout, the art deco landmark within performing arts spaces across Seattle and the world at large, the front lawn of the Seattle Asian Art Museum’s lawn lingers on. As the dance group (and the rest of us) return to life and the public realm, the improvised occupation of spaces grounded in the styles of jazz, Broadway, and hip-hop. “The concrete and grass are not ideal dancing surfaces, but it has become a nice addition to the difficulty and challenge of the class. Being outside an actual dance studio—with its wooden floors, ballet barre, and mirrors—was hard for people to get used to, but you learn to love it,” says Matt Coats, who has been attending the class for about ten years.
FOR THOSE WHO VIEW THE WORLD THROUGH THE LENS OF DESIGN.
WINDOW: ONE YEAR LATER

By Michael Doyle and Peter Gaucy

Michael Doyle is a visual artist in Seattle. Peter Gaucy is a proprietor of Orcas Paley in Seattle.

I’m now the person I always wanted to be — but this is who I always was anyway. So here I am trying to be someone who was already there, trying to see something that was already there.

But it took how many years on the planet to just come back to, ok, I’m not struggling to attain what was present all along. But all this stuff, life, whatever, it creates a static so you can’t see.

There were 57… — the energy just put out all 57 people are invited. And the message to those 57 people gets sent out in some ethereal way, and these 57 people are then to come. And it’s not the message. It’s not like things happen so consciously. That intuition and the energy do something. When we say “I’m going to invite this into my life,” that realization or whatever it is, it’s ready to go out.

The Transmitters’ magic was beyond anyone’s control. There’s so much going on being intentional. But what about the spirituality of not being intentional?

We're talking about the prevalence of physical holes in our work and how the legacy of haniwa is active there. We've talked about the prevalence of physical holes in our work and how the legacy of haniwa is active there.

It was a very trusting moment, to let myself go for it and some energetic way, and those 57 people are drawn to that energy. — that energy was put out, ok, 57 people are invited. It's important to make space for play when it comes to our artistic line. “I just think it looks cool and I'm going to put it wherever” — that act is wonderful. A sculptor objects can be a play object, a causal object, an object that isn’t a Transmitter?

The Transmitters function individually and collectively, inviting positive energy to the people housing them, and also connecting with each other, as a mystical network. It’s comforting to think of that being out there in the world.

I feel so much urgency last October that people needed to have connections, so something greater than themselves, to other people — we've been isolated. In the context of this past year, it was really like being vaccinated and able to come together again, other things are happening more slowly. It’s a moment of community, and the energy moves from that point of connection. It makes me a little sad that’s what happened — going from us just need to be together to we're in danger. Less so health-wise than before, but the world feels very tense now.

I'm not making them in a particularly prayerful way. They come into being in an organic way that's fun. They are things that look like they were made by a child. It's important to make space for play when it comes to our artistic line. “I just think it looks cool and I'm going to put it wherever” — that act is wonderful. A sculptor object can be a play object, a causal object, an object that isn’t a Transmitter?

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The Transmitters’ magic was beyond anyone’s control. There’s so much going on being intentional. But what about the spirituality of not being intentional?

During the beginning of the pandemic year, I made 57 objects that really didn’t know what I was going to do in my new life. I felt dominated by “inside” and “outside,” and our lens for navigating an extraordinary time, when life felt dominated by “inside” and “outside,” and our lens for navigating an extraordinary time, when life felt dominated by “inside” and “outside.”

The diversity of people, practices, and works that gathered into Window represented a range of inquiry into artistic and intellectual enterprises whose overlapping intentions and collective vitality can clear away the static, to make a view available that wasn’t there before.

The moment drew us to a constellation of related images. The window presented itself immediately, both as a physical aperture and in the sense of a temporal, fleeting opportunity. This ushered in concepts such as the imagination’s third eye, the sixth chakra, alchemic’s seven crystal-like bodies, whichever number is the one that becomes activated first. This pointed to a whole series of them tools for self-discovery and self-confrontation, with their leverage for opening up inner possibilities and growth.

There’s this feeling of your home as a second body that you can extricate yourself from. It was a very trusting moment, to let myself go for it and something that looks like it was made by a child. It’s important to make space for play when it comes to our artistic line. “I just think it looks cool and I’m going to put it wherever” — that act is wonderful. A sculptor object can be a play object, a causal object, an object that isn’t a Transmitter?

People are being invited to a Transmitter? There’s something very mysterious about bringing physical holes into what we see as the ‘real world’. What does that mean? There’s so much focus on being intentional. But what about the spirituality of not being intentional?

I'm not making them in a particularly prayerful way. They come into being in an organic way that's fun. They are things that look like they were made by a child. It's important to make space for play when it comes to our artistic line. “I just think it looks cool and I'm going to put it wherever” — that act is wonderful. A sculptor object can be a play object, a causal object, an object that isn’t a Transmitter?

The Transmitters’ magic was beyond anyone’s control. There’s so much going on being intentional. But what about the spirituality of not being intentional?

During the beginning of the pandemic year, I made 57 objects that really didn’t know what I was going to do in my new life. I felt dominated by “inside” and “outside,” and our lens for navigating an extraordinary time, when life felt dominated by “inside” and “outside.”

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When lockdown happened I had too many ideas. I just going to be in all day, long day by day by myself, just working and thinking. My going to open the closet and I’m going to even go to close it, I’m just going to walk my mind open the the guide and have that guidance, I’m going to go, “oh so back down into the dark dream I can’t get back up and have to travel through the other side.” That is what I wanted to happen, and then everything just stemmed into a puzzle.

What do I thought I wanted to do was open a portal and keep it open. But instead I get a window. Where’s the efficiency? The window open, but even without opening it see to when we might go, while keeping our lives protected. A portal is open. When it’s closed, it disappears. You cannot see where the other side of it. It was the protection, that could see what was near and open onto it when it wanted. It works when made something work, the same thing, is more saving, to open and close at will.

I just heard something recently from an artist I love. She said, you know when people speak to high school and college students asking, what do you see? how do you solve that? That’s the way to do it. I like that idea. I want to find out what kind of world lies under this sleeping city, maybe with trees growing from the ends of roots, spreading their own roots into the edges of life as we know it to be. Maybe there is an air dune there, though probably no one needs to breathe. Sometimes at night I’m almost there, but the panic of having forces me back into my body.

Name for me one thing that doesn’t wrinkle, doesn’t bend. Everything will with the right pressure. I am not so foolish that I don’t know what isn’t. I just couldn’t tell what you actually wanted. It was a miscalculation anyway, some kind of miscalculation, business, thinking the path was clear or that it was a path at all. Energy moves on either side of a moment, but the moment itself is stale. Thank you for putting this desert into me. There are some plants that will only flower there, lotuses of fire and desert into me. There are some plants that will only flourish there, lotuses of fire and...
At the time, most American buildings of that scale were built of wood, but for Kirk and his colleagues it was the defining feature; they loved wood. It was their material of choice for interior and exterior surfaces and for their always-exposed structures. They detailed it to express its own nature, the means of its construction, and, often, its structural purpose, and they either left it in its natural state or with a slight protective stain. Although it has been folded into what has been called the Northwest Style, or Northwest Modernism, the work of Kirk and his compatriots is distinguished by features shared within it and unique to it. Since its buildings, with very few exceptions, lie within a few dozen miles of the shores of Puget Sound, it seems reasonable to call its architects the Puget Sound School.

When I came to Seattle from Michigan in 1964, I knew of architect Paul Hayden Kirk’s work. I had been working for Minoru Yamasaki, so I knew my way around the architectural world, or at least I thought I did. But Kirk’s office had just been published in one of the major architecture journals, and it was unlike anything I had seen—I thought it was beautiful. When I came to Seattle to teach at the University of Washington, I was thrilled to see Kirk’s Magnolia Branch Library again. So I visited. Two years later, I worked for Gene Zema, where I spent some evenings in his Laurelhurst home. So it was that I came to know the wooden architecture of Paul Kirk and that of one of his most important compatriot architects.

In that time and place—the third quarter of the twentieth century, in the region centered on Puget Sound—Paul Hayden Kirk and a group of architects he inspired, all graduates of the University of Washington, created a remarkable body of work. Their unique achievement lies in the design of small buildings—houses, medical clinics, churches, a neighborhood library, a teahouse—all less than three stories in height. At the time, most American buildings of that scale were built of wood, but for Kirk and his colleagues it was the defining feature; they loved wood. It was their material of choice for interior and exterior surfaces and for their always-exposed structures. They detailed it to express its own nature, the means of its construction, and, often, its structural purpose, and they either left it in its natural state or with a slight protective stain. Although it has been folded into what has been called the Northwest Style, or Northwest Modernism, the work of Kirk and his compatriots is distinguished by features shared within it and unique to it. Since its buildings, with very few exceptions, lie within a few dozen miles of the shores of Puget Sound, it seems reasonable to call its architects the Puget Sound School.

Written by Grant Hildebrand

Grant Hildebrand is an architect and architectural historian. He has written eleven books on architecture, including Origins of Architectural Pleasure; Frank Lloyd Wright’s First House; and Gordon Watanabe: A Pacific Northwest Architect. He is a recipient of the Washington State Governor’s Writers Award for work of “literary merit and lasting value.” Hildebrand’s latest book, Paul Hayden Kirk and the Puget Sound School, has recently been released by University of Washington Press.

Pictured Below: The office’s “Christmas Card” for 1955, by Astra Zarina
In 1980, Seattle’s chapter of the American Institute of Architects curated an exhibit of work from the Puget Sound School. Philip Johnson, then dean of American architectural critics, was in Seattle at the time; he was invited to comment. He visited architects and was “astonished” by the “extraordinary” work, of which he had been entirely unaware.

Four decades have passed; that work has remained little known. Yet, the quality of Kirk’s achievement, and that of his counterparts, was unsurpassed in the nation, perhaps the world, in their time. Their story is an important but unrecognized part of America’s architectural history.

In the new book, Paul Hayden Kirk and the Puget Sound School, I examine in depth twenty-six key buildings by those architects, illustrating them with historic and contemporary photographs and drawings, including sixty-three images taken by Andrew van Leeuwen specifically for this book. He was “bewitched” by the “irrepressible” work, of which he had been entirely unaware.

Hildebrand’s book Paul Hayden Kirk and the Puget Sound School is now available through University of Washington Press; it is the first book to explore the work of Kirk and the Puget Sound School.
How does one serve up a plan for generational Black wealth? Jaebadiah Gardner passionately talks about Emiliano Zapata, a revolutionary historical figure that has tremendous relevance to the Gardner/Gilman mission. Zapata’s motto was “Tierra y libertad” (land and liberty), which is a guiding principle for Gardner’s vision of Black Seattle.

For Gardner, answering that question is the first step to unlocking those resources so we can pursue our mission of building wealth. According to Gardner, there is nothing stopping the Black community in Seattle from building real wealth, but there are some internal issues Black people need to overcome. “Frequently we don’t want to look at ourselves in the mirror. It’s easier to take on a victim mentality and blame another group or another person for our misfortunes or our shortcomings or failures. The natural reaction is ‘Who are you? I’ve never seen you before,’” Gardner said. “ ‘You just rolled up to my village. You want what? You want to sit at my table? Hold on, hold on, hold on.’ So you have to build a relationship, build a rapport with that village and build trust with that village before they invite you in. And trust in that village has been established over a long period of time, and there is a lot to lose if you trust the wrong person. So, people are cautious.

“I’m not here to be popular. Black people need to look at other communities have. It’s not a popular opinion, but there are some internal issues Black people need to recognize our own community shortcomings and work through those number one.”

While recognizing institutional racism as a real challenge, Gardner says that the Black community’s reluctance to work collectively, along with a “generational gap,” threatens the ability to build wealth. Gardner expressed his deep appreciation for the sacrifices and accomplishments of Black community leaders in the past but lamented a failure to build wealth as a legacy for future generations.

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Which came first, the chicken or the egg? It is a quandary often invoked when cause and effect appear out of whack. Did a love of poultry will the pandemic of the last two years into being, or did COVID-19 cause a new appetite for backyard chickens? The question is tongue-in-cheek, but the reliance on animals during months of isolation is not. Dogs and cats played a huge role, providing company and comfort in times of mental and physical distress. But also chickens, as evidenced by sales and the extent to which effort was made to buy and keep them. “Chickens are tough, people want chickens,” Tove Danovich wrote in a New York Times article pointedly titled “America Stress-Bought All the Baby Chickens.” And who wouldn’t acquire a feathered friend with the promise of soothing our nagging anxieties? “Without question, the resurgence in raising backyard poultry has been unbelievable over the past year,” confirmed Severson Chea for AP News. “It just exploded. Whether folks wanted birds just for eggs or eggs and meat, it seemed to really, really take off.”

The desire for chickens was only in part about food security; in another, it was about comfort and a search for connection. Overnight, hugs and kisses went from a matter of course to one associated with fear and repulsion, an emotional gap arising, leaving many empty inside. Miraculously, chickens seemed to know what to do, immediately jumping in to solve the problem, and in some cases, literally acting more like cats and less like birds by leaping into laps and snuggling uninvited. “And then there is Jaime,” as one friend noted of another’s recently acquired hen. “She needs to snuggle periodically.”

Chickens need chicken coops, small structures to keep predators out and the hens cool, happy, and productive. They can be anything really: boxes; hexagons; or just four posts and wire mesh, a shelf on which to lay eggs, and a lid. But that is not how most architects see them. Rather, they see them as opportunities to explore design ideas normally quashed by time, cost, and other legal parameters. Even a structure seemingly as simple as a detached accessory dwelling unit (DADU) takes forever to permit, five to six weeks, and then build, some costing up to half a million dollars. By the time a structure like this is complete, half the pleasure of architecture is gone. Something has to give, and architects often find it in designing and building stealth structures that seem to nicely and naturally evade excess moralizing and legadling. As writer Bob Borson points out, urban chicken coops don’t make much sense from a practical and financial point of view. Between store eggs and those cultivated in the backyard, there is a difference of about $1700 annually: “where store eggs cost around $89.50 annually,” he said, “those from the backyard a whopping $1,870.” Accurate or not, a large monetary difference between the two is likely. And yet the desire for chickens and chicken coops persists, some more beautiful than the homes to which they belong, some even inspiring books, complete with guidelines for how to build your own.
As the city of Seattle continues to experience explosive growth—and the displacement that goes along with it—a disused snippet of land on a major thoroughfare in the Central District neighborhood has demonstrated the potential of community-driven design. This 2,000 square-foot trapezoidal plot now contains a saltbox-roof micro structure with a neon sign proudly announcing “Estelita’s Library.”

Organized and funded through the City of Seattle’s pioneering Tiny Cultural Spaces program, the 225 square-foot community social justice library was designed and built by Sawhorse Revolution, a local nonprofit that teaches high school students architecture and carpentry through needed community projects. “We strive to team youth furthest from educational justice with professional carpenters and architects, so they can build for their own neighborhoods,” says Sawhorse’s Executive Director Sarah Smith, who partnered with Olson Kundig and three builders from professional firms to lead twenty youth on the project.

“Estelita’s is a library made by youth for their neighborhood,” says Smith. “We wanted it to be a place for community to come together.”

When Lindo learned Estelita’s original space in Seattle’s Beacon Hill neighborhood was slated for demolition, to make way for high-rise apartments, he set out to find a new home for the library. With a catalog of more than 1,500 books, Estelita’s holds titles from authors like Audre Lorde, Malcolm X, and Howard Zinn, along with Lindo’s collection of Black Panther newspapers, one of the largest in the country. But beyond the books, Estelita’s is a place for connection. “For Estelita’s, the students’ core idea was to create a space that was welcoming for all people and that brought together the activism of the past, present, and future,” says Smith of Sawhorse’s youth-design/build team. That translated to a bright, colorful interior that opens via double doors to an adjacent deck, with rolling bleacher storage benches that can move seamlessly from inside out.

The library is a single room, with built-in desk space on one end and U-shaped bookshelves lining the opposing walls. Outside, the 330-square-foot cedar deck serves as a multipurpose gathering and event space, visually linking Estelita’s to the surrounding neighborhood. “The library can open up for a public lecture, reading, or whatever the community wants,” says Smith. “Our goal was to design the most generous communal space.”

For the City of Seattle, Estelita’s is a gesture of things to come. Seattle’s Office of Arts & Culture has just issued its second call for Tiny Cultural Space projects and hopes to develop it into an annual program. “Arts and culture generally punches way above its weight,” says Richter. “You’re talking about a 225-square-foot space that’s going to redefine the neighborhood.” Smith agrees. “Perhaps more than any other project, Estelita’s has taught our students how creative design and construction projects can change your perspective and your community.”

Lauren Gallow is a design writer and editor based in Seattle. She is the Editorial Chair of ARCADE and writes regularly for publications including Metropolis, Dwell, Interior Design, and more.

Photos by Rafael Soldi and Meg Hartwig.
Fourth Street was on my list of places I knew I had to photograph for the Urban Bremerton project. The elegant, two-story commercial building at 379 Fourth Street has always caught my eye, and having only ever seen it empty and covered in grime, it gives a mystique that embodies both the beauty and potential of downtown Bremerton. But, when I came down with my camera, my attention was immediately grabbed by something else.

Nestled along the curving sidewalk sits a community message board and matching bike racks. Following the lead of the buildings behind them, both go largely unused and unnoticed. The muted but multicolored palette doesn’t exactly cry out for attention, but the geometric shapes, sturdy metal fabrication, and postmodern design details reveal that these aren’t standard issue street furniture.

Around the corner on Pacific Ave, a matching clock is an even more impressive representation of the same aesthetic – clearly cut from the same cloth.

I found out these pieces were installed as part of a Fourth Street revitalization project in the 1990s. This was the same project that gave us the narrower, winding street with wide sidewalks and angled parking – a design that fit right in with new-urbanist thinking still popular today and currently remaking the streetscapes of cities around the world. The dominant feature being that they include more space for people, and less for cars.

Unlike most places where this progressive street design has been implemented, a full mix of retail, residential, extended-stay hotel, and businesses left. Some blamed the towering trees that left the street feeling dark, and others the constricted one-way traffic flow that made it hard to access. Whatever the cause, it left us with a charming and seemingly well-designed but empty street, in the heart of our downtown, and in the planning stages of yet another revitalization project.

Bremerton sometimes feels like a small town living in the shell of a bigger city. It has a downtown whose buildings dwarf the scale of the activity that they support. And over the past few decades, we’ve tried to turn it into something more like the big box stores and fast food chains along 303 and Kitsap Way. Let’s hope that this time around Bremerton is ready to embrace the changes coming to Fourth Street.

There’s a tragic beauty to this neglected old message board – a thoughtfully-designed, but already decaying relic of someone who dared to hope for community with this antiquated form of connection. If the next revitalization project does succeed where the last one failed, I hope this sturdy message board that’s waited all these years gets to stick around to see it.

Editor’s Note: This essay is part of a series of writings excerpted from the book Urban Bremerton that have been published in ARCADE over the last six months. Together, the essays offer a poignant tale on this important but often overlooked coastal city in Washington. For more information on David Albright’s Urban Bremerton project or to order a copy of the book, visit urbanbremerton.com/home/hand.
Dear Friends,

I am writing you all a heartfelt “tot ziens” (longtime Side Yarders know my Dutch roots well). After almost two decades of being ARCADE’s Side Yard columnist, it’s time to pass the torch to a new generation of cathartic and irreverent designers who have a marginal ability to write about their idiosyncratic lives.

Torch-passing typically puts me in a nostalgic mood, but what makes this particularly emotional is knowing this issue of ARCADE will be printed on real paper! As a way of saying goodbye, I thought it might be appropriate to bring the faithful followers of ARCADE together, around the proverbial fire, share some old Side Yard yarns, but also look to the future. What is most remarkable to me about the column is that it has actually survived eighteen years. Heck, it’s almost been around longer than Google!

The concept of Side Yard started in early 2003, when ARCADE put on a job to better understand why readers were interested in our design community. I was on the organization’s board at the time, and much to my surprise, we heard overwhelmingly from our readers that they were clamoring for more humor. There was one significant issue with this: ARCHITECTS AND DESIGNERS AREN’T FUNNY!

I agree. As a dyslexic, pre-medication ADHD, partially traced paper and go for an afternoon nap. Who is going to make fun of the uptight, pretentious world of design. As a funny idea, I thought about making fun of the uptight, pretentious world of design. As with the whole sacred trust of architects and designers, we know they are funnier than we originally thought. Because, let’s face it: they AREN’T FUNNY!

So, who could have ever foreseen that Side Yard would last this long? Certainly not my sixth grade English teacher, Mr. LaCount. During the last two decades, I have had the really astounding privilege of completing close to fifty articles for this column. I guess architects and designers are funnier than we originally thought. After all, if I am the only one who is going to make fun of the uptight, pretentious world of design, it’s time for me to retire. So, who could have ever foreseen that Side Yard would last this long? Certainly not my sixth grade English teacher, Mr. LaCount. During the last two decades, I have had the really astounding privilege of completing close to fifty articles for this column. I guess architects and designers are funnier than we originally thought. After all, if I am the only one who is going to make fun of the uptight, pretentious world of design, it’s time for me to retire...

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The usually stoic Kelly was jubilant and asked if I had any other funny ideas. This was an even tougher problem because ARCHITECTS AND DESIGNERS AREN’T FUNNY! I rationalized that our editor at the time, Kelly Rodriguez, would either react to something I wrote or react to it so it wouldn’t be publicly shamed. To my utter shock, the piece, which was called “The Best Time to Be an Architect—Idiosyncratic Life of Someone Married to an Architect—Parts 1 and 2” (dedicated to my long-suffering wife, Kerry), was back in the olden days, when it was still novel for songs of the twenty-first century? Yeah, Side Yard

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For those of you who want to push this old man to the side and take your seat at Side Yard-style commentary, here are a few suggestions:

- Use your own voice, but make sure you mix irreverence and sarcasm with grace. It really helped me that the commentary was at least semi-autobiographical.

- Make fun of the uptight, pretentious world of design. The more uptight, the better. Yeah, it’s a small community, and you might piss off a few designers, but remember you are really only writing what everyone already knows.

- Rely heavily on collaborations for ideas. Many of the Side Yard articles have come from fellow architects saying, “Hey Ron, have you ever thought about ______?”

- Depend on your trusted ARCADE editor. Shout out to Kelly Rodriguez and Bernie Duncan for making me sound like a real writer over the years.

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For those of you who want to push this old man to the side and take your seat at Side Yard-style commentary, here are a few suggestions:

- Use your own voice, but make sure you mix irreverence and sarcasm with grace. It really helped me that the commentary was at least semi-autobiographical.

- Make fun of the uptight, pretentious world of design. The more uptight, the better. Yeah, it’s a small community, and you might piss off a few designers, but remember you are really only writing what everyone already knows.

- Rely heavily on collaborations for ideas. Many of the Side Yard articles have come from fellow architects saying, “Hey Ron, have you ever thought about ______?”

- Depend on your trusted ARCADE editor. Shout out to Kelly Rodriguez and Bernie Duncan for making me sound like a real writer over the years.

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Whether you are a small print publication, a like-minded nonprofit, or an organization just interested in learning how we can best support you, ARCADE is actively pursuing organizational partners for events, publication support, and advertising partnerships! Please contact us at info@arcadenw.org or reach out to one of our board members. You can find a full list on our sponsors page.

ORGANIZATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

ARCADE wants to support emerging writers and designers through mentorship programs based on our long tradition of engaging unique feature editors and new designers for each issue.

ARCADE is restructuring this practice to offer more hands-on support in the publication process, editorial, issue conceptualization, and publication design, to provide space for more emerging writers and designers.

ARCADE values the work of arts, architecture, and design writers and creative makers and shows this by compensating participants and connecting each applicant with an established and experienced mentor.

If you love design and are interested in publication processes, please reach out to our design and editorial staff for information, editor@arcadenw.org and let us support you!

APPLICANTS TO OUR DESIGN AND EDITORIAL MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

ARCADE’s mission is to host an inclusive and enlightening dialogue on the designed environment. We do this through our print and digital publications and our community programming. ARCADE’s vision is to expand the idea that design at every scale of human endeavor impacts our quality of life.

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