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Robert Ivy, FAIA, rivy@mccgraw-hill.com
Beth Broome, elizabeth_broome@mccgraw-hill.com
Anna Egger-Schlesinger, schlesin@mccgraw-hill.com
Clifford A. Pearson, pearson@mccgraw-hill.com
Suzanne Stephens, suzanne_stepens@mccgraw-hill.com
Charles Linn, FAIA, Professor and Industry, linn@mccgraw-hill.com
Sarah Anselin, sarah_anselin@mccgraw-hill.com
William Weatherby, Jr., bill_weatherby@mccgraw-hill.com
Jane E. Kellerny, jane_kellerny@mccgraw-hill.com
Joan Gonchar, joann_gonchar@mccgraw-hill.com
Russell Fortmeyer, russell_fortmeyer@mccgraw-hill.com
Rita Catinella Orrell, rita_catinella@mccgraw-hill.com
James Murdock, james_murdock@mccgraw-hill.com
Kristopher E. Rabașa, kris_rabasa@mccgraw-hill.com
Encarnativa Rivera, encarnativa_rivera@mccgraw-hill.com
I-ni Chen
Juan Ramos, juan_ramos@mccgraw-hill.com
Leslie Yudell, leslie_yudell@mccgraw-hill.com
Linda Ransey, linda_ransey@mccgraw-hill.com
Monique Francis, monique_francis@mccgraw-hill.com
John Gendall, john_gendall@mccgraw-hill.com
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Raul Barreneche, Robert Campbell, FAIA, Andrea Oppenheimer Dean, David Dillon, Lisa Findley, Blair Kamin, Nancy Levinson, Thomas Mellins, Jayne Merkel, Robert Murray, Andrew Pressman, FAIA, Nancy B. Solomon, AIA, Michael Sorkin, Michael Speaks, Ingrid Spenak
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Here's Your Chance

Editorial

By Robert Ivy, FAIA

W

e have talked at you for 116 years. Every month, the members of the A R C H I T E C T U R A L R E C O R D audience receive our curatorial choices—the architectural projects, the types of buildings and plans, the interiors, the houses, the lighting, the technical questions, and the cultural happenings, that we, the editorial staff, choose for you. Consistently, in correspondence and at live events, we listen as best we can, then attempt simultaneously to stimulate and inform. Each month, we try to bring you the latest, the best, the most provocative, as well as the highest examples of architectural work, domestically and around the world. You regularly respond to our choices, usually positively.

Sometimes, we editors are accused of being too "New York-centric," or too "bicoastal" (all California and the East Coast), or favoring "starchitecture"—that is, purveying the work of a few, select names that constantly reappear in the pages of print media and online. You have told us, "Our clients would never let us get away with the projects you show," or, "The kind of work you're publishing doesn't match the kind of work we do in the Midwest." We've heard that, too.

If any of those arguments sound remotely familiar, if you hail from the Midwest or the Deep South and don't see enough of your own kind of work in these pages, listen up! Here's your chance. On April 15, ARCHITECTURAL RECORD is launching a bold new initiative to reach out to our entire community, allowing you, the reader, to participate more actively in the content of our publication. As promised in an earlier editorial, McGraw-Hill Construction and ARCHITECTURAL RECORD have invested in powerful new community-building digital tools allowing you to help steer the ship. Here's what we are offering.

As you may be aware, we already provide forums online centered on a few key topics, including sustainability, registration, and licensure. After a simple sign-on, you're in the forum and can submit your own ideas; it's easy to do. At mid-month, the forums have been augmented by a suite of tools allowing you a range of options.

For the first time, we have constructed photo and drawing galleries that allow you to post your own content to our Web site. Gathered around five critical areas of interest, these galleries permit you to share your best work, wherever it occurs, with your peers throughout the world. The requirements to post include your acknowledgment that you control (or own) the photo rights to anything published. That fundamental condition applies to all publishing, electronic or print.

And if you don't like the type of architecture we, the editors, have chosen, you can vote and tell the world. We are instituting a rating system that allows you to evaluate every significant project that appears online and in print by a simple-to-use tabulation system: Vote and immediately see the results. You can even comment on the projects that you love (or hate).

If you find a particular article in any issue helpful, such as the one on the technology of building information modeling that appears in this issue, you can recommend that column to others by casting a vote. We have also inaugurated blogs—staff-derived experiences and opinions, as well as blogs aggregated from outside sources—that broaden the kind of coverage we provide and allow us all to comment on what we've just seen or experienced. We would be pleased to consider blogs or bloggers that you value, permitting RECORD to become more immediate and more relevant to your world.

In the past, when we've asked whether or not you sent in your own projects for consideration for publication, most often you've answered, "No." It was too hard to do, or too expensive, you said. As of April 15, that excuse no longer flies. We will use the galleries as sources, examining them for the best examples of domestic work, and including a select few in print and in expanded Web coverage through an informal competition. All you have to do is sign into the system and post to the galleries.

From now on, you cannot hide behind an excuse. For your best ideas, sign up and post. Vote for what you like. Send in your work. You asked, and we're providing the tools. Now put up, or—oh well, you know.

Robert Ivy

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Letters

Strong notes
Thank you for a really strong March issue, with many relevant projects. There’s an especially nice piece on Diller Scofidio + Renfro’s Institute of Contemporary Art [page 108], with a clever last sentence and all—finally I have a reason to go to Boston again! It is too bad, however, that the tenticular film for the museum’s Founders’ Gallery was nixed. Though I understand the impulse to capture the big one-liner view, this incident reflects the difficulty architects face when trying to address the more nuanced conditions of our complex contemporary life.

Also in the same issue, Machado and Silvetti’s Provincetown Art Association and Museum [page 102] reminds me of how good that practice is when it comes to putting contemporary additions onto traditional buildings.
—LI Wen, AIA
Gensler
Los Angeles

The “A” list
I am not surprised by the fact that the Empire State Building was voted number one on America’s List of Favorite Buildings [Record News, “AIA releases results from its ‘Top 150’ buildings survey,” March 2007, page 43]. Its stately grace and reserved majesty have been the iconic symbol of New York for as long as anyone can recall.

More important—and in response to the committee wondering why more modern architecture was not on the list—the answer is as simple as the Empire State Building itself. The building appeals to the common person. While Modern design may have numerous salient points in the architectural world, most of it is viewed by nonpractitioners as odd and unappealing. Hence, when you compare a structure such as the above to, say, Zaha Hadid’s Rosenthal Center for Contemporary Art in Cincinnati [RECORD, August 2003, page 86], whose ominous, precast-concrete jumble of geometric shapes look more like a foundry form than a building, it should be of little wonder why it’s not on the list, and the Empire State Building is.
—Clifford Archer, AIA
Levittown, N.Y.

Contextual correction
Greetings from Tokyo. On behalf of Fumihiko Maki, we wanted to point out an error in the FOB4: Buildings book review published in your February issue [page 48]. The review states, “Fumihiko Maki, a Kyoto native who has lived in Tokyo for many years, addressed the city in his projects there by ignoring it, creating minimal, universal buildings.”

In fact, Mr. Maki was born and raised in Tokyo, and he only has one major project in Kyoto—the National Museum of Modern Art. “Minimal” and “universal” as descriptions may or may not be appropriate, depending on one’s point of view, but I think you would agree that Mr. Maki does not typically adopt the stance of ignoring the context in which he builds, particularly in a sensitive environment such as Kyoto.
—Michel van Ackere, AIA
Maki and Associates
Tokyo

Taking the stand
I am a long-time reader, and a first-time writer, inspired to respond to your coverage of Morphosis’s U.S. Courthouse in Oregon [March 2007, page 94]. This building is a fine example of wasted taxpayer money. I grow tired of seeing architects trying to create design statements with each new project. My first impression was “what is it?” It does not resemble in any way any courthouse I have ever seen. That the project came in at over $288 a square foot, the only award I can see this building getting would be a “golden fleece” award for all the unnecessary elements of design that Thom Mayne incorporated in the name of “making a statement.”
—Michael Frank, AIA
Orlando

Corrections
A February 2007 story on lighting designer Abhay Wadhwa [page 160] had incorrect information on one of Wadhwa’s projects. The client name is Ivan Pavičić 3W13, the architect is Avi Oster Architecture, and the project includes seven condominium floors, not four. A March news item about Dion Neutra selling his firm’s last commercial building [page 40] misstated the square footage, which is 4,800, and misspelled the name of his firm’s Mason House. A March technology story on Haworth’s Zody chair [page 170] misspelled the manufacturer’s name. Because of a late change of venue for the GreenBuild Expo (held November 7–9), it should be noted that the correct location is Chicago, not Los Angeles, as mentioned in the March issue’s Product section [page 193]. A drawing featured in RECORD’s Web-site house ad [page 18] should have been identified as Zero Energy Home, by Zoka Zola, not a photograph of the ICA.

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Richard Rogers wins the 2007 Pritzker Architecture Prize

Richard Rogers is this year’s winner of the Pritzker Architecture Prize, the profession’s highest honor. The 73-year-old architect heads the Richard Rogers Partnership, which he established in London 30 years ago. Jurors praised his work as representing “defining moments in the history of contemporary architecture.”

One of Rogers’s best-known works is also among his earliest: the Centre Georges Pompidou, in Paris, of 1977, designed with Renzo Piano. Rogers and Piano, who were then in partnership together, won the commission after an international competition in 1971. As Pritzker jurors observed, the Pompidou’s striking appearance—with a facade dominated by HVAC conduits, escalators, and other service elements typically relegated to a building’s core—“revolutionized museums, transforming what had once been elite monuments into popular places of social and cultural exchange.” Another early work, the Lloyd’s of London office tower, completed in 1986, displayed a similar inside-out sensibility and cemented Rogers’s reputation for expressionist architecture.

Born in Florence, Italy, Rogers trained at the Architectural Association in London and earned his master’s degree in architecture from Yale University. There his path crossed with a number of other design giants: Paul Rudolph, who headed the architecture school; James Stirling, who taught Rogers; and Norman Foster, a fellow student with whom he opened a practice after the pair graduated and returned to England.

Although Rogers’s recent works, such as London’s Millennium Dome, in 2000, and Terminal 4 at the Madrid Barajas Airport, which opened in 2005 [RECORD, October 2005, page 150], continue to display his flair for showcasing the purely functional elements of a building, he has increasingly concerned himself with larger scales—both urban and global. “Cities are where life is most precarious; they are also where we have the greatest tangible opportunity for improvement, intervention, and change,” he said in a 1995 lecture.

In addition to serving as the mayor of London’s chief adviser for architecture and urbanism, Rogers chaired the United Kingdom’s Urban Task Force. Established in 1998, this group studied the causes of urban decline and outlined the groundwork for creating a future urban renaissance. Describing this vision, Rogers observed that tomorrow’s cities “will no longer be zoned as today in isolated, one-activity ghettos; rather, they will resemble the more richly layered cities of the past. Living, work, shopping, learning, and leisure will overlap and be housed in continuous, varied, and changing structures.”

Rogers, made a British lord in 1996, is the fourth U.K.-based architect to win the Pritzker in its 28-year history; the other three were Zaha Hadid, Foster, and Sterling. He will receive the honor, which comes with a $100,000 grant, at a ceremony in London this June. James Murdock
Freedom Tower questioned amid rising costs

As work on the Freedom Tower’s foundations progresses, with an eye to vertical construction beginning next year, observers are expressing doubts over the project’s total price tag, which seems poised to rise at a faster rate than the building itself.

In late February, the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey officially authorized construction of the Skidmore, Owings & Merrill-designed building, which forms the symbolic cornerstone of the rebuilt World Trade Center complex. The agency also approved the awarding of contracts worth $500 million for continuing construction on the Freedom Tower’s foundations, which began last year.

A press release stated that the contract amounts fell “within planned-for contingencies common to projects of this scale,” a roughly 4 percent margin. The building’s total price tag is currently set at $2.88 billion. But many observers believe that the final number will rise far higher.

Barry LePatner, Hon. AIA, a real estate attorney and construction-cost expert, contends that the Freedom Tower’s initial bid numbers were virtually meaningless—unless construction companies agree to sign fixed-cost contracts, which seems unlikely. The problem, he explains, is that contractors often lowball their estimates to win projects and then file change orders and add other fees to make up the difference later.

Prominent real estate developers Douglas Durst and Anthony Malkin have also criticized the project’s finances. Taking out advertisements in major New York City newspapers, they contended that Lower Manhattan has an oversupply of office space—and that the Freedom Tower is struggling to attract commercial tenants aside from government agencies.

New York’s new governor, Eliot Spitzer, pledged his support for the Freedom Tower’s construction after taking office this winter, a critical if somewhat symbolic step. Even so, Spitzer as well as New Jersey governor Jon Corzine and New York City mayor Michael Bloomberg have said that they are open to selling it to a private developer, which could presumably redesign it. The foundation under construction now, they note, can be used for buildings other than the Freedom Tower.

Other projects at Ground Zero face a similarly uncertain fate. The Port Authority admitted this winter that rising labor and materials costs have caused the PATH station, designed by Santiago Calatrava, to exceed its $2.2 billion budget by nearly $1.2 billion. The architect and agency are looking for ways to trim costs. This could mean a redesign, although Calatrava has said he is committed to preserving his design’s signature elements. For more on this story, visit www.archrecord.com. Kevin Lerner

Search begins for new Architect of Capitol

As crews push to finish the long-overdue Capitol Visitors Center project in Washington, D.C., Congress is stepping up the search for candidates for the recently vacated post of Architect of the Capitol. The position oversees construction at the Capitol, Library of Congress, and House and Senate offices. Alan Hartman, FAIA, retired February 4 after his 10-year term ended. He did not seek reappointment.

In recent years, Hartman’s office came under fire from Congress for lengthy delays and cost escalation on the visitors center. When the project began in 2002, estimates suggested it could be completed by January 2005 for $265 million. The latest estimate projected that costs could top $600 million, with an opening date in early 2008.

The American Institute of Architects (AIA) prepared a list of four potential candidates for the job last fall, which it then submitted to the Senate Rules Committee. The AIA has been part of the search process before, recommending both Hartman and his predecessor, George White, FAIA. President-elect Marshall E. Purnell, FAIA, who is helping with the search now, refuses to name the candidates, but he confirms that Congress has hired a search firm.

In helping with the hiring process, the AIA has attempted to deflect congressional criticism and suggestions that the next Architect of the Capitol should have more managerial experience. “To me, that doesn’t exclude architects,” Purnell says. “We need a licensed, registered architect. That will guarantee a certain level of quality.” He adds that the AIA considered architects with facilities management experience. Prior to his appointment, Hartman was vice president of facilities planning and architecture for Rockefeller Center in New York City.

It took more than a year to select and approve Hartman, and observers expect the current hiring process will take nearly as long. For now, deputy architect and chief operating officer Stephen Ayers is filling the position temporarily. Ayers has worked in the office for 10 years.

Purnell says the search firm is expected to release its list of names by early summer. Three candidates eventually will be recommended to President Bush. His pick then requires Senate confirmation.

“We just hope this doesn’t turn political,” Purnell says. “It’s a Democratic Congress and a Republican President, so you never know. We’re not concerned about who party the candidate is in. We just want someone who is qualified.” Bruce Buckley

[This story first ran in Engineering News Record, RECORD’s sister publication.]
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Governors Island development moves forward

It's full steam ahead for Governors Island, a 172-acre landmass located off Manhattan's southern tip that the Coast Guard turned over to New York City in 2003. Although the Governor's Island Preservation and Education Corporation (GIPEC) decided against naming a single developer for preservation and redevelopment of the island last year, the organization is pushing forward on other fronts.

Leslie Koch, president of GIPEC, says the corporation had originally been looking for developers and "whole-island" solutions, but "it became clear that none of the developers were proposing that they would assume any of the major financial burdens for infrastructure and open space." She adds that the corporation soured on the idea of a master developer altogether.

At the same time that GIPEC announced there would be no winner of that initial RFP, it introduced a design competition for open space that is hoped will jump-start other development. The new competition asked designers to consider three components: a 25-to-40-acre park; a 2-mile waterfront promenade around the island's perimeter; and a district of historic buildings.

A Request for Qualifications generated submissions from 29 teams. GIPEC announced five finalists earlier this year: Field Operations and WilkinsonEyre; Hargreaves Associates and Michael Maltzan; REX and Michel Desvigne; West 8, Rogers Marvel, and Diller Scofidio + Renfro; and WRT, Weiss/Manfredi, and Urban Strategies. GIPEC will unveil their submissions in a public forum this spring.

"We're choosing a team, not a design," Koch says, adding that a final plan for the public spaces will come later. "We're hopeful that between 2009 and 2010 we'll have shovels in the ground." GIPEC is also hopeful that these efforts will spark interest in further development activity. Koch observes, "Investments in extraordinary public open space is the way to bring the island back to life so that we have tenants in our historic buildings and the possibilities of partners for new construction."

One of these partners might be the New York Harbor School, a high school that uses maritime subjects as a way to deepen education and prepare students for college and water-related careers. The school is presently located in Brooklyn's landlocked Bushwick neighborhood. GIPEC is negotiating an agreement that would make it the island's first official tenant, in September 2009.

A feasibility study is also under way to determine the potential cost and complications of an aerial gondola system designed by Santiago Calatrava, FAIA, that would link Governors Island to Manhattan and Brooklyn. When renderings of the gondola were released last year, it was presented as a speculative project. But positive public response prompted officials to take the proposal more seriously. Koch says, "Rather than just having it float out there, we wanted to answer some questions about whether it could be built." Tim McKeough

Is another world's fair in New York's future?

BOORA designed pavilions housed on barges docked at the island (above two). Craig Konyk's Mile High Tower, with views as far as Philadelphia (right).

As the Governors Island Preservation and Education Corporation (GIPEC) mulls over the finalists in its competition to encourage development of this 172-acre harbor island, it may have some additional suggestions to consider. Fred Bernstein, a journalist and former lawyer, has recruited seven architects to imagine schemes for hosting the 2020 World Expo there.

Bernstein believes that in addition to raising the island's profile, hosting an Expo would help GIPEC put into place infrastructure necessary for future development. New York City has a history of hosting these events to accomplish urban change. For the 1939–40 World's Fair, Robert Moses transformed 1,255 acres of Queens marshland and landfill. The site hosted another fair in 1964–65, which resulted in the creation of Flushing Meadow Corona Park.

World's fairs, since rebranded as Expo, continue to provide opportunities for reimagining urban spaces. Shanghai, for instance, expects to unveil its much-anticipated ecocity prototype at the 2010 Expo [RECORD, March 2007, page 162].

For the 2020 event, Bernstein suggests the theme "Connections," a reference to New York's history as a multicultural paragon. He invited young architects, as well as those old enough to remember the 1964 fair, to contribute ideas that he will use in strengthening his proposal. Chad Oppenheim and BOORA both proposed that pavilions representing different nations be situated on barges docked at the island. The Expo would begin and end with a grand procession of the pavilions through the city's waterways. Other architects referenced the iconography of past fairs. Thinking of Paris's Eiffel Tower, Craig Konyk envisioned a "Mile High Tower" with a viewing platform at a height of 5,280 feet, providing 100-mile views. Ali Tayar conceived a structure that reinvents the New York State Pavilion, which Philip Johnson designed for the 1964–65 fair. Alexander Gorlin, Frederic Schwartz, and Markus Dohanischi, of studio MDA, also contributed designs.

To build support for these ideas, Bernstein has formed a nonprofit called "21st Century New York" and is gathering a committee to lobby the mayor as well as New York's governor and congressional delegation. GIPEC has yet to comment. This is not the first time Bernstein, who occasionally writes for RECORD, has become involved in large-scale design. He also submitted a proposal to rebuild the World Trade Center. Christopher Kieran
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Shanghai readying for the 2010 World Expo, but important commissions remain unfilled

While Beijing’s urban reinvention for the 2008 Summer Olympics is attracting plenty of attention now, similarly large-scale preparations are under way in Shanghai, China’s largest city, for the 2010 World Expo. Compared to the Olympics, which lasts just a fortnight, this event will extend six months and is expected to attract 70 million visitors, according to the city’s projections.

Given the Expo’s theme, “Better City, Better Life,” Shanghai has already started huge infrastructural upgrades, including the construction of four new underground train lines that will nearly double the capacity of its mass-transit system. Work has also begun on a second magnetic levitation train that will connect Shanghai to the neighboring city of Hangzhou. But with the Expo looming just three years in the future, planners have yet to select the architects for several key projects, and other uncertainties remain. Politics is to blame.

Last month the city announced that the East China Architecture Design Institute will design the Expo Center, winning out over Perkins Eastman. But this news was accompanied by word that program changes will cause the 11,000-square-foot building to be split into two smaller structures. Planners also suggested that the Chinese architect collaborate with a foreign firm on a new design.

This somewhat cryptic announcement was only the latest in a series of ambiguous decisions and false starts, played out against a backdrop of political tumult. After China’s president Hu Jintao launched a widespread anticorruption crackdown last year, one of the city’s chief political figures, Chen Liangyu, secretary of the Communist party, was dismissed from his post. With Chen’s indictment on embezzlement charges, many large-scale private and public development projects were placed on hold until additional investigations are complete. The commission for the Expo Center was one victim of the delay; the Expo museum is another.

Xing Tong He, director of Expo planning and research, says that although 2010 is nearing, he is not worried about the remaining architect sections. “We are a smaller operation than the Olympics. And we have time,” he says.

Xing adds that Shanghai planners are seeking designs that offer long-term functionality after the Expo is finished. “We want the architecture and design to be meaningful,” he explains. “We don’t want it to just be ordinary. It’ll be the first Expo to take place in China, and we are considering quality and sustainability.” To this end, the Expo’s star attraction will be Dongtan, an ecologically sensitive new city district that will house 80,000 people by 2020. Andrew Yang

Moscow may breathe new life into the crumbling Narkomfin landmark

In the mad construction dash that has consumed Moscow in recent years, one of the city’s more celebrated layers of history has been left by the wayside. Numerous Constructivist structures from the 1920s have fallen victim to their original shoddy construction as well as neglect on the part of succeeding generations. Preservationists’ greatest concern has centered on the Narkomfin residential complex, an experimental house-commune built between 1928 and 1930.

Last spring, a group of experts attending a conference organized by the International Council on Monuments and Sites was granted an audience with Mayor Yury Luzhkov to make a case for taking organized action to safeguard the Modernist heritage. The meeting was a rare gesture on the part of the mayor and, according to local observers, it gave impetus to current developments around Narkomfin. In December, deputy mayor Josef Ordzhonikidze announced plans to convert it into Russia’s first time-share hotel. Few further details have been made public, but urgent remediation may finally be under way.

Although long considered a canonical example of the Russian avant-garde, and an object of intense interest for Western architects since Le Corbusier, the building’s utopian qualities have made it ill-suited for sustained use. Designed by Moisey Ginzburg and Ignaty Milinis, Narkomfin architecturally expressed new collectivist ideals: Its split-level apartments featured minimal amenities, while a separate unit for communal services was attached to the main building at one end.

Residents soon started modifying these unique living arrangements. Narkomfin’s ownership has changed hands several times, and the structure increasingly fell into disrepair. Twice in recent years the World Monument Fund placed it on a list of 100 Most Endangered Sites. A skyrocketing real estate market has fueled suspicions that authorities would rather let Narkomfin—superbly located just behind the American Embassy—shudder away than undertake costly repairs. Without explicitly bowing to the preservationist appeals, the city’s announcement is viewed as a conciliatory and constructive change of tactics.

Although Ordzhonikidze has yet to announce a time line or funding for Narkomfin’s revitalization, Moscow-based developer MIAN is expected to provide the primary share of private investment. Architect Alexei Ginzburg, the grandson of Narkomfin’s chief designer, has proposed conserving the building’s structural and interior components while adapting the technical elements to modern standards. His detailed proposal, which has been on public view for years, could lay the groundwork for what promises to be a multifaceted resurrection. He estimates that redevelopment will cost between $15 million and $20 million.

While many Narkomfin apartments have stood vacant for years, roughly half of the 50 units are still occupied despite decrepit conditions. Buying out the residents or resetting them elsewhere remains one of the key stumbling blocks to any reconstruction. Reports indicate that MIAN is approaching apartment owners with individual offers. Paul Abelsky
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Students aim to preserve the historic fabric of a battered Lebanese town

Bint Jbail is a small town in southern Lebanon. Labeled a Hezbollah stronghold, it was especially hard hit by Israeli air strikes during last summer’s war—more than 2,500 houses were damaged and 800 completely destroyed. But when Howayda Al-Harithy, an associate professor of architecture at the American University of Beirut and a member of its postwar reconstruction unit, arrived shortly after the August 14 cease-fire, she found reason for hope.

As a preservation expert, Al-Harithy saw that much of Bint Jbail’s historic fabric had survived. On returning to Beirut, she asked her third- and fourth-year students to envision ways of rebuilding and reinterpreting it. The effort sparked a larger conversation about the town’s future—and might spare historic neighborhoods from new destruction.

Al-Harithy is convinced that simply razing damaged houses and replacing them with new construction and 33-foot-wide boulevards, as the city’s mayor, Ali Bazzi, originally proposed, would victimize residents again through “the erasure of memory, history, and identity.” And so shortly after the war, she urged city and Hezbollah officials to slow—and, inside the old city, halt—the removal of rubble, some of which can be used to build again. Al-Harithy also broached the subject of preservation with representatives of the Qatar Rehabilitation Program of South Lebanon. Qatar has pledged $300 million toward Lebanese rebuilding projects, including the reconstruction of four entire towns, among them Bint Jbail.

Local architect Halitham Bazzi was impressed by Al-Harithy’s commitment. In support of her efforts, he circulated petitions urging that Qatari payments be deferred to fund the creation of a master plan for preservation and adaptive reuse. Bazzi says that of the 148 houses that Al-Harithy would like to include in this project, 102 owners have agreed to hold off on rebuilding.

Negotiations between local officials and the Qataris are under way now and Bazzi hopes that they will conclude this spring. In the meantime, Al-Harithy’s students are conducting site analysis and interviews with residents of the damaged areas—work that the American University of Beirut is incorporating into a draft master plan.

The students are also imagining an urban future for Bint Jbail that won’t turn its back on a historic past. During recent trips, one young architect named Céline Stephan spoke of “stitching the city back together” with a new library and a restated marketplace to accommodate the Thursday souk that has taken place since the Ottoman era. Other students paid close attention to preserving the footprints of centuries-old stone houses while also providing for new, Western-style apartments. Jessica Dheere

Israel nixes controversial Safdie project

Israel’s National Planning and Building Commission has rejected a controversial mixed-use development, designed by Moshe Safdie, FAIA, that would have significantly expanded settlement along Jerusalem’s western edge. Known as the “West Jerusalem Plan,” the scheme had been facing stiff opposition from environmentalists since it was first proposed more than a decade ago.

The project’s developers—which include the Jerusalem Development Authority and the Israel Lands Administration—commissioned the Safdie design for 18,700 housing units as well as commercial structures on almost 6 square miles that the city annexed in 1992. They hoped that the project would stem the drain of middle-class families from the capital, which is Israel’s poorest city.

But opponents contended that the development would have produced the opposite effect—its convenient access to Tel Aviv drawing people to work and shop in that city, rather than in Jerusalem. They also feared that the proposed road network would destroy sensitive valley landscapes, including remnants of ancient agricultural systems.

The West Jerusalem Plan remained in limbo for so long because environmentalists had to prove that city planners had other development possibilities open to them, explains Yael Eliasch of the Society for the Protection of Nature in Israel, which led the opposition. Last November, they successfully persuaded Mayor Uri Lupoliansky to halt the project and instead promote denser and higher development in existing neighborhoods. The denouement for the process came in February, when the national commission voted it down.

Building in Jerusalem is never easy. Earlier this year, above-ground construction finally began on a bridge at the city’s entrance. Designed by Santiago Calatrava, FAIA, the project is part of a light-rail scheme due to have been completed last year, now targeted for 2009. And another significant development, the Museum of Tolerance, designed by Frank Gehry, FAIA, remains mired in legal proceedings that have delayed its construction by more than a year. Esther Hecht
Record News

Competition rethinks student housing for the echo-boom generation

The class of 2009 will be the largest high school graduating class in U.S. history. If the idea of that many 18-year-olds entering into the world makes you nervous, imagine how university housing officials feel.

Demand for campus housing is expected to keep growing as echo boomers, offspring of the baby-boom generation, make their way through the educational system. To help meet this challenge, the Association of College and University Housing Officials International has initiated a three-stage competition called the 21st Century Project to design and eventually build a “state-of-the-art residential facility” prototype.

The competition’s first stage, which concluded this winter, was to design a model room, or “student living unit,” as it will appear 25 years in the future. The room must accommodate a range of different sleeping arrangements and provide for advances in technology and sustainability. From a total of 46 entries, Boston-based Jonathan Levi Architects edged out seven finalists for the $25,000 top prize.

Levi’s living unit features a media wall, movable storage units, and Murphy beds. A glass wall that changes from transparent to translucent encloses the bathroom, which includes a custom-designed toilet and sink. “Their design brought a lot of new ideas to bear while remaining realistic and buildable,” says competition juror C.C. Sullivan.

For his part, Levi attributed the design’s buildable quality to his firm’s recent experience designing a graduate housing facility for Harvard University, in Cambridge, Massachusetts. “The word speculation has been abused in architecture culture—it’s come to mean wild form-making—but for us, speculation is intimately tied to building,” he observes.

When it comes to building, Levi’s 21st Century Project entry is composed of modular components that allow for rapid assembly. Modular construction has the added benefit of creating excellent sound barriers due to double-layered walls, floors, and ceilings. “A sense of isolation is necessary for scholarship. We wanted to give students the option of silence,” Levi observes.

The second phase of the 21st Century Project competition, which will start in July, asks entrants to build upon Levi’s design, extrapolating it to the scale of a building and emphasizing communal aspects of residential living. A third phase will identify a site for a prototype building, asking entrants to relate the dormitory to a broader campus community.

“Student living space can be a marketing tool for universities,” says Michael Coakley, the competition coordinator, “but how those spaces come together contributes to students’ ability to succeed once they are enrolled and shaped how they relate to the campus community.”

The seven other finalists in the first phase of the competition were American Campus Communities with WDG Architecture of Austin; Angelini and Associates; Bergmeyer Associates; CSO Schenkel Shultz; Marks Thomas Architects; RATIO Architects with KI; and Southern Illinois University Edwardsville with Mackey Mitchell Associates.

Alan G. Brake

New Orleans gets affordable, greener housing

Talk to Chris Goad, a senior architect with Wayne Troyer Architect in New Orleans, and you begin to envision a future for this storm-battered city that includes electricity generating wind turbines sprouting from the rooftops of former factory buildings. David Miller, a real estate developer, has a slightly different but equally compelling and sustainable future in mind, one that integrates affordable housing throughout all of the city’s neighborhoods.

The future may not be as far off as it seems. Working with developer Sean Cummings, Goad’s office is converting a derelict mill into the Rice Mill Lofts, an apartment and retail complex that aims to become the first LEED Platinum–certified mixed-use project in Louisiana.

And Miller, a vice president of the Renaissance Property Group, is redeveloping the abandoned Falstaff Brewery into mixed-income apartments. While the conversion of aging industrial buildings for residential use is nothing new in New Orleans, these projects suggest new directions for the city and its architecture.

Located in the city’s historic Bywater neighborhood, the Rice Mill Lofts will contain 50 residential units as well as ground-floor retail shops.

With green features such as a 127-foot-tall wind turbine—whose form evokes a smokestack—photovoltaic arrays, and rainwater reclamation, it is eligible for the highest LEED rating and has already earned a merit award from the American Institute of Architects’ New Orleans Chapter [RECORD, March 2006, page 36]. Despite its green features, though, Goad believes the project is easy to replicate. “We really didn’t have to do a lot to renovate this old mill building into apartments,” he says. “I believe there’s lots of opportunity in New Orleans to do this kind of project.”

Across town, in the Mid-City area, David Miller also sees untapped potential that could stem from his own redevelopment scheme. Renaissance is taking a 204,000-square-foot former beer brewery and converting it into 149 apartments, half of which are set aside for people making less than the city’s median income. “Projects like Fa staff could be hugely positive for redevelopment. I believe it will serve as a catalyst for the area,” he says.

The Falstaff building has been a landmark since 1912—its neon sign, some 13 stories high, is visible throughout the city—but it sat vacant for nearly three decades in a neighborhood now filled with bail-bond offices and convenience stores. HMS Architects, with associate architect Webster Design, chose to retain the existing structure, preserving as much of its character as possible.

Keith Steiger, of HMS, explains that this move allowed for the creation of living units with large window bays and high ceilings—a boon to future residents.

The Falstaff Brewery should be ready for occupancy by the end of this year, while construction on the Rice Mill Lofts is expected to finish in the summer of 2008. For a city in desperate need of new housing, these dates can’t come soon enough. Matt Supplee
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In D.C., the climate shifts for tackling climate change

In the absence of concerted federal leadership, cities and states have been taking the lead in addressing the issue of climate change. But now, with the help of the American Institute of Architects (AIA), the federal government is finally stepping up to the plate.

The day after his State of the Union speech in January, President Bush signed Executive Order 13423, which mandates green building targets for all executive branch agencies. Topping a long list of goals, it calls for a 3 percent annual reduction in energy intensity, defined as energy consumption per square foot of building space, and increased use of on-site renewable energy.

Why the recent change in attitude? “There’s been a growing understanding in the government and executive branch that dependence on foreign oil is something that we need to grapple with,” observes Kevin Kampschroer, director of research and expert services for the Public Buildings Service in the General Services Administration (GSA).

Following the executive order, the GSA raised the energy intensity targets listed in its contract language. Although the agency, which is the nation’s largest public landlord, previously required that its own new construction be LEED certified, it also now states a preference for leasing space in buildings constructed in a more sustainable way.

Other possible changes affecting federal space requirements are afoot on Capitol Hill. In February, AIA president R.K. Stewart, FAIA, appeared before Congress to present the group’s recommendations on energy efficiency in federal buildings.

Stewart emphasized the critical role that the built environment plays in climate change, noting that buildings produce nearly half of the greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to global warming. “You can argue about the way to change, but architecture is the biggest contributor, so the opportunity to change is there,” he explains.

Like Executive Order 13423, the AIA’s recommendations specifically address federal buildings—but they take a slightly different tack by going directly to Congress. “It has the ability to make sure that funding exists,” Stewart explains.

The AIA is proposing an immediate 50 percent reduction in fossil fuel use, with further reductions every five years until 2030, by which time new federal buildings would be carbon neutral. These numbers coincide with those proposed by the 2030 Challenge, which the U.S. Conference of Mayors adopted last year for municipal buildings (Record, August 2006, page 30).

A surprise to some observers, neither the AIA’s recommendations nor the executive order require that federal buildings seek LEED certification, which is commonly required by state and local governments. The executive order mandates that new construction and major renovations of agency buildings comply with the Guiding Principles for Federal Leadership in High Performance and Sustainable Buildings. Signed by 19 federal agencies, these principles establish broad goals that cover many of the same areas as LEED but place greater emphasis on encouraging sustainable practices in ongoing building operations.

The GSA believes that it needs to address more specific operational issues that the LEED systems do not. “Building the building is merely the first step in its life. If you don’t take care of the building, you’ve lost an opportunity,” Kampschroer explains.

For its part, the AIA feels that endorsing a single standard would work against its attempts to further the development of all standards. “No standard that exists today addresses these issues in as all-encompassing a way as we, as a profession, think that they need to be addressed,” Stewart says.

The AIA is already pursuing the next step with its recommendations by seeking a congressional sponsor to draft legislation that can be attached to a larger bill addressing energy use or climate change.

The critical aspect of the steady stream of action in Washington, Stewart says, is that it signifies a sense of empowerment. “Before, there was debate about whether or not something was happening. Now, people agree that something is happening—and, most important, they feel that they can do something about it.” Amanda Webb

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Two new Web sites help architecture go open source

At the annual invitation-only Technology Entertainment Design Conference last month, Architecture for Humanity founder Cameron Sinclair took center stage to launch the Open Architecture Prize. Its $250,000 purse, among the largest offered for architecture, will be awarded to the best design for a computer lab that will be built as part of the 50x15 Initiative. This effort, led by chip maker Advanced Micro Devices, aims to provide Internet access to half the world's population by 2015.

Sinclair’s announcement came just one day after he inaugurated another project with a similarly global reach: the Open Architecture Network, an open-source online space where architects and engineers can share their ideas with organizations and community leaders that are seeking design solutions for coping with the aftermath of natural disasters and political conflict. In addition to forging connections between socially responsible designers and worthy clients, the network allows creative colleagues to comment on one another’s ideas, along the lines of Web sites such as Wikipedia.

Architecture for Humanity is not alone in adapting Wiki culture to the architecture profession. Another project in the works is the Public Information Exchange (PIE), a digital interface that Local Projects, a design studio in New York City, is developing for the Center for Architecture, home to the American Institute of Architect’s New York Chapter.

Comparing the two efforts, Local Projects principal Jake Barton says that whereas participants in the Open Architecture Network “are really looking to share how these things are built, and to facilitate working teams across the world,” PIE will solicit feedback from design professionals and community members about new buildings in development throughout greater New York. “It’s about architects communicating with all stakeholders,” he explains.

A beta version of PIE launches this month at www.publicinformationexchange.org, with the final version set to go live later this year. A beta version of Architecture for Humanity’s vision is already live at; the Open Architecture Prize competition will be managed through this site.

David Sokol

Commercial billings show unexpected strength in early 2007

Continuing a trend first evident late last year, architecture firms reported a healthy volume of billings for commercial projects in January 2007, according to the American Institute of Architect’s monthly Architectural Billings Index (ABI). And, for the first time since last fall, inquiries made to architecture firms also rose.

The AIA’s chief economist, Kermit Baker, Hon. AIA, initially attributed this activity to warmer winter weather throughout much of the country prompting clients to get an early start on projects. But he now wonders if the trend instead signals an improving business climate.

“The first half of January was warm, but the second half we had a full-blown winter, and yet we continued to see an upturn in design activity,” Baker says. “That leads us to believe that something structural might be going on, not just weather-related activity. We’ll be looking at the February numbers carefully.”

Although commercial activity remained strong, Baker continues, residential design billings indicate the housing market has yet to recover from its collapse last year. “Single-family work has been in a major recession, and multifamily work has been down for the past six months or so, too.”

Data that makes up the ABI is gathered from a survey sent to 300 firm leaders primarily in the commercial design sector. Studies have shown that the index is a good predictor for construction spending nine to 12 months in the future. J.M.
News Briefs

Arquitectonica’s Columbia Memorial Space Learning Center will break ground this spring. Located in Downey, California, the 18,000-square-foot museum honors the seven-member crew of the Columbia Space Shuttle, who perished when the shuttle disintegrated on reentry in 2003. “The center will look like it is taking off toward the sky,” says Bernardo Fort-Brescia, a principal of the Miami-based firm. Fiber-optic lighting incorporated into metal panels within the facade will simulate constellations of stars. Jennifer LeClaire

Thomas Galloway, dean of the College of Architecture at Georgia Tech, died last month at the age of 67. During his 15 years at Georgia, Galloway was credited with raising the school’s stature both in the U.S. and abroad, forming partnerships with institutions in France and the United Arab Emirates. Before joining the university, he served as dean and professor of the College of Design at Iowa State University, from 1985 to 1992. He also taught and held administrative positions at the University of Rhode Island and the University of Kansas. J.M.

Adalberto Libera’s Cinema Airone will be transformed into a public archive for the Oscar-winning composer Ennio Morricone. The derelict theater in suburban Rome was built in 1953 as a tribute to Italy’s film industry. Its biotite volumes, very much in vogue now, were a playful departure for the Italian Rationalist known for his Palace of Congresses, in Rome’s EUR district. Bluostudio and Nema Architecture, both locally based, are designing the Airone renovations. In addition to Morricone’s archives, the project will also include an acting school. Construction is expected to finish in 2009. Susan H. Gordon

Robert A.M. Stern has designed a new building for the Museum for African Art, to be located on Fifth Avenue in New York City. When the 93,000-square-foot institution opens in 2009, it will be the first all-new museum located on the city’s famed “Museum Mile” since the Guggenheim opened in 1959. The museum is partnering with developers that will construct 116 housing units above the building. “It’s a whole new ball game: museums that function as cultural centers for the community,” Stern says. “We hope it engages the public.” C.J. Hughes

The Parrish Art Museum has asked Herzog and de Meuron to rethink its expensive new building in Southampton, New York. The museum originally sought an 80,000-square-foot facility; plans now call for 63,000 square feet to be built in two phases. It will be the Swiss design duo’s fourth U.S. museum. Parrish director Trudy Kramer, who announced her retirement last month, says that the concept remains unchanged. Inspired by 19th-century artist colonies, the architects envisioned a series of separate pavilions housing small galleries. The first phase, expected to cost $55–60 million, will break ground in 2009. J.M.

ENDNOTES

- Denise Scott Brown received the 2007 Vilcek Foundation Prize. It honors foreign-born individuals for contributions to American society.
- The Barnes Foundation issued a Request for Qualifications to select an architect to design its new museum in Philadelphia.
- Rem Koolhaas is working on a 52-story “vertical city” for a waterfront site in Jersey City, New Jersey. The tower will contain condos and art studios.
- Plant Architect and Shore Tilbe Irwin were selected to redesign Nathan Phillips Square, which fronts Víljo Revell’s Toronto City Hall.
- France and Abu Dhabi inked a controversial $1.3 billion deal to bring the Louvre’s name and art to a Jean Nouvel–designed museum on Saadiyat Island.

For more on all of these stories, go to archrecord.construction.com.
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Putting ideas into action can be daunting when you’re creating a business. We found two firms that just went for it and are finding how rewarding taking the risk can be. Pique’s three principals keep their vision alive from three different locations, using technology to bridge the physical gaps. For British industrial designers Will Crawford and Peter Brewin, it was following through on an idea for a temporary concrete canvas shelter that gave their business legs. Go to archrecord.construction.com/archrecord2 to learn about other talented, risk-taking designers in Design, Work, and Live, and join the conversation in our forums in Talk.

Design

Pique: Three architects, one vision

When architect Peter Jahnke (center in photo) says that he has to stare at Eric Meglasson (left in photo), his partner and coprincipal of architecture firm Pique, all day, he means it, but not in the way you might think. Peter, Eric, and the firm’s third coprincipal, Keith Ballantyne (right in photo), live and work in different parts of the world, but together share one practice. “I boot Eric up first thing in the morning and we’re together all day,” says Jahnke of his Webcam connection with Meglasson, “and I see Keith almost every day, as well.” Physically, the three aren’t actually within spitting distance very much—Jahnke’s home studio is in Seattle; Meglasson’s in Bend, Oregon; and Ballantyne lives and works just outside of Edinburgh, Scotland. Still, the three have had an active architectural partnership since 2005.

According to Jahnke, while each partner is a skillful designer, they also bring their own special talents to the mix—Jahnke is the instigator, marketer, and pursuer of competitions; Meglasson, the practical doer who loves to be out in the field managing projects and getting things built; and Ballantyne is commentator, critic, and self-admitted minority shareholder in the group. “I’d like to change that balance one day,” says Ballantyne, who also teaches at the University of Edinburgh, “but for now I’m the one they turn to to push them and to be critical about the work.”

All three hold architecture degrees from Montana State University, but while the university may be the thread that links them together, it is their distance from one another that they believe has strengthened their link and given their practice an edge. The partners’ physical distance gives them an objective platform from which to consider each project from all angles—client, location, National Library of the Czech Republic, Prague, Czech Republic, unbuilt
A competition entry for a 500,000-square-foot library that would incorporate offices and storage of archived collections with general reference materials. The building would include a restaurant and lecture hall.

Viewmaster 2005, Bend, Oregon, unbuilt
Taking cues from a child’s toy, the Viewmaster, this home becomes an instrument that gives limits to views with two open lofts, or “lenses,” acoustically and experientially separated by an atrium.
materials, budget, and program. There’s also a global perspective that comes with the geographical freedom. “We all travel extensively, and I have land in Belgium, where I hope eventually to end up,” says Jahnke, whose wife is Belgian. “Creating a business like ours means I could easily do that.”

The partners currently have several residences under construction in Bend, and they are looking at commercial interiors projects, as well. They constantly submit designs to competitions worldwide, an exercise they say keeps them exploring and experimenting. According to Jahnke, the potential is limitless. “There is an enormous amount of development out there, and much of it bad,” he says. “We know there are people who are looking for something better.” Dividing up to find those special clients is working for Pique. *Ingrid Spencer*

**Tumalo House,**
**Tumalo, Oregon, 2008**
A narrow home stacked to express the experience of ascending from the scale of trees to the expansive sky. The second and third floors appear to float.

**Garren Residence,** **Bend, Oregon, 2007**
This low-slung residence rests on a prairie site in the high desert of central Oregon. The strong horizontal elements visually tie the building to the surrounding landscape. Three parallel axis walls orient the house toward prominent views and define outdoor rooms, expanding the small footprint out into the site. The steel-clad spine wall separates private and public portions of the dwelling, above grade and below. A large central void delivers natural light to basement rooms.

For more photos and projects by Pique, go to archrecord.construction.com/archrecord2.

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**Work**

**Idea becomes business for two British designers**

Experimenting with concrete in school paved the way for British industrial designers Will Crawford and Peter Brewin to enter the business of helping disaster relief workers. The two entrepreneurs are the brains behind Concrete Canvas Technologies, a new company that is marketing inflatable concrete tents to aid organizations as well as the U.S. and U.K. military.

To erect the tent, you add water to the bag and inflate it with air, and 12 hours later it is ready to use. The two students entered their idea in the British Cement Association’s annual competition in 2004 for new and innovative uses of concrete, and they won second prize.

During summer vacation, they traveled to Uganda to do field tests. They spent a month meeting U.N. agencies and nongovernmental organizations and visited six different refugee camps where they tested the idea. They were met with a positive response from aid agencies, who have long needed a way to quickly erect shelters on demand.

After graduation in August 2005, Crawford and Brewin started the company with their prize money, and secured their first round of financing from private investors in April 2006, as well as through a grant from the British government. With the idea that a free trial will lead to sales, the firm has handed out prototype tents to clients like the U.K. and U.S. military and the Red Cross.

With the durability of a portable building and the ease-of-use of a tent, the structures have an estimated life span of five to 10 years, which outlives the normal wear of a tent, while remaining logistically easier and cheaper to manage than prefabricated portable buildings. While cost has yet to be determined—based on further prototype testing—Crawford says he and Brewin plan to take the product to the commercial marketplace, as shelters for sheds and agristorage, or to sell the concrete cloth in rolls to builders for instant hard pouring. *Dianna Dilworth*

For more information on Concrete Canvas and more pictures of the structure in action, go to archrecord.construction.com/archrecord2.
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Does size matter when it comes to design offices and quality?

Critique

By Alexander Gorlin, FAIA

Le Corbusier's sketch for Villa Savoie (top), projected as a development (bottom) 1930.

and although it would come out only every few years with a limited number of projects, every one was marked by an extraordinary level of originality and power: the Villa Savoie, La Tourette, Ronchamp, Maisons Jaoul, the High Court and Assembly at Chandigarh, the Carpenter Center.

Never did more than 15 people work at his office at 35 rue de Sevres, in Paris. Similarly, Louis Kahn never had more than 20 architects at his office in Philadelphia. Of the 40 desks at each of Frank Lloyd Wright's Taliesin studios (East and West), only 20 were ever occupied. At the most, James Stirling's staff was around 25. And, of course, Carlo Scarpa worked with maybe 6 people in his own home office in Vicenza, Italy.

But that was then, and this is now, a time when the world is awash with money, new clients are everywhere, and architects are called upon to build in every corner of the globe as fast as possible, today if not yesterday. With Blackberries, cell phones, wireless computers, and faxes, one is expected to create and produce buildings at an unprecedented scale and rate. And this at a time, at least in the media, when architecture's stock has risen to historic highs.

Back when Le Corbusier was working in India and Louis Kahn in Bangladesh (then Pakistan), these locales were considered remote and exotically quaint. Today, construction has exploded in China, Singapore, the Philippines, Thailand, and Dubai.

So what is wrong with this picture? In the 1970s and early '80s, when there was little work, every Michael Graves yellow trace sketch was the talk of the town. Now there is not only a cornucopia of projects, but a lot of architects' wildest fantasies are actually being built in places like Shanghai and Dubai.

Isn't this what every architect wants—larger projects, bigger offices, and fatter budgets? Yes, but ... A large office is not only a blessing, but also a curse. There is the inevitable loss of control—"many a slip betwixt cup and lip"—as directions from the design partner to subordinates, and then through construction drawings to the contractor, are lost or mistranslated. And, as we know, it is almost impossible to construct even the simplest things correctly. In an office, everyone has a personality, attitude, and ego, especially in a field rife with prima donnas. You must be really "hot" to get a job at Zaha's! Architecture often winds up being more about managing people than design. As Bill Pedersen of Kohn Pedersen Fox told me after I proudly informed him I had hired my first employee, "Now the trouble begins."

So how is it possible for architects who have arrived at the pinnacle of their profession and are known for the intensity of their design and their obsession to detail to expand successfully to a size that rivals the large corporate firms? Can one have an atelier of 200 people working at the same level of originality and care as one of 20? There is a clear and present danger that too much work will dilute the production of even the best firms. History is strewn with the wreckage of bloated offices' late work, such as any of Ed Barnes's or Ulrich Franzen's faceless towers. And can anyone forgive Walter Gropius his horrendous Pan Am Building?

Both Frank Gehry and Zaha Hadid now have offices with more than 200 people. Not only do they have numerous projects of gigantic scale, but the distance between projects requires the architects to spend a great deal of time on planes. Is it possible to maintain the quality of design at this size and with projects flung across the world? Is there a danger of repeating oneself when clients demand a "Gehry" or "Zaha" for their city or museum? Does it matter?

On the opposite end of the spectrum is Glenn Murcutt, who works alone and refuses to take projects outside of Australia, as he believes one can only build where one completely understands the site. This extreme position—the architect as a kind of local tribal shaman—does not make enormous sense with the realities of global communications (actually since the invention of the telephone), but it does raise the issue of how to build appropriately in different locations, climates, and cultures. This has been a problem of Modernism since Philip Johnson and Henry-Russell Hitchcock's 1932 MoMA exhibition declared there was one International Style suitable for all locations. This long-discredited

Critique

notion, oddly enough, is being raised again through the multiple commissions of boutique architects asked to repeat their “signature” projects regardless of the site. Do Richard Meier’s glass towers on the Hudson in New York make sense near Miami in even more Minimal garb?

Both Le Corbusier and Mies van der Rohe walked the fine line between innovation and repetition, but did so within the context of solving a problem in an architectural typology. One of the answers to housing for Le Corbusier was the slab of the Marseilles block, where duplex apartments were stacked within a structural frame, the whole building was raised off the ground on pilotis, and a terrace occupied the roof. He repeated versions of this scheme in Berlin and Brey-le-Forêt, and proposed them in all of his urban plans. Were they all as well done as Marseilles? Perhaps not, but they were to be seen together as a laboratory of investigation, refining an answer to a clearly stated problem. The same goes for Mies, in his series of corporate office buildings: Seagram in New York City, IBM and the Federal Center in Chicago, and Westmount Square in Montreal. Mies developed a language that for him was an expression of the “zeitgeist,” the spirit of the age, and therefore needed no excuse for “originality.” Refinement was the goal; each was as subtly different as one Greek temple was from another. For myself, Seagram trumps them all, but that was not the point.

Today, it’s different for architects such as Gehry, whose late work has been compared to sculpture and who has been called the Michelangelo of his age. Such comparisons imply that he alone is the final arbiter of each curve and arc. His late work recalls James Stirling’s calling Ronchamp “a masterpiece of a unique and most personal order.” As opposed to Mies’s right-angled vocabulary of construction, which created a school of followers, Gehry’s work even now is untouchable in its hermetic formulas, however open and approachable it is for the public.

After the enormous success of the Guggenheim in Bilbao, Gehry produced Disney Concert Hall, in Los Angeles, the Corcoran Gallery of Art, in Washington, D.C., and the Guggenheim New York, all variations on a theme. What if, after Ronchamp, churches all wanted similar solutions? Of course, Le Corbusier himself extended the vocabulary of Ronchamp in his church at Firminy, France, and at Chandigarh. Since

HAS GEHRY DISCOVERED THE “MAGIC TRICK” OF MAINTAINING A HIGH LEVEL OF DESIGN WITHIN A LARGE OFFICE?

Bilbao, has Gehry been mining a similarly rich vein of form?

The problem is that when architecture is presented as fine art and sculpture, then each project is considered unique, and not as an answer to the problem of how to make a blockbuster form to embody the aspiration of a place such as Bilbao. This ultimately works against the desire to explore the same themes within a typology, as the variations invariably question and vitiate the uniqueness of the initial object. Uniqueness is an essential part of the aura of the object, as expressed in Walter Benjamin’s The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction. Benjamin notes that film, which he considers to have less aura than the authentic object, “responds to the shirveling of the aura with an artificial build-up of the ‘personality’ outside the studio. The cult of the movie star ... preserves not the unique aura of the person, but the ‘spell of the personality’, the phony spell of a commodity.” The same thing seems to be happening with brand-name architects today. As demand has risen for this group and repetition in their work has increased, the “starchitect” phenomenon has accompanied the “shrunk aura” of the subsequent architectural projects.

Of course, it is unrealistic to expect every new project by Gehry to be a masterpiece; even he admits that. But what can he pull off at the 8.7-million-square-foot Atlantic Yards mega-project in dear old Brooklyn, New York, which at the moment looks more like Co-op City with a bad case of the shingles?

At another level, the problem stems from the incorrect application of the “artist” model to the architect by the media. Even Le Corbusier carefully maintained a distinction between his painting, sculpture, and architecture. Rather than Jackson Pollock or Rembrant, two solo artists, it is Peter Paul Rubens and Viagra. Perhaps he has indeed discovered the “magic trick” of maintaining a high level of design within a large office, as he told me recently. (So why aren’t the SOMs of the world doing the same?)

Regarding Zaha, as far as I can see, the jury is still out. As opposed to Gehry, who emerged after years of building fairly undistinguished commercial structures, she spent a long time hand painting visions of flight and lightness and has not built much.

What has been built is very different from her initial drawings. In Germany, at Vitra, her concrete fire station is chocked with rebars; at Wolfsburg and BMW, there was a realization that a new direction was necessary, and we see Deco-like continuous concrete curves, a fluid Brutalism—or is that brutal fluidism? Two hundred people working for her? Seems out of control, but we must wait and see what she builds next.

Richard Meier, with 65 employees in New York and 25 in Los Angeles, never had a problem repeating himself and never presented each project as distinctly unique. From the beginning, the success of his early houses established a vocabulary of Corbusian-derived formal strategies and a restrained white palette that he rarely veered from. This single-minded commitment to a specific “style” with rules and limitations was teachable to people in the office, allowing it to grow. So strict was his early formal system that when I worked as an intern there years ago, it was the news of the day when he used a curve in the Schumbrug Pavilion! Very slowly, his all-white vocabulary broadened to include gray. And now he has actually used dark wood in a house in Malibu.

So what is one to do? Since architectural immortality may be fairly limited in the near future, with global warming and the apocalypse happening sooner rather than later, why not carpe diem (seize the day) and take on another hundred staffers? Or should Gehry and Hadid follow Nancy Reagan’s dictum and just say no to the lure and addiction of more work and bigger offices?
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Books


Although identified largely with monumental civic creations such as iconic government buildings in Brasilia, Oscar Niemeyer has inconspicuously worked on house designs for seven decades. This book, the first on his houses, presents a convincing case for residences as central to his oeuvre. The allure of the houses in this finely honed survey reveals how far Niemeyer has evolved from a young follower of Le Corbusier’s vision of houses as “machines for living” to an original creator of houses as sensual structures for living close to nature.

Niemeyer, who is 99 years old, prefaces Alan Hess’s text and Alan Weintrab’s photographs with a clear overview of his residential style: “I am attracted to free-flowing, sensual curves. The curves that I find in the mountains of my country, in the sinuosity of its rivers, in the waves of the ocean, and on the body of the beloved woman.” He has translated this romantic vision into residences showcasing bending, dynamically slanting, and often biomorphic concrete forms. Niemeyer’s love of curves surfaced in his first house design for himself, completed in 1953 in Rio, topped by a curvilinear roof conjuring a seemingly weightless, floating lily pad. His next house for himself, built in Brasilia in 1960, brought feminine curves to the design of a shapely swimming pool, an ironic counterpoint to his fazenda-style residence adjoining the pool. The fazenda was a typical 19th-century coffee-plantation-owner’s house on an estate maintained by slaves. Niemeyer’s reformulation of it serves as a symbolic act, trying to redeem Brazil’s slave past while also showing how Modernism can embrace vernacular forms.

Hess’s commentary offers just enough historical and cultural background to enhance our appreciation for these residences. Weintrab’s 200 sharply detailed, atmospheric photographs do justice to the tropical sensuality of Niemeyer’s designs. Together, they create an experience akin to being graciously welcomed as an honored guest in Niemeyer’s houses. Norman Weinstein


Sarasota Modern pays homage to a remarkable moment in the early 1950s when a “confluence of talented and daring architects coupled with a hip crowd willing to take risks” made the west coast of Florida a center of avant-garde design. The work of Ralph Twitchell, Victor Lundy, and particularly Paul Rudolph formed the Sarasota School, which historian Henry-Russell Hitchcock in 1952 called “the most exciting new architecture in the world.”

Sarasota was a somewhat unlikely spot, yet its barrier islands and subtropical climate made it an ideal laboratory for a Modernism that was both elegant and environmentally intelligent. After Rudolph and Lundy moved elsewhere, a new generation of architects came to Siesta Key and Lido Shores to build more flat-roofed, concrete, and cedar houses with central courtyards and cross ventilation, and filled them with Bertoia, Eames, and Neutra furniture.

Splendid as these pure examples of Gropius-in-a-warm-climate were, many are modest second homes occupying prime real estate. The Sarasota School patrimony is threatened by nature, changes in taste, and greed. Author Andrew Weaving, a Modern dealer in London, bought two examples of the style: a Gene Leedy house in Winter Haven and a Mark Hampton in Lakeland. The book is his plea for a renewed appreciation of Sarasota style and its preservation.

Weaving provides a historical overview of the movement and its main protagonists, plus essays on 18 key houses. While these include two recent entries by Toshiko Mori, most are from the golden age, providing the reader with a sentimental stroll back to the 1950s. These prime examples are often restorations by aficionados who have furnished their houses with George Nelson clocks, Saarinen womb chairs, and abstract paintings.

Sarasota Modern is a welcome tribute to that vibrant Florida moment. It is, however, marred by sloppy editing (good grammar and punctuation do matter), and needless errors (the Farnsworth Museum is in Maine, not in Massachusetts; plates is not a plural noun, and so on). The designer of the book, too, might have taken some lessons from the straightforward design of the houses. William Morgan


A cold and sleepless night spent bivouacking on a mountain face left a 20-year-old Tom Kundig with a visceral experience that has continued to shape his architecture. Opening his preface with this defining mem-
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ory, Kundig indirectly implies a link between the experience and its lasting influence on his work, concluding that "architecture became less of a career and more of a learning pathway." Now a partner in the Seattle-based firm Olson Sundberg Kundig Allen Architects, Kundig's signature contraptions, like a hand crank that enables even a child to pivot a sixteen-foot steel-and-glass picture window at Chicken Point Cabin in Northern Idaho, have enchanted clients, magazines, museums, and award panels for more than a decade. The five residences in this monograph were chosen to reflect Kundig's mountaineering aesthetic through such idiosyncratic design details, which he refers to as "gizmos."

Dung Ngo, the book's editor, believes that the true significance of Kundig's experimental mechanisms is a refreshing and underappreciated reappropriation of engineering into architecture. Pages of sketches, occasionally as simple as scribbles on ruled paper, provide intriguing glimpses into the development of some intricate contraptions and fetislike details, for example the glass marbles used to plug holes left from the concrete framework at the Brain Studio in Seattle. But if the aim was to focus on gizmos and, as Ngo puts it, "the desire to incorporate another vocabulary, another language of making into the rigid codes of today's architectural construction," then the reader is left desiring a more substantial explanation of this other language. Magnified drawings of gear systems accompanied by scant text are less than satisfying.

Kundig's details inspire a childlike curiosity that begs people to take his work apart and learn how it operates. This book is only superficially successful at satisfying this desire. Ngo is right: There is something creative and novel here. But the book is stuffed with images, some of which are redundant. We can look at a house from half a dozen angles or more—but a mere single-sentence caption won't really get us inside of it. One senses that the pictures were intended to fill space, which is odd since so many Kundig houses are omitted. The residences here are mostly those that have garnered the greatest number of awards, which makes the publication initially seem like an overzealous publicity pamphlet. But the book is smartly arranged to guide the reader's experience of the gizmos. The buildings appear in order of the increasing complexity, prominence, or abundance of the imaginative devices in each, culminating in the house Kundig hot-rod for himself and his wife in Seattle. By the time this house appears, the reader's eye has been trained to scan the myriad miniature design moments in a house that might otherwise appear stark in contrast to the preceding four. It is difficult not to be captured by the obsessive minutiae and mechanistic moments in these houses.

Ngo says of Kundig's gizmos that they bring life to static architectural elements. They connect people with architecture, and in some cases, connect architecture with nature. They are fascinating, but dangerously so. Drawing perspective away from the whole, they can appear overwrought. A massive steel-beam
system at the Studio House in Seattle serves primarily to support light fixtures, not the house structure. The awkward guest bathroom and lack of intimacy in this intensely scaled house reveal an inconsistent appreciation for functionality within the chosen projects. The nearby Brain Studio, on the other hand, demonstrates an elemental simplicity and relevance to the ideals of the book, like the “reinvention of the commodity” exemplified by a balcony designed from repurposed road construction steel plates.

Tom Kundig has proved himself an architect with a crafty aesthetic that can become addictive. No doubt his image-heavy monograph will feed the fever. Christopher Kieran


In many ways, Brian MacKay-Lyons, who was born and raised in Arcadia, Nova Scotia, to which he returned in 1983 after studying and working abroad, is the Glenn Murcutt of North America. Like Murcutt, the Pritzker Prize–winning architect from Australia, MacKay-Lyons has erected a legacy of plain modern houses informed by local vernacular forms, building materials, and conventions. In the preface to Plain Modern, Murcutt likens MacKay-Lyons’s buildings to traditional boats and boat-building structures “constructed with light, crisp, timber-clad skins over simple, internal, exposed structure.” The work, like Murcutt’s, is affordable, low-tech, and tough for a tough climate.

Interestingly, some of MacKay-Lyons’s buildings also have a family resemblance to houses by Samuel Mockbee and his Rural Studio in Alabama. MacKay-Lyons’s 1998 Barn House is a close cousin to the Rural Studio’s Haybale House of 1994: Both are simple, rectangular volumes topped by a big, overhanging metal roof. MacKay-Lyons and Mockbee’s Rural Studio look to simple structures—barns, sheds, trailers—for their design cues.

Plain Modern’s weakest link, for me, is Quantrill’s introduction. He writes, at length, about events and thoughts more germane to his own work than to MacKay-Lyons’s. His characterization of MacKay-Lyons as a “peasant prince” overlooks the fact that peasants have been nonexistent in North America since they first reached these shores and became American farmers. MacKay-Lyons’s projects: descriptions, by contrast, are as plain, direct, and appealing as his buildings.

MacKay-Lyons, whose Nova Scotia house designs have made him a leading exponent of critical regionalism, is expanding his horizons. Plain Modern concludes with plans and models for the firm’s largest and most complex project to date, the Canadian High Commission in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

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Exhibitions

By John Gendall


Urban Design, a term coined at the Harvard Graduate School of Design (GSD) in the mid-1950s, is the tenuously defined profession consigned to the blurred zone where architecture, landscape architecture, and city planning overlap. Practiced mostly in seminar rooms of prestigious universities, it is still staking out its territory as a stand-alone field. The Fall 2006/Winter 2007 issue of the Harvard Design Magazine (HDM), presents a conversation among nine preeminent designers, academics, and writers on a question urban designers should find pressing: “What is Urban Design?” This query follows an essay by Michael Sorkin in the same issue of HDM, in which he begins by announcing, “Urban Design has reached a dead end.”

Adding to the uncertainties of the discipline’s objectives and professional parameters is the fact that its focus—the city—has undergone changes sufficient to challenge even the most entrenched field of study and practice. In recent years, cities have swelled at unprecedented rates, forcing a reconsideration of urban strategies.

In the midst of these discussions comes the beautifully executed exhibition, X Lines: A New Lens for the Urbanistic Project, curated by GSD professor Joan Busquets, a Barcelona-based architect, in collaboration with GSD design critic Felipe Correa. Presenting 10 different methods of carrying out urban design, X Lines (with its X referring to the Roman numeral 10) sets out to articulate and perhaps justify this field of investigation. What Sorkin pronounced dead, Busquets and Correa rush in to resuscitate. Sorkin argues that the discipline, overcome with nostalgia, lacks the ideological underpinnings and methodological means to engage cities constructively and imaginatively. While consciously omitting the term Urban Design from the entire show, in favor of “Urbanistic Project,” Busquets and Correa offer myriad examples of how Urban Design is both constructive and imaginative. They envision X Lines as a point of departure for designers considering urban interventions and as an infusion into the ongoing dialogue about the discipline’s direction.

Dividing the show into methodological categories, the curators identify the following 10 different “lines,” or project types, which they appropriate as examples of “Urbanistic Projects”: 1) Synthetic Gestures: construction of an iconic building; 2) Multiplied Grounds: creation of multilevel layers of urban fabric; 3) Tactical Maneuvers: minimalist interventions; 4) Reconfigured Surfaces: restructuring of open space; 5) Piecemeal Aggregations: intermediate urban fragments; 6) Traditional Views: New Urbanism; 7) Recycled Territories: decentralization; 8) Core Retrofitting: updating of historic cores; 9) Analog Compositions: projects that defy master plans; and 10) Speculative

The Quito Biennale showed X Lines (below). A mapping of Bilbao analyzed the urban effects of Gehry’s building (bottom). “Wallpaper,” abstracting urban conditions, runs through the show (left).
Exhibitions

Mappings by Anuradha Mathur and Dilip Da Cunha (left three) analyze colonization in Bangalore, India. An aerial photograph (top right) and diagram (bottom right) show Toledo, Spain.

Procedures: experimental investigations in urbanism.

The "lines" package the exhibition neatly, making it easy to peruse. Each of the 10 walls, assigned to a particular thread of urbanism, has its own "wallpaper" as background, providing graphic yet abstract representations of the interventions exhibited, as well as readily legible distinctions among the categories.

Historical precedents and contemporary case studies expound on each approach. With Synthetic Gestures, the curators look at iconic buildings that, they contend, initiate comprehensive strategies for restructuring entire cities and regions. This category analyzes projects that are often brushed off as merely formal manifestations of star architects' egos.

Frank Gehry's Guggenheim in Bilbao, the perennial example, springs to the top of the list. Mappings by landscape architect Gonzalo V. Cruz reveal the building's effects on the city's waterfront, transportation systems, and harbors. Toyo Ito's Sendai Mediatheque and Peter Cook and Colin Fournier's Kunsthaus Graz offer further examples of urban catalysts.

Another category, the seventh "line," Recycled Territories, addresses urban interventions outside of the consolidated city. Citing New York's Fresh Kills, and the Bordeaux riverfront and Caen Industrial Park, in France, the curators also turn considerable attention to Anuradha Mathur and Dilip Da Cunha's mappings of India's Bangalore territory, demonstrating the role of colonization on that region's urban areas.

Mathur and Da Cunha's stunning research highlights one of the show's greatest virtues and unstated objectives: to reveal and test the limits of the methods of representation used in design disciplines (and, by appropriation, in Urban Design). Replete with magisterial drawings, diagrams, and maps, the exhibition offers a rich spectrum of architectural research. Analytical essays by Busquets and Corea in the accompanying catalog ground the work in terms of urban significance.

Far from definitive, however, the "lines" impose arbitrary distinctions on urban conditions. The curators acknowledge that they could have delineated seven or, for that matter, 29 lines, with some projects falling into any number of different categories. But even with that acknowledgment, the attempt to define an amorphous profession by herding different techniques into quasi-arbitrary categories is of debatable value. The curators do well to highlight examples of successful projects, which they interpret urbanistically, reminding designers that buildings and landscapes have implications extending far beyond the particular sites.

In the end, viewers are left with a stimulating collection of visual analyses of urban scenarios, some predictable, some surprising, all beautifully represented, and grouped with others that appear at least superficially akin (if not always more profoundly related).

With this exhibition, as with ongoing discussions at design schools, people may still be left wondering, "What is Urban Design?" And such questioning may be the show's greatest contribution. By reframing the discipline into categories, the curators open the formulation of Urban Design to a new scope of possibilities. Even for a field that has comfortably enjoyed more than 50 years of self-reflection in classrooms and journals, this opportunity for yet more debate places it in more tangible terms than before.
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Where independent contractors are concerned, know the rules

Practice Matters

By Alec Appelbaum

Architecture firms may need to lure extra hands for all sorts of reasons. One might be to staff up for a sweet opportunity that’s too good to pass up, but is just a bit beyond the capacity of the office. Another might be to get the benefits of a specialist whose skills are perfect for a current project but might or might not be needed in the future. Those sorts of situations always present princi-

pals with a dilemma: do you hire new staff permanently or expand temporarily using hired guns? At first glance it appears that if the good times won’t last and overhead will have to be shaved when the project ends, independent contractors may seem to be the solution.

But don’t think that just because you’ve decided not to withhold income and social security taxes from a person’s wages that the Internal Revenue Service will agree that you’ve truly retained an independent contractor. The IRS can be very picky about this and it has certain tests to apply to any given situation. It can hit you with penalties if it disagrees about whether someone has been working for herself or as an employee of your practice. This is not only because it wants to protect workers from unscrupulous practices, but it also wants a smoother flow of tax payments and, ostensibly, a fairer market. “Employers that improperly deprive workers of benefits disadvantage those businesses that bear higher costs in complying with the law,” said Massachusetts’ tax agency in a 2004 advisory explaining its strict attitude. “In this way, independent contractor misclassification undermines fair market competition.”

Architecture has become a more collaborative business as clients have sought sustainability, buzz, and new technology. The kind of expertise a practice needs to reach a new threshold often involves specialists—lighting consultants, irrigation experts, model-makers—who may only work for a short time. Hiring outside companies such as structural engineers need not induce the employee-or-contractor question: the firms must evaluate their own employment practices. But when architects take on individuals for short stints, tax questions and ethical ones intertwine. Many in the profession, leery of exploiting young and energetic designers, simply avoid taking on help during busy times without providing health benefits and insurance.

Who’s an independent?

Like it or not, somebody becomes an employee in the tax collector’s eyes just by showing up enough times, using your equipment, and willingly taking direction. And, nowadays, when many architects and specialists work freelance forever or between jobs, it is particularly important for large and small practices to document nonpermanent workers carefully.

Senior associate Polly Brazelton of Michael Van Valkenburgh & Associates, which keeps offices in New York and Cambridge, Massachusetts, consulted a lawyer after Massachusetts tightened its definition of “independent contractor” in 2004. On advice from counsel, the firm started withholding payroll taxes from a broader range of workers. Brazelton sums it up: “If they are working in our offices with our equipment for long stretches, even if they had a different expertise, we would classify them as an employee.”

The IRS also invokes a test, the “common-law rule,” to decide whether you have to withhold taxes
from a worker. Essentially, it turns
on how thoroughly the person fol-
lows the firm’s instruction and uses
the firm’s resources. A firm can
only control the results of an inde-
pendent contractor’s work; they
cannot control how the work is
accomplished. Brazelton says her
firm confers employee status via
three tests: “If they are doing sub-
stantially the same work as our
employees, if we are directing the
process by which they work, or we
are providing the location and tools
for them to complete the work.”
She advises architects to show
their lawyers the firm’s hiring prac-
tices, policies, and procedures to
make sure nobody triggers a
meaningful penalty.

Also, have your lawyer draw up
a menu of items that define what it
means to be an independent con-
tactor, and to go over the terms
with every freelancer who comes to
work in your offices, and possibly
have them sign a statement that
says they received the document.
Among the items that might be cov-
ered are that the work is for hire;
that taxes are the responsibility of
the worker; and that the relationship
can be terminated at will by either
party. An adroit freelancer, says
Rafael Pelli of Pelli Clarke Pelli, will
“ask as many questions as possible.”
But knowing what questions to ask,
he adds, only comes with time and
experience.

“There’s a lot of moving
around of younger architects
because it’s very easy for a small
firm to get busy or a large firm to
get busy,” says Ed Rubin, a prin-
cipal in Manhattan’s Mullen Rubin
Architects. (His office consists of
the two principals, an architect, and
a secretary.) “There are many firms
that underpay because they bid
too low on projects to pay wages
that are acceptable.”

Rubin won’t pay freelance fees
to anybody who works full days for
his firm and doesn’t have other
meaningful income. “Sometimes

there’s a subtle difference,” he says.
“If I am a craftsman and I do work
for 20 architects, that’s one thing. If
you just pay me a fee as a way of
avoiding the withholding that comes
with wages, that’s another.”

Freelancers and firm culture
No architect would say that avoiding
hassles from the IRS over who’s an
employee and who’s not will make
them sharper at their craft. But
whether your firm decides its priority
is to train and retain or to run lean
and mean says a lot about a firm’s
culture internally, as well as what
strengths it may offer its clients.
Many architects say that leaving
employment terms loose can lead to
jobs? The answer depends on the
firm’s size and resources. The 20-
person Utile staff includes six
teachers, so Love taps students who
understand the link between their
studio work and the experience they
gain in the job. While small firms like
this can use students to support a
team, large ones can treat ambitious
projects as chances to deepen their
overall strength. Again, firm culture
drives the decision as much as
bookkeeping does.

Seattle-based NBBJ uses
labor-intensive new jobs as occa-
sions for finding new hires who can
enrich the firm over the long haul.
NBBJ architect Kerry Hegedus
says the chance to design Safeco Field
for the Seattle Mariners prompted
the firm to use a smaller firm in-
house for a limited time—but also
prompted a wave of new hires who

DRAW UP A LIST OF ITEMS THAT DEFINE
WHAT AN INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR IS
AND GO OVER IT WITH THOSE YOU HIRE.

excessively casual attitudes about
the quality of the work, since free-
lancers may not have the same level
of commitment that employees do.

Tim Love, AIA, principal at Utile
Design in Boston, says a payment
scheme often influences how work-
ers manage their time. He says
bringing on workers without bene-
fits can make a studio seem more
like an atelier than a dynamic
business. Independent contractors
who work for long periods of time
without getting social security or
workers’ comp, he says, can start
to feel like students. The message
from the “employer” to the worker
can amount to: “You [should] pay
me to work here because it’s like
you’re in school.” Love treats this as
a “shady practice” that used to arise
fairly often at “boutique firms.” And
he says he avoids it as much to
preserve a “9 A.M. to 6 P.M. culture,”
in which everyone feels impetus to
work efficiently, as to stay out of
trouble with the tax collector.

So if a broad definition of
“employee” serves your bookkeeping
and your bottom line, how can a firm
go about staffing up for sudden big

One head of a six-person firm even
argues that this treatment stokes
creativity and output, but steers
clear of long-term commitments.

“People act as employees in every
respect except for on the books,”
he says. “In every respect it’s like
working at SOM except that come
payday, they invoice me, I cut them
a check for the full amount, and
they pay their own taxes.” Tellingly,
this person only spoke on the condi-
tion of anonymity.

This practitioner argues that
freeing himself from accounting
headaches enhances office produc-
tivity by treating workers with respect.

“It’s not easy for a young firm to
heap on benefits. I pay more than a
lot of small firms, and I’d rather
give [workers] the money and have
them figure out how to spend their
money,” he says. “The arrangement
lets his staff claim tax deductions on
equipment, meals, transportation,
and home-office equipment they use.
The IRS has examined the practice, he says,
adding that his “immaculate records” document all his office’s
work and sent the examiner away
after 2 hours.

In crowded markets, where
there is almost always lots of work,
people may work as independent
contractors throughout their entire
career. In New York City, an advo-
cacy group, Freelancers Union, offers
health insurance at discounted rates
to independent designers. And even
in cities without insurance pools,
there may be enough work available
for ambitious designers to cover
their own taxes and insurance while
they build a portfolio. In this situation,
advise Pelli, the worker should clar-
ify mutual goals and approaches at
the outset. “That’s a critical point
architects should know how to do with
clients, of course. But it’s not some-
thing they can do with the IRS.”

Always consult a lawyer or account-
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A wall-mounted oven that offers counter service

By Rita Catinella Orrell

With the touch of a button, Gaggenau's 24-inch Lift Oven's glass ceramic base lowers directly from the oven to the countertop, where meals can be loaded and then raised into the cooking cavity. According to the manufacturer, this new approach results in minimal energy loss as the heat remains in the upper cavity when it is opened. The design may also aid users who have limited strength or mobility as access from three sides eliminates the need to reach into a hot oven. The stainless-steel-tinted glass front oven can either be hung on a wall or built into hanging cabinetry. Features include halogen lighting, 11 heating methods, automatic temperature recommendation, and precise electronic temperature control. An added bonus for cooks: Items such as bread and pizza can be cooked directly on the glass ceramic base, and a pyrolytic self-cleaning program burns off any residues left behind. Gaggenau, Huntington Beach, Calif. www.gaggenau-usa.com CIRCLE 200

Clockwise from top left: A drawing illustrates the oven's ventilation and air-extraction slots, which must remain free from obstruction; the oven descended to counter height; halogen lighting provides a view of the interior.

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1 A designer’s legacy  Designed by the late Maarten Van Severen (and carried through by his former assistant), Pastoe’s introduction of a leather lounge chair was quite the surprise. The chair features a one-sided mounted armrest and a cross-stitched leather cover that is screwed to the stainless steel frame. Pastoe, Utrecht, The Netherlands. www.pastoe.nl CIRCLE 201

2 Lava flow  The team behind Studio Vertret, Kirsten Ane Hoppert and Steffen Kroll, designed the Lava sofa for Cor. Featuring an amorphous, flowing form, Lava includes a range of transforming elements, including one that overlaps the seat of the sofa to spread onto the floor. Cor, Rheda-Wiedenbrück, Germany. www.cor.de CIRCLE 202

3 Updated classics  Thonet’s classic bentwood chairs were recently treated to a face-lift. The Viennese Coffee House Chair, or Chair no. 214, is now available with an airy, mesh-fabric seat in addition to the original woven-cane seat, and in upholstered versions in a variety of colors. Thonet, Frankenberg, Germany. www.thonet.de CIRCLE 203

4 Finshed floors  Textile designer Hannna Korvela’s most recent introduction is Aqua, a resilient indoor/outdoor rug. Unlike most water-resistant rugs, Aqua has a soft look that is suitable for residential use and in spas for sauna and pool areas. Hanna Korvela Design, Kuopio, Finland. www.hannakorveladesign.fi CIRCLE 204

5 Log on  As one half of imm’s Ideal House exhibitors alongside Zaha Hadid, Naoto Fukasawa played a major role at this year’s fair. Resembling a fallen tree, his distinctive Log series in oak veneer features low, hollow benches, both long and short, and a vertical stool that doubles as a table. Swedese, Vaggeryd, Sweden. www.swedese.com CIRCLE 205
6 Giddy up When it comes to finding playful, even off-the-wall pieces, Belgian outdoor line Extremis is typically a safe bet. This year in Cologne, the company presented an unusual new outdoor seating ensemble. Bronco is a plastic stool whose shape is derived from a horse saddle. The accompanying table, Corral, also made from rotation-molded polyethylene, can be lit up in various colors depending on the chosen filter. When hung upside down, the table becomes a light fixture fittingly called Cuppedown. Extremis, Gijverinkhove, Belgium. www.extremis.be CIRCLE 206

7 Soft woods Founded in 1995, e15 established its reputation for its exclusive use of solid wood, particularly oak. Recently the company has broadened its scope, this year introducing two new upholstered pieces. The Kashan sofa is easily identifiable as an e15 product with its solid wood backrest and Minimalist form. The Shiraz sofa (shown), on the other hand, features no wood at all. Its unusual form was inspired in part by traditional Persian seating islands. e15, Oberursel, Germany. www.e15.com CIRCLE 207

8 Far-out fabric Winner of the Best Item award at IMM, Kinnasand’s Rocco fabric exploits a new development in weaving technology. Using a special clip-cord technique, the multi-layered, graphically arranged colored panels optically flow into one another. The resulting complex coloring and shading gives its airiness from the change from sheer to densely woven stripes. Kinnasand, Westerstede, Germany. www.kinnasand.de CIRCLE 208

9 Punk rocker The young design duo of Patrick Frey and Markus Boge have designed products for several German furniture companies, most recently for the playful line Elmar Flötotto. The splayed legs of their new seat, Abraham, may look a bit odd, but they make for a comfortable and smooth rocking chair. Available with a matching ottoman. Elmar Flötotto, Gütersloh, Germany. www.elmarfloettotto.de CIRCLE 109
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Snapshot

By Beth Broome

After the last of the *crema Catalana* has been consumed and the dregs at the bottom of the demitasse cup are all that remain of a blowout dinner, a car ride home can be a real letdown. Hoping to extend the experience of dining at Les Cols, a world-class restaurant in Olot, in northeastern Spain, chef and owner Fina Puigdevall called upon local architects RCR to create a luxurious but spare lodging—with five separate pavilions—for diners wishing to spend the night. Four years earlier, RCR had designed the restaurant itself, using steel in varied and fanciful treatments, on the ground floor of the Puigdevall family’s 17th-century farmhouse [RECORD, September 2003, page 136].

The chef brings a philosophy to her cooking that celebrates pure, unadulterated ingredients. And the architects seem to share this view. “We use as few materials as possible,” says RCR partner Carme Pigem. “We try to exploit the different ways of using or looking at the same material.” Each slightly different from the next, the pavilions are, except for their steel structural elements, almost entirely of...
Layers of transparency and reflection blur lines between inside and out (right). Bathrooms are minimal to an extreme (below). Pavilions are accessed off of glass-louver-lined exterior corridors (bottom).

In a single material: glass, expressed in laminated ceilings and floors; transparent walls and doors; and translucent floor-to-ceiling louvers.

To enter the pavilions, guests follow one of two narrow paths defined by stainless-steel elevated walkways and flanked by the louvered glass walls that cast a dramatic green glow. Each pavilion looks out onto its own small courtyard, paved in dark concrete, textured to resemble both a plowed field and lava flows—a nod to the region’s volcanic past. This treatment continues beneath the pavilions, visible through the raised glass floors. Clusters of thin steel tubes, painted green to mimic reeds, provide privacy between the small buildings.

RCR has created a postprandial hermitage in the midst of this small Catalanian town. The decor is monastic. Each interior features a single piece of furniture: a leather-clad mattress that serves as a table, bed, or sofa. There are no TVs, phones, or electric outlets. A built-in closet and mini bar remain discreetly concealed. Bathrooms are similarly pared-down, featuring simple black fixtures devoid of fittings as the sink and bath are constantly filled with water, relying on a sensor to prompt replenishing as needed.

While transparency and infinite reflections help bring the outside in, the rooms’ austerity draws the visitor’s focus even deeper inside, beyond the confines of the space. “You have the sky, the air, the silence, the water,” says Pigem, noting that leaving guests alone with these natural elements gives them entrée to one of the richest delicacies of all: introspection. Even if you did not come to Les Cols to meditate, there is a good chance you will be feeling the flow of your chi before you check out.
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Seven swimming pools offer contrasting places of leisure and sensory experience — RECORD dives in

By John Gendall and Sarah Amelar

Pools are all about experience. *The Graduate's* Benjamin Braddock, aimlessly adrift on his inflatable raft and peering through his diving mask, can attest to it. As can the starlet of glossy Hollywood 8x10s, lounging poolside in a glamorous bikini and stilettos.

People once went to pools for sacred rites of bathing and immersion, as in ancient Greece and Rome. Now such aqueous oases have more to do with rites of leisure than anything else. And no matter how shallow or deep the experiences offered there, swimming

Just add Water

Left: OMA: Villa dall’Ava, St. Cloud, France.

Right: Julia Morgan: Marion Davies’s Beach House, Santa Monica, California.
pools remain fabricated environments—artificial bodies of water, whether rectilinear or kidney-shaped and lined in turquoise, or placid planks of liquid vanishing into the horizon.

Presenting a small collection of choice residential pools, RECORD slips into a sensible swim-suit and takes the plunge. Moving from the inside to the outside, and then back in again, we float from the depths of artifice to the shimmering surfaces of faux nature.

At Marion Davies’s California beach house, designed by Julia Morgan for William Randolph Hearst, the indoor pool glitters with lapis and gold tile. This surface suggests an opulent oriental rug that, in effect, upholsters not only the pool, but also the poolside, the walls, and the ceiling. Enveloping the entire space in deep-water hues and rich textile patterns, this pool area becomes an exotic, all-immersive living room.

Meanwhile, outdoors, David Hockney, the arbiter of all things aquatic (and perhaps, artificial), abandons the rectilinear in favor of the kidney for his own pool in Southern California. The kidney-shaped backyard pool (a cousin of amoeba or boomerang coffee tables) became a prototype in the 1950s. With it, the artist celebrates the banality of the American suburb. By painting swirling, multicolored lines on the great water container’s bottom, he gives it an added dimension, playfully suggesting wild undercurrents.

In Papudo, Chile, Smiljan Radic cantilevers a cast-concrete pool, thrusting it like a visual spring-
Right: Smiljan Radic:
Casa Pite, Papudo,
Chile.

Right: David Hockney:
The Artist's Own Pool,
Southern California.
board to the Atlantic Ocean. While Radic projects this line of sight into the horizon, Rem Koolhaas, with his Villa dall’Ava pool, aims the trajectory at the metropolis of Paris. In the Chilean example, you swim laps in a concrete box while floating toward the sea, whereas in the other, you plunge in amid trees, only to drift toward the city in the distance.

But instead of surging forward, the pool at Bohlin Cywinski Jackson’s Farrar Residence nestles into a forest. Its swimming area’s glazed end—literally cutting a section through the water—creates a compelling aquarium effect, with the glass enclosure revealing swimmers only a thin separation away from the earth beneath them.

Even deeper in the ground, the subterranean pool at Jonathan Woolf’s Hampstead Heath Brick Leaf House occupies a cavernous setting. Poetically lit by shafts of daylight entering through thin, overhead perimeter openings, this space engages simple means to produce a mesmerizing effect, abstracting the sun’s rays into intersecting planes of illumination.

Finally, Nataniel Fuster orchestrates yet another dynamic play of light and water at his Casa Delphin pool in Puerto Rico. Here, small perforations in the ceiling parse rays that the water reflects and refracts, generating an animated dappled effect.

With each of these pools set at its own experiential temperature, the water’s fine—so put on that swimsuit, inflate your raft, and come on in.
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ow to slip a rambling 21st-century dwelling into the narrow bell tower of a 17th-century church by Christopher Wren? Tackling that architectural riddle, nearly as perplexing as the prospect of passing a camel through the eye of a needle, architects Boyarsky Murphy rose to the occasion with a remarkable 11-story “flat,” a soaring folly in central London. This great monolithic spike stands in Record Houses 2007 amid six other featured projects. Though no two houses rose from similar circumstances, an extraordinary challenge generated each one.

On Hawaii’s Big Island, 80-mile-per-hour winds were the driving force behind Cutler Anderson’s Ohana Guest House. Here, a detail—a steel tie anchored to the house’s lava-rock plinth to lace down the roof—engendered the whole, a house formed to weather the trade winds.

Meanwhile, a tight squeeze—a densely forested site—inspired TNA’s Ring House, in Japan. Preserving the trees, TNA inserted among them a tall, delicate building rising from a minimal footprint. With deftly engineered expanses of transparency, the structure was designed as an idyllic perch for viewing woodland growth.

For a weekend home in New York State, UNStudio’s clients, aficionados of Modern architecture, expressed a daunting desire: a new work rivaling anything by Neutra or Schindler. UNStudio responded by reinterpreting the midcentury masters, putting a 21st-century spin (and, literally, a brilliant glow) on that clean-lined aesthetic.

Though in most of these cases, client enlightenment helped prime the way for innovation, the owners of the three remaining houses were the architects themselves, who would be living with their experiments.

For Stephen Kieran’s weekend home, in Taylors Island, Maryland, he and his firm, Kieran Timberlake, set out to test a construction method using entirely prefabricated elements and components, including cartridges with integral building systems that allowed for assembly of the prototypical Lobolly House in just a few weeks. Siting the building gently like a camouflaged duck blind, the team gave it barklike sheathing that echoes the surrounding lobolly grove and piloting that evokes tree trunks.

In Omaha, Nebraska, Randy Brown’s house evolved, by design, as an improvisatory collaboration with the architect’s students. Beyond the datum of a traditional program and limited material palette, the project lay wide open to considered invention. Flaunting its process and protesting the Prairie trope’s polite conventions of low horizontality in the landscape, the house, nicknamed LAB-or-a-t-ory, remains an energetic work in progress.

Finally, Pvé’s Casa Poli, a concrete cube recalling a great porous rock, appears to have grown from the jagged coastal cliff beneath it. The materials and construction methods not only speak to the site, but also accommodate the skills of local laborers. Doubling as an artists’ retreat, the house frames multiple, often abstract readings of the rugged landscape—offering myriad thought-provoking, but curiously relaxing views.

Each of our seven featured houses—imaginative solutions—emerged from idiosyncratic sources of inspiration, with constraints and obstacles as colorful and varied as the venues themselves. Sarah Amelar
Sited atop a hill in rural New York State, the house appears to rise over the terrain. A long drive leads to the building’s east side and carport. UNStudio inserted a lap pool on the western slope.
Joining rectilinear forms with a twist, UNStudio’s VILLA NM, in upstate New York, captures the landscape in gold reflections.

The house morphs into a different form with each elevation, as revealed from its north (top), southeast (middle), and west (bottom) orientations.

By Suzanne Stephens

The client, a New York–based developer with a young family, had a clear goal: a weekend house “as exciting as anything by Neutra and Schindler.” With VILLA NM, he got it—in spades. The flat-roofed, taut, planar house in upstate New York, designed by UNStudio, of Amsterdam, both evokes its predecessors and pushes their architectonic qualities into a new realm.

Whereas the Modernist structures of the early-to-mid-20th century emanated from simple rectangles that seemed to float above a grassy lawn or perch on a craggy cliff, something else is going on here. If the south elevation brings to mind Mies van der Rohe’s Farnsworth House (1951) coupled with Philip Johnson’s Glass House (1949), or the stepped massing to the north harks back to Schindler’s Lovell House (1926), then what about that curved middle section? While the original architectural paradigms define the box-on-a-rock category, this villa is a box-on-a-rock-with-a-twist. The singular insertion of what UNStudio principal Ben van Berkel calls a “bloblike moment” causes a simple shoe-box shape to bifurcate into two separate volumes, one clinging to the northern slope, the other detaching itself from the ground to leave room underneath for a covered parking space. Not only does the new prototype assume a more complex spatial relationship to the land, it creates quite a different interior environment.

The client and his wife, both aficionados of current design and art, encountered the work of UNStudio, headed by van Berkel and Caroline Bos, at the Museum of Modern Art’s 1999 Unprivate House exhibition. There, the couple (who themselves are very private) were drawn to the display of the firm’s attenuated Möbius House, built in Het Gooi, the Netherlands, in 1998, and inspired by the Möbius strip, the single-surface topological model. As van Berkel recalls, “They were fascinated by the way the design wove together living, working, and sleeping activities in a continuous movement.”

The client found 2 acres on a hilltop that commands spectacular views of rolling pastures and forests with no other houses in sight. Both he and his wife, who are originally from Russia, welcome changing seasons and wanted to watch turning leaves and falling snow while inside the house. The architects happily responded with what they called a “viewfinder dacha”—a 3,600-square-foot villa, which dramatically embraces the surrounding landscape through expansive glass walls.

But more unexpected are the swooping interior spaces forming the core of the house, which you first detect as you approach the front door and carport, tucked under the cantilevered bedroom wing: Here, the exterior wall of the south end lifts up in a gentle curve to meet the soffit above

Project: VILLA NM, New York State
Architect: UNStudio—Ben van Berkel, principal; Olaf Gipser, Andrew Benn, Colette Parras, Jacco van Wengerden, Maria Eugenia Diaz, Jan Debelius, Martin Kuiter, Pablo Rica, Olga Vazquez-Ruano, Wouter de Jonge, team
Engineers: Robert Slulman Associates (structural, HVAC)
Landscape: Poudre Design Group
the entrance. Passing through the entry vestibule, you enter the house proper, where a sculptural cooking island in the kitchen leads your eye out through the glass wall toward a pastoral view to the north. But your attention is quickly diverted in the other direction—to the accordion edge of the stair, revealed like a crisply pleated sheet unfurling within cocoonlike white plastered walls. The stairway’s contours and splayed treads pull you up to the living room on a level poised 5 feet above the entry. The exuberant spatial effect of this small-scale Baroque circulation device is mesmerizing: You half expect Georges Guétary to pop out and croon “I’ll Build a Stairway to Paradise,” as he did so memorably in the 1951 film An American in Paris.

As you ascend to the white living room, your gaze is again propelled out into the landscape through glass expanses to the south and west. A massive fireplace wall, sheathed in a tightly grained Macassar ebony, defines the space to the east (and conceals structural cross bracing). But then you notice that the fluidly sculptural stair behind you has taken a sharp turn to float up to another half level, where it ends in an onyx-paneled bath and adjoining master bedroom.

From this landing, you look down on a twisted vortex of line and space that van Berkel describes as a “kaleidoscopic dynamism, where mobility and materiality come together.” If there were a remake of the 1971
Prefabricated contoured steel panels (section, above) form a clam-shaped bedroom on one level and a bath underneath. The bedroom's profile is expressed on the exterior of the east elevation (below), near the V-shaped columns.
film *Diamonds are Forever*, this stair and living room should be the place where the Amazonian bodyguards cavort with James Bond, rather than John Lautner's Elrod House (1968), which was the setting in the original film.

On the upper level, another *coup de théâtre* awaits, a bedroom for the couple's son that takes the form of a clam shell with a sloping ceiling and floor lined in dark-brown African wenge wood. The bed—not yet installed—will project as a flat plane from the wall and floor. (The girl's bedroom, more conventionally configured, comes with an amoeba-shaped bathroom.)

How does a contractor go about building such a structure, especially where twisted and curved surfaces meet planar volumes? "Not easily," anyone familiar with U.S. builders' predilection for orthogonal wood-frame houses would reply. Using computer modeling, van Berkel and his team, which included Robert Silman Associates as the structural engineers, went back and forth with several variations on the parti to come up with a design that could be realized by a local builder. Van Berkel, used to European construction techniques, had figured that much of the house, especially the curvy core elements, would be concrete; the rest, steel. While he and the client found a local builder game enough to take on the job, the methods turned out to be more ordinary: A hybrid structure of steel studs and framing elements along with wood rafters, joists, and studs, plus a
UNStudio's Ben van Berkel wanted the "box to meet the blob" (above) in this house, as realized on the exterior. The strongly sculptural stair, with a sharply pleated profile (below), loops up from the ground floor to the living level and then to the bedroom level.

1. Entry vestibule
2. Kitchen
3. Living
4. Bedroom
5. Master bedroom
6. Parking
The voluptuous, plastered stair core twists up to the bedroom level, where the glass-walled master bath opens up to the view.

Concrete deck and foundations, give this house its zoomy, 21st-century look.

Five standardized, prefabricated, single-curved steel panels (instead of poured concrete) lend the interior spaces their distinctive shape and helped keep costs down. At the same time, the steel in the cantilevered bedroom floor (partly supported by the carport’s V-shaped welded-pipe columns) and the wraping of the curved panels around metal-pipe columns turned this into a very customized construction process.

As for the exterior walls, concrete is sprayed over the frame and painted a rich, earthy brown, with certain areas filled in by translucent polycarbonate panels. The glass window walls are tinted gold, rather rare in noncommercial buildings. “We wanted the house to pick up the color of the leaves,” says van Berkel. “I experimented with different kinds of glass, looking for one that would mirror the landscape,” he explains. Although gold reflective glass, which dominated sunbelt skyscrapers in the 1970s, went the way of the leisure suit, it reveals van Berkel’s bravado—or his romanticism: “Gold seems also to be most like the sky at dusk.”

Where the house differs from so many of its early Modernist predecessors is in the way it doesn’t try to meld with the landscape. Instead of hunkering down in the earth à la Frank Lloyd Wright, or merging interior and exterior spaces through sliding glass walls and outdoor decks, the living quarters appear sealed off in a gold-and-brown envelope (though there are vertical operable windows). The house presents itself as an autonomous, high-design object, in the spirit of Le Corbusier’s Villa Savoie (1929).

The voluptuous interior, combined with the taut rectilinearity and reflectivity of thin, flat, exterior surfaces; the Miesian use of luxurious materials; and the Corbusian detachment from the landscape speak of the architects’ knowing sense of history. Their take on it, however, seems to demonstrate a certain Dutch madness, not unlike Rem Koolhaas’s Mies-on-meth design for IIT’s Campus Center [RECORD, May 2004, page 122]. In the past, van Berkel and Bos have taken risks, culling ideas from the past and transforming them for the present, as in their double-helix Mercedes-Benz Museum in Stuttgart, Germany [RECORD, November 2006, page 126], for which Wright’s Guggenheim Museum provided the DNA.

At Villa NM, the firm’s sophisticated “both/and” approach boldly manifests itself through investigations of the box with the blob, commercial with domestic materials, and high with low cultural allusions. Having an adventuresome client meant UNStudio could catapult the design of the Modern house into the 21st century. ■

For Sources, go to page 148, and Projects at archrecord.com.
The thin vertical lines of the mullions and cables along the accordion-pleated stair and the soft curves of the soffit and floor (right) lend the house its ethereal quality.
The architects partially embedded their 2,100-square-foot mini-tower into a hillside, nestling the striped, semitransparent structure amid pine, cherry, and a host of other trees.

By Naomi Pollock

A product designer with a young family was so taken with photos of the Ring House that he bought the place before even visiting it. "Even the developer was shocked," exclaims Makoto Takei, a principal of Takei-Nabeshima-Architects (TNA), the architects who designed the striking mini-tower on spec for a planned community in the town of Karuizawa, some 185 miles northwest of the Japanese capital. As an upscale weekend enclave, Karuizawa may be Tokyo's equivalent of New York City's Hamptons (minus the beach), but the developer had nonetheless failed repeatedly to sell the raw land on which Ring House now stands. Among the least desirable of the community's 318 lots, the property forms a steeply sloped valley, bound at its higher end by a road on three sides. Unlike many of the other sites, this one offers no views of snow-capped Mount Asama, and its southern exposure—the most precious asset of any Japanese home—faces the rear of someone else's house. The developer, hoping his luck would turn if he marketed the land together with a house, commissioned TNA, a three-person firm, whose two, 30-something principals had previously worked at Tezuka Architects [ RECORD, December 2002, page 98]. The developer, a younger himself, had seen TNA's work published in a magazine and was keen to give the newly minted design team a chance to build.

"Despite the flaws, we thought it was a great site," recalls TNA principal Chie Nabeshima. The 1/8-acre property was not merely large by Japanese country-house standards, but also dotted with pine, cherry, and a host of other trees. Besides, the architects were confident they could make the slanted ground plane work to their advantage. Though code-stipulated setbacks defined the lot's buildable area, the forest guided the placement of the structure. "We cut down only three trees," boasts Takei, "the fewest number of any house in this entire development."


Project: Ring House, Karuizawa, Japan
Architect: Takei-Nabeshima-Architects (TNA)—Makoto Takei, Chie Nabeshima, principals; Ryousuke Fujitani, assistant
Engineers: ASA—Akira Suzuki, Yuuki Kuroiwa
Lighting: Lighting Architect & Associates—Masahide Kakudate
General contractor: Niitsu-gumi
A country retreat outside Tokyo, **TNA’s RING HOUSE** opens itself to vertical forest views through horizontal stripes.
The horizontal stripes, which form the tower's structural beams, are clad in charcoal-colored yakisugi, a singed cedar.
Some trees stand just 3 feet from Ring House’s outer wall. This proximity was intentional, as the architects envisioned their building—with pronounced verticality and many vantage points—as a perch for appreciating the woodland growth. “You need various heights to truly enjoy trees,” explains Takei. Yet code permitted a building only 33 feet high, with two stories plus a basement.

So they created a mini-tower at the maximum height, skinned in alternating bands of wood and glass—an irregularly striped sheath that evenly balances transparency and opacity, acting more like a screening filter than a bona fide barrier. As sunlight floods into the interior by day (or electric illumination glows from within the volume by night), the wrapper allows views straight through the house. With three 20-foot-square floors, including a basement partially embedded in the hillside, the architects provided entrances at the lowest and middle levels. In the basement, they put the *doma*, an all-purpose entry vestibule-cum-storage area, and a tatami-mat guest room; on the first floor, a combined living/dining room and kitchen; and on the second, the family bedroom (since pre-elementary-school children in Japan frequently share their parents’ bed), with additional steps rising to the bath, where a ladder ascends to the roof deck.

Strategically placed to protect the owner’s privacy, the obi-like belts of charcoal-colored wood range from 49 inches wide, to conceal sleeping and bathing areas, to 11 inches wide, for handrails on the roof. The 4.5-inch-thick bands enclosing the building required at least 12 inches of vertical depth, since they double as glue-laminated structural beams. Made of Oregon pine, these horizontal members are painted white on the inside, clad on the outside in *yakisugi*—a durable and subtly grained singed cedar, traditionally used for everything from temples to teahouses—and bolted to 12 slender columns, evenly spaced along the house’s perimeter. Also of wood painted white, each column measures 5 inches square, but soars a staggering 34 feet to the top of the roof railing. Instead of rising from buried foundations, the posts simply sit on the
basement floor, transferring the loads laterally via bolted connections to the concrete wall that anchors the house. "Usually columns and beams are in the same plane," says Takei. But Ring House's construction gives priority, from the exterior to the horizontal stripes.

Unlike homes with conventional outer walls, the 1,100-square-foot Ring House has everything, from kitchen counters to curtain rails, attached to the wood bands. Even the custom-designed wood-burning stove hovers above the floor, hanging from one of the timber ribbons. Though potentially distracting vertical elements, such as drain pipes and downspouts, were unavoidable, the architects helped them recede visually by making them silver (or black, as with the flue) and confining them to the 5 inches, at the building's perimeter, defined by the depth of the slender columns.

The horizontal wood stripes not only perform structural and masking roles, but also function as window sashes. Composed of two fixed sheets of glass with an insulating air pocket in between, the bands of window sit in grooves carved into the edges of the timber panels. Thin metal mullions and mitered corners join the large panes. For ventilation, each elevation has two subtly framed, operable windows. Explaining the small number of openings, Takei says, "With the building shaped like a chimney, cool air circulates naturally."

Ring House's limited contact with the outdoors may seem a bit extreme for a country home, and the architects' strict prioritization of the horizontal banding does border on the obsessive. But at the same time, this house balances opacity and transparency with exquisite conceptual purity, playing on—and giving form to—wa, the Japanese word for both "ring" and "harmony."

For Sources, go to page 148, and Projects at archrecord.construction.com.
Most of the house's fixtures and components—including the cantilevered, custom wood-burning stove (opposite, right top) and the stair landings (this page and opposite, top)—fit neatly within the horizontal bands of the composite structural beams/exterior cladding.
Brown plans to use the cantilevered, 20-foot-high "gallery" or "big cube" for entertaining guests. His sons' rooms are set back, below it.
Randy Brown draws a line in the sand for Nebraska architecture with his family's BROWN HOUSE, a labor of love in Omaha

By Russell Fortmeyer

Andy Brown, FAIA, treats Nebraska architecture the same way Conor Oberst treats its music. Oberst, otherwise known as Bright Eyes, sings “No one ever plans to sleep out in the gutter/sometimes that’s just the most comfortable place” in his 2005 song “Road to Joy,” and you can’t help but sense the same theme of turning circumstance into opportunity, with a slight wink to its consequences, unfolding in Brown’s massive Omaha house perched among trees on a hilly 10-acre lot north of the city. You won’t see another house like this 12-gaue-hot-rolled-steel-clad landmark in Omaha—if not the state—guaranteed.

Once you drive the gravel road to the back of the native prairie site, the main form of the house looms over you with what Brown calls the “big cube,” or “gallery,” which contains the living room in an oversize extruded steel tube, split in two, peeled back in some locations to reveal windows and punctured in others to allow new hallways to connect with an existing house. These few sweeping figural gestures announce the architect’s ambitions as clearly as anything: Here, architecture is a closed system of continuous materials and program for the architect to manipulate. A minimal set of materials—steel, drywall, conventional lumber, glass, plastic—and a conventional program (including four bedrooms, five bathrooms, a living room) freed Brown to make the new structure’s organization less cohesive, more improvisatory.

And so, beginning in 2003, he took his preparatory drawings and concocted the construction of his family’s house over three years. That ad hoc impulse also fed the summer work programs Brown has orchestrated since 1998 for architecture students from a handful of colleges. (Prior to this house, which he nicknamed LAB-or-a-t-ory, students contributed to his other Omaha projects.) Adventurous kids, receiving pay and academic credit, spent a few weeks each summer drawing before descending en masse on the house to experiment with designs and ultimately fabricate them. This breezy group effort—an alt-rock update on the Frank Lloyd Wright Taliesin camp—led to many happy discoveries, plus craftsmanship rivaling houses that cost much more than the $495,000 paid for this one of 5,100 square feet.
The main entrance straddles the new structure's entry hall and the bridge connecting to the existing house. The stairwell presents a choice: Climb up to the public levels of the house and across to the gallery or continue below to the childrens' floor, tucked under the "big cube" and capped with a green roof.
"We redesigned every piece before we built it," Brown says. "The building department didn’t look at the drawings; they looked at what was there." So did Brown. When he bought the site in 1999, it came with an unexceptional two-story 1950s yellow ranch-style house that would suffice as a home for himself, his wife, and two young sons until he was ready to build the house he really wanted. Although he plans to remodel it, the yellow house, now in use for its kitchen, connects to the new structure via two hallways: a bridge from the main living floor to the “big cube” and an on-grade hallway leading to the children’s bedrooms, a playroom, and a guest suite, all on the lower level, and a rear stair up to the master suite, on the third floor. You enter this bipolar house through a lower hallway that shares a foyer with a staircase leading up to the bridge. From this central pivot point, the interior splay into an almost bizarre configuration of spaces, with an uncannily disjointed plan, that has the effect of centering you as you walk through it. The project defies simple reading, laying bare the inadequacies (and frustrations) of a mere description of a processional experience. Understanding the house is best left to reading its plan and section (or better yet, its model, which more than anything guided the house’s evolution). Like Peter Eisenman’s deconstructed house projects, Brown’s building exposes the subjective conditions of what we might call houseness, but unlike Eisenman, who largely concerned himself with deliberate misreadings of architecture’s conventions as deployed in residential work, Brown uses these fissures in understanding to implement a schema of intricate, resourceful craft. Many of his details, such as wood-slat screens surrounding the children’s bedrooms, emerged from intensely focused work by his students—the roadies to Brown’s rock god.

Unlike an academic architecture of overconsidered, underproduced gimmicks, Brown’s idea for the house—its system—was allowed to
bend to the improvisatory will of his team of constructors, providing a nuanced critique of how we actually produce architecture today. And it opened Brown to hidden opportunities.

In simplest terms, the exterior functions as a single-skin container. All seven levels of the house connect through various vertical and horizontal passages, although the structure officially qualifies as having only three floors and a mezzanine (as if it matters). Once the steel framing was complete, Brown recognized more possibilities for spatial invention. The master bedroom, originally planned as one level, spread out with its sleeping area above and a study on top of that, leaving the bathroom to itself with a double-height ceiling over the tub—a void created by pulling the bedroom floor away from the outer wall. The office’s wood desk plate distorts to become the headboard of the bed below. “Continuities,” Brown would say. All three areas of the suite take advantage of northwest views through giant steel-framed windows (fabricated in situ) into a preserved forest of walnut, oak, and poplar trees.

Whereas the master bedroom responds vertically to the site, the double-height living room (or gallery), encased within the big cube, on the fourth level, stretches horizontally toward the prairie horizon. A wet bar emerges as a small mezzanine, its one-by-two wood slat surface integrated into a steel staircase beneath it. Both the master suite and gallery adhere to Brown’s minimal material palette—slatted wood on the bar, maple on the floors, acres of white drywall and glass—shifting the focus to the views out.

While most of the individual rooms share this serene, almost contemplative use of the house’s forms and materials, each circulation area develops a different spatial and material logic. Three-quarter-inch, frosted-plastic glazing wraps the bridge connecting the gallery’s mezzanine to the existing house. The folded-steel stairwell down from the gallery to the chi-
The master suite forms three levels (left), with glazing elements and the desk-cum-headboard device visually unifying the space. The children's bedrooms (above) are concealed behind wood slats.

dren's rooms, at grade, spills through a contorted screen of more wood slats (Brown estimates nearly 1,000 of them throughout). The slat aesthetic repeats itself at a secondary stair off the entry hall, setting the tone for the lower floors with a ceiling of exposed, intricately framed two-by-twelve boards with conduits and piping neatly hidden between the roof's sheathing and an upper layer of insulation and rubber. This slotted ceiling continues into the large playroom, which features a concrete floor with a radiant system that Brown says heats most of the house through simple convection currents.

Manipulating the conventions of architecture is the contemporary architect's basic right, if not the core of many an innovative practice. But where do you start—or end? Why does a nest of stacked two-by-four boards, constructed of leftover scraps, encircle the toilet in one of Brown's bathrooms (all the more jarring given the smoothness of the nearby light-gray-and-white Carrara marble sink and shower)? Brown's answer: His system, with its open-ended process, allows for such unexpected gestures. He says his sons have the house exactly right: It's a playground. Omaha, if not architecture in general, needs these "playgrounds," these states of frenzy. Here, a simple material palette openly disguises a plan that obliterates the tropes of traditional Prairie architecture, ever so politely and horizontally nestled into the landscape. Like Oberst's music, this is an architecture of protest—messing with convention by defining a system only to resist it—infected with just enough of Brown's early experience in Los Angeles, as one of the late Frank Israel's students at UCLA, to hit Omaha's ground running. Oh, what the neighbors must think.

For Sources, go to page 148, and Projects at archrecord.construction.com.
Brown and his crew welded the steel main entrance stair themselves (right). Visitors can choose between ascending these stairs to cross the bridge to the gallery or taking the on-grade hallway to the lower level.
Atop a jagged cliff in coastal Chile, Pezo von Ellrichshausen sets CASA POLI, a great concrete cube, evoking a block of porous stone
Casa Poli is only a 30-mile drive from Chile's second-largest city, Concepción, midway down the country's coast, but it feels perched at the edge of the world: a place with limitless ocean views, a soundtrack provided by wind and pelicans, and no other human beings within eyeshot, except for local fishermen in boats, hundreds of feet offshore. Venture 45 minutes outside any major city in the United States, and you're in an exurban tangle of highways, but here, half the roads remain unpaved. In the States, a weekend house such a quick jaunt from the city would mean high prices for land and construction, yet here, Pezo von Ellrichshausen Architects (PvE) built almost 2,000 square feet for $63,000 dollars.

But if the Coliumo Peninsula, on which Casa Poli rests, sounds too idyllic, the truth about its development should be told: On the bay side of this landform, construction cranes are busily erecting weekend retreats for city residents. Only the Pacific Ocean side has remained largely uninhabited, and mostly because many people consider its terrain less suitable for building. Of course, that could change now that word has gotten out about Casa Poli. (The house garnered first prize at the


**Project:** Casa Poli, Coliumo Peninsula, Chile  
**Architects:** Pezo von Ellrichshausen Architects (PvE)  
**Engineer:** Cecilia Pohlete  
**Lighting:** Alberto Silva  
**General contractor:** PvE

Perched atop a 200-foot cliff, the house faces the Pacific Ocean.
2006 Santiago Biennale, where its architects, Mauricio Pezo and Sofia von Ellrichshausen, a married couple, won the Best Young Chilean Architects Award.)

The pair found this piece of pristine cliff through Pezo's friend and mentor, artist and writer Eduardo Meissner and his wife, sculptor Rosemarie Prim. Though the property's value had appreciated in recent years, the seller wanted to divest herself of the 2.5-acre parcel for the same price she'd paid for it long before Chile's economic boom, hoping her generosity would spur the buyers to build something more meaningful than the cookie-cutter, cast-concrete spec houses abounding elsewhere on the peninsula.

The two couples bought the land together in 2003 and at first considered erecting two houses there, but over the course of several dinners realized that neither pair would be on-site enough to warrant double construction. As they discussed the program for a single house, they began to imagine the structure serving not merely themselves, but also a larger community. "Once we decided not to build two houses," recalls von Ellrichshausen, "we knew we needed to do more and give something back to this area." They agreed to turn the house into an artist's residency during the off-season, when neither couple would be using it.

For Pezo and von Ellrichshausen, whose small, five-year-old practice "started the minute we met," jokes von Ellrichshausen, the challenge was to create a house that felt domestic and comfortable, but might also inspire the abstract thinking of artists. Budget, or lack thereof, was a valuable constraint in determining the material palette.

Concrete—cheap, reliable, and low maintenance—served Pezo's needs, with the toughness to fend off formidable elements. At this site, the sun beats down almost 15 hours a day at the peak of summer, and a strong, southerly wind races continually over the cliff year-round. (A recent storm tore apart a neighboring prefab house.)

After considering siting the house some 300 feet back from the precipice that drops 200 feet down to the ocean, the architects picked a more dramatic and less sheltered spot: on the parcel's flattest area, near the land's edge, with uninterrupted 360-degree views. Even if the surrounding tracts, where cows currently graze, are ever developed, they reasoned, this high vantage point would still claim unblocked views.

Of course, the landscape was just one factor influencing the architectural decisions. In a region where shingled salt boxes and concrete shacks typify the previous generation of weekend homes, a glitzy, high-tech residence would have seemed glaringly out of touch with the vernacular architecture and social mores. Instead, a local building crew—wielding one small mixer, four wheelbarrows, and scant background in Modern architecture—completed the cubic, 1,937-square-foot, board-formed concrete house in 18 months.

The formwork left the concrete with a rough-hewn surface that gives the otherwise spare construction a textural richness—a handsomely imperfect, striated motif. Pezo found inspiration from various sources, including the starkness of Adolf Loos's work and, Pezo recalls, from objects that "aren't consciously designed." From a distance, Casa Poli conveys a distinctively less-than-deliberate quality, evoking an ancient ruin. But the intent of the architects soon reveals itself in the way the structure sits atop its granite peaks, as if its ideal, cubic form had evolved from the cliff's jagged shards.

The house, taking its name, Poli, from the Greek for "many," features repeated shapes. Its 20 windows, all square and mullionfree, vary
Viewed from the outside, the staggered windows hint at the varied split levels of interior space (below). The floor plans (bottom) show the hollow perimeter housing closet space, bathrooms, and staircases.

1. Entry foyer
2. Dining/kitchen
3. Living
4. Bedroom
5. Terrace
6. Skylight
7. Open to below
The architects use the main living area (above and far left) for a variety of purposes, including exhibitions during the off-season, when the owners are not in residence for weekend getaways. This space features three separate levels, all opening outdoors through 6.5-foot-tall windows. Stairs to the rooftop terrace are hidden in a hollow perimeter space (left).
Windows frame "swatches" of the landscape, abstracting them in places, while in others creating perfect vignettes of surf, land, and sky (opposite).

The simple furniture, designed by PvE, performs multitasks, such as providing for casual seating or dining (below left). The skylight, along with 20 windows, fills the double-height main living space with sunlight (above).

The architects transformed wood boards, used during construction, into closet doors and shutters, all painted white (left).
from paperback-book-size punctures, with flush glazing, to 7.3-foot-square openings, with the glass set back more than 3 feet from the face of the building, forming entryways on the ground floor and balconies on the second. Staggered at different levels, rather than arrayed in strict bands, the windows hint at the interior’s split-level floor planes, which give the main living space three tiers and provide the bedrooms, located upstairs, with sunken seating and observation areas.

Not surprisingly, the owner-couples, who visit Casa Poli on alternating summer weekends, spend much of their time here simply looking out at the framed vistas, culled from the vast landscape. The patchwork of windows—with several heights visible at once from multistoried spaces or across the split levels—suggests an array of postcards with flat, abstract images of the sea and terrain. At the same time, the large apertures give the sense of a house virtually inhabited by the landscape.

Effectively thickening the perimeter wall, while providing a buffer against the elements, a hollow layer of closets, bathrooms, and staircases lines the cube’s outer shell. Sliding partitions, made of the wood from the concrete formwork, are cleverly recycled as closet doors, painted white. The wood and the concrete carrying its imprints match seamlessly,

THE PATCHWORK OF SQUARE WINDOWS SUGGESTS AN ARRAY OF POSTCARDS WITH ABSTRACT IMAGES OF THE SEA AND LAND.

adding ingeniously to the house’s dialogue between positive and negative forms or spaces. The wood panels also serve as interior shutters, allowing the owners to close up the cube for the week.

From the bedroom windows facing into the main living space, which rises to double height, you get complex, oblique views through, into, and out of Casa Poli. The house’s box-within-a-box-within-a-box layout—a skylit, off-center light well within the living core, in turn surrounded by a service perimeter—is revealed by these sectional views. Yet the horizontal and vertical layering of spaces always keeps some corner hidden. Engaged by this seemingly infinite supply of tableaux, you get the feeling of never occupying any particular level or quadrant of the house. (Imagine inhabiting one of M.C. Escher’s impossible structures—another influence on PV— and you approach this sensation of endlessness).

Just as the multitiered kitchen, dining, and living areas blend together, fluidly morphing in function, the furniture, designed and fabricated by the architects, also performs multitasks. A couch that looks like a built-in fixture, for example, actually opens into four coffee tables. The owners have intentionally left the interior sparsely furnished and uncluttered; likewise, they never leave behind clothes or personal effects. This way, visitors—whether artists in residence or the owners themselves—experience the house as their own and no one else’s. (Already a handful of international painters and sculptors has taken turns using the place as a studio during the winter, and government funds have helped pay for exhibitions and other arts events in the space during the spring.)

The absence of boundaries between most rooms leads to a pleasant lack of structure for time spent at Casa Poli. A day might begin with picking boldo leaves, a mintlike herb that grows all over the cliff, to make tea, followed by a leisurely hike down a footpath to the rocky shoreline where sea lions rest on boulders, or to a cave where the ocean’s tide rushes in, making the loudest noise all day. But this visitor was just as happy to sit on the grass staring at the house, then lounge inside gazing out, finding ultimate enjoyment in contemplating the sheer beauty of the building and its remarkable site.
James Cutler crafts an ocean cottage, **OHANA GUEST HOUSE**, for a windy and lush site at the end of the road on Hawaii’s Big Island.
The Ohana Guest House occupies one of three lots in a 75-acre compound. Set near a former sugar mill in the community of Niulii on the Big Island of Hawaii's windswept north shore, the coastline property lies within a protected conservation zone.
A house near the end of the road holds infinite promise. And here, the architectural stakes rise when the route turns past the northern, windward tip of the island of Hawaii, arriving finally at the blustery, sloping site of a former sugar mill. How to respond to such a heroic natural setting?

The Ohana Guest House at Niulii offers a contemporary illustration of the Wrightian notion of organic architecture, in which “the whole is to the part as the part is to the whole.” Take the defining instance of a detail in this windswept house, in which flitched metal supports slice into ovoid wood columns, then cross brace between uprights. Structural integrity—literally holding things down, not mere ornament—underlies the design of this singular joint and, for that matter, the entire house. “Lacing the roof to the massive earth elements with metal,” as Ohana’s architect James Cutler, FAIA, puts it, was essential to creating a viable structure on this particular site.

The wind, unseen but ever present on the Big Island of Hawaii’s lush north coast, helped inform the building’s shedlike shape. Designed to withstand 80-mile-per-hour sustained gales, the pitched roofs reflect the angle and direction of the prevailing trade winds, which blow in both rain and shine—now clearing, now gusting again.

Set on the clean brow of a 75-acre estate composed of three distinct parcels of land, the guesthouse (ohana means “extended family”) crowns the hillside site, which drops to spectacular oceanfront conservation property graced with historic, spiky Hala trees, used by native Hawaiians for weaving baskets and textiles.

After the parcel had provided decades of service as a casual town dump, the current owners, who have taken a position as stewards of the land, set about planning a home on the full acreage, and embarked on six years of manual cleaning (large equipment is banned by local ordinance) to clear the land of buried detritus. With the site finally cleaned up, three buildings, including a private residence for the owners, a retired executive and his wife, will form the ensemble, which is still in the planning stages by the client and Cutler, with only the guesthouse built so far. While solitary in its siting and primary views out to the sea (about a mile away), the guesthouse rests on a lot, which stretches toward the ocean, where it abuts a community of modest homes.

Defying the Wrightian dictum that a house should be “of” but not “on” a hill, the owner asked the architect literally to raise this house on a plinth at least 2 feet high: The additional elevation provided her with a sense of comfort, particularly for the sleeping spaces. Hawaiian precedent lay in the heiau, a massive raised stone platform, typically used for religious purposes. Here, Cutler used a type of lava stone called a‘a‘i, acquired from the nearby mega-property of Parker Ranch, to form a base rising from

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Project: Ohana Guest House, Hawaii, Hawaii
Architect: Cutler Anderson Architects
—James Cutler, FAIA, principal;
Janet Longenecker, Hiroki Kurzumi
Engineer: Jerome Madden III (structural)
General contractor: Calyton Turnbull
Modest homes lie over the hill’s brow, where the cedar-and-glass Ohana House rises from a lava-stone base (opposite). With pitched roofs angled for wind protection (this spread), the U-configuration (this page, and plan) shelters the pool.

FLOOR PLAN

1. Bedroom
2. Library
3. Living
4. Kitchen
5. Dining
6. Media
7. Laundry
8. Garage
9. Pool
10. Terrace

\[ N \uparrow \text{O} \quad 10 \text{FT.} \quad 3 \text{M.} \]
Steel supports (left) tie the structure down to the lava-rock base. Custom details include rolling doors (below left) that open the walls to wide Pacific views, as in the kitchen/dining area (above).

3 to 5 feet on the sloping site, lifting the living quarters from the ground plane and securing this shelter to the earth.

Not just the gusts, but all the elements helped dictate the form of plan. The U-shaped design encircles a linear pool, which faces the southerly sunlight, shielded from the windswept outer elevations. With the house thus anchored and protected, transparency from myriad expansive windows characterizes the rest of its construction, with clerestory windows admitting light and air to interior corridors. Gentle breezes circulate freely from exterior to interior passageways, bringing in outdoor scents and sounds. The permeable residence avoids auxiliary mechanical systems, relying completely on ambient heating and cooling. (Only a small library has a heating system for chilly days.) Light and views open in a 180-degree expanse from the mythic Pololu Cliffs, a few miles away, through operable glass jalousies, screens, and doorways out to the sea.

While the owners will ultimately trade their guesthouse quarters for a permanent home, Ohana House will serve them as a primary residence for several years; it therefore reflects their personal interests, with ample space and provision for cooking and reading. Neither the husband nor wife wanted the ubiquitous "great room," so the architect separated living and kitchen areas into discrete, yet flowing spaces. Between the house's democratically equal bedrooms, a small library provides a quiet place for reading.

On the interior, simple detailing pared down to workable neces-
Metal cross bracing, as in the kitchen (above) and corridors (left), helps stabilize the roof structure for high winds and seismic events. Eucalyptus paneling and cabinetry, along with stone floors, add warmth to 16-to-18-foot-high passageways (left).

Sensuous simplicity reinforces the sensuous materials. As in other Cutler-designed projects, wood features large in the palette: Tamarind floors, a species introduced into the islands in the late 18th century that has the richness of cherry, and 300 panels of lighter Eucalyptus wood, both typical of the tropical environment, invite visitors to remove their shoes or run their hands along the smooth surfaces. To insure careful assembly, each board was numbered and installed sequentially. In addition to structural bracing, custom steel hardware, some with exposed though refined rolling-wheel mechanisms, as in the sliding doors and panels, renders the house like a working machine that can be boxed up and stored when not in use.

As is typical of Cutler, he got to know the site by shooting the grades himself, much the way an artist “sees” through the act of drawing. Then came the architectural drawings. The clarity and apparent simplicity of the 2,600-square-foot house evolved from his high degree of personal engagement: The finished work required at least 30 site visits by Cutler during construction (trips necessitated not only by this house, but by another in the works nearby) and more than 220 individualized detail drawings. Rather than overwrought, the resulting Ohana Guest House seems honed, pared down to essentials, organic in a Wrightian sense, and windswept, married to the place where it resides and the people it protects.

For Sources, go to page 148, and Projects at archrecord.construction.com.
Oak treads spiral up from the living room to a glass-floored mezzanine. A retractable ladder (not visible here), attached to a steel pole, invites ascent to a belvedere viewing deck. Wren’s church (opposite) was originally entered through the base of the tower. The main sanctuary was destroyed in World War II, leaving only an outer shell.
Boyarsky Murphy slips an 11-story home into the tower of **CHRIST CHURCH** in London

By Raymund Ryan and Sarah Amelar

Christ Church was one of four dozen iconic churches erected by Christopher Wren in the City of London after 1666, when the Great Fire annihilated much of the famous Square Mile—a world center, then and now, for trading and banking. Close to Wren’s St. Paul’s Cathedral, with its spectacular dome, the tower of Christ Church has recently, almost surreptitiously, been converted by Boyarsky Murphy Architects into a remarkable residence at the heart of the capital.

Having suffered almost complete destruction by German bombing during World War II, the nave of the church remains a ruined carapace surrounding a roofless void, now a Memorial Rose Garden. But the tower, constructed from blocks of Portland stone, survived. (It was partially rebuilt in the 1950s to stabilize the structure.)

The woman who chose to commission an 11-story “flat” inside this great steeple was not Rapunzel herself, but Kate Renwick, who had grown up in the States and Ireland. A widow and mother of two college-age sons, she had held high office at the investment bank of Goldman Sachs.

Raymund Ryan is curator at the Carnegie Museum of Art’s Heinz Architectural Center.

**Project:** Christ Church Tower, London  
**Architects:** Boyarsky Murphy  
**Architects—Nicholas Boyarsky, Nicola Murphy; partners in charge**  
**Engineers:** Alan Baxter & Associates, Greig Ling (structural); McDonnell Langley, Max Fordham (me/p)  
**General contractor:** KoruBuild
The architects were advised against cleaning, and potentially damaging, the exterior—now juxtaposed with the entry hall’s sleek, modern spiral stair (1) of polished limestone with a curving glass balustrade (2, 4).

After retiring from work in this very neighborhood, London’s financial district, she happened to spot a photo of the tower, up for sale, in a real estate agent’s window. By then, the tower’s interior lay in a derelict state.

Open to adventure and encouraged by her sons, Renwick soon envisioned a reincarnation of the great monolith. Before gaining explicit permission to convert it into a home, she engaged the firm of Boyarsky Murphy, which she had found via the Client Advisory Service of the Royal Institute of British Architects. Nicholas Boyarsky, son of former Architecture Association chairman Alvin Boyarsky, had worked with Zaha Hadid and Michael Hopkins before forming his own small firm with his wife, Nicola Murphy, in 1994. Their previous projects, with a distinctively clean-lined, Modernist bent, had included a prize-winning house in Holland Park, West London, and the charmingly named Nook, a home on Eel Pie Island on the Thames.

According to Boyarsky, the landmarked status of Christ Church caused significant delays, resulting in an 18-month approval process. The two most critical design problems, he notes, were “circulation and how to make the interior work in terms of light,” especially as no new window openings would be allowed. From the outside, the tower gives few clues that a 2,500-square-foot residence now rises inside of it. Only new oak doors at its base offer a glimpse of the architectural intervention.

To tackle the daylight problem and squeeze in vertical circulation while creating a sequence of livable spaces, Boyarsky Murphy reworked the existing six levels to create 11 floors, including several mezzanines. From the bottom of the tower up, the massive walls become thinner (as the structural load from above lightens), allowing for slightly larger floor plates, though none exceeds 231 square feet. Naturally, a lift was needed for daily ascents into this 150-foot-high monument, but the architects were not permitted to remove an original spiral stair at grade to insert an elevator there. Instead, they had to act with the utmost architectural discretion, slipping in an almost toylike, barely two-person lift, which first appears on the third floor. Now Wren’s tight stone spiral, embedded in a tower corner, provides the secondary means of egress, certainly a fire-safety necessity. The challenging spatial compression and narrow circulation routes later led Boyarsky Murphy to assemble and build many of the house’s furnishings and fittings in situ—an almost surgical process not apparent from the street.

Behind the oak front doors, the journey up through the building proceeds from a front hall that doubles as a dining area. This is the church’s original entry vestibule with an elegant Greek-cross plan and high domical vault. From here, new stairs curve upward with risers and treads of polished limestone, an inner balustrade of white plaster, and an outer balustrade of glass—all streamlined and clearly modern, yet sympathetic

The tower’s varied window types—today, with metal rather than the original timber mullions—include round ones (far right), now in the sons’ bedrooms (5) and tall, small-paned openings on the third level (6). One stone archway (3) formerly led to the adjacent (now nonexistent) sanctuary’s attic. Before Boyarsky Murphy’s interventions, exposed rubble masonry lined the entire tower (near and far right).
The master suite includes a luxurious bathroom (top) and a private stairway behind the west elevation, up to the bedroom itself (bottom).

to the original architecture. The stair’s white-plaster edge flows seamlessly into the balustrade and soffit of a small mezzanine above. At the top of the ascent, the architects inserted a meticulously detailed custom kitchen in the space between the winding stair and the thick, sculptural outer walls. Existing windows in arched niches open to views in the cardinal directions, giving the small kitchen area an expansive quality.

Spiraling up to the next floor, a second, more tightly wound stair has a balustrade of acrylic (as glass could not be curved to this small a radius). The third story, with space for the elevator, offers a sitting room amid tall, multipaned windows.

The next three levels form a triplex with a bedroom for each of the client’s sons above their bathrooms and laundry area. This three-story zone is accessed at the tower’s fifth floor, where, beside a wall of oak shelves, a staircase disappears out of view as it descends to the bathrooms and laundry. A small, double-height vestibule near the tower’s center marks the entryway to the sleeping areas, each a double-height space with its own configuration of internal steps up to a mezzanine study with built-in oak furniture and axial views across the surrounding cityscape. One of the stairways is of folded steel; the other, made of oak, has a narrow alternating-riser system, occupying only a minimal patch of precious floor space.

A generous bath and built-in closet occupy the next two levels, surmounted by the master bedroom. A private staircase inside Wren’s west facade and a walkway of glass lenses set in the floor connects these spaces. The ninth floor is the living room—rising 49 feet high into the former bell chamber—with its shell drywalled and its concrete floors laid with wide oak boards that are not smooth but pelleted, as in the 17th century. The architects subtly replaced exterior concrete louvers from the 1950s with a lookalike brise-soleil of Portland stone, angled unlike its concrete predecessor to bring in light and views. Juxtaposing sleek new insertions with grittier old elements, they intentionally left exposed a concrete ring beam and rubble walls, complete with graphic notations by postwar reconstruction teams.

In this light-filled aerie, miraculously close to St Paul’s and just across the street from the Stock Exchange, the views of London are extraordinary. But the ascent continues where the steeple grows slender, as its stacked cubic forms approach the ornate pinnacle. Now the space available to Boyarsky Murphy becomes even more squeezed. A final corkscrew staircase, this one with open oak treads cantilevered from a stainless-steel pole, twists up to a transparent glass floor held by a delicate steel frame within the “found” octagonal space. From this private and vertiginous deck, housing a library, a retractable ladder attached to the pole leads to an upper mezzanine with a glass-and-wood floor. Those of hearty disposition can climb a second ladder to emerge from Wren’s envelope into a columned belvedere, clearly visible from the exterior.

With daylight spilling in from an aperture in the tower’s telescoping apex, the once-neglected and war-torn Christ Church comes alive in ways Wren probably never anticipated. With ingenious and precise insertions, Boyarsky Murphy has created a domestic world that is surely unlike any other; in some sense, a fantastic 11-story folly. Since Renwick’s children are quickly growing up and heading on—and the $2 million Christ Church conversion is now complete—she is already planning her next move. Turning into a serial renovator with a newly acquired taste for Wren churches, she has commissioned Boyarsky Murphy to transform yet another of his forlorn spires into a residence. This time, it’s St. Mary Somerset, along the riverfront of London’s financial district, a structure in a greater state of disrepair—tantalizingly, an even more towering challenge.

For Sources, go to page 148, and Projects at archrecord.construction.com.
The kitchen (above) includes counters of polished black granite and a spiral stair with a balustrade and treads of clear acrylic. The soaring living room, on the ninth floor, occupies the former bell chamber, now with new Portland stone louvers (outside the glazed French doors), angled for light and views. The 1950s louvers were of concrete (right top). An original spiral stair, embedded in a corner of the tower (far right) provides a secondary means of egress. The masonry walls are up to 8 feet thick (near right).
Irregularly placed cedar cladding and angled wood piles serve as abstract metaphors for the house's forested site.
On a wooded site on Taylors Island, Maryland, KieranTimberlake tested a new way of building with the LOBLOLLY HOUSE

By Clifford A. Pearson

Stephen Kieran, FAIA, likens his family's new weekend house on Taylors Island in Maryland to a duck blind, one of those three-sided shelters that hunters build to make themselves disappear in the woods or a marsh. Barklike vertical strips of red cedar clad three elevations of Kieran's 2,200-square-foot house, camouflaging it on a 4-acre Chesapeake Bay site thick with loblobby pines. While those mostly opaque sides face the surrounding forest, the fourth elevation literally opens to the water—thanks to retractable translucent hangar doors and accordion-folding glass walls that the owners can move to eliminate all separation between indoors and out.

And like a duck blind, the building—which the architect calls the Lobolly House—can be disassembled. Most of its pieces are then recyclable. Concern for the environment has long been essential to the work of KieranTimberlake Associates, Kieran's Philadelphia-based firm. But in the past few years, the practice has also investigated modular and prefabricated construction with the aim of developing faster, cheaper, and smarter ways of building. "Forty percent of the material in landfills is building debris," notes Kieran. "If you could take apart a building and sell elements from it on eBay, you could make a difference."

But most attempts at prefabrication in building construction have failed, he says, due to economics, market perceptions, and peculiarities of the home-building industry. Traditional construction methods have long been less expensive than prefab experiments, and perceived by the public as being of higher quality. In the past few years, though, the costs of on-site construction have soared, while the industry has faced serious quality concerns, says Kieran. At the same time, the quality of factory-built components and consumer interest in prefab have risen. "We're close to a tipping point," he suggests. "I think we can flip the general perception, so that houses largely made from factory-built components are seen by the public as cheaper and better."

The one earlier example of successful industrialization in American home building—manufactured houses delivered by truck to sites all over the country—holds no appeal for Kieran and his partner, James Timberlake, FAIA. "You're stuck with dimensions and limitations determined by highway transportation rules. That's the death of architecture," Kieran maintains. "No matter what you do, you always read the single- or double-wide trailer in those homes."

KieranTimberlake saw the three-story Lobolly House as a system made entirely of off-the-shelf elements and components fabricated off-site to be assembled atop a platform (or "foundation") of wooden piles sunk into the sandy soil. Key components included so-called "smart cartridges" used to create floors, ceilings, and roof; "dumb cartridges" for the building's skin; and "blocks" that house bathrooms or mechanical rooms. All of the cartridges are 12-inch-deep sandwiches made of plywood or cement-board layers with wood studs in between. By installing radiant-heating elements, insulated microducts for air-conditioning, and wiring for power, lighting, and data, the off-site fabricator makes the floor and ceiling cartridges.

Project: Lobolly House, Taylors Island, Maryland

Owners: Barbara DeGrange and Stephen Kieran

Architect: KieranTimberlake Associates—Stephen Kieran, FAIA, James Timberlake, FAIA, design partners; Marilia Rodrigues, project architect

Engineers: CVM (structural);
Bruce Brooks & Associates (m/e/p)

Consultants: Marguerite Rodgers (interiors); Barbara Seymour (landscapes)

Fabricator: Bensonwood

General contractor: Arena Program Management

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A small court separates the house into two volumes (above): a smaller one serving the Kierans's two children, and a larger one with the main living spaces and master bedroom.

1. Master bedroom  
2. Deck  
3. Guest bedroom  
4. Mechanical  
5. Dining  
6. Living  
7. Kitchen  
8. Glass bridge
A clear glass bridge (right) connects the two halves of the house, spanning a garden landscaped with bamboo and gray stones.

“smart.” Wall cartridges, on the other hand, are “dumb” because they contain only insulation, vapor barrier, sheathing, and windows. Blocks embody the most complex elements of the house: complete rooms—with ceilings, walls, glazing, finishes, plumbing, power, and lighting—that can be lifted into place, then quickly plugged into utility connections already threaded through the building’s frame.

Once the builder had sunk the piles and installed beam collars, the house’s on-site construction took just six weeks, starting at the end of September 2006. To minimize damage to the fragile ecosystem (which is home to large populations of bald eagles, hawks, and waterfowl), the architects arranged for the factory-built components to be delivered on an on-demand basis.

Kieran supplemented those components with off-the-shelf items, such as a German-made aluminum frame, an interior steel spiral stair, and kitchen cabinets and counters. The few elements actually built on-site included the wood piles with beam collars, an outdoor stair on the east elevation, stained-bamboo flooring indoors, and the cedar-plank siding on the three land sides of the house. After assembling the house so quickly, Kieran found the weeks it took to install just the bamboo flooring excruciatingly long.

With his project architect Marilia Rodrigues, he developed the irregular pattern of cedar siding by pasting strips representing the planks on
A floor-to-ceiling glass wall in the living/dining area (above) and in the bedrooms folds open in panels that slide off to one side. A fabricator built pieces of the house in a factory (right). The various components were then assembled on-site (far right).
A small deck (above) on the lower floor overlooks a bamboo garden on one side and the Chesapeake Bay on the other. The house was assembled in just six weeks from a series of components (below), most of which were made in a factory in New Hampshire.

A NEW WAY OF BUILDING  Kieran and Timberlake developed many of their ideas on prefabricated housing by looking at other fields, in particular the automotive and aerospace industries. In 2001, they visited a Boeing aircraft facility and marveled at the way the company's engineers built a digital parametric model that depicted every one of a 777 airplane's one million parts as a solid object and provided all kinds of information about its material properties, source, and cost. Now KieranTimberlake (and other architects) is using building information modeling (BIM) software that offers the same kind of parametric modeling. "Parametric modeling was the breakthrough that allowed us to take components manufactured at various places off-site and bring them together with a high level of precision on-site," explains Kieran. [For a detailed examination of the firm's use of BIM and the construction process it used on the Loblolly House, see RECORD, November 2006, page 185.]
a photograph of the site. "We designed the house as an abstraction of the key elements found there: loblolly pines, tall grasses, water, and the western sun," says Kieran. So the cedar boards' varying widths and spacing echo the dappled rhythm of the forest; the green-stained bamboo flooring recalls local grasses; a two-story-high expanse of orange-coated glass set between the main volume of the house and its guest wing provides a visual jolt suggesting a sunset when light shines through it; and the two floors of living and sleeping spaces, raised one story above the ground, allow flood waters to flow underneath.

Instead of placing living and dining rooms on the lower floor, the architects put them on the upper one to capture the best views of the water. Inside, the house orients every space (except bathrooms and mechanical rooms) to the sun setting over the bay. To protect this western elevation from solar heat and glare, KieranTimberlake treated it as a piece of equipment that can open and close in three independent layers—starting on the inside with simple roll-up shades; then a glass wall that folds up in 2.5-to-3-foot-wide sections, which slide on floor and ceiling channels; and finally, the translucent polycarbonate airplane hangar doors that fold out and up at the touch of button. A 16-inch air gap between the glass wall and the hangar doors provides insulation when this "equipment" closes shut in cold weather. On a visit to the house on a sunny day in February, the 35-foot-long living room was getting plenty warm by 2 P.M., so Kieran opened the glass wall and let in a cool bay breeze. When asked if he had considered a porch for this elevation, he replied, "The living room is the porch."

The outdoors makes its presence felt in other ways, too. For example, a small court just 8 feet wide and planted with bamboo separates the living room/master bedroom block from a smaller volume containing guest rooms (one on each floor for the Kierans' two grown children). A clear-glass indoor bridge spans the court, providing a light-filled connection between the house's two halves. And on the lower floor, a small deck serves as an outdoor room.

Kieran is now talking with an unusual company that sells LEED-certified, factory-built houses about creating a version of the Loblolly House that could be purchased and built in different places. (The company is currently offering houses designed by Ray Kappe, FAIA, and David Hertz, Ala.) "The idea is to develop the house as a product," says Kieran. "We'll use the Loblolly House as a prototype for a more generic system."

He estimates that around 60 to 70 percent of the Loblolly House's components were built in a factory. For a commercially available iteration, he would like to push that figure to 80 or 85 percent, which would help reduce costs to around $250 per square foot (about half the cost of most custom homes). All of a sudden, an architect-designed house falls within reach of a lot of middle-class Americans.■

For Sources, go to page 148, and Projects at archrecordconstruction.com.
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VIILA NM
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(page 98)
Sources
Windows: Duratherm
Glazing: Pilkington
Hardware: Valli & Valli
Interior finishes: Bute Products (cabinets); Sterling-Miller Designs (kitchen island)
Wall coverings: Timorous Beasts; Bisazza (glass tile); Ridgefield Industries (raised flooring)
Furnishings: B&B Italia (fixed seating); Cassina (chairs)
Lighting: Regency Architectural Lighting (downlights)

BROWN HOUSE
Omaha
(page 112)
Sources
Exterior cladding: State Steel; Swanson Sheet Metal
Roofing: Firestone
Windows: Randy Brown Architects
Glazing: City Glass; Polycarbonate
Paints and stains: Sherwin Williams
Wall coverings: Plywood Inc (paneling); Sunderland Brothers, Knutzen Tile (tile flooring);
Dale Ocken Company (raised flooring)
Furnishings: Cassina Le Corbusier
Lighting: Metro Electric

OHANA GUEST HOUSE
Hawaii, Hawaii
(page 128)
Sources
Roofing: Taylor Metal Roofing
Windows and doors: Two Rivers Window
Lighting: Bruck (cablelights); BK (stemlights, landscape); Alco (bathroom); Translite Sonoma Art Lighting

RINER HOUSE
Karuzawa, Japan
(page 106)
Sources
Structural system: Saito Wood Industry
Exterior cladding: Nakamotosourin
Windows: Naito
Glazing: Osa Matex
Wall coverings: Tokyo Mokuzai Kogyou
Furnishings: Koutarou Nakamura+Kanako Nakamura/plots (tables); Shinji Kodama/Sanrinsha (firewood stove)
Lighting: Kumio Satou/Lighting Crew

CASA POLI
Columo Peninsula, Chile
(page 120)
Sources
Windows and doors: Digosa
Glazing: Digosa
Hardware: Digosa
Interior finishes: Cesar Manriquez
Furnishings: Pezo von Ellrichshausen Architects; Ramón Cartes

CHRIST CHURCH TOWER
London
(page 134)
Sources
Structural system: John Atwater (wood); Sharder Glass (glass balustrades, glazed floor panels); Spiral Staircase Systems
Roofing: Able Waterproofing (metal); Paye Stonework & Restoration (stone)
Windows: Senlac
Glazing: Pilkington Building Products (glass, skylights); St. Helens (skylights)
Doors: MSJ Joinery (entrances); Hafele (sliding doors, closers)
Hardware: D-Line (locks, hinges, pulls); Hafele (cabinets)
Cabinets and custom woodwork: KORUBuild; MSJ Joinery
Paints and stains: Johnstone's;

LOBOLLY HOUSE
Taylors Island, Maryland
(page 140)
Sources
Structural System: Bosch Rexroth (aluminum framing); Tripyramid Structures (stainless-steel-rail assemblies)
Exterior cladding: James Hardie Building Project
Windows: Artistic Doors & Windows; Loewen Windows
Glazing: Deglas (insulated panel); Innovative Building Products (structural glass floor)
Doors: Artistic Doors & Windows (entrances); Nanawall (metal); Wilson Doors (hangar)
Hardware: Double-Hill
Wall coverings: Solistone
Lighting: Lightright (downlights); We-of-Lighting (exterior); G Squared (ceiling fans)

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Transmutative Tools Start to Take Hold

A CRITICAL MASS OF BUILDING INFORMATION MODELING PROJECTS DEMONSTRATES THE TECHNOLOGY'S BENEFITS AND ITS POTENTIAL FOR REDEFINING PRACTICE

By Joann Gonchar, AIA

No doubt you've already heard a great deal about the digitally enabled revolution that promises to transform design and construction. Proponents say that if the industry embraces building information modeling, or BIM, it will streamline the delivery process, ensure well-coordinated documents, providing a basis for more accurate fabrication and construction. Designs will be more closely tied to structural analysis and energy simulations, producing better performing, high-quality facilities. These will be built more quickly and at lower cost than previously possible, resulting in fewer claims, and of course, happier clients.

So exactly what is this panacea for all that ails the design and construction industry? At the heart of the new process is the building information model—an object-oriented digital representation of a building. Unlike traditional two-dimensional CAD drawings, the model is not a collection of discrete lines on the screen, but is a compilation of integrated and dynamic data that describes the functional and physical aspects of a building and its components. This model could include information such as the dimensions and structural characteristics of beams, the fire rating of partitions, or warranties for mechanical equipment.

More than a new way of drafting, BIM is really a paradigm shift for design and construction. Its adoption forces examination of a host of practice and business issues, from the definition of professional roles to liability to project delivery methods. Perhaps because of these still-emerging concerns, BIM is not yet mainstream. According to the most recent American Institute of Architects' firms survey, The Business of Architecture, about 16 percent of firms have acquired BIM tools, and roughly 10 percent are using them for billable work. However, among firms with 50 or more employees, just over 60 percent have acquired BIM software, and just over half are using it on billable projects. Adoption is likely now more widespread since the data, collected in the spring of 2006, is already eons old in the context of a rapidly evolving technology.

Even for large, technologically sophisticated firms, it isn't all BIM all the time. "While we are using 3D modeling on just about everything, we aren't at that level just yet for BIM," says NBBJ managing partner Jim Jonassen, FAIA. Jonassen says the firm has been pursuing object-based design for about a decade, with just over half of its current projects using BIM. His goal is for 75 percent of the firm's projects to be using the process by the year's end.

Just how comprehensively the technology is being used varies from project to project and team to team. A whole spectrum of deployment is possible. Some architects and consultants are using BIM only within their own offices and distribute 2D background documents to other members of the team. On other projects, 3D models are shared with fabricators and constructors. Some contractors are creating their own building information models from their designers' traditional CAD drawings. Sources say that there are still benefits, even when only one member of a project team is working in a BIM environment. "If we are the only ones using the process, it still improves the quality of the product and our..."
Design and construction of a 1.2-million-square-foot hospital for London involves numerous stakeholders and an array of software platforms and tools (right). BIM clash-detection capabilities helped identify maintenance issues and hazards, such as a conflict between a manhole and a service ladder, a missing handrail, an inaccessible valve (below three, left to right).

efficiency,” says Jim Jacobi, C.I.O. of structural engineering firm Walter P Moore. However, “You can come as close as possible to flawless delivery when all the partners in the supply chain engage,” he adds.

With large owners like the General Services Administration (GSA) jumping on the BIM bandwagon, use of the technology by all members of the design and construction team will surely grow. Since 2003, the agency has been exploring aspects of BIM, including energy simulation, materials quantity analysis, and construction scheduling, on

THE GSA PREDICTS THAT TEAMS USING BIM FOR SPATIAL MANAGEMENT ARE UNLIKELY TO RETURN TO THE OLD TECHNOLOGY.

select pilot projects. But starting with this fiscal year, funded projects are required, at minimum, to provide “spatial program building information models” as part of their schemes. The spatial models will be used to evaluate how well proposals meet programming requirements.

Although the official GSA goals may seem relatively modest, agency administrators predict the requirements will serve to demonstrate the power of the technology and encourage more comprehensive deployment. “Any team that uses BIM to perform spatial management is unlikely to return to the old technology,” says Charles Matta, FAIA, director of the GSA’s Center for Federal Buildings and Modernization.

The increasing body of well-advanced and completed projects should also serve to broaden the industry’s adoption of BIM as team members promote the benefits of the process. One recently completed project that used BIM comprehensively is a 65,000-square-foot, three-story office building in Houston designed by Kirksey. Although the firm had been using ArchiCAD, Graphisoft’s object-based software since the late 1990s, this was its first experience as part of an integrated design and construction team using BIM, says Russell Wooten, Kirksey associate. On earlier projects, the firm’s consultants had always worked in 2D.

The model was used to evaluate glazing options, perform daylight studies and energy analysis, and coordinate the structural, m/e/p, and architectural systems early in the construction document phase. The general contractor and owner of the building, Satterfield & Pontikes, used the model as an estimating and scheduling tool. The LEED Gold-rated facility was designed and built in 11 months, with no Requests for Information. Use of BIM helped shave two months from the construction schedule and also saved about $10 to $15 per square foot, estimates George Pontikes, Satterfield & Pontikes president and C.E.O.

Helping NBBJ meet an aggressive design and construction
BIM has helped NBBJ meet an aggressive schedule for a Cleveland health-care facility. Like most building information models, the project database is organized by major elements, such as enclosure, core, vertical circulation, and interior fitout.

The schedule was one of many reasons for using BIM on the Glickman Pavilion, a 325,000-square-foot urology, nephrology, and dialysis center at the Cleveland Clinic in Cleveland. Although programming was begun in the summer of 2005, more than a year after construction of an adjacent cardiac center was started, the hospital targeted October 2008 for completion of both buildings. "The promise of finding efficiencies [in BIM] has always been there, but we've seen it demonstrated for the first time on this project," says Doug Parris, AIA, NBBJ project manager and partner.

When the owner added another elevator to the building after the contractor had started construction of the foundations, the architect was able to update the model in less than half a day. Construction has progressed smoothly, with structure for five of the building's 10 floors complete and installation of the curtain wall under way. "Fast-track projects are done all the time, but we were able to do it here without extra staffing," says Parris.

One huge benefit of using BIM for systems-intense building types such as hospitals is the capability of detecting conflicts between the m/e/p components and the architectural and structural elements. A health-and-safety review of the combined digital model for the Royal Hospital London, a 912-bed facility designed by HOK and slated for completion in 2012, uncovered several potential hazards and maintenance issues. Problems such as inaccessible valves and a service ladder located too close to a manhole would have been costly to correct had they not been detected before construction, points out Miles Walker, a HOK vice president and London office CAD manager. He adds that the kind of intelligence embedded within the model will also be useful once the building is in operation as part of the facility management system.

**Never too early**

Many sources say that a true building information model (or one that exploits the BIM process to its fullest potential) is based on an information resource shared among all participants and stakeholders throughout the life of a project, from the earliest phases of design through occupancy. However, such comprehensive deployment is still not the norm. Instances of implementation from the start to the end of a project are still rare, says Mieszko Niedzwiecki, AIA, vice president and director of design at Leo A Daly. One of the firm's current BIM projects is the renovation of a library and design of two new buildings for Georgia State University in downtown Atlanta. Niedzwiecki and his team used BIM even before schematic design to explore programming issues, phasing, and the urban design implications of the proposed project.

Although BIM users constantly refer to "the model," in actual practice, a multidisciplinary project team is rarely, if ever, served by a
single, seamless database. Instead, teams rely on a series of models usually organized by discipline, and are often dependent on different software platforms. The models are generally updated and coordinated at regular intervals, often via a project extranet.

Even within their own offices, architects employ numerous software tools from a variety of vendors, exploiting the strengths of each. Such is the case with New York City–based SHoP Architects. The firm typically uses AutoDesk Revit to manage a project’s database but picks

"WE STILL DEPEND ON STANDARDS THAT ARE A LEGACY OF DRAFTING IN 2D," SAYS KIRKSEY’S WOOTEN.

and chooses from other programs for the one best suited for the particular design problem at hand, explains principal William Sharple.

For a 26,000-square-foot, 9-unit condominium building under construction in downtown Manhattan, SHoP used four programs, each from a separate software company, to design the building’s faceted panels of brick and precast concrete. The architects quickly sketched the cladding’s complex surfaces with the 3D modeling and visualization tool Rhino. But in order to understand the relationship of one brick to another and determine the configuration and placement of the eight different panel types, they used Gehry Technologies’ Digital Project and Bentley Systems’ parametric tool, Generative Components (GC). These two programs were employed in tandem to take into account factors such as material properties, transportation limitations, and the fabricator’s manufacturing constraints. This cladding data was periodically imported into, and coordinated with, the project’s Revit master model and regularly shared with the fabricator, says Federico Negro, SHoP project manager.

**New technology, old standards**

One challenge facing designers, contractors, and other users of BIM is the lack of standards for the organization and format of the data contained within models. "We still depend on standards that are a legacy of drafting in 2D," says Kirksey’s Wooten. Organizations such as the National Institute of Building Sciences (NIHS) and the International Alliance for Interoperability are pushing hard on the issue. (Note: record publisher McGraw-Hill Construction is an active member of the alliance.) At RECORD press time, the institute was due to release a draft document establishing principles and methodology for a national BIM standard. The draft will be available for public comment at www.nibs.org through
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mid-May, with release of a final document slated for early June, according to Deke Smith, chair of the institute’s national BIM standards committee.

A particular focus of the NIBS effort is postconstruction accessibility of the building information model so that it could be used by a variety of stakeholders, including insurers, first responders, or facility managers. Some sources worry that the effort is geared too much toward the building’s end users to be valuable to designers. But Smith points out that “the true payback [of BIM] is in the building’s facility management phase, since it is the longest, typically 50 to 75 years.”

**Roles and relationships**

One barrier to adoption of BIM is not the technology itself, but the implications for changes in the relationship of all the members of a project team. Because BIM allows architects, their consultants, owners, and contractors to share information and expertise more easily and earlier in the life of a project, many proponents see it as a catalyst for use of more integrated delivery methods than design-bid-build. The AIA, the Construction Users Roundtable, and the Associated General Contractors of America are collaborating to better understand the impact on traditional professional roles and liability. Among these groups’ initiatives is an effort to create new model contracts to help define responsibilities and address the allocation of risk and financial reward.

The issue of ownership of the data contained within the model is also unresolved. John Marinello, Flack & Kurtz C.I.O., worries about the interpretation of data generated by computational fluid dynamics tools and other complex simulation programs. “We don’t want our data manipulated by another consultant,” he says.

**WITHIN ARCHITECTURE FIRMS, THE NEW TECHNOLOGY IS REDEFINING CULTURE, HIERARCHIES, AND WORK FLOW.**

Within architecture firms, the technology is forcing changes in culture and work flow. SHoP’s Negro points out that before the firm started using BIM, he and his colleagues would divvy up project responsibility by drawing sheets. Now work is assigned according to a building’s major elements, such as the enclosure, the vertical core, or interior partitions.

Although adjustment to this new division of labor can be difficult, Negro and other sources say the interconnected nature of the model’s elements enhances communication and reveals potential problems earlier in the design process. “Because we are working on the same model, it encourages interaction more than before,” says Eric Watson, AIA, of SmithGroup. Watson is project architect for one of the
Comfort Ti AC23™ from AFG. The energy savings deserve a look.

Comfort Ti-AC23™ is a new low emissivity glass designed to maximize solar control and air conditioning efficiency in Sun Belt regions while maintaining a very attractive appearance. This next-generation low-emissivity product is the newest product innovation from industry leader AFG Glass.

With a solar heat gain coefficient of 0.23—among the lowest in the industry—the newest member of AFG's Comfort Ti™ family of low-emissivity (low-e) sputter-coated glasses is ideal for climates where air conditioning is the primary year-round energy concern. Comfort Ti-AC23, with its combination of low reflectivity, excellent light absorbing properties, and its ability to block the sun's most warming wavelengths of energy, provides one of the highest light-to-solar-gain ratios of 1.74 when deposited on clear glass. The product is ideal for coastal regions as it meets Turtle Code specifications. (<0.45 Visible Transmittance). Its unique combination of powerful solar control with a "neutral look" makes Comfort Ti-AC23 an ideal solution for a range of residential and commercial applications where heat-gain, glare, and aesthetics are a concern.

### AFG Comfort Ti-AC23 Performance Data

<table>
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<th>Glass Thickness</th>
<th>Air Space</th>
<th>Winter U-value</th>
<th>Summer U-value</th>
<th>% Transmittance</th>
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All values are for center of glass and were obtained using LBNL's Window 5.2 software.
All make-ups are Comfort Ti-AC23 outboard (coating on surface #2), 1/2" air space, and Clear inboard.
firm's five current BIM projects—a 63,000-square-foot life sciences building for Mesa Community College, in Mesa, Arizona.

The BIM process is also blurring distinctions between managers, technical staff, and designers. “There is a breakdown of traditional hierarchical roles to a much more granular level where all team members are important,” says Allar. Partridge, principal of HIP Architects, an Alberta-based firm in its fourth year of full BIM deployment. “Technologists are being involved much earlier in the work flow,” he adds.

For architects and consultants, one of the most exciting aspects of BIM is the technology’s potential to collapse separate activities, such as design, analysis, and documentation, into one, although most sources would agree the link is still far from seamless. NBBJ and E/Ye Design, a four-year-old firm based in Troy, New York, and Jackson, Wyoming, are connecting the tasks of geometry rationalization and design in their development of a scheme for a 4.68-hectare (11.6-acre) office park for Dostyk, Kazakhstan. The firms are using Bentley’s GC to define the configuration of the complex’s curvy towers. The architects have written a script that establishes the relationship between criteria such as view corridors, height, and shape, explains Nona Yehia, E/Ye principal. Because these criteria are interconnected, an adjustment to one factor produces a change to the others, she says. Here, BIM “is an integral part of the design rather than a tool for documentation.”

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**AIA/ARCHITECTURAL RECORD CONTINUING EDUCATION**

**INSTRUCTIONS**

- Read the article “Transformative Tools Start to Take Hold” using the learning objectives provided.
- Complete the questions below, then fill in your answers (page 191).
- Fill out and submit the AIA/CES education reporting form (page 191) or download the form at archrecord.construction.com to receive one AIA learning unit.

**QUESTIONS**

1. Proponents of BIM claim it will accomplish all except which?
   a. streamline the delivery process
   b. lengthen the time to implement change orders
   c. ensure better-coordinated documents
   d. provide a basis for more accurate construction

2. Using BIM properly should do all except which?
   a. result in better-performing facilities
   b. result in a faster construction process
   c. produce fewer construction claims
   d. result in higher construction costs

3. An object-oriented digital representation of a building is which?
   a. a collection of lines on the screen
   b. a compilation of integrated, dynamic data
   c. photos of a model scanned into CAD
   d. a prototype produced by a 3D printer

4. Data contained within a building information model could include which of the following?
   a. structural characteristics of beams
   b. fire rating of partitions
   c. warranties for mechanical equipment
   d. all of the above

5. Starting this fiscal year, General Services Administration design and construction teams are required to use BIM for which?
   a. spatial analysis
   b. energy simulation
   c. materials quantity analysis
   d. scheduling

6. Within architectural offices, work on a building information model is typically assigned to employees according to which?
   a. drawing sheet number
   b. building elements, such as the enclosure or vertical core
   c. drawing type, such as plans, sections, or elevations
   d. design phase

7. Which is an example of a benefit of using BIM to design buildings?
   a. its capability to help detect conflicts between m/e/p systems and other components
   b. its ability to help perform daylight studies and energy analysis
   c. its ability to help explore programming issues and urban design implications
   d. all of the above

8. An effort of the National Institute of Building Sciences is which?
   a. train people to use software
   b. increase use of design-bid-build
   c. create standards for the organization and format of the information contained within building information models
   d. blur the distinctions between managers, technicians, and designers

9. Potential users of data in a building information model postconstruction are which?
   a. insurers
   b. first responders
   c. facility managers
   d. all of the above

10. Which of the following is not a barrier to the adoption of BIM?
    a. implications for changes in workflow
    b. changes in the relationships among members of the project team
    c. revealing potential problems earlier in the design process
    d. changes in firm culture
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Tech Briefs

A London architect rethinks the house as a small machine for living with a cube that nods to airplane design, while elsewhere in the U.K. and Los Angeles, researchers attempt to print a house using an experimental fabrication technology that could transform construction.

A super-small house achieves an ideal state of design integration

Richard Horden looks to a lustrous time in design with his Micro Compact, 10-foot-square houses—a time when it was actually a pleasure to fly in an airplane.

Horden’s tightly integrated prefab cubes came onto the European market last summer, retailing for $60,000 installed, and he’s handling the production of twelve of them on order from a European client for a project due this fall. The houses are factory-produced in Austria.

The cubes, intended for short stays, reflect Minimalist influences, but Horden says the core ideas come from shuttling routes on commercial airlines. “I was intrigued by how well designed small scale can be,” he says. However, it’s hard to find inspiration in air travel, with one’s knees barked by the seat tray table from Narita to San Francisco. But like airplanes, the 2-ton cubes use only the materials necessary.

Horden’s maximizing of small spaces led first to the portable, futuristic Ski Haus—which featured aluminum sheeting, a propane kitchen, solar photovoltaic power—and then to this more fully realized Micro Compact house. Horden teaches at Munich’s Technical University, and six of the cubes have been used there for housing. The designer, a principal at London-based Horden Cherry Lee Architects, stays in one himself.

There’s no furniture—it’s already integrated in the design—no big paintings on the wall, and no piled papers. The plywood-and-aluminum cube is about flat-panel screens and broadband connections, a virtual space that extends the real conditions of the cube. The bed folds down from the ceiling. When the door is closed, the entranceway can be used as the shower. Every space is multipurpose. Placed on-site by a crane, the cubes connect to utilities in minutes. A low-energy version comes equipped with photovoltaics and a wind turbine.

While it’s a nod to the hyper-urban stylings of Kisho Kurokawa or William Gibson, Horden’s cube can be pictured in much more bucolic settings, such as a weekend cabin by the wooded trout stream. “It’s short stay, smart living,” Horden says, more teahouse than coffin hotel. “It shows the value of scale.”

And with the cube’s lighting system of indirect LED strips in 10 fittings, it only takes 53 watts to light the whole thing.

Michael Dumiak
As prefabrication sheds its off-the-rack image, automation via 3D printing threatens to transform conventional construction

The supersizing of printer technology could significantly extend the limits of concrete. By adapting technologies similar to those used in ink-jet and 3D printers and rapid prototyping machines for large-scale use, researchers in the U.S. and the U.K. are developing automated systems capable of rapidly constructing houses and other structures.

This spring, the University of Southern California’s Center for Rapid Automated Fabrication Technologies (USC’s CRAFT) plans to test its large-scale 3D printing system by building a 300-square-foot house in a day. The extrusion technology consists of a tank for cement, polymers, ceramic slurry or other wet materials, a nozzle, and several precisely controlled trowels. The machine could ride on a gantry, a robotic unit or crane.

By depositing layers of cementitious materials such as concrete and gypsum—more or less “printing” designs translated from CAD files—the systems promise a cheaper, faster, and less-polluting method of building. Researchers are working on prototypes with an eye toward housing, temporary structures, multi-story buildings, and space exploration.

The process promises a number of environmental benefits, including less construction site pollution and waste, and less traffic to the site (given the lower labor requirements). The method can also produce tight, energy-efficient buildings, according to Behrokh Khoshnevis, an engineering professor at USC and a director at CRAFT.

The USC scheme, accurate to a millimeter, could embed strain gauges and other “smart” components within walls and to vary the composition of structures by layering in different materials during construction. Metal reinforcement, plumbing, electrical systems, and tiling can also be automated, according to the USC researchers. While the technology should be production-ready within several years, building practices and codes might be slower to change, notes Khoshnevis.

In the U.K., Loughborough University’s Rapid Manufacturing Research Group is working on a system capable of constructing buildings down to the level of fixtures and built-in furniture. The project, which spans materials research, biomimicry, adaptive buildings, and technologies for monitoring and maintaining buildings, is years away from constructing a complete building.

The Loughborough scheme can “print” conduits, ducts, and other service voids, in addition to window frames and, potentially, windows. The project has produced a small room-size gantry system, according to director Rupert Soar, an engineering professor at Loughborough. This scheme allows for the recycling of building parts and entire buildings as conditions dictate, according to the researchers.

The technology has drawn the interest of designers and engineers. “Our main interest is in making structures more efficient by controlling the amount and the distribution of material in the structure according to its ‘needs,’” said Jalal El-Ali, an engineer at Buro Happold in London. “Printing buildings, using single or multiple materials, would make freeform buildings more realizable. We have the knowledge to design such buildings, we just need the tool.” Ted Smalley Bowen
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Product Focus  Windows & Doors

Our roundup this month includes products that help create ornamental centerpieces, increase safety or security, apply unexpected materials such as eucalyptus and crystal, or further open up the building envelope, as with the exterior folding door system featured here. *Rita Catinella Orrell*

Post-free 90-degree folding door system peels back the layer between indoors and out

For the past few years, exhibitors at the International Builders' Show (IBS) have responded to a demand in the residential marketplace for spaces that extend indoor living areas to the outside. Product introductions at the most recent edition of IBS, held last February in Orlando, included outdoor kitchen appliances to replace indoor food prep, cooking, and cleanup; retractable window screens that allow unobstructed views when not in use; and a growing number of exterior folding door systems that open up rooms to patios, gardens, and decks.

Jeld-Wen launched its first folding door system at last year's IBS, and the product's success encouraged the company to take the concept one step further this year. The zero-post, 90-degree Exterior Folding Door System allows designers to open up two wall spans in a room with a single product. The suggested length for each side of the system is three to five panels; longer than that is not recommended. Beveled door edges and double weather strip seal the unit against the elements, even without a structural corner post.

Shane Meisel, product marketing manager for Jeld-Wen, says that architects specifying the system must make sure they have an appropriate header, and depending on the number of door panels, use a supporting I-beam. Working with a structural engineer is also suggested.

Jeld-Wen's first generation folding door system for flat applications offers a DP 45 rating and general Florida building code approvals, while the 90-degree option is currently undergoing third-party testing. The system is available in Jeld-Wen IWP Aurora Custom Fiberglass door panels, as well as custom wood. Panels come stained, painted, or primed with energy-efficient low-E glass as an option. The door frame can be clad with any Jeld-Wen standard color to match windows, and for security the system features drop bolts and five-point locking hardware.

Applications range from high-end single-family homes and condos to commercial projects such as hotels and restaurants. Meisel expects the system to sell well, specifically to customers "who want to commune with nature, or bring the outdoors in." While folding door systems do tend to sell better in temperate climates, he adds, "We sell quite a few in the Colorado/Montana area, the Pacific Northwest, the Northeast, and the Mid-Atlantic. It's more a personality and lifestyle type than a specific region." Jeld-Wen Windows & Doors, Klamath Falls, Ore.

www.jeld-wen.com  CIRCLE 210
Products Windows & Doors

► Italian entrance
The Graffiti door, designed by architect and Luceplan founder Paolo Rizzatto with the graphics of Italo Lupi, features bas-relief decorations on the panel in three different motifs alluding to letters of the alphabet. Available in a range of depths, the door jamb juts out from the wall and can be used as a support for brackets, hooks, shelves, or wood paneling, or fitted with wires or electronics as needed. Montanari Group, Los Angeles. www.montanarigroup.com CIRCLE 211

► Certified wood alternative
Bieber USA's solid three-ply seasoned eucalyptus is harvested from FSC certified South American plantations. A low-maintenance, renewable hardwood alternative to mahogany and teak options, the custom-designed windows and doors are finished with water-based finishes. Unlike traditional American windows, Bieber's tilt-and-turn functionality allows the windows to open easily and completely inward. Bieber USA, Tustin, Calif. www.bieberusa.com CIRCLE 213

► Fire-rated metal doors
Now available in an expanded palette of designs, Forms+Surfaces' Architectural Metal Door collection allows specifiers to choose from an array of metal, finish, and pattern combinations while specifying doors with 45-minute, 60-minute, 90-minute, and 3-hour UL fire ratings. Six configurations and sizes up to 4' x 10' are standard. Shown here is the Champagne pattern in stainless steel. Forms+Surfaces, Carpinteria, Calif. www.forms-surfaces.com CIRCLE 212

► Crystal palace
The limited edition Ventura door-glass set features faceted red and clear Swarovski crystals set within rich patina caming. The set includes a 24½" x 65" door-glass unit; two 8" x 65" side lights, and a 66½" x 33½" half-round transom. Each set of Ventura door glass is numbered by the designer, with only 50 sets available. A door frame featuring generous moldings and patina medallions coordinates with the design. ODL, Zeeland, Mich. www.odl.com CIRCLE 214

► Access at your fingertips
Kwikset introduced SmartScan, the industry's first residential biometrically accessible dead-bolt door lock system, at this year's Builders' Show. Programmable with up to 50 user fingerprints, the lock can be controlled by swiping a valid fingerprint across the sensor, eliminating the need for a key or key code. Using RF electronic imaging, SmartScan reads live fingerprint patterns located beneath the dermal outer surface layer of the skin. Kwikset, Lake Forest, Calif. www.kwikset.com CIRCLE 215

► Neoclassical revival
The second family to be launched in Weather Shield's Collections product line, the Neoclassical collection of windows and doors mirrors the delicate detailing of Adam and Georgian architectural styles with a narrow sash profile and ¼" Simulated Divided Lites. Ideal for upscale, traditional custom homes, the line features hard-cast Stone River Bronze hardware in natural nickel or a dark antique oil-rubbed bronze. Weather Shield Windows & Doors, Medford, Wis. www.weathershield.com CIRCLE 216
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Seating for 10
The Oasis bench, designed by o4i, was inspired by the shapely dunes that the wind sculpts out of sand. Made of a vacuum-formed ABS plastic sheet over a recycled utility base, the bench is 100 percent recyclable, UV-resistant, weatherproof, and fire-retardant. Seating up to 10 people, the multisided bench can be used indoors or out in corporate, healthcare, hospitality, institutional, and educational spaces. Upholstered seat pads are available for indoor use, while outdoors the bench can be safely mounted to the ground if required. Oasis is offered in a range of colors and surfaces. Peter Pepper Products, Compton, Calif. www.peterpepper.com CIRCLE 217

Artistic trench/drain grates
Formed by artisan foundry professionals, Iron Age Designs made its official debut at this year’s World of Concrete show. The company creates a range of geometric and botanical patterned grates as well as customized decorative grates made of 80 to 100 percent postconsumer recycled iron. All grates fit industry standard size trench drain bodies and catch basins from major manufacturers and are designed to be ADA compliant. The company also offers custom castings, including trench grates on a radius, tree grates, medallions, and manhole covers. Iron Age Designs, Burien, Wash. www.ironagegrates.com CIRCLE 218

Elevator safety system
The Panachrome 3D elevator safety-detection system uses infrared light technology, rather than physical contact, to detect obstructions and direct door movement. In addition, a visual warning system uses red and green illuminated segments along the edge, alerting elevator passengers to door movement. The strips glow green when it is safe to enter and exit, and flash red to signal the doors are about to close. The system complies with ADA requirements, and is suitable for both center-opening and side-opening doors. Janus Elevator Products, Hauppauge, N.Y. www.janusalelevator.com CIRCLE 219

Spring collection
Veritas has added the Texture and Content collection to its ResinArt line of resin panels. The line features not one, but four designers, including New Mexico-based sculptor Ken Leap, Eric Mailander of the New York architecture and interior design firm Resistance Design, Libby Kowalski of Koa Textiles, and Marybeth Shaw of Shaw-Jelveh Design. Shown in resin (from left to right): Evora, an undyed, granulated cork; Nadia, with seeds bursting from pods; Black Wave, a pattern of undulating black threads; and Lucille, an array of bright wildflowers. Robin Reigl, New York City. www.robin-reigl.com CIRCLE 220

Bricklike finish system
Sto Creativ Brick is a lightweight, customizable brick finish system that can be used over prepared exterior surfaces such as EIFS, stucco, tilt-up, or CMU to give the impression of brick. To install, self-adhering templates are applied over the primer layer to provide the appearance of mortar. The finish layer can be applied in varying thicknesses to achieve the desired stand-out of the brick from the mortar. Brick finishes are available in 800 colors, and the mortars are offered in 42 colors options. Sto Corporation, Atlanta. www.stocorp.com CIRCLE 221

Greener particleboard
Columbia Forest Products has begun producing formaldehyde-free PureBond particleboard, complementing an existing line of formaldehyde-free hardwood plywood products. The particleboard will be manufactured at the company’s Hearst, Ontario facility, which will turn the board into finished hardwood plywood and other panels. Columbia is seeking arrangements for other composite-panel manufacturers to incorporate the PureBond adhesive system into their processes. Columbia Forest Products, Portland. www.columbiaforestproducts.com CIRCLE 222

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**Product Resources: Literature**

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*Solutions: The Schott Technology Magazine* is the title of Schott’s revamped customer publication, featuring innovative companies that use Schott products in power plants, cell phones, LED lamps, cooktops, breweries, flat-screen monitors, telescopes, and more. Schott, Elmford, N.Y. www.us.schott.com CIRCLE 224

**The green line**
An expanded EnviroGT brochure from InPro Corporation introduces new handrails and wall and corner guards from the company’s sustainable product line. All EnviroGT products are manufactured from 100 percent recycled high-density polyethylene and Forest Stewardship Council–certified wood. InPro, Muskego, Wis. www.inprocorp.com CIRCLE 226

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www.gunlocke.com
The new Web site for casegoods and seating specialist Gunlocke manages to make an enormous amount of information simple and accessible. Its clean and uncluttered pages present product descriptions, pricing, and technical specs in Cap and Excel, 2D and 3D AutoCAD drawings, furniture symbols, finish choices, lead times, warranties, and downloadable images and brochures. Special sections provide important information tailored to the specific needs of dealers, designers, and government sales.

www.amtico.com
Amtico has launched a new Web site to showcase its high-end flooring designs. The company's three major sites, Amtico Home, Business, and International, are kept separate with links providing access between them. Also available are links to the Stratica Web site, with information about Amtico's line of sustainable flooring. Images of flooring designs in real bathrooms, hallways, kitchens, and living rooms are attractive, but with small and inconspicuous links, the site is awkward to navigate.

www.marazzitile.com
Marazzi's newest showroom is open all day, every day at their redesigned Web site. Specifying a product can be stressful, but navigating this site is a breeze thanks to impressively intuitive organization, cool colors, and bold forms. The new SpecWizard, located under specifications in the technology section of the site (arcat.com/specwizard/09300amt/index.htm), has been developed by Marazzi with ARCAT to make writing a Marazzi spec as simple as possible.

www.lightingecosystem.com
To promote its innovative EcoSystem fluorescent dimming solution, Lutron came up with an interactive multimedia Web site, which uses images instead of paragraphs to explain the product. The video components are unobtrusive and can be paused at any time to explore further information through navigational links that never leave the page. Simulated 24-hour office lighting videos during explanatory speeches make the message clear and simple.

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New and Upcoming Exhibitions

2007 AIA New York Chapter Design Awards
New York City
April 9–July 7, 2007

NY 150+: A Timeline: Ideas, Civic Institutions, and Futures
New York City
Through June 23, 2007
To commemorate the 150th anniversary of the founding of the American Institute of Architects in New York City, the AIA New York Chapter will feature an exhibition charting the transformation of the city and the profession from 1857 through the present and into the future. Genetic lines tracing the founding of the institute will intersect with various democratic and social movements and the architecture of New York’s civic structures. Fifteen buildings and public spaces will be presented with a factual overview and commentary by architects, critics, journalists, authors, and others to illustrate the ideas that define the city’s history as well as its future. A preamble will frame the social, cultural, and historical discourse, giving special emphasis to the directions of architecture in the city as imagined within a puritan pastoral democracy. At the Center for Architecture. Call 212/683-0023 or visit www.aiany.org.

AIA National 150 Best Buildings
Exhibition Opening
Washington, D.C.
April 11, 2007
Visit www.aia.org

Open House: Architecture and Technology for Intelligent Living
Pasadena
April 14–July 1, 2007
This exhibition will offer glimpses into the house of the future as a place for new spatial experiences, systems of sustainability, and sensory enhancements through recent technologies and material developments. It will feature specially commissioned “intelligent houses” by 10 teams of emerging architects and designers from the United States, Europe, Australia, Asia, and Mexico. The research aspect of the design process will be highlighted and will encourage visitors to explore their own ideas about the future in a public forum. At Art Center’s South Campus in Pasadena. Call 626/396-2380 or visit www.artcenter.edu.

Devil in the White City Tour
Chicago
Select Fridays and Sundays,
April 20–October 28, 2007
The tour is based on Eric Larson’s best-selling book and focuses on two events: the World’s Columbian Exposition of 1893 and the emergence of America’s first serial killer to come to public attention.

Specify CONFIDENCE.
A slide presentation is followed by a bus tour of Prairie Avenue and Jackson Park with a visit to many buildings and places identified in the book, at the Chicago Architecture Foundation’s ArchiCenter. Call 312/922-3432 or visit www.architecture.org.

Snapshot 007: Current Houston Design on View Houston
May 18–June 16, 2007
The fifth open-call exhibition showcasing architecture, urban planning, preservation, landscape architecture, interiors, furniture, and graphics by more than 100 Houston architects and designers. At Lawndale Art Center. Call 713/348-4876 or visit www.rda.rice.edu.

Studio @ the Center: Lighting Design New York City June 7–August 4, 2007
This exhibition will highlight the work of 12 students from the High School of Art and Design who are taking part in the intensive after-school program that exposes them to one area of design through interaction with design professionals. At the Center for Architecture. Call 212/683-0023 or visit www.aiany.org.

On a Grand Scale: The Hall of Architecture at 100 Pittsburgh
In celebration of the 100th anniversary of the Carnegie Museum of Art's Hall of Architecture, the museum will present an exhibition surveying its collection of nearly 150 plaster architectural casts that Andrew Carnegie created specifically for this magisterial space. At the time of the hall's inauguration in April 1907, the museum joined the ranks of prominent American museums exhibiting plaster casts of monuments from around the world. To ensure the hall's relevance to visitors, Carnegie surveyed architects of the day to determine which casts the museum would acquire. At the Heinz Architectural Center. Call 412/622-3131 or visit www.cmoa.org.

Ongoing Exhibitions
Architecture Interrupts Columbus, Ohio
Through April 15, 2007
The Church of Saint Pierre, in Firminy, France, was designed by Le Corbusier and Jose Oubriere in the early 1960s. Now, after years of interruptions, Oubriere is bringing the project to fruition. Featuring historical and contemporary photographs and drawings, the exhibition strives to bring the experience of the building to life. At the Wexner Center galleries. Call 614/292-3535 or visit www.wexarts.org.

The Home House Project: The Future of Affordable Housing New York City
Through April 21, 2007
The project challenged artists and architects to design single-family houses using Habitat for Humanity's basic plans as a point of departure. This exhibition presents 100 innovative housing designs that explore affordable housing. At the 69th Street Gallery of the New York School of Interior Design. Call 212/472-1500 or visit www.nysid.edu.

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Zaha Hadid Architects and Eric Owen Moss Architects: Adventures in Kazakhstan
Los Angeles
Through April 22, 2007
This exhibition features the design entries of London-based Zaha Hadid Architects and Los Angeles-based Eric Owen Moss Architects for an invitational competition for Republic Square in Almaty, Kazakhstan, which consisted of a multiuse building complex on a prime lot. At SCI-Arc Library. Call 213/356-5329 or visit www.sciarc.edu.

Grounded: Eisenman Architects
Los Angeles
Through April 22, 2007
This is an installation by world-renowned Eisenman Architects. Most of Peter Eisenman’s work has sought to overcome the traditional idea of architecture as a figure on a ground by “figuring the ground”: making ground a figure. Some projects carve into the ground, while others manipulate the surface to create a figured ground. This installation considers Eisenman’s “groundwork” from one of the earliest projects, the Cannaregio Town Square in Venice (1978), to the Wexner Center for the Arts in Columbus, Ohio (1989), and the City of Culture of Galicia, in Santiago de Compostela, Spain (currently under construction). At SCI-Arc Gallery. Call 213/356-5329 or visit www.sciarc.edu.

Prairie Skyscraper:
Frank Lloyd Wright’s Price Tower
Chicago
Through April 29, 2007
The Price Tower Arts Center in Bartlesville, Oklahoma, has the distinction of being the only fully realized skyscraper Frank Lloyd Wright ever designed. Built in 1956 and inspired by a tree, at 19 stories tall the building transformed the flat prairie on which it was built, altering the horizon with Wright’s bold architectural statement. This exhibition celebrates the 50th anniversary of this milestone in American architecture and features drawings, photographs, building components, and some of the original furnishings designed by the architect. Call 312/922-3432 or visit www.architecture.org.

A House for an Ecologist
Chicago
Through May 5, 2007
The competition sought designs for a live/work dwelling for an ecologist in residence at the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, located on the grounds of the National Conservation Training Center in Shepherdstown, West Virginia. Local competition winner Florian Morczan with M3 Architectural Consultants will present his entry. At the John Buck Company Lecture Hall Gallery. Call 312/922-3432 or visit www.architecture.org.

Some Assembly Required:
Contemporary Prefabricated Houses
Los Angeles
Through May 20, 2007
This exhibition presents eight projects, by several of today’s leading architects of modular dwellings, which vary in style and approach to prefab—from homes that are built by the owner out of a kit with an instruction manual to those that are delivered fully assembled. At the Museum of Contemporary Art. Call 213/621-1749 or visit www.moca.org.

Gritty Brits: New London Architecture
Pittsburgh
Through June 3, 2007
In recent years, a new generation of architects has emerged in London, operating mostly from the postindustrial East End and intimately engaged with the city’s contemporary urban condition. Gritty Brits: New London Architecture presents the work of six firms: Adjaye/Associates, Caruso St. John Architects, FAT [Fashion Architecture Taste], Niall McLaughlin, mu, and Sergison Bates architects. At the Heinz Architectural Center. Call 412/622-3131 or visit www.cmoa.org.

Powerhouse: New Housing New York
New York City
Through June 16, 2007
This exhibition illuminates the people, projects, and public policies that fuel the affordable hous-
ing landscape in New York City, focusing on the New Housing New York Legacy Project (NHHY) competition. At the Center for Architecture. Call 212/683-0023 or visit www.aiany.org.

Open House: Architecture and Technology for Intelligent Living
Los Angeles
Through July 1, 2007
This exhibition includes nearly 100 teams of emerging designers whose work focuses on technology and domestic architecture. The teams were invited to submit new designs that offer real-life solutions that incorporate the concepts of connectivity, well-being, flexibility, and sustainability. At Art Center College of Design's South Campus Wind Tunnel. Call 626/396-2380 or visit www.artcenter.edu.

The 2006 National Design Triennial: Design Life Now
New York City
Through July 29, 2007
Inaugurated in 2000, the triennial seeks out and presents the most innovative American designs from the prior three years in a variety of fields, including product design, architecture, furniture, film, graphics, new technologies, animation, science, medicine, and fashion. On view throughout the museum campus will be the work of 87 designers and firms, ranging from established design leaders such as Apple Computer, architect Santiago Calatrava, and Nike to emerging designers like Joshua Davis, Jason Miller, and David Wiseman. At the Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum. For more information, call 212/849-8400 or visit www.ndm.si.edu.

Lectures, Conferences, and Symposia
National Landscape Architecture Month
Various Locations
April 2007
The American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA) chapters across the country will celebrate with public outreach activities to help communities "Discover Careers in Landscape Architecture," the theme for this year. The month encompasses Earth Day on April 22 and the birthday on April 26 of Frederick Law Olmsted, who founded the American landscape architecture profession. Call 202/216-2371 or visit www.asla.org for further information.

The 2007 Michael Kalili Lecture on Natural and Technological Systems: Majora Carter
New York City
April 2, 2007
Majora Carter will talk on the topic of sustainability and environmental justice. Carter is executive director and founder of Sustainable South Bronx, which supports environmental justice through innovative, economically sustainable projects that are informed by the needs of the community. At Parsons The New School for Design. Call 212/229-8919 or visit www.parsons.newschool.edu.

The 2007 ANSYS U.S. Regional Conference Series: California
San Diego
April 3–5, 2007
Simulation has become a critical element of the product development process. The California meeting will provide an overview of the ANSYS technology road map, updates on new product features and product integrations, a management roundtable, customer presentations, workshops and demonstrations, and a full day of product training. Special content for health care, electronics, ventilation, aerospace/defense, and general industries will include user presentations and demonstrations. At the San Diego Marriott Hotel & Marina. Visit www.fluent.com/worldwide/usa/support/ugrn07/ca.htm.

Think New York: A Ground Zero Diary
New York City
April 5, 2007
With some distance, taking a look at the process which led to the selection of a master plan for Ground Zero offers insights into how obstacles confronting planners, builders, and civic agencies today can be addressed. In his lecture, Rafael Viñoly will lecture using his book as a narrative. At the Center for Architecture. Call 212/683-0023 or visit www.aiany.org.

Pratt Brooklyn Lecture Series
Brooklyn, N.Y.
April 5, 16, and 19, 2007
Included in the roster for the Spring 2007 Lecture Series are Henry Cobb on "The Skyscraper as Citizen: The Public Life of Private Buildings"; Henry Smith-Miller on "Resolution"; and Fumihiko Maki on "On Scenery." At Pratt's School of Architecture, Higgins Hall Auditorium. Call 718/399-4304 or visit www.pratt.edu.

Manufacturing Material Effects:
Rethinking Design and Making in Architecture International Symposium
Indianapolis
April 6–7, 2007
Leading thinkers, designers, and makers from around the world will discuss collaborative design and production practices based on innovative and
Dates & Events

experimental processes of material exploration. The symposium will examine the various levels of engagement and the new forms of architectural production that bring designers deeper into the complexities of making, assembly, and material formulation. Call 765/289-1241 or visit www.ibsu.edu.

New Housing New York: Panel Discussion with Winning and Runner-up Teams
New York City
April 9, 2007
A presentation of the New Housing New York Legacy Project, which illuminates the people, projects, and public policies that fuel the affordable housing landscapes in New York City. At the Center for Architecture. Call 212/683-0023 or visit www.aiany.org.

The Charles H. Atherton Memorial Lecture
Washington, D.C.
April 10, 2007
The Charles H. Atherton Memorial Lecture program commemorates the life and legacy of Charles Atherton, who for almost four decades served as Secretary of the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts. The lecture series is dedicated to providing a forum for discourse on the planning and design of Washington, D.C., and will examine the architectural, historical, and natural context of the city and its development to promote visionary planning and design excellence in the nation's capital. At the National Building Museum. Call 202/272-2448 or visit www.nbm.org.

Greenmaker for Homeowners
Chicago
April 10, 2007
A part of the Sustainable Architecture Lunchtime Lecture Series. As the market for environmentally friendly materials continues to grow, the number of companies offering these products follows suit. Greenmaker Supply Company is a Midwestern green building supply company, serving homeowner and building professional alike. Ori J. Sivan will introduce Greenmaker’s mission and its offerings, and attendees will receive an insider’s view of the environmental benefits of going green. At the John Buck Company Lecture Hall Gallery. For additional information, call 312/922-3432 or visit www.architecture.org.

AIA NY 2007 Design Awards Luncheon
New York City
April 11, 2007
Award recipients are recognized during the event that brings together 700 leaders in the design world to honor exceptional achievements in design excellence in the three categories: Architecture, Interior Architecture, and Projects. At the Center for Architecture. Call 212/683-0023 or visit www.aiaw.org.

Keynote Address and Reception: Michael Rotondi
Milwaukee
April 12, 2007
A lecture and reception with Michael Rotondi, FAIA, of RoTo Architecture during National Architecture Week at UWM-School of Architecture and Urban Planning. The event caps a week-long celebration of architecture and community. For more information, call 414/410-2813 or visit www.aiaw.org.

Rejuvenation of American Cities on the Water
Miami
April 12–15, 2007
The AIA Committee on Design hosts a three-day conference exploring the current urban landscapes of Miami and future design opportunities around Miami and its waterways. At the Standard Hotel. Visit www.aiaw.org.

RDA Annual Architecture Tour: Southampton
Houston
April 14–15, 2007
As one of Houston’s most memorable early-20th-century planned neighborhoods, Southampton is distinctive because through the decades houses of architectural significance have continued to be built there. The tour will feature seven houses in this neighborhood, to acquaint viewers with the best examples of architecture, interior design, and landscape design. Call 713/348-4876 or visit www.rda.rice.edu.

Multicultural Modernism
Palm Springs
Through April 15, 2007
A retrospective exhibition, featuring the work of Steven Ehrlich Architects. At the Palm Springs...
CAF Celebrates Earth Week
Chicago
April 16–20, 2007

Preservation Maintenance:
Understanding and Preserving
Historic Buildings
San Francisco
April 17–18, 2007
This seminar is held by the National Preservation Institute (NPI) and taught by nationally recognized educators, consultants, and practitioners in historic preservation, archaeology, architecture, landscape architecture, conservation, historical research, restoration, and cultural resource management. Visit www.npi.org for further information.

Coverings
Chicago
April 17–20, 2007
The Coverings tile and stone exposition features 1,200 exhibitors from more than 50 countries and attracts more than 33,000 distributors, retailers, fabricators, contractors and specifiers, architectural and design professionals, builders and real estate developers. The expo serves as a resource for continuing education for all categories of attendees, with informative, accredited seminars and live demonstration sessions conducted throughout the four days. At the McCormick Place Convention Center. For more information on attending or exhibiting, call 703/683.8500 or visit www.coverings.com.

Sally Walsh Lecture
Houston
April 18, 2007
A collaboration of the Rice Design Alliance, The Houston Architecture Alliance, and the American Institute of Architects, Houston, this lecture is dedicated to the memory of one of Houston’s most distinguished interior designers. At Brown Auditorium, The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. Call 713/348-4876 or visit www.rda.rice.edu.

Downtown Third Thursdays
Lecture Series
New York City
April 19, 2007
The series celebrates Lower Manhattan’s architectural treasures and history by presenting discussions with best-selling authors and world-renowned experts in thematically connected settings. Mary Dierickx, architectural preservationist and author, will speak on the topic of “Forgotten Splendor: Restoring Downtown’s Historic Architecture.” At Federal Hall National Memorial. For additional information, visit www.downtownny.com/third.

Design Showcase 2007
Newark, N.J.
April 19, 2007
This is a networking event, recruitment fair, and exhibition for the real estate and design communities. Industry sponsors will promote their goods and services; architectural firms will recruit students; and alumni will showcase their designs. At the New Jersey School of Architecture at NJIT. For more information, call 973/596-5531 or visit www.njitdesignshowcase.com.

Brandism Series: Signature as Brand
New York City
April 24, 2007
Signature-branded buildings, instantly linked to the prestige and aptitudes of their authors, transform the star-power of the architect into a material commodity. As more and more star architects are being hired for their selling potential, can architects maintain innovative and creative practices in the economic pressures of facsimile? At the Center for Architecture. Call 212/683-0023 or visit www.aiany.org.

The Rhodoc ASID Student Chapter
Interior Design Educational Symposium Online
April 27–28, 2007
An opportunity to enhance learning by participating in “real-time discussions” with interior design professionals and educators from around the globe. Topic discussions related to green issues, residential and commercial design, lighting, and computer-aided-design programs will all be presented by experienced professionals and educators. For more information, visit: http://www.geocities.com/rhodoc_asid_sc_events/2007_design_day_symposium.htm
**Dates & Events**

**AIA 2007**
**National Convention and Design Exposition**
**San Antonio**
May 3–5, 2007
The convention theme, "Growing Beyond Green," spotlights sustainable design, how you can green your projects, educate your clients, and reduce the impact buildings have on the environment. Visit www.aiaconvention.com.

**Greening Chicago's Municipal Buildings**
**Chicago**
May 8, 2007
This is a part of the Sustainable Architecture Lecture Series. Chicago's city government has made a significant commitment to greening its facilities. Join Department of General Services Architect Andrea Love as she offers an overview of several projects both completed and in progress. At the John Buck Company Lecture Hall Gallery. Call 312/922-3432 or visit www.architecture.org.

**BKLYN DESIGNS 2007**
**Brooklyn, N.Y.**
May 11–13, 2007
Celebrating its five-year anniversary, the show will take place in multiple venues throughout the DUMBO neighborhood, including St. Ann's Warehouse and the Smack Mellon Gallery. This year will also mark the launch of BKLYN DESIGNS +, a new cash-and-carry accessories market. Call 718-243-1414 or visit www.bklyndesigns.com.

**GPD China 2007**
**Shanghai, China**
May 14–15, 2007
This conference, with the theme, "Production Process Efficiency and Quality—From Design to Construction," takes place just before the China Glass Exposition, Glass Processing Days. Call 358 3 372 3225 or visit www.gpd.fi.

**Downtown Third Thursdays Lecture Series**
**New York City**
May 17, 2007
The ongoing series celebrating Lower Manhattan's architectural treasures and history will feature Barbara Christen, architectural historian and Cass Gilbert scholar, speaking on "Cass Gilbert and History: The Past as Present." At the New York County Lawyers' Association. For more information, visit www.downtownny.com/third.

**Architecture Camp**
**Pittsburgh**
June 25–August 17, 2007
Architecture Explorations, a series of one- and two-week camps dedicated to architectural design, construction, form, and function, and presented in collaboration with Carnegie Mellon University's School of Architecture, are available for children ages four to 13, as well as high school students. The architecture camps are held at Carnegie Mellon University's architecture studios and in the Carnegie Museum of Art's Heinz Architectural Center. Call 412/622-3131 or visit www.cmoa.org.

**Competitions**

**Open Architecture Prize**
**Deadline: Ongoing**
The $250,000 Open Architecture Prize is the largest prize in the field of architecture and is designed to be a multyear program that will draw competition from design teams around the world. Each year, a winning design will be selected from a field of low-cost, sustainable design projects and built in a selected community. The first project for the Open Architecture Prize will be an “e-community center,” a centralized building equipped with Internet connectivity solutions designed to enable an entire community to access the transformative power of the Internet. The winning designs will be built as part of the prize and in alignment with the 50x15 Initiative, a program founded by AMD to connect 50 percent of the world’s population to the Internet by 2015. For more information, visit www.50x15.com.

**Grangegorman Architectural Competition**
**Competitions Deadline: April 2007**
An international architecture competition for the development of a modern new campus, along with health and other facilities at Grangegorman, a 74-acre site close to the city center of Dublin. This invitation is open to all architectural firms, joint ventures, or consortia of architects, as eligible under EU Directive 2005/36/EC or comparable registration recognized by a national government. Visit www.grangegormandevelopmentagency.ie.
Envisioning Gateway: A Public Design Competition for Gateway National Park
Submission Deadline: May 7, 2007
An international public design competition to create a new vision for Gateway National Recreation Area, a 26,000-acre national park located in New York. The goal is to generate innovative, visionary, and compelling designs that reflect the area as a regional resource and national environmental asset. Visit www.vanalan.org/gateway.

AIA Columbus Announces Transit Design Competition
Deadline: May 29, 2007
The competition will generate dialogue about the possibilities for the role of public transportation in Columbus with special emphasis on illustrating how multiple transportation modes can work together to provide a complete network that connects citizens with their community and sparks economic development. The competition will look for solutions for three specific sites prime for transportation infrastructure enhancements. For additional information, visit www.columbusrenewed.org or call 614/469-1973.

Shrink This House
Deadline: June 15, 2007
This competition is open to all architects and architecture students. The winning entries will be published in the September-October issue of Florida Insideout Magazine. The program challenges the participants to take a 5,687-square-foot, two-story modern house going up in Miami Beach and, in expectation of high energy prices and an aging population in 2025, shrink it, creatively, to 2,000 square feet. For images, floor plans, and specs, visit www.floridainsideout.com or call 305/337-7207.

Heated Issue
Deadline: June 17, 2007
This competition asks participants to create an educational campaign to raise public awareness of the problem of global warming and the contribution of our daily lifestyle and activities to this phenomenon. The aim of the campaign is to provoke people to think about the issue and how their individual consumer choices and energy consumption enter into the equation. To learn more, visit www.design21sdn.com.

Child’s Play
Deadline: June 17, 2007
This competition focuses on children and asks designers to create an affordable object (or objects) that encourage children to cultivate their own imagination and creativity. The function is open to interpretation and the objective of the design should be to encourage exploration and to inspire a child to derive his/her own associations and invent their own interaction or way of playing with the object. Visit www.design21sdn.com.

Shelter Me
Deadline: June 17, 2007
In the past two years, widespread catastrophic events have called forth large-scale relief efforts throughout both urban and rural areas of the world. Shelter Me challenges designers to present a cost-effective short-term shelter that is affordable, lightweight, strong, and easily deployed. Visit www.design21sdn.com.

21st International Excellence on the Waterfront Awards
Deadline: June 29, 2007
This program will honor waterfront projects, plans, citizen efforts, and student awards. Winners will be announced on November 2 during the "Urban Waterfronts: The Next Wave" conference at the Seaport Hotel in Boston. For program details and entry forms, call 202/337-0356 or visit www.waterfrontcenter.org.

Just Jerusalem
Deadline: December 31, 2007
This competition invites participants worldwide to submit urban plans and other creative works that consider novel ways to transform this fractious city into a place where contending ideas and citizenries coexist in peaceful ways. An international panel of diplomats, researchers, and professionals will jury the competition. The winning participants will be awarded fellowships at MIT, a prize equivalent to $50,000. Visit www.mit.edu/cis/ jerusalem2050/.

Project New Orleans
Call for Submissions
Ongoing
Project New Orleans is seeking to compile a record of all architectural and planning proposals created for the post-Katrina rebuilding of New Orleans. Submissions are welcome, both written and graphic, from the architectural to the regional, and from all engaged in thinking about the future of the city in physical terms. Visit www.project-neworleans.org.

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Launched in 2005, the four-month course develops the operational and intellectual instruments that form the basis of practice. Without substituting for a formal architectural education, weekly classes are addressed to advanced students and practicing architects who find a significant gap between their formative instruction and the challenges they face as professionals. The course presents architectural know-how, not as an intuitive ability that comes only with experience, but as a body of knowledge that can be taught. Classes, led principally by Rafael Viñoly, begin in September, 2007. Tuition is free. Applications are due July 1, 2007.

For applications and further information, visit www.rvatr.com

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Your submission must be postmarked no later than April 30, 2007. Winning entries will be featured in RECORD INTERIORS 2007. Other submissions will be returned or scheduled for a future issue. Kindly allow 10 weeks for notification. Please be sure to enclose a self-addressed envelope with appropriate postage or return air bill.

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Candidates for Institute Offices

Elections for the Institute’s next First Vice President/President-elect, two Vice Presidents, and Treasurer will be held May 3–5, 2007, at the AIA 2007 National Convention and Design Exposition in San Antonio. If no candidate for First Vice President obtains a majority of the votes cast during the initial round of voting on May 3–4, a run-off election will take place on May 5, 2007. The Institute’s Secretary has certified the following candidates:

For First Vice President/President-elect
Michael R. Broshar, FAIA (AIA Iowa)
Marvin Meleche, FAIA (AIA North Carolina)

For Vice President
Peter J. Arseneault, AIA, NCARB, LEED AP (AIA Central New York)
David J. Brotman, FAIA (AIA California)
Clark D. Manus, FAIA (AIA California)

For Secretary
Hal P. Munger, FAIA (AIA Toledo)

Proposed Bylaws Amendments

The AIA Board of Directors is sponsoring amendments to the Institute’s Bylaws, which are scheduled for consideration by the delegates at the annual business meeting in San Antonio on May 5, 2007. Bylaws amendments require the approval of a two-thirds majority of all votes accredited to be cast at convention.

Bylaws Amendment 07-A—Nomination and Election of Honorary Fellows

The Institute’s Bylaws provide that an architect of esteemed character and distinguished achievements who is neither a U.S. citizen nor a resident of the United States, and who does not primarily practice architecture within the domain of the Institute, may be admitted to Honorary Fellowship. The Institute’s Bylaws also currently provide that only a member of the Board, the College of Fellows or the International Committee may nominate qualified individuals for Honorary Fellowship. A committee of former presidents of the AIA has recommended that the scope of potential nominators be expanded to include any member of the Institute. This suggestion received a favorable response when it was brought to the Secretary’s Advisory Committee and to the Board.

Bylaws Amendment 07-B—Architect Emeritus

The Institute’s Bylaws currently provide that “any Architect member may apply for Emeritus status who has been in good standing in the Institute for fifteen successive years and either (i) has attained the age of 70, or (ii) has attained the age of 60 and is retired from the profession of architecture or is so incapacitated as to be unable to work in the profession.” All Architect member rights, interests, privileges, titles, liabilities and obligations remain unchanged upon advancement to Emeritus status, except that Members Emeritus may no longer be required to pay either regular or supplemental dues nor to maintain the right under law to practice and use the title Architect. In addition, the registration fee is waived for Emeritus members attending the national convention. Recently, the Secretary has received requests for dues waivers from several Architect members who are incapacitated but are ineligible for Emeritus status because they are not yet 60 years of age. Such dues waivers may be approved for only one year at a time, and may not be granted for more than three consecutive years. To ameliorate the hardships experienced by younger incapacitated members, the Board of Directors is sponsoring this amendment to the Institute Bylaws that would permit a member—regardless of age—to apply for Emeritus status if s/he satisfies other eligibility requirements and is so incapacitated as to be unable to work in the profession.

Bylaws Amendment 07-C—Associate Emeritus Membership Category

The Institute’s Bylaws currently provide that Architect members may achieve Emeritus status by satisfying certain eligibility requirements. (See above.) The Secretary of the Institute has investigated the benefits and disadvantages of opening Emeritus membership to Associate members. If Emeritus status were opened to Associate members on terms generally comparable to those used for Architect members, approximately 535 Associate members would satisfy current age requirements to achieve Emeritus status. If all were to achieve Emeritus status, they would expand the current Emeritus ranks by about eight percent. The Board sponsors this amendment to open Emeritus membership to Associate members.

Resolutions

The delegates at the AIA 2007 National Convention and Design Exposition will be asked to consider the following resolutions, which require approval by a majority vote:

07-1 Leading by Design: Elevating Collaboration as the Path to a Sustainable Future for Society and the Architecture Profession
07-2 Recognition of Newly Licensed Architect Members
07-3 Appreciation of Departing Members of the Council of Architectural Component Executives
07-4 Appreciation to Retiring Executive Committee and Board Members
07-5 Appreciation to the Host Chapter
07-6 Appreciation to Convention Committees
07-7 Appreciation to Exhibitors
07-8 Appreciation to RK Stewart, FAIA, and Barbara Lyone Stewart, AIA

For candidates’ statements and the full text of the proposed Bylaws amendments and resolutions, visit the AIA Web site at www.aia.org.
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The Architect's Hand

Hanneman Residence, Houston, Texas, graphite, prisma pencil, 2003 (top left and right); Boerne Residence, Boerne, Texas, floor plan and section: blue ink, prisma pencil, 2005 (middle and bottom right); floor plan and elevation study: red ink, prisma pencil, 2005 (middle and bottom left).

Carlos Jimenez captures the moment

Sketching provides a private form of notetaking for Carlos Jimenez, a Houston-based designer and architecture professor at Rice University. "It's of the moment, and not self-conscious," he says. When Jimenez visited the sites for two houses he was designing in Texas (above), he took along prisma and graphite pencils and blue- or red-ink pens to jot his impressions down on paper and work out initial design concepts he would develop later. "Sketches help me to keep track of the placement of the trees, or potential views of the landscape from inside the house, and to arrive at my own understanding of the problem," he says. In the case of the residence in Boerne, Texas (unbuilt), designed in 2005, he used sketches to determine how trees could frame the house, shown by the green marks in the drawing (middle), and where he could place the indoor and outdoor fireplaces, shown by red marks (bottom right). With his design of the Hanneman residence in Houston (finished in 2005), sketches (upper right) helped Jimenez integrate the pool with the house on a tight site. As he says, "Drawing by hand is better than a computer: sketching gives me a distance." Suzanne Stephens
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