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STATEMENT FROM TOD WILLIAMS AND BILLIE TSIEN
IN RESPONSE TO THE AMERICAN FOLK ART MUSEUM BUILDING DECISION BY MoMA

January 8, 2014

We have learned of MoMA's final decision to raze the former American Folk Art Museum building and replace it with a new structure. This action represents a missed opportunity to find new life and purpose for a building that is meaningful to so many.

The Folk Art building was designed to respond to the fabric of the neighborhood and create a building that felt both appropriate and yet also extraordinary. Demolishing this human-scaled, uniquely crafted building is a loss to the city of New York in terms of respecting the size, diversity and texture of buildings in a midtown neighborhood that is at risk of becoming increasingly homogenized.

This is a building that we and others teach from and about. It has served as an invaluable learning resource for students, colleagues and scholars, and a source of inspiration for many more. It has a powerful architectural legacy. The inability to experience the building firsthand and to appreciate its meaning from an historical perspective will be profoundly felt.

As architects, we must be optimists.
So we look to the future
and we move on.