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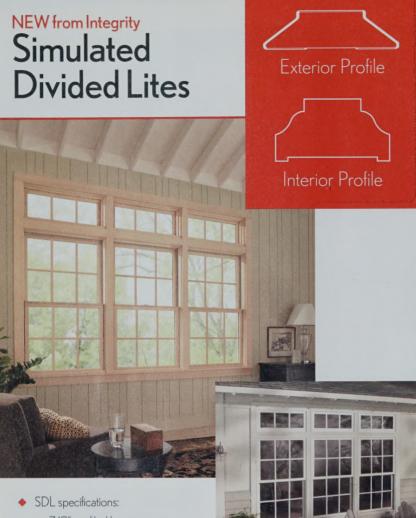


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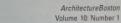
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Leading Questions

uring last November's BuildBoston conference, a panel convened to discuss the tower proposal for Boston's Winthrop Square. Just days before, the city announced that it had received one response to Mayor Thomas Menino's call for a tower of up to 1,000 feet in height on the site of a city-owned parking garage. The panelists — none of them architectural Luddites — intelligently, if occasionally skeptically, probed questions of siting, use, symbolism, traffic, environmental impacts, sustainability, and the meaning of the 21st-century city. At the end, only one question remained: why hadn't this discussion occurred a year ago?

In some respects, that was the most important, and most interesting, question. The Winthrop Square request for proposals issued last spring was a surprise to most Bostonians. This is, after all, a city that has had issues with political authority for 250 years, elevating public process to a near-religion in which neighborhoods serve as acolytes intoning vox populi. Quickly dubbed "Tommy's Tower," the building was seen as the mayor's legacy project, one that would, not incidentally, produce substantial city revenues. The fact that Winthrop Square is located in the Financial District and thus belongs to no neighborhood means that this tower might actually be built.

The word that has not emerged in most discussions is "leadership." In nearly any other city, such a proposal, announced so unapologetically, would be instantly lauded for its political boldness. The fact that it has not raises profound questions about our political expectations. Despite occasional calls for brave new ideas and decisive action, perhaps the reality of Boston's political process is that we dream of a king but want only a facilitator.

As contributors George Thrush, Hubert Murray, Anthony Flint, and Rebecca Barnes demonstrate in this issue of ArchitectureBoston, we now understand city-building and its far-ranging implications with a sophistication that eluded us just 25 years ago. It is impossible to look at the Winthrop Square proposal and not ask hard questions about a site selection based on the happenstance of some longforgotten negotiation for a public garage. The unenviable task for the mayor is not only to respond to these questions but also to transcend them.

Across the Atlantic, another city has famously melded political leadership and architecture. In 1982, French president François Mitterrand announced his grands projets for Paris — building

projects intended to transform the French capital from an historical urban artifact to a symbol of the country's continuing cultural vigor. The best known of these, the Louvre pyramid, was surely no less controversial than the notion of a 1,000-foot tower in Boston. In pushing his projects, Mitterrand was able to draw on the unbeatable combination of government funding and an appeal to French nationalism.

Nationalism doesn't play well in Boston, and city "branding" (one of the underpinnings of the city's defense of the tower) is its poor cousin. The problem of Winthrop Square is that the case for its boldness depends upon a single attribute — height — which is, as one BuildBoston panelist noted, a quality that seems to appeal most to emerging economies. The global competition for the world's tallest tower, conducted in the name of progress, suddenly seems as hopelessly retro as a Miss America contest.

The genius of Mitterrand's projets — none of which were especially tall buildings — was that they were in fact transformative: by changing physical bits of the city's public realm, they changed the city's public life. It is the promise of transformation that ignites the public imagination evidence, surely, of leadership.

Perhaps the reality of Boston's political process is that we dream of a king but want only a facilitator.

Boston has entered an era of big projects that historians might some day view as its own grands projets: the Big Dig; the Rose Kennedy Greenway; Harvard's Allston campus. Political leadership has had a checkered history in each of them. The boldness of Mayor Menino's proposal suggests that he, as a skillful politician, senses that people are ready for a new style of leadership; indeed, the Massachusetts gubernatorial election proved him right. Some students of urban history have predicted the emergence of a new Robert Moses. Moses probably wouldn't survive in Boston today, not only because neighborhoods relish their hard-won power, but also because — as the BuildBoston panelists demonstrated — so many people have learned to ask all the right questions. If Mayor Menino can demonstrate that his tower will be more than the tallest cube farm on the skyline, his larger legacy will be a new political landscape.

Elizabeth S. Padjen FAIA Editor



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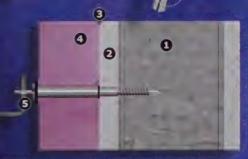
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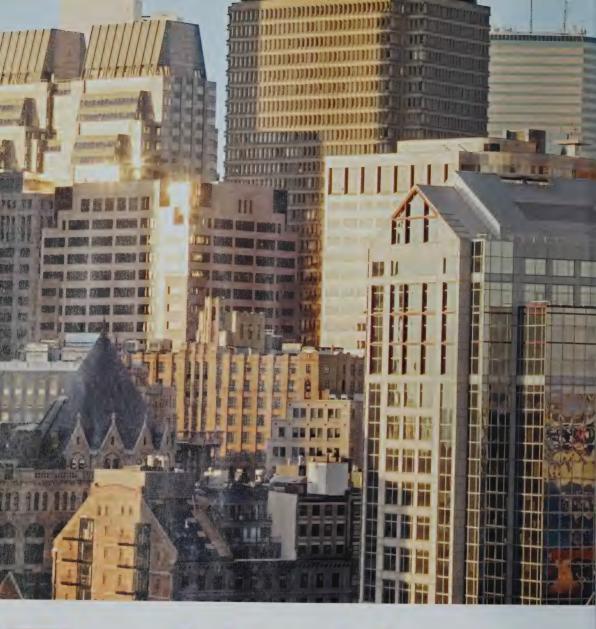
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The Next Layer

Boston in the Age of the New Towers

By George Thrush FAIA



James Howard Kunstler and Nikos A. Salingaros wrote, "We are convinced that the age of skyscrapers is at an end. It must now be considered an experimental building typology that has failed. We predict that no new megatowers will be built, and existing ones are destined to be dismantled."

Their prediction may have been a bit premature. Since then, dozens of tall and ultra-tall buildings have been proposed in the United States, and several are under construction. As the 96-story Trump Tower rises above the Chicago River, two even taller buildings promise to follow.

How could Kunstler and Salingaros have been so wrong? It seems that in spite of terrorism, other forces such as ego, political legacy, real estate markets, public revenue, architectural elegance, and even environmentalism continue to drive cities to approve very tall buildings, including our own city of Boston. And I say it's about time.

Last spring, Boston Mayor Thomas Menino put out a request for proposals for redevelopment of the city-owned parking garage in Winthrop Square looking for a tower of "up to 1,000 feet in height." That such height would be permitted, let alone encouraged, runs counter to Boston's medieval approval process. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, the city expanded citizen input to give neighborhoods a greater voice in their own futures. The towers that arose on the ruins of the old West End were glaring examples of the kind of "top down" planning process that activists were determined would never happen again. As a result, agencies such as the Boston Redevelopment Authority, which had previously led development efforts, now only responded to them. Developers now faced a lengthy public approval process with groups dominated by those opposed to tall buildings. Although many Bostonians (and not just architects among them) think that there is nothing more sublime than seeing the sun glisten off the Hancock, the tall building in Boston has become anathema to the public interest. Because in Boston, unlike many other American cities, tall buildings are regarded as — at best — a necessary evil, rather than as an opportunity for symbolizing civic pride.

So why do we now have the city actively calling for new development that is very tall? The first answer, of course, is money.

The changes in the planning and approval process over the recent decades have severely affected the city's pocketbook. The national obsession with low taxes has further limited Boston's revenues by significantly reducing the amount of federal aid it receives (arcane laws requiring state approval of municipal tax increases don't help either). Meanwhile, municipal costs keep rising faster than inflation — especially for police and fire departments, health care, and schools — and economists are concerned that the continued loss of middle-class residents can only be stemmed by improvements in precisely these areas. The mayor hopes to take advantage of a vigorous downtown real estate market. And this makes sense.

What makes the Winthrop Square location so fantastic from the city's point of view is that it offers two revenue opportunities instead of one. The city will receive not only the real estate tax revenue, but also development fees, because the city owns the land.

For those opposed to very tall buildings because of their perceived incompatibility with the city's historic character, an effort to introduce a massive tower to Winthrop Square is profoundly disturbing. A vague but persistent opposition to the idea of private-sector profit in real estate only makes matters worse. Add to this an abiding reverence for the late Jane Jacobs and her dream of an "urban village," with small-scale buildings on small-scale streets, and you have what promises to be an all-out war.

Opponents of such towers argue that the taller the building, the more the poor street below is consigned to perpetual darkness. But is this not even more true for wide, mid-rise buildings than for tall, slender buildings? At least the shadows from the tall, slender ones move around as from a sundial as the day progresses. The bulky

mid-rise buildings often sought by communities in the name of civic responsibility actually create much broader shadows than their taller, skinnier counterparts. Critics of tall buildings also raise the specter of "Manhattan-ization," that we are striving to recreate New York City right here in New England. But the reality is quite different. If Boston's neighborhood activists continue to equate low-scale, anti-growth development with progressive causes, the much likelier result is what I call "Nantucket-ization," where enforced small-scale building within limited land area results in even more expensive housing. It may promote historic character, but it won't allow for the kind of vitality, new building, and change that a modern city demands.

Today's successful cities see the importance of retaining a vital center. It is no longer acceptable to have a downtown that empties out at five o'clock. The modern city demands convenient urban housing and a 24/7 lifestyle that will attract and maintain a high-quality workforce. From an environmental perspective, such towers would allow access to all four MBTA transit lines, and would mean significantly fewer parking spaces per unit, and far more transit use. But this means new buildings in a city like Boston and, because it is expensive to build here, they'll likely be tall ones.

The mayor is finally opening up the discussion about tall buildings in Boston, and I would argue that this is a good thing — a desperately needed debate for our city. Tall buildings hold greater economic and architectural promise. They will create new sources of municipal revenue. The image of Boston will be given an opportunity to evolve yet again. Indeed, Winthrop Square is only one of many possible locations for new towers.



After Mayor Thomas
Menino solicited
proposals for a new
tower on the site of a
city-owned garage,
ArchitectureBoston
asked readers, Would
a 1,000-foot tower in
Winthrop Square be

The question makes me reflect on what must have been asked in the early '70s: would an 800-foot tower in Copley Square be good for Boston? Years later, despite the windows, the winds, and the lesson learned, the John Hancock tower stands as Boston's most distinctive and elegant office tower, a building with a stature that is recognized around the world as a symbol of our city's modernity and sophistication. I would like to believe an equally inventive solution might again mark a new era for our city. The risks to Winthrop Square are high, but even though we have every reason to be skeptical, let's also be open to the potential of a great architectural solution that will function sympathetically with its surroundings and powerfully symbolize a city that is ambitious and unafraid.

David Hacin AIA

BSA Commissioner of Urban Design

A 1,000-foot tower is symbolic only in terms of the unit in which it is measured:

feet. In meters, that would be an unsymbolic 304.8. Mayor Menino's legacy with regard to the Winthrop Square tower has been the introduction of a new unit: 1,000 feet = 1 Menino. His legacy would depend upon its being the only tower ever to be built in Boston to be one Menino high.

As to the tower in question: yes, build it, but build not only this one — build many. Experiment. Mix uses. Push the envelope. And, most importantly, forget the arbitrary height limit. Let buildings be as tall as the market, engineering, and the public will let them.

In the meantime: focus on a real mayoral legacy. Repairing bridges would be one noteworthy and far-sighted achievement. The people who will be spending time in that tower will want to be able to get to it.

Susanne Schindler

Boston

The question for pedestrians is not "How tall?" but "How does a large new building meet the ground?" WalkBoston is generally

Is it possible that Mayor Menino views a 1,000-foot building as his legacy? Maybe. And surely there are people who don't like politicians getting credit for things, although I don't think that Chicagoans begrudge Mayor Daley getting some credit for leading that city to such impressive new heights of civic grandeur.

But the Winthrop Square solicitation has pushed us across a critically important threshold. By saying that a 1,000-foot tower could actually be very good for the city, we might finally be able to move beyond the bicentennial-era obsession with our revolutionary roots. This doesn't mean that Boston will lose them, only that another layer of meaning will be added to our city. If you've ever driven inbound on Massachusetts Avenue from Cambridge and looked straight down the street toward the John Hancock building in the distance, you know exactly how different sections of the urban experience can be linked by tall buildings, and how one need not eradicate the other.

Will such changes make us a "world class" city? I don't know. But faith in the future is essential for the ongoing vitality of any city. For far too long, Boston has behaved as though its best days were behind it. The city must stop apologizing for the loss of the West End. It was a bad choice, but we have learned from it, and now we must move on. If the West End hadn't been bulldozed, today it would likely be home to condominiums and millionaires, and not the working-class families who populate the nostalgic period photos that continue to indict us from afar. Everything changes.

The inevitable debate about the proposed tower shouldn't be about embracing the future or celebrating the past. Boston has a nearly 400-year history of doing both. The late-19th-century Back

Bay is a layer of the city that sits alongside the 18th-century Beacon Hill, adjacent to the 20th-century Christian Science Center, Prudential, and Copley Place, and not far from future 21st-century turnpike air-rights projects. This city has been forever evolving and, as Alex Krieger and David Cobb made so clear in their elegant book

Faith in the future is essential for the ongoing vitality of any city.

Mapping Boston, there is probably no city in America that has remade itself as much as Boston. The idea that there is only one true image of our city just isn't so.

Sensibly placed towers can actually improve the historical legibility of our city. These towers can help rearrange the hierarchy of the skyline of our city, reinvigorate the downtown with residential life, and help to pay for the re-energized public life that we seek in the midst of this private age.

In 1798, it was the dome of the statehouse. In 1915, it was the Custom House Tower. In 1976, it was the luminous blade of the Hancock Tower. In 2010, we can hope for one or more new spires helping to better define the same Shawmut Peninsula that settlers first saw nearly 400 years ago.

George Thrush FAIA is director of the School of Architecture at Northeastern University.

comfortable with dense development near transit, and Winthrop Square fits that bill. That said, the building should have minimal parking; wide, smooth sidewalks; and wonderful pedestrian facilities both inside and out - including multi-season spaces that enliven the city's sidewalks, servicing that impinges minimally on the sidewalk and walkers, and a mix of uses to help populate downtown 24/7. In addition, a throughblock lobby connection should be created between Winthrop Square and Federal Street to create a fine-grained pedestrian network that breaks up the long block between High and Franklin. Finally, careful wind and shadow studies should be done to ensure that the building does not create windy conditions at ground level or shadows on sidewalks and open spaces nearby.

Wendy Landman

WalkBoston

The preservation community is supportive of new buildings that will be future Boston landmarks. Their design is more important

than their height. We look forward to proposals that will enhance the Boston skyline as well as enliven the streetscape.

Susan Park

Boston Preservation Alliance

I was appalled when I heard about the proposed 1,000-foot tower on Winthrop Square and I remain so. It's the location even more than the height that concerns me.

What good can that project do for Boston — other than to increase the price of a small parcel of city-owned land? Boston is treasured (and visited) for its unique and intimate qualities: a finegrained street pattern that invites walking, and a variety of interesting and sometimes historic buildings that hug the street line and shape those inviting "outdoor rooms."

Placing a 1,000-foot tower in the midst of the delicate and narrow downtown streets, looming over little Winthrop Square, will destroy that important part of our heritage with shadows and grid-locked vehicular traffic. (How many cars

will be parked under the tower to make it "economically viable"?)

Besides damaging an historic part of our city, the proposed tower will undercut the development of what was supposed to be our new frontier, the South Boston Seaport — a place that was meant to attract new commercial buildings and take the pressure off the financial district. But who will build out there, in moderate-size towers, when the glamour is downtown?

And there is no doubt it would be glamorous: the proposed designs will probably be elegant, the designer a star. Boston deserves new and beautiful buildings: we already have several exciting, more appropriately scaled projects underway designed by the best of them: Renzo Piano (the Gardner), Norman Foster (the MFA), Diller and Scofidio (the ICA). We don't have to sell our soul and our city's character to add the next layer of Boston's architectural history.

Joan Goody FAIA

Boston



Re-evaluating the Big Dig in the wake of tragedy BY HUBERT MURRAY AIA, RIBA





\$7 billion in private investment; almost 8,000 new housing units — of which 1,000 are affordable; 10 million square feet of office and retail space; 2,600 hotel rooms; and over 40,000 jobs. This is unremitting good news for the city, which is strapped for cash, desperate for an expanded tax base, and scrambling to remain internationally competitive. And whatever the quibbles about the design of the parks, the Greenway itself will be an outstanding new asset for Boston.

This success story is not just bland boosterism. The numbers, from the Massachusetts Turnpike Authority's 2006 Economic Impacts Report, are real, better than predicted, and likely to be better yet in the coming decade.

I confess to having been involved in the project as chief architect on the Central Artery from 1989 through 1992, the preliminary-design phase for the project. "Architecture," in that context, encompassed all the bits you would see. The engineers did all the work you would not see. The whole design and construction management team at that time amounted to something like 1,000 people — of whom 45 were architects, landscape architects, or urban designers.

Even today, a lingering gaze on the successful bits evokes, at least in my breast, a thrill of promises fulfilled. The four ventilation

THE TUNNELS, AS BRILLIANT AN ENGINEERING IDEA AS THEY WERE AND ARE, ARE MISSING THAT ONE CRITICAL INGREDIENT — A SENSE OF PLACE, OF DIRECTION, AND OF PROGRESS.

buildings that are the breathing machines for I-90 are the best of the publicly visible, civic infrastructure. Vent Building 7 (VB-7) in East Boston is the noblest and least compromised of all; VB-5 on Summer Street — conceived in good faith but mugged in construction — is less than it might have been, while VB-1, on Fort Point Channel, has been a pleasant surprise, especially when viewed between the knot of viaducts and catenaries as one speeds eastbound before diving into the tunnel.

That mess of ramps too, is a pleasant surprise. The not-so-simple convergence of the two interstates on the southern edge of the city is exacerbated by their plunge into their respective tunnels, one under the city, the other under South Boston and the harbor. No model was large enough, no video simulation extravagant enough, to convey the Piranesi-like quality of columns, viaducts, boat-walls, and portals in just three dimensions, never mind the fourth.

There is, as well, a satisfaction in having created well-planned, naturally lit, quietly elegant maintenance workshops on D Street — originally intended to be a joined-at-the-hip sibling to the now somewhat banal Operations Control Center (OCC) overlooking the open section of the Ted Williams Tunnel. While the Maintenance Building survived the separation on its new site, the OCC lost an essential vitality and never recovered.

The architecture of I-93, conceived in the same spirit, never attained greatness. Its ventilation buildings are at best unexceptional and at worst something of a dog's dinner. VB-4 at the Haymarket never really had a chance. A five-part program was developed out of a political deal, united (briefly) in conceptual design, reconceived and divided in final design among three different designer teams, and constructed under three separate contracts. What building could survive such abuse and maintain its integrity?

And I regret to say, aware that I may be in a minority of one, that even the famed bridge that has now risen to iconic status is in my view as awkward as the process from which it was spawned. The engineering is astounding of course, and the finesse with which Christian Menn developed the original concept could not have been more assured. But it was asked to carry too much—which is what makes the Zakim the widest cable-stay bridge in the world, as if that were an accolade to urbanism. Architecturally, the bow-legged towers are out of scale and the Bunker Hill obelisk top too cheap a reference to really achieve dignity—a bit like a clip-on bow tie.

Now to the dark side.

The tunnels have always been a disaster, metaphorically and aesthetically, and now, regrettably, in reality. The first hint of trouble appeared in conceptual design. One of the few virtues of the old green viaduct perched above the city was that you could see out and know where you were. The tunnels, as brilliant an engineering idea as they were and are, are missing that one critical ingredient — a sense of place, of direction, and of progress. All the topographical markers that one normally relies on for giving a sense of direction (such as the Custom House tower and the harbor) are gone. Driving into the tunnels is like entering a world of sensory deprivation. Architects and artists produced designs and models for the graphic treatment of tunnel walls to restore in some measure that missing locational fix. Graphic themes, abstract themes, naturalistic and representational themes, in muted colors no less, were all nixed by the Federal Highway Administration as being "unsafe" in that they were "distracting to the motorist." The argument that such unrelieved blandness was in itself a danger to the motorist was thought not to hold water, so to speak.

All this discussion of architectural design of course pales in comparison to the death of Milena Del Valle following the collapse of a tunnel ceiling panel. The personal tragedy of the family and the ensuing institutional and contractual debacle that has befallen the Turnpike and its consultants have heaped infamy upon

MANY WHO KNEW THE OLD CENTRAL ARTERY HAVE ALREADY FORGOTTEN WHAT A GRIM AND UNFORGIVING MONSTER IT WAS.

dishonor in the public perception of the project. It is at this darkest moment that we need to remind ourselves of the rationale for undertaking this enterprise in the first place.

Our memories are perhaps as impoverished as our imaginations. Just as it was hard to imagine the Greenway prior to the removal of the elevated highway, there are now people working in the city who have never known and could not visualize the old Central Artery. And many of those who did know it have already forgotten what a grim and unforgiving monster it was that kept us from our waterfront. Had it not been for the disastrous falling ceiling panel and the subsequent repair schedule, many of us could barely recall the former isolation of South Boston and the tangled drive to the airport.

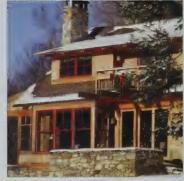
Boston is often characterized as the most European of American cities. Apart from the obvious connotations of brick sidewalks and row houses, the most profound similarity is in the aging infrastructure that this city shares with cities as diverse as Oslo, Barcelona, and Genoa. These cities are trying to make themselves attractive places in which to live and work, just as we are. Foreign architects and planners have been watching Boston's progress with interest for years. The only analogue I know of in 20th-century American history of a vision as technologically, socially, and economically transformative is the Tennessee Valley Authority project, which brought electricity, education, employment, and hope to the rural poor. The Central Artery does not match the TVA project in physical scale, but to our city and the region it is no less important. With mixed success, the architecture is an attempt to reflect that importance.

As tragic as the death of an individual is, the greater political tragedy occasioned by the falling of the ceiling panel is the loss of trust in public work — that is, if we continue to allow that to be the case. While serious investigative work is clearly warranted, it is the organizational and institutional issues that need to be examined, clear of cynicism and sniping from the sidelines. For years, our political leaders have tried to shake this project off as the unwanted love-child of irresponsible spendthrifts. The plain fact of the matter is that as a city and a state we have executed something as remarkable as it was necessary. There are problems left to be solved on this great urban project, but unless we are resolved to wallow in the slough of despond, it is also high time to be getting on to the next investment in the city and our future.

Hubert Murray AIA, RIBA is the principal of Hubert Murray Architect + Planner in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and is president of the Boston Society of Architects.



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whose ard?

Who gives is sometimes as important as who gets.

Everyone wants to know "Who?" when a new award is announced.

But a better question might be "Whose?" For in the ritual of selling architecture, in which awards play a major role, an architecture award almost never belongs to its recipient. An award remains the property of the entity that awards it. In fact, there is almost no other situation in public life in which it is so much better to give than to receive. When an award is given in architecture, whether from the AIA or the American Wood Council, from the Urban Land Institute or the Pritzker family, the real winner is the granting body itself, whose name is then associated with great architecture. After that, of course, the profession of architecture itself benefits when it appears that its professionals' work is so valuable that awards have been created, juries have deliberated, and medals struck, to recognize it.

Take this little test: can you name the Pritzker Architecture Prize laureate for 2005? (No looking!) Just two years ago. Arguably, the most famous award in American architecture. Give up? Thom Mayne, from California. He had previously won several awards, and he has since won a National Design Award. We might not remember that Mayne won the prize, or which pieces of his work, exactly, were awarded. But when we read the list of Pritzker laureates, which includes Philip Johnson, Luis Barragán, James Stirling, I.M. Pei, Richard Meier, Frank Gehry, Robert Venturi, Rem Koolhaas, and Zaha Hadid among the 27 previous winners, we might think, "Hmmm. Pritzker Prize. Pretty important." We might also think, "Not bad company for a family whose previous claim to high culture was owning a chain of hotels."

The awarding body gets to bask in the reflected glory of the recipient's accomplishment.

And it's not expensive. For only \$100,000 a year (the award itself), staff time, and the cost of hosting jurors in the style to which they would like to become accustomed, the Pritzker family developed an award given to a series of men (and one woman) who have also received other awards over the years. And unlike the Pritzker's \$100,000 or the Aga Khan Award's purse of \$500,000, most architecture awards actually carry no monetary value whatsoever. Instead, oftentimes it is the awarding body that gets to bask in the reflected glory of the recipient's accomplishment, rather than the other way around. For very little effort and almost no cash upfront, a group of well-meaning but not necessarily well-known folks can take a ride on the reputation of an architect of some high achievement by giving him or her an award.

But let's start at the beginning. Award. The term itself is embedded in the old-fashioned language that describes how architecture begins. Lawyers accept a client, doctors treat patients, contractors take on a job. Architects are awarded a commission. Language like this makes getting work seem to arise from lofty

competition. Thus an architect must somehow be deserving of the work, yet appear passive in pursuing it—surprised, even, as if somehow being awarded a commission just happens.

But while an award has always initiated a project, these days, architects seem to require an award at the project's end, too. Not to worry—there are plenty of awards out there. If you, or your firm, or a project you've been part of, have never won an award, you're clearly not doing something right. That something might not have much to do with building design; more likely it has to do with public relations.

The term "award" has been handed down to us from a time when the profession of architecture was understood to be "of service," back when transactions between professionals were transactions within a particular social class and cultural hierarchy. It recalls a time when professionals could not legally advertise. This was well before architects routinely hired commercial business consultants and marketing managers, before we had communications directors and public relations firms at the ready to pursue not only the awarding of architectural commissions but also awards to recognize the completion of those commissions.

We celebrate the 100th anniversary of American architecture awards this year, the AIA having awarded its first Gold Medal in 1907. At the beginning of a tumultuous century in which there was much confusion about what might constitute good design, this professional organization launched an award "conferred in recognition of a significant body of work of lasting influence on the theory and practice of architecture." Not taking any chances, that first award went to Sir Aston Webb, a British architect unknown to most Americans. He had been president of the Royal Institute of British Architects, was already a knight, and had just received the Royal Gold Medal. So, like the Pritzkers 72 years later, the AIA right away gained credibility for good taste. We imagine they had a fine party.

Since then, we have established even more professional organizations and trade groups to raise money to produce awards and concomitant celebrations. These try to influence the public who are almost never in on design decisions — that such decisions have been the right ones, that they should feel honored to be in the company of designers and projects such as these, and that perhaps these same award-winning designers should create more of these projects in future.

Most professions don't wait to be awarded work, and they don't wait around for awards once their work has been completed, either. Somehow, winning a case in court and reaping a 40 percent fee is its own reward. In the clinic, bringing someone's blood pressure down and prolonging his life is reward enough. People who receive those services seem to understand the need for competent professionals to perform them. Architecture though, truth be told, is a more difficult sell. And so there are awards to help infuse this profession with a certain *gravitas*. To win an award, a project cannot merely be an example of comfortable architecture, on time, under budget, meeting the client's needs. To win an award, a work must by definition be the best example that the architecture profession has to offer. But who decides that? How can they tell?

Oftentimes it is Bostonians who decide. Boston architects and professors of architecture are currently Pritzker Prize jurors, nominators for the Aga Khan and Cooper-Hewitt awards, and in

Awards infuse this profession with a certain *gravitas*.

the past have been instrumental in awarding prizes for organizations ranging from the Concrete Masonry Institute to the Brick Industry Association, the Urban Land Institute, the AIA, the American Society of Landscape Architects, and the Building Owners and Managers Association. There are literally hundreds of architecture awards nationwide, even awards for buildings that will never be built, as in the pages of this magazine. And, like architecture itself, awards and their winners often represent a fairly narrow cultural and historical context.

Very few women have ever won one of these awards (Pritzker Prize laureate Zaha Hadid being a notable exception) and even fewer people of color are regularly honored. Minorities have a way of dealing with this: NOMA, the National Organization of Minority Architects, gives its own awards, the "Awards for Excellence in Architecture."

In Bertolt Brecht's play, The Life of Galileo, the German play-wright has his hero Galileo opine, "Unhappy the land that needs heroes," imagining that idolizing others and their work won't lead to much, and anyway, that the work itself is probably its own reward. In the all-marketing-all-the-time 21st century, someone with Brecht's outlook might as easily have a nameless starchitect say, "Unhappy the profession that needs awards." But here we are: it's the Awards issue. Welcome to it. ■

Jeff Stein AIA is the director of the architecture program at the Boston Architectural College and is the architecture critic for *Banker & Tradesman*.

CASE STUDY:

The Cooper-Hewitt's National Design Awards



At the close of 2006, America's National Design Museum, the Cooper-Hewitt in New York City, hosted its annual awards ceremony. The Cooper-Hewitt knows how to award an architecture prize. First, give it an important name: the "National" Design Awards will do. Second, hold it at an exclusive venue: a thousand-dollar-a-plate black-tie evening at the Cooper-Hewitt's own building, the former Andrew Carnegie mansion on New York's Fifth Avenue, does nicely. Then capture some Hollywood shine: invite movie-maker and über-hipster Spike Lee to be one of the evening's presenters. And finally, reap the publicity. If you give awards, you don't have to buy advertising, because awards

are news. It helps if, like the Cooper-Hewitt, you publish your own magazine (*National Design Journal*) and have access to *The New York Times* Style section.

Among the half-dozen 2006 honorees was architect Paolo Soleri, who at 87 years old was recognized with the National Design Award for Lifetime Achievement. The media were in attendance, as were 560 paying members of the public. An additional 200 showed up at a reception afterward. No cash prize accrues to this distinguished award. Instead, the winner receives a foot-high statue (shown left), kind of an abstract, extruded snowflake made of a mystery material. And a champagne toast.

Eighty-seven is about the right age to receive a lifetime achievement award. It minimizes any cultural risk to the awarding body. Just last April, Soleri received the Cascieri Medal at the Boston Architectural College. He had previously won the AIA Gold Medal for Craftsmanship, the Gold Medal of the Union of International Architects, a *Progressive Architecture* Award, and the Gold Medal of the Venice Biennale. He has been awarded multiple honorary degrees; the State of Arizona has celebrated

a day in his honor; and just last year, a street in downtown Scottsdale was named after him. None of these awards carried a stipend. The gold medals are not really made of gold, either.

In polite design circles, Soleri has been considered something of a revolutionary. The mind behind Arcosanti (the urban laboratory in the Arizona desert) and the author of 20 books, Soleri has worked to counter what he views as the universal wastefulness of most American architecture and land-use. Now, of course, such ideas are newly in vogue, attached to the sustainability and green-design movements with which everyone wants to be associated. Hence, a National Design Award. And who underwrites the National Design Award ceremony itself? Developers of single-family houses and office buildings, makers of SUVs, and purveyors of consumer goods. All people who benefit from an association with design excellence. Exactly the folks who the 2006 lifetimeachievement winner has confronted through his work. In the end, honoring someone is not quite the same as actually supporting that person's lifetime work.

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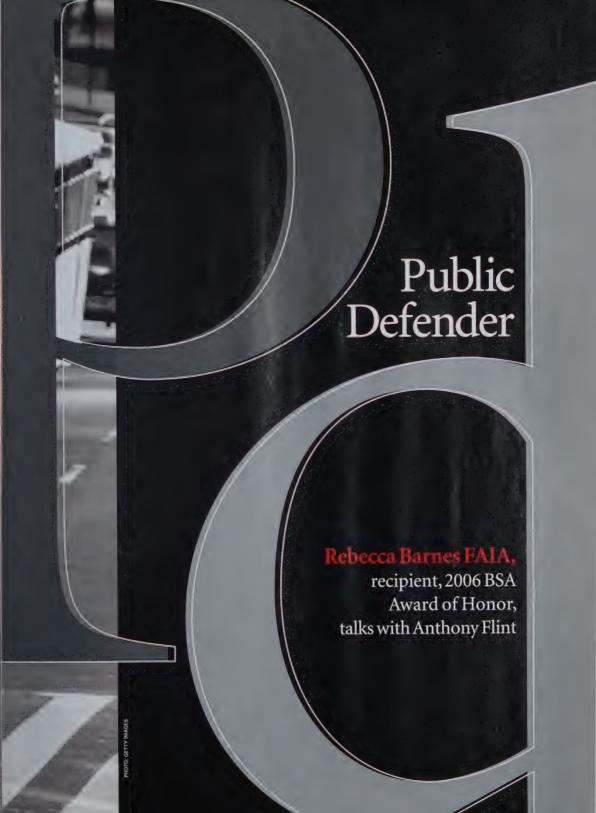
Rebecca G. Barnes FAIA is the recipient of the 2006 Boston Society of Architects Award of Honor, in recognition of her contributions to the profession and to the community.

Now the director of strategic growth at Brown University, she served as chief planner for the city of Boston from 2001 to 2005. She served as planning director and developed the comprehensive plan for Seattle between 1991 and 1995: from 1995 to 2000. she served as associate vice president at Frederic R. Harris in Boston; and in 2000 and 2001, she led Barnes Resources Group, Inc. A past president of the BSA, she was also a Loeb Fellow at the Harvard Graduate School of Design. She received degrees from Brown University and the University of Oregon, and studied architecture at the Boston Architectural Center.



Anthony Flint is public affairs manager at the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy in Cambridge, Massachusetts, a think-tank with a focus on land-use, urban planning,

and tax policy (www.lincolninst.edu). He is author of *This Land: The Battle over Sprawl and the Future of America* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006), and is working on a book on Jane Jacobs and Robert Moses to be published by Random House in 2008. He was a reporter for *The Boston Globe* for 16 years, covering planning, development, transportation, and architecture, and then served in 2005–2006 at the Massachu setts Office for Commonwealth Development. He was a Loeb Fellow at the Harvard Graduate School of Design in 2000–2001.



Anthony Flint: You've moved from being chief planner for the City of Boston to director of strategic growth for Brown University. What has characterized that transition?

Rebecca Barnes: My job, which is newly created, is to look beyond the traditional campus and further into the future than the capital plan for Brown's growth and expansion. As a result of Frances Halsband's master plan, which was completed twoand-a-half years ago, the university has realized that its ability to expand on College Hill is limited. A great deal of its future growth is expected to be in life sciences and medicine. Buildings serving those functions tend to have pretty large footprints that don't fit easily into the intimate scale of College Hill. So I'm looking at other parts

of the city. It's a nice nexus of the university's need to grow and the city's desire for economic development.

Anthony Flint: You're clearly working in an exciting area of planning — the participation of colleges and universities in urban revitalization. And yet campus growth is often a source of community friction. Do you see town-gown relationships changing in this respect?

Rebecca Barnes: We are seeing a similar phenomenon all across the country of universities expanding beyond their traditional borders, and coming to understand that their ship rises and falls on the same water as their host communities. One of the most often-cited poster children for this is the University of Pennsylvania,

Zoning is only as good as it's practiced.

-Rebecca Barnes FAIA

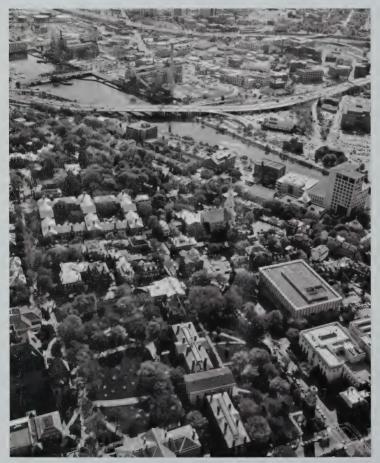
which almost single-handedly redeveloped its immediate neighborhood in West Philadelphia. There were enormous public-safety issues that were affecting the university's ability to attract the caliber of students and faculty that it wanted, so improving the health of the surrounding community became critical to the institution's own survival.

That's not the way it is in Providence, which is an appealing and attractive contemporary city. Providence has pulled itself up by its bootstraps over the last 20 years, by moving a rail line, creating a mixed-use environment in parts of downtown, adding a big mall, creating a huge new public open-space along the river, and providing the infrastructure to support public activity, events, and amenities. The city sees Brown as one of its richest resources and, as a permanently invested institution, part of the community's leadership structure. So the town-gown relationships are being more consciously developed and nurtured by both parties.

Anthony Flint: Some cities are clearly struggling, but others, such as Boston and San Francisco, are becoming very trendy and very expensive. Can a little gentrification ever be a good thing? Or do you see this as a major problem in the smartgrowth movement or in the revitalization of our cities?

Rebecca Barnes: I think gentrification tends to be a red flag that gets waved. It often has racist overtones and implies dislocating long-term lower-income residents. Of course that's not a social good, but there are good things that come with the redevelopment and revitalization

Brown University campus (foreground)



of districts and cities. Like everything else, it depends upon the underlying values that are guiding the process. The good things that can result are an increase in the tax base and physical upgrading. It's a question of community development instead of simple economic development, community development being economic development that is achieved within a set of community-building values that the term "economic development" doesn't typically connote.

Anthony Flint: But isn't affordability still the issue? What do you see as effective or promising ways to ensure some affordability? Boston, for example, has embraced "inclusionary zoning." Has that been effective?

Rebecca Barnes: Inclusionary zoning is the requirement that a residential development of any substantial scale include a certain percentage of the units to be sold or rented at a price that is affordable to a certain percentage of the population. In effect, the rest of the units subsidize

those "affordable" units. So it's an effort to provide moderately priced, not necessarily low-income, housing.

When I first came to Boston from Seattle, this was new to me. Conventional wisdom had said that mixing incomes in housing projects would never work. Now we've lived with HUD's Hope VI program, which encourages mixing incomes, and with Boston's inclusionary zoning. It works. And it is important not only economically but also socially.

Anthony Flint: Negotiations for affordable units are now frequently included in a quasi-private agreement between the community and the developer, the new term being "community benefit agreements." Are there any dangers in this trend?

Rebecca Barnes: The only danger is in keeping a good project from happening. Good development manages the balancing act between the values that the development organization brings and those that the community has in place. I'm an idealist

about community benefit agreements. I think they are a natural outcome of the community involvement process that has heavily influenced and characterized planning in my professional lifetime.

Anthony Flint: Now they seem to exist as a sort of corollary to zoning codes. Perhaps they're the inevitable outcome of a participatory planning process.

Rebecca Barnes: They're a function, to some degree, of the zoning context. I began my planning career in Seattle in the '80s, when a great deal of participatory effort was spent on zoning. When the zoning was done, it was enforced. It was understood: these are the rules of the game that we're playing. When I came to Boston, I learned that zoning here was viewed in two ways: the community saw it as a compact that had been made with government leadership; people involved in development or in government saw it as a set of guidelines or as an expression of intent. Those are two frequently incompatible views.





It's not instant breakfast; it's city-building.

-Rebecca Barnes FAIA

Zoning is only as good as it's practiced. And if zoning is practiced as a guideline, then other mechanisms, such as community benefit agreements, become as important as zoning in achieving the goals of the community.

Anthony Flint: What do you think of the programs and tools that have been established under the Office for Commonwealth Development in Massachusetts? Chapters 40R and 40S, for example, which provide incentives to communities for dense residential development, and other initiatives such as money for transit-oriented development, Commonwealth Capital, the Smart Growth Toolkit, and the new highway design manual.

Rebecca Barnes: I say, Hallelujah! What a bold initiative the Office for Commonwealth Development has been. These tools are a wonderful start and they're all important. I hope that the next administration in Massachusetts will breathe even more life into OCD, bringing together the elements that must be integrated if you're going to have a healthy region: economics, environment, transportation, and

Waterplace Park and Riverwalk, Providence

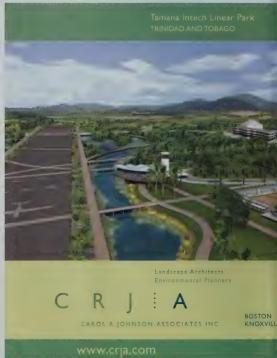
development. They're all part of the package.

I live now in Rhode Island, a state that has a very smart land-use plan that associates targets for growth with targets for infrastructure investment. Unfortunately, it has no teeth — there are no real means of enforcement. Through the OCD, Massachusetts is now looking at smart growth through incentives. It's a promising approach. It just needs to go much further to have a real impact.

Anthony Flint: You were intimately involved with the Rose Kennedy Greenway during your time with the City of Boston. What's your assessment of how that project is unfolding today, and what should we look for as a turning point?

Rebecca Barnes: I think it's the greatest project in the country. And I'd say it is at a turning point now. The Greenway Conservancy needs to receive the authority to act as





the designated maintenance and programming steward for the Greenway. To think that an entity could be created to raise all the money for programming and maintaining such a significant amenity and then not have any authority over it—it's unimaginable.

I recently went to a forum hosted by the BSA and the Conservancy about programming and planning for the use of the parks. More things like that need to be done, with various parties, in order to shape the public's expectations and so that people might understand that there are going to be many turning points along the way. It's not instant breakfast; it's city-building. The Esplanade took 100 years from conception to completion. The Greenway is another great work of public infrastructure and public open space. We've been at it for about 20 years, and it may take another 15-to-20 years to build all of the institutions that have been contemplated and for the plantings to mature. Boston needs to catch its breath, pat itself on the back, shake hands all around, and go back to tending this very special urban garden.

Anthony Flint: What do you think of the proposed architecture on the public buildings parcels?

Rebecca Barnes: It's important that the buildings excite people, and I do think that designers associated with each of those projects are more than competent. The buildings will evolve as more people get involved to support them, and they will be good buildings, exciting buildings, if the institutions involved keep the process open to discussion. Which, of course, is a good way to build even more support.

But there are two barriers that I see that must be broken through. One is this badmouthing of Boston by people saying that it doesn't have the financial wherewithal to support all of these institutions. It hasn't in the past, but that doesn't mean it can't in the future. There is no question it has the wherewithal. The will is a matter of leadership.

And the other barrier comes from the fact that a primary goal of the public participation process that led to the design of the parks was to minimize controversy. It was a process that enfranchised the abutters largely to the exclusion of everyone else, totally inappropriately for a project that was a beneficiary of substantial federal and state funds, and that will be a regional and statewide amenity. I don't know how you break through that barrier, because the abutters feel that the state has made a commitment to them. Consequently, there are designed-in barriers to certain kinds of events, events that might involve some loud music or activities that are unpredictable. For the Greenway to be the success it has the potential to be, the kind of activity that draws people of all ages and backgrounds, from all Boston's neighborhoods and its regional neighbors, has to be not just allowed but welcomed and supported.

Anthony Flint: Of course, as the city's chief planner, you were also in the position of needing to accommodate the neighborhoods.



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Rebecca Barnes: I'm not saying that neighborhoods are not important. They're very important. And we did work with the neighborhoods. I don't much like the term "accommodate"—a more accurate phrase is "work with." We had a Greenway internship program that involved youth from across the city, as well as the North End and Chinatown. We had a charrette that involved about 40 students from all the city's neighborhoods—the idea was to solicit their suggestions about what would draw them into a part of the city that's not familiar to them, that's pretty remote from their normal hangouts, but that could give them a whole new level of experience and a different sense of belonging to the city. Unfortunately, that input wasn't taken as seriously as that of the abutting communities. For the Greenway to be a place for everyone, everyone has to be at the table. It's much more difficult now to achieve a shared sense of ownership among cultures and age groups, but it is fundamental to the success of the Greenway and to Boston's future as a great American city.

Planning is a political act, done within the political realm.

-Rebecca Barnes FAIA

Anthony Flint: As a champion of cities, what advice would you give to those entering the design professions? What experiences were most valuable to you?

Rebecca Barnes: I would advise them to think of each job as part of a process of self-education and self-knowledge relative to their values. As you develop your career, it's important to maintain a sense of what your values are and what you're trying to contribute, and to understand how each job enables you to build your own capacity to achieve that.

I've worked with three mayors in my life, two of them very closely: Norm Rice in Seattle and Thomas Menino in Boston, Both of them, when they were interviewing me to work on their teams, said that the most important thing about planning is not about design, not about the physical space, it's about people. That's not a surprise, coming from politicians who, after all, are "people people." But that message has hugely influenced my planning career. It gave me permission to do something that I didn't feel the design professions really gave me permission to do --- to work with members of the public as partners in the design process. Planning is a political act, done within the political realm, so you have to have some tolerance for or, better yet, interest in politics and its ability to serve people's needs, which I do. I'm sure you know the real estate mantra -"location, location, location," For me, it all comes down to the urban planning and development equivalent: people, people, people.



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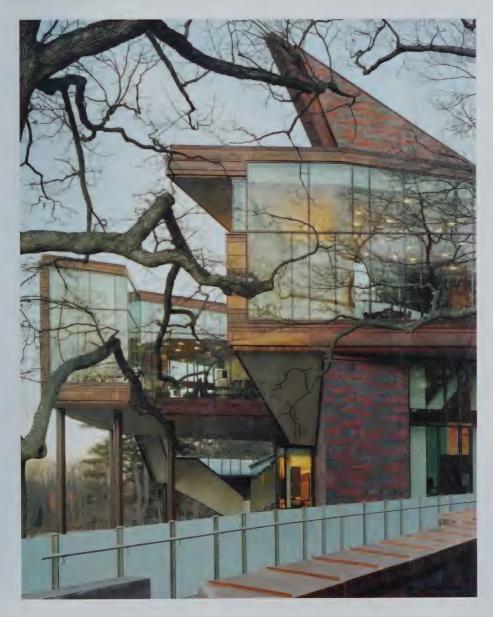
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2006 HARLESTON PARKER MEDAL

Lulu Chow Wang Campus Center and Davis Garage MACK SCOGIN MERRILL ELAM ARCHITECTS







JURY:

George Metzger AIA **HMFH Architects** Cambridge, Massachusetts

Edward Allen FAIA South Natick, Massachusetts

> **Phyllis Andersen** landscape historian Boston

Nazneen Cooper Harvard University Physical Resources and Planning Cambridge, Massachusetts

> Mark Pasnik Wentworth Institute of Technology Boston

Ann Pendleton-Jullian Massachusetts Institute of Technology Cambridge, Massachusetts The Lulu Wang Campus Center at Wellesley College is part of a complex of building and site improvements in a formerly neglected corner of the campus. The new building floats on the site, raised above a sloping landscape and integrated into the campus pedestrian circulation by sweeping bridges. Interior spaces are clustered on several levels, defining the interior circulation as the in-between space and resisting any effort to contain the building within a rectilinear shell. What could be a chaotic result is instead a symphony of repeating spatial and material motifs that relate to its campus context by reference but not by mimicry. The many different internal spaces offer both warmth and homeyness as well as breathtaking views of the adjacent wetland valley and woodlands and the more distant lake. Both interior and exterior details are clearly conceived and carefully executed to be coherent in the total composition and pleasantly tactile and elegant in the foreground. The building is not without its faults, primarily in its assertive style and demonstrative form, which contrast sharply on a campus of dignified buildings. In addition, the building purports to be "green" while it wantonly violates the most common notions of compactness and economy. But most fundamentally, the jury recognized that this building has the characteristics that evoke both wonder and delight in those who walk through or around it, and it is for this transcendent quality that the jury recommends this building for the 2006 Harleston Parker Medal.

Grant Rhode GF Rhode Construction Boston

Laura Solano Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates Cambridge, Massachusetts

Josiah Stevenson AIA Leers Weinzapfel Associates Boston

Joan Wickersham novelist/essayist Cambridge, Massachusetts

Editor's note: The full text of jury www.architects.org/awards.

2006 HARLESTON PARKER MEDAL

Lulu Chow Wang Campus Center and Davis Garage

Wellesley College Wellesley, Massachusetts

Client:

Wellesley College Wellesley, Massachusetts

Architect:

Mack Scogin Merrill Elam Architects

Atlanta, Georgia

Project team:

Mack Scogin AIA with Merrill Elam AIA; Timothy Harrison AIA: Christopher Agosta AIA; David Yocum AIA; Kimberly Shoemake-Medlock; Jeffrey Collins; Jennifer Pindyck; Barnum Tiller; Christian Rice; Michael Wirsching; Jennifer Hurst; John Trefry; Stephen Trimble; Kevin Gotsch; Andrea Korber; Jane Lee; Ashley Moore; Margaret Fletcher; Brian Bell AIA; Trey Lindsey; Sophia Greenbaum; Helen Han; Ted Paxton

Richard White Sons

Consultants:

Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates (landscape); Arup (structural/mechanical/ plumbing); Vanasse Hangen Brustlin (civil); Lam Partners (lighting)

Photographers:

Timothy Hursley (opener and bottom left) Peter Vanderwarker (top left)









Lab Modules Metal Skin

Mechanical

Athletics/Daycare Wood

Lab Modules Glass and Steel

Metal

Parking Below Grade

2006 ROTCH TRAVELLING SCHOLARSHIP

The Draughtsman's Contract

By Nathalie Beauvais RIAC, MAPA

JURY

Nathalie Beauvais RIAC, MAPA

Harvard University
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Carol Burns AIA
Taylor & Burns Architects
Boston

Steven Foote FAIA
Perry Dean Rogers | Partners
Boston

Audrey O'Hagan AIA
The Stubbins Associates
Cambridge, Massachusetts

William Saunders
Harvard Design Magazine
Harvard University
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Kairos Shen
Boston Redevelopment
Authority
Boston

First Prize (\$35,000) Elizabeth Leidy

> Alternate Neil Strup

ince writing the program for the Rotch final competition for 2006, I have been obsessed with Peter Greenaway's 1982 film, *The Draughtsman's Contract*. The movie is set in 17th-century England, where an aristocratic woman commissions a draftsman to produce sketches of the family estate to surprise her absent husband. As the movie unfolds, the draftsman's sketches reveal the preparation of a murder, yet he is unaware of it. Similarly, the 2006 Rotch competition program for a large science facility reveals the malaise of contemporary architecture without intentionally addressing it, just as the draftsman unwittingly drew evidence of the murder.

The first evidence of the malaise of contemporary architecture is the increasing size of the typical architectural project. The competition called for a science facility of approximately a half million square feet located in the Allston neighborhood of Boston. The site includes 3.7 acres on Western Avenue; to the north is an apartment complex and, to the east, the Harvard Business School (HBS). The winning entry by Elizabeth Leidy (shown opposite) broke the program into three distinct buildings: an elongated lab building, suspended lab modules, and a pavilion-like structure for daycare and fitness facilities.

The second evidence of the malaise of contemporary architecture is style. One of the criteria for this year's competition was a formal and spatial language that recalls and considers Harvard's traditions while setting a direction for the future. Abutting the science complex, the HBS campus has the greatest concentration of neo-Georgian architecture on the Harvard campus, a significant component of the school's identity. Consequently, it is understood that the expanded campus will be contemporary in its architecture but will also respect Harvard's traditional vocabulary. The winning entry suggests that it is better to be uncompromising in architectural expression than to pursue awkward historical references. Instead, it acknowledges Harvard's architecture in its siting, with a plinth, a courtyard, and a grand stair similar to those at Widener Library and Memorial Church.

The last evidence of the malaise of contemporary architecture would be the impossible quest for the architect who also must be a social engineer. The challenge for the Rotch competitors was to conceive a building that fulfills the needs of the scientific community while also contributing to the urban environment. Most entries struggled with the edge of Western Avenue. The winning entry presents strategic public uses at street level and on the rooftop, providing great views of Boston. The project sets a balance between views of and from the project that strongly grounds it to its unique condition and geography.

This year's competition may have set too big a task, even though projects of similar complexity reveal what is expected of the architect today: architects must integrate the physical resolution of a program with an understanding of its politics and connected symbolism. Winning an architectural competition requires timing and luck, but above all, it requires a match between an idea, a program, skills, and inspiration. Elizabeth Leidy's winning entry demonstrated that large, complex projects can be mastered with poetry—and can elegantly overcome the challenges of today's draftsman's contract.

Nathalie Beauvais RIAC, MAPA, is principal planner for design in the Allston Development Group at Harvard University. She was the author of the 2006 Rotch competition program.

The Rotch Travelling Scholarship was established in 1883 to advance architectural education through foreign study and travel. Rotch Scholars today are selected through an annual two-stage competition. For more information, go to www.rotchscholarship.org.







- 37 Arrowstreet Artists for Humanity EpiCenter **Boston**
- 38 Ellenzweig Associates Aquarium Subway Station Boston
- 39 Machado and Silvetti Associates Provincetown Art Association and Museum Provincetown. Massachusetts
- **40** William Rawn Associates The Rose Center Yale University Police New Haven, Connecticut
- 41 William Rawn Associates Alice Paul Residence Hall Swarthmore College Swarthmore, Pennsylvania

JURY:

JURY COMMENTS:

Deborah Berke AIA Deborah Berke & Partners New York City

Dan Casey AIA

Princeton University Princeton, New Jersey

Mitchell Rasor MRI D Portland, Maine

Susan Szenasy

Metropolis New York City We were struck by the exceptionally high quality of the entire body of work this year. One of us described this collection of projects as the best she had seen in any US design awards program in several years. Of special note was the high quality of developer-sponsored work and the seriousness with which many submitters addressed and arrived at good solutions to sustainable design challenges. On the other hand, we were surprised at how little understanding was evident of the real meaning of universal design; it is a concept often misinterpreted. Overall, it seemed to us that the smaller projects we reviewed were more successful than the very large projects.

We wish to offer a special note about preservation/restoration/ renovation projects. In most of these projects, images and narrative describing the "before" and "after" status of the project were inadequate. At a time when there are so many talented woodworkers, we also found it puzzling to see so many carved details rendered in synthetic materials. Our hope is that restorers think more carefully about the materials they use, not simply the stylistic details being replicated. Most discouraging for us was how woefully under-represented this category of work was in the program this year.

We have chosen to honor projects that reflect clear understanding (of the site, program, users, climate, and the surrounding aesthetic); that are appropriate (universally accessible, sustainable, and representative of their time and place); that provide new perspectives (through inventive detailing, thoughtful use of materials, and innovation); and in which the interiors reflect as much design attention and design skill as the exteriors.

AWARDS

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- 42 DiMella Shaffer Loft23 University Park at MIT Cambridge, Massachusetts
- 43 Ellenzweig Associates Research Buildings and **Expansion of Central Energy Plant** Woods Hole. Massachusetts
- 43 John Stephen Ellis AIA Naomi Sato Architects Nakahara Residence Tokyo, Japan
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Editor's note: The full text

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- **46 SINGLE speed DESIGN**Big Dig House
 Lexington, Massachusetts
- 47 Maryann Thompson Architects Geothermal House Belmont, Massachusetts

CITATION FOR INTERIOR DESIGN

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- 48 Bruner/Cott & Associates
 Landmark Center
 Boston
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 Trinity Church in the City of Boston
 Boston



HONOR AWARD

Artists for Humanity EpiCenterBoston

Client:

Artists for Humanity

Architect:

Arrowstreet

Somerville, Massachusetts www.arrowstreet.com

Project team:

James P. Batchelor FAIA, LEED AP (principal-in-charge); Patricia Cornelison AIA, LEED AP (project architect)

Contractor:

T.R. White Company

Consultants:

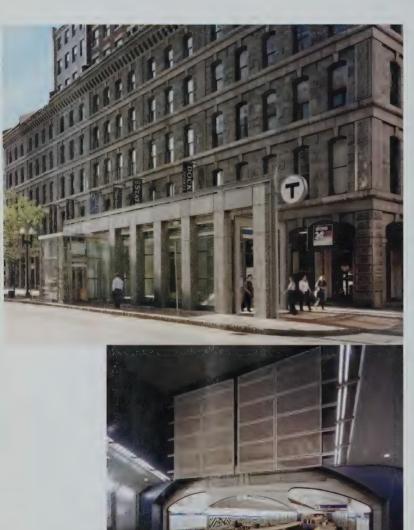
The Hickory Consortium (sustainability); Rene Mugnier Associates (structural); Zade Company (mechanical/electrical); Samiotes Consultants (civil); UTS (geotechnical); US Lighting (lighting); Schirmer Engineering (code); Nick Rodrigues (artist)

Photographer:

Richard Mandelkorn

Designer's statement:

The Artists for Humanity EpiCenter is home to an innovative art and entrepre neurship program serving urban high-school students. Sustainability, on a tight budget, was critical to the client's program; the building has earned LEED Platinum recognition. The design features unusual applications for inexpensive materials, while keeping the volume and massing as simple as possible



Aquarium Subway Station Boston

Client:

Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority

Architect:

Ellenzweig Associates

Cambridge, Massachusetts

Project team:

Harry Ellenzweig FAIA (principal); Michael Nipoti (associate); Matthew Ali: Edward Koehler

Contractor:

Modern Continental/Ohbayashi

Consultants:

Weidlinger Associates (structural); SAR Engineering (mechanical/electrical/plumbing); Bryant Associates (civil); Haley & Aldrich (geotechnical); Vanasse Hangen Brustlin (traffic); Paul C.K. Lu and Associates (landscape); Parsons Brinckerhoff (waterproofing/vent shaft); Thomas K. Dyer (track/signal); The BSC Group (environmental); Cambridge Acoustical Associates (acoustical); HM Brandston & Partners (lighting); Finegold Alexander + Associates (historical conservator); Jun Kaneko (artist)

Photographer:

Anton Grassl

Designer's statement:

This expansion and modernization of a Blue Line subway station broadens its identity and service area from former waterfront-only access to the historic center of Boston. The project included three new entrances, two new ticketing lobbies, six new elevators, a doubled platform, and 150 feet of the depressed Central Artery.



Provincetown Art Association and Museum

Provincetown, Massachusetts

Provincetown Art Association and Museum

Architect:

Machado and Silvetti Associates

Boston

www.machado-silvetti.com

Project team:

Jorge Silvetti, Assoc. AIA (principal-incharge); Rodolfo Machado, Assoc. AlA (consulting principal); Andrew Cruse AlA (architect of record); Michael LeBlanc; Kelly Smith; Derek Johnson; John Clegg; Chris Grimley

Client's project manager/estimator:

Contractor:

Paul J. Rogan Company (renovation) Acella Construction (new construction)

Consultants:

Richmond So Engineers (structural); The Collaborative Engineers (mechanical/ electrical/plumbing/fire protection); Collective Wisdom (specifications); Bennett & O'Reilly (civil); Michael Boucher Landscape Architecture (landscape); Peter Coxe Associates (lighting); DMI (energy); Solar Design Associates (photovoltaics); Arrowstreet Graphic Design (signage)

Photographer:

Anton Grassl

Designer's statement:

Provincetown Art Association and Museum has dramatically improved the museum's ability to store and display art, and serves to shape an architectural identity for the institution within its Provincetown context. To our knowledge. PAAM is the first art museum to receive a Silver LEED rating.





The Rose Center

Yale University Police New Haven, Connecticut

Client:

Yale University

Architect:

William Rawn Associates

Boston

Project team:

William L. Rawn FAIA, Douglas C. Johnston AIA (principals for design); Clifford V. Gayley AIA (associate principal for design); Robert Wear RA (project manager/project architect); David Bagnoli; Kevin Bergeron AIA; Peter Reiss; Euiseok Jeong AIA; Jeffrey McBride

Construction manager:

Dimeo Construction Company

Consultants:

LeMessurier Consultants (structural); Vanderweil Engineers (mechanical/electrical/plumbing); Purcell Associates (civil); Kaestle Boos Associates (police facility); Horton Lees Brogden (lighting); Towers/ Golde Landscape Architects (landscape)

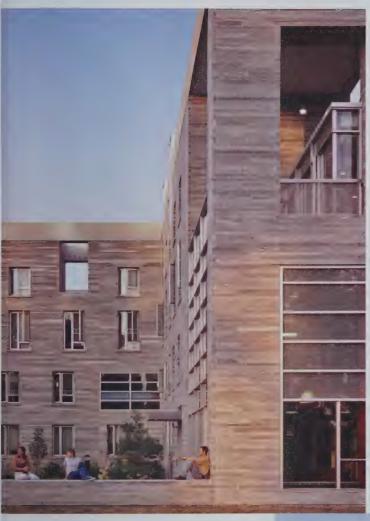
Photographer:

Robert Benson

Designer's statement:

The first project in a new campus sector linking Yale University's Central Campus and Science Hill, the 38,000-square-foot Rose Center acts as a beacon of security for the university and surrounding community. Uninterrupted glass walls at the public edges of the building represent the department's commitment to "community policing."





Alice Paul Residence Hall

Swarthmore College Swarthmore, Pennsylvania

Architect:

William Rawn Associates

Boston

Project team:

William L. Rawn FAIA (principal for design); Clifford V. Gayley AIA (associate principal for design); Kevin Bergeron AIA (project manager/project architect); Peter Reiss; Rob Wear

Construction manager:

W.S. Cumby & Son

Consultants:

LeMessurier Engineers (structural); Cosentini Associates (mechanical/ electrical/plumbing); Gilmore & Associates (civil); Ripman Lighting Consultants (lighting); Olin Partnership (landscape)

Photographer:

Robert Benson

Designer's statement:

Ancionne the contient end of Pirms 1, on, Swarthinger College's misst concreen space, this 150 bet residence held to tiples detines a new timer's sided space, tiples, ig toward the sawn and the southwestern air.

Phase I (75 beds, computed 2004) is the first building in this new empley.



HONOR AWARDS FOR DESIGN EXCELLENCE

AWARD

CarMax Headquarters

West Creek, Goochland County, Virginia

Client:

CarMax

Architect:

ADD Inc

Cambridge, Massachusetts www.addinc.com

Project team:

Lisa Killaby IIDA (principal-in-charge); Jonathan Lannan (project executive); B.K. Boley AIA (project design leader); Colleen Simon LEED AP; Holly Wasilowski LEED AP; Luke Thiboutot; JoonGul Oh AIA; Mike Brahler; Gina Hawley

Client representative:

Millennium Retail Partners

Construction manager:

Brookwood Program Management

Contractor:

KBS

Consultants:

Vanasse Hangen Brustlin (landscape/civil); McNamara/Salvia (structural); AHA Consulting Engineers (mechanical/electrical/plumbing/fire protection); Schirmer Engineering Corporation (code)

Photographer:

Prakash Patel

Designer's statement:

The CarMax Headquarters is a Modernist glass box slipped into the forest to bring its inhabitants closer to nature. Sophisticated daylighting technology and complete structured parking with a bridge through the tree canopy tie the building to the environment and lessen its impact on the land.





AWARD

Loft23

University Park at MIT Cambridge, Massachusetts

Client

Forest City Residential Group

Architect:

DiMella Shaffer

Boston

www.dimellashaffer.com

Project team:

Edward Hodges AIA (principal-in-charge); Kenneth Hartfiel AIA (project manager); Kathy LaDuca NCIDQ (interior designer); Steve Keyser; David Taylor; Jason Hart, Assoc. AIA, LEED AP; Sarah O'Keefe; Scott Plante AIA, LEED AP

Contractor:

Walsh Brothers

Consultants:

Weidlinger Associates (structural);
Cosentini Associates (mechanical/
electrical/plumbing); McPhail Associates
(geotechnical); SEA Consultants (civil);
Halvorson Design Partnership (landscape);
Acentech (acoustical); Collective Wisdom
Corporation (specifications); Kaplan
Gehring McCarroll (lighting)

Photographer:

Robert Benson

Designer's statement:

Loft23 houses 51 residential units for lease with high ceilings, floor-to-ceiling windows, and flexible open floor plans. The building's side walls, sheathed in green copper shingles that complement the adjacent red-brick buildings, provide more privacy from the neighboring residential buildings while the transparent end walls open up generously to the adjacent parks.



AWARD

Research Buildings and Expansion of Central Energy Plant

Woods Hole, Massachusetts

Client:

Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution

Architect/laboratory planner:

Ellenzweig Associates

Cambridge, Massachusetts

Project team:

Michael Lauber AIA; Miltos Catomeris AIA; Shirine Boulos AIA, LEED; Edwin Hargrave; Eric Mitchell

Contractor:

Bond Brothers

Consultants:

LeMessurier Consultants (structural); BR+A Consulting Engineers (mechanical/ electrical/plumbing/fire protection); Stephen Stimson Associates (landscape); Holmes and McGrath (civil); McPhail Associates (geotechnical); Lam Partners (lighting); Nelson Communications (communications); Acentech (acoustical); Rowan Williams Davies & Irwin (air quality)

Photographer:

Anton Grassi

Designer's statement:

This project consists of a new biogeochemistry research laboratory, a new marine research laboratory, and expansion of a central energy plant that together form an ensemble. The design was guided by green building principles; materials include white-cedar siding that emulates a prominent Cape Cod building material, white curtainwall, and zinc panels on penthouse walls.



AWARD

Nakahara Residence

Tokyo, Japan

Client:

Shizuaki Nakahara

Architect:

John Stephen Ellis AIA

Burlington, Massachusetts

Associate architect:

Naomi Sato Architects

Minato-ku, Tokyo

Project team:

John Stephen Ellis AIA (design principal); Taka Yamaguchi

Contractor:

Shiraishi Construction Co. Ltd.

Consultants:

Taro Yokoyama (structural); Masako Takatsuki (mechanical); Kiyoshi Takahashi (electrical)

Photographer:

Koji Horiuchi

Designer's statement:

The design concept is a garden passing through the house, forming a continuous relationship with nature. The time of day, the seasons, the weather, and views into the garden and neighborhood become vital and important parts of the family's daily experience.



AWARD

Chilled Water Plant Addition

Princeton University Princeton, New Jersey

Architect:

Leers Weinzapfel Associates

Boston

Project team:

Jane Weinzapfel FAIA (co-principal-incharge); Joe Pryse AIA (project manager); Margaret Minor Wood AIA; Rachel Levitt

Contractor:

Skanska USA Building

Consultants:

Carter Burgess (lead engineer): VanNote-Harvey Associates (civil); Quennell Rothschild & Partners (landscape)

Photographer:

Alan Karchmer/Esto

Designer's statement:

The new chiller plant features translucent and ceramic fritted clear glass panels, which bring natural light into the building and form a strong contrast to the long uninterrupted enclosure wall of local stone. The building massing screens the rooftop cooling towers beyond and provides a strong corner to the larger service precinct.

CITATION

Congregation Or Atid

Wayland, Massachusetts

Client:

Congregation Or Atid

Architect:

Bruner/Cott & Associates

Cambridge, Massachusetts

Project team:

Lee Cott FAIA; Henry Moss AIA; Robert Arthur; Beatriz Gomez; Erin Cahill

Contractor:

Elaine Construction Company

Consultants:

Souza, True & Partners (structural); Gregorian Engineers (structural peer review); Building Engineer Resources (mechanical); Abend Associates (traffic); Samiotes Consultants (civil); Kalin Associates (specifications); Richard Burck Associates (landscape); McPhail Associates (geotechnical); Agassiz Theatre (lighting); David Strauss Designs (Judaica)



Photographer:

Peter Vanderwarker

Designer's statement:

This new synagogue includes a 250-seat services, classrooms, offices, and a functions. The building's shape was developed to suggest a hierarchy of volumes, leading



CITATION

Yawkey Center for Outpatient Care

Massachusetts General Hospital Boston

Client:

The Massachusetts General Hospital

Architects:

Michael Fieldman, Architects

(planning and design architect, shell/core/public spaces) New York City

Cambridge Seven Associates

(urban design and executive architect, shell/core/public spaces) Cambridge, Massachusetts

Ann Beha Architects

(historical architect, shell/core/ public spaces) Boston

Perkins+Will

(planning and design architect, fit-out) New York City

Steffian Bradley Architects

(local architect, fit-out) Boston

Project team:

Michael Fieldman, Architects: Michael Fieldman FAIA (design principal); Ed Rawlings AIA (project architect) Cambridge Seven Associates: Charles Redmon FAIA (design principal); Ron Baker AIA (project manager); Adam Mitchell AIA (project architect/design); James Puopolo AIA (project architect/construction) Ann Beha Architects: Pamela W. Hawkes FAIA (principal); Scott Aquilina (project architect)

Owner's representative:

Leggat McCall Properties

Construction manager:

Walsh Brothers

Consultants:

Kurt Salmon Associates (programming); McNamara/Salvia (structural); BR+A Consulting Engineers (mechanical/electrical/plumbing/fire protection); McPhail Associates (geotechnical); Judith Nitsch Engineering (civil); Carol R. Johnson Associates (landscape); Vanasse Hangen Brustlin (traffic); Walker Parking Consultants (parking); Lerch Bates and Associates (vertical transportation); Acentech (acoustical); Quentin Thomas Associates (lighting); Heitmann & Associates (building envelope); Cini-Little International (food services); Two Twelve Associates (signage)

Photographer:

Bruce T. Martin

Designer's statement:

This new ambulatory building provides a gateway to the MGH campus, and uses innovative design and state-of-the-art technology to improve the healthcare of ambulatory clinics, and includes an underground garage and reconstruction of



CITATION

Athletic Center

Kenyon College Gambier, Ohio

Architect:

GUND Partnership

Cambridge, Massachusetts www.gundpartnership.com

Project team:

Graham Gund FAIA (principal-in-charge); Dan Rutledge RA (lead project architect); David Zenk AIA (co-project architect); Bob Caddigan (job captain); Liam Deevy, Assoc. AIA; Michael Blutt; Elizabeth Yusem AIA; Joong Kym; Jon Richardson; Michael Dembowski AIA; Ana Gordon; Jacob Lilley; Larry Lin; Khalil Pirani

Construction manager:

The A.M. Higley Company

Consultants:

Arup (mechanical/electrical/plumbing/ structural); Bird and Bull (civil/survey); Acentech (acoustical/AV); Geotechnical Consulting (geotechnical); Counsilman Hunsaker (pool); Lucas Stefura Interiors (interiors); Brailsford and Dunlavey (athletic); The RETEC Group (lighting); Jon Roll & Associates (graphics)

Photographer:

David Lamb

Designer's statement:

has become a new hub for campus life. surrounding athletic fields and neighboring houses in a visually unbroken line. Transparency is balanced with daylight control through the use of fritted glass, internally baffled glass, north-facing skylights, and sun-shading structures.



CITATION

Schwarz Student Center

Milton Academy
Milton, Massachusetts

Client:

Milton Academy Milton, Massachusetts

Design architect:

William Rawn Associates

Boston

Architect of record:

Finegold Alexander + Associates

Boston

Project team:

William Rawn Associates: William L. Rawn FAIA, Douglas C. Johnston AIA (principals for design); Randy Wilmot AIA (project manager); Andy Jonic AIA (project architect) Finegold Alexander + Associates:

James G. Alexander FAIA (principal);
Ellen K. Anselone AIA (project manager)

Contractor:

Barr & Barr

Consultants:

McNamara/Salvia (structural); Stephen Stimson (landscape)

Photographer:

Robert Benson

Designer's statement:

Located at the heart of Milton Academy's grounds, the Schwarz Student Center brings the physical campus together by seamlessly reconnecting two major pedestrian paths. Clear glass curtainwalls allow the activity on campus to be seen and experienced; at night, the building becomes an iconic beacon among Milton's brick buildings.

CITATION FOR RESIDENTIAL DESIGN

Big Dig House

Lexington, Massachusetts

Client

Paul Pedini and Cristina Perez-Pedini

Architect:

SINGLE speed DESIGN

Cambridge, Massachusetts www.singlespeeddesign.com

Project team:

John Hong AlA, LEED, Jinhee Park (principals-in-charge); Erik Carlson; Sadmir Ovcina; Chris Minor

Contractor/structural design:

Paul Pedini (Jay Cashman, Inc.)

Consultants:

Weidlinger Associates (structural); Cristina Perez-Pedini (water management design)

Photographer:

SINGLE speed IMAGE

Designer's statement:

As a prototype for future salvaging efforts, the structural system for this house is almost wholly made up of steel and concrete from Boston's Big Dig, including over 600,000 pounds of "waste" material. Similar to a prefabri-

cated system, the project demonstrates that subtle spatial arrangements can be designed from infrastructural cast-off.





CITATION FOR RESIDENTIAL DESIGN **Geothermal House**

Belmont, Massachusetts

David Lubin and Nora Huvelle

Architect:

Maryann Thompson Architects

Cambridge, Massachusetts www.maryannthompson.com

Project team:

Maryann Thompson AIA (principal-incharge); Bill Pevear (project manager); David Suttle; Ioana Urma; Tom Murdough

Contractor:

S + H Construction

Consultants:

Steve Siegel (engineer); C & J Katz Studio (interior design); Julie Moir Messervy (landscape)

Photographers:

Chuck Choi (left) Stephen Lee

Designer's statement:

The design for this house arose in response to topography and solar orientations. Layered and interlocking the combined living room, dining room, and kitchen face southwest and receive light on four sides through a clerestory.

CITATION FOR INTERIOR DESIGN

Bloomberg

Boston

Client:

Client:

Bloomberg

Architect:

CBT/Childs Bertman Tseckares

Boston

www.cbtarchitects.com

Construction manager:

Commodore Builders

Project manager:

The Staubach Company

Consultants:

Richard D. Kimball Company (mechanical/electrical/plumbing)

Photographer:

Anton Grassl

Designer's statement:

CBT designed an environment where employees and visitors are immersed in a constant flow of financial information, news, open workspace, and public areas for broader interaction, the facilinology with a high-energy aesthetic.



HONOR AWARDS FOR DESIGN EXCELLENCE

CITATION FOR RESTORATION

Landmark Center

Client:

The Abbey Group

Community groups:

Fenway Neighborhood Association Boston Parks Department Boston Landmarks Commission Boston Redevelopment Authority Massachusetts Historical Commission National Park Service

Architect:

Bruner/Cott & Associates

Cambridge, Massachusetts

Project team:

Simeon Bruner RA (principal-in-charge); Henry Moss AlA, Lynne Brooks AlA (associated principals); Bob Simmons AIA (associated project manager)

Contractor:

Suffolk Construction

Consultants:

AHA Consulting Engineers (mechanical/ electrical); Souza, True & Partners (structural); Pressley Associates (landscape); Michael Green (sculptor, front desk)

Photographers:

Peter Vanderwarker Robert Polidori (right)

Designer's statement:

Bruner/Cott's designs for the Landmark Center turned a former Sears warehouse into a thriving retail/office center. The use elements of the Art Deco building as the inspiration for the new environment, metamorphosing a significant early 20thcentury warehouse into a 21st-century





CITATION FOR RESTORATION

Trinity Church in the City of Boston Boston

Client:

Trinity Church in the City of Boston

Architect:

Goody Clancy

Boston

Project team:

Joan Goody FAIA (principal-in-charge); Geoff Wooding AIA (principal for design); Jean Carroon AIA (principal for preservation); Stefan Knust AIA (project architect); Lisa Howe (director of preservation); Kristen Simmons (job captain); David Bemiss; Nick Brooks AIA; Peter Ciganek; Jim Clifford: Al Fobes: Carrie Goodfriend: Susan Hollister: Arjun Mande: Ryan Nevidomsky; Ginelle Pisa AIA; Andrea Ruedy; Beth Sitterly; Gil Strickler; **Emilie Turano**

Owner's representative:

Leggat McCall Properties

Contractor:

Shawmut Design & Construction

Contractor for interior paint restoration:

John Canning Painting & Conservation Studios

Consultants:

Gianfranco Pocobene Studios (painting conservator); Alexander Beleschenko, Raffaela Sirtoli Schnell (glass artists); Lawrence Architectural Planning (programming); Cosentini Associates (HVAC); LeMessurier Consultants (structural); Carol R. Johnson Associates (landscape); Judith Nitsch Engineering (civil); WBA Associates (code)

Photographers:

Peter Vanderwarker (left) David Lamb

Designer's statement:

and expansion of Trinity Church in the City by Henry Hobson Richardson in 1877. The phased work included exterior envelope restoration, installing new geothermal wells, creating a new space below the church, decorative paint restoration,

and renovating the adjacent Parish House.

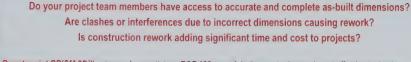
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SMALL FIRM/ SMALL PROJECTS AWARDS





HONOR AWARDS

- 51 Amsler Mashek MacLean Architects Harthaven House Oak Bluffs, Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts
- 52 Kimo Griggs Architects Screen Porch Wellesley, Massachusetts
- 53 Tise Design Associates Les Etoiles. Private Residence St. Barthelemy, French West Indies

AWARDS

- 54 Stephen Chung AIA Davelin Road House Wayland, Massachusetts
- 54 Jonathan Levi Architects Craft Gallery North Bennet Street School Boston
- 55 vir.mueller architects Beacon Hill Residence Boston

CITATIONS

- 55 Burr and McCallum Architects Private Residence Sugar Hill, New Hampshire
- 56 David R. MacLean and Denise F. Long Long Garden Shed/ Greenhouse Sargentville, Maine
- 56 Peterson Architects Walton Boathouse and Riverside Activity Center Jacksonville, Florida
- 57 Wiederspahn Architecture Architecture Studio Somerville, Massachusetts

IURY ·

Hansy Better Barraza Studio Luz Architects Boston

Richard Bergmann FAIA Richard Bergmann Architects New Canaan, Connecticut

> Claire Conrov residential architect Washington, DC

Karen Moore Imai Keller Moore Architects Watertown, Massachusetts

William Soupcoff AIA TMS Architects Portsmouth, New Hampshire

JURY COMMENTS:

This is the first year of this program, which will be administered biennially. We received 69 entries, which we believe underscores the value of a program such as this that focuses on the work of small firms and on small projects in general. While the projects submitted to this program also could have been submitted to other BSA design award programs, including the annual Honor Awards, it is the BSA's experience that very few small firms participate in those larger programs.

Submissions were invited in three categories — projects under 1,000 square feet, those under 2,500 square feet, and those under 5,000 square feet. These categories were complemented by construction cost limits of \$750,000; \$1.5 million; and \$3 million, respectively.

As we sought to define design excellence for ourselves during our discussions of the submitted work, we were ultimately drawn to the 10 projects described on the following pages because we found them generally to be well conceived, carefully executed, marked by design restraint, responsive to the program, and frequently innovative.

Editor's note: The full text of jury comments, including responses to individual projects and advice on preparing submissions, may be found at www.architects.org/awards.



Harthaven House

Oak Bluffs Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts

Client:

Stephanie Mashek AIA and Ken MacLean AIA

Architect:

Amsler Mashek MacLean Architects

Boston and Oak Bluffs, Massachusetts www.ammarchitects.com

Contractor:

McHugh Builders

Photographer:

Peter Vanderwarker

Designer's statement:

Three structures—ahouse, guest nouse studio, and garage—organized around a central garden and lawn create a private courtyard complex within a one-acre wooded site. With reference to the colorful. Victorian-style cottages of Oak Bluffs, the facade of each structure facing the courtyard is decorated: the battens of the board and batten siding, doors, windows, and casings are painted in three shades of reds and purples.





Screen Porch

Wellesley, Massachusetts

Architect:

Kimo Griggs Architects

Somerville, Massachusetts

Project team:

Kimo Griggs AIA (principal); Nick Maynard AIA (project architect)

Contractor/Fabricator:

Kimo Inc.

Photographer:

Kimo Griggs Architects

This project created a transparent canopy over the perimeter of the porch, but beyond the existing roof's edge, to support the screens. The mounting system attaches lightly but securely to the existing structure without disrupting any historic fabric. One person can easily install or remove the screens seasonally.



HONOR AWARD Les Etoiles, Private Residence

St. Barthelemy, French West Indies

Client:

Steve Hicks and Donna Stockton-Hicks

Architect:

Tise Design Associates

Newton, Massachusetts www.tisedesign.com

Construction consultant/engineer:

Xavier David

Consultants:

Katherine Schreiber (landscape)

Photographer:

Jim Raycroft

Designer's statement:

TDA was commissioned to prepare a master plan and residential designs for five exclusive villas on steeply sloping land atop one of St. Bart's highest peaks. Overall ease of maintenance was a major factor in planning, and many aspects of the design reflect careful consideration of operational simplicity. Les Etoiles is the fourth villa completed in this project.



AWARD

Davelin Road House

Wayland, Massachusetts

Architect:

Stephen Chung AIA

Contractor:

Tim Cavanaugh and Robson Mauricio

Designer's statement:

This modest house, designed as the architect's own residence, investigates the expressive potential of two common building materials: stained wood, and white painted plaster and wood. This interplay of these two materials serves to fuse the inside of the house with its natural setting.



AWARD

Craft Gallery

North Bennet Street School

Boston

Client:

North Bennet Street School

Architect:

Jonathan Levi Architects

Boston

www.leviarc.com

Project team:

Jonathan Levi FAIA (principal-in-charge/ project designer); Seth Hoffman (project manager); Matthew LaRue AIA

Contractor:

Hughes Construction

Consultants:

Caliper Woodworking Corp. (cabinetmaker)

Photographer:

Bruce T. Martin

Designer's statement:

A new gallery for this nationally prominent school of fine craft provides a place to receive visitors, educates the public about the work of the school's eight departments, and offers select craft items for sale. Finely shaped and finished wood surfaces reflect the craft traditions of the school.

AWARD

Beacon Hill Residence

Boston

Client:

Esther Duflo

Architect:

vir.mueller architects

New Delhi, India

Project team:

Christine Mueller, Pankaj Vir Gupta AlA (principals); Neil Patel; David Kilpatrick; Scott Deans; Brian Hagood

Contractor:

r3construction

Consultants:

Simpson Gumpertz & Heger (structural); Ibrahim & Ibrahim (mechanical/electrical); C.W. Keller & Associates (millwork/ cabinetry)

Photographer:

John Horner



Designer's statement:

A mahogany-and-bronze screen creates a new interior "property line" within this townhouse on Boston's historic Beacon Hill. The screen illuminates the stair, filtering natural light from an overhead aperture by day, and emanating artificial light from recessed fixtures by night. The entry lobby is lined with a mahogany "wrap" of sliding doors and closets; the kitchen features a cantilevered steel island clad in granite.



CITATION

Private Residence

Sugar Hill, New Hampshire

Architect:

Burr and McCallum Architects

Williamstown, Massachusetts

Contractor:

Dodge Contracting

Photographer:

Ann K. McCallum FAIA

Designer's statement:

Located on a steep site and built for clients with a tiny budget and a wonderful sense of design adventure, this house was divided into three parts: a large open barn for living spaces, a small and efficient wing for bedrooms and all rooms requiring plumbing, and a screened porch. Color and inexpensive materials such as corrugated steel siding, bamboo flooring, and IKEA plumbing fixtures were used inventively throughout the house.





CITATION

Long Garden Shed/Greenhouse Sargentville, Maine

Architect:

David R. MacLean and Denise F. Long

Project team:

David R. MacLean (principal); David E. Fredericks (project assistant)

Carpentry:

Trowbridge Carpentry

Photographer:

Christopher Raphael

Designer's statement:

The garden shed/greenhouse represents the first of three buildings, which will include a garage/studio and residence. All buildings are shaped in simple, vernacular forms, carefully sited and linked together with a deck. Detailing throughout is spare and manifests the same virtues that we have come to appreciate in New England architecture.

CITATION

Walton Boathouse and **Riverside Activity Center** Jacksonville, Florida

Client:

Episcopal High School of Jacksonville

Architect:

Peterson Architects

Cambridge, Massachusetts www.peterson-architects.com

Project team:

Jeffrey D. Peterson AIA (project principal); Steve Scapicchio AIA; Carla Smith; **Emily Wang**

Contractor:

Hashman Construction

Consultants:

RS&H Engineers (mechanical/electrical/ plumbing/civil); John Born Associates (structural)

Photographer:

Antony Rieck

Designer's statement:

The exposed wood structure of this boathouse responds to its wooded site. Looking out into the landscape, one sees its wood columns as continuous with the trees beyond. At its core, the structure reaches its full exuberance, stretching up into the space like the boughs of the live oaks outside.





CITATION

Architecture Studio

Somerville, Massachusetts

Wiederspahn Architecture

Architect:

Wiederspahn Architecture

Somerville, Massachusetts www.wiederspahn.com

Project team:

Peter Wiederspahn AIA (principal)

Contractor:

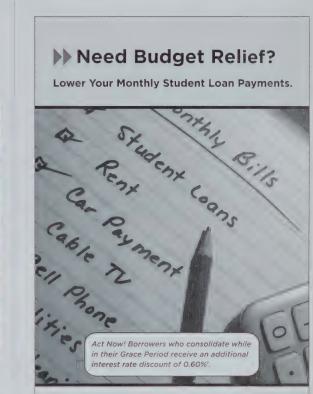
Wiederspahn Architecture

Photographer:

Bob O'Connor

Designer's statement:

This studio space embodies both literal and rhetorical architectural agendas. Literally, it gathers the sky by controlling natural light and collecting the rain. Rhetorically, it comments on the ubiquitous aluminum siding, or "subsequent skin," of the neighboring buildings, and it dialectically juxtaposes contemporary and historic form.

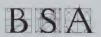


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- 59 DiMella Shaffer Loft23 University Park at MIT Cambridge, Massachusetts
- 60 Peter L. Gluck and Partners. Architects Floating Box House Austin, Texas
- 61 William Rawn Associates Alice Paul Residence Hall Swarthmore, Pennsylvania
- **62** Resolution: 4 Architecture Modern Modular House multiple locations
- **63** Maryann Thompson **Architects** Westport Meadow House Westport, Massachusetts

JURY:

William Hammer AIA **HKT Architects** Somerville, Massachusetts

Joe Pryse AIA Leers Weinzapfel Associates Boston

> David Stern AIA Stern McCafferty Boston

Efthia Tsitiridis AIA New York City Housing Authority

New York City

Susan Wright AIA **Gruzen Samton Architects**

Editor's note: This award program is co-sponsored by the BSA and AIA New York.

www.architects.org/awards.

JURY COMMENTS:

Among the 71 submissions we reviewed this year were many good projects, including a large number of residential lofts, dormitories, single-family homes, some assisted-living and HUD 202 projects, and in general a good mix of new projects and renovations, restorations, and adaptive reuse projects. We were surprised to find no public housing, very little affordable housing, very few high-rise multi-family projects, and no projects by New England or New York architects built outside North America, especially surprising given the number of Boston and New York architects who are working extensively in other countries throughout the world.

We gravitated toward projects that manifest design excellence through a clear design idea. The 14 projects we ultimately recognized offer intelligent responses to site, context, and program as well as to the users' needs. They enhance the neighborhoods in which they were built and demonstrate a clear commitment to universal design and environmental sustainability.

AWARDS

- 64 Cook + Fox Architects Front Street, Block 97 New York City
- 64 Handel Architects 505 Greenwich Street New York City
- 65 William Rawn Associates College of Computer and Information Science and Residence Hall Northeastern University Boston
- 65 SINGLE speed DESIGN Big Dig House Lexington, Massachusetts

CITATIONS

66 Dolezal Architecture + Interior Design with Whitney Atwood **Norcross Associates** Wilkes Passage Lofts Boston

66 Machado and Silvetti

Associates with ADD Inc AtelierI505 Boston **67** Maryann Thompson Architects

> Geothermal House Belmont, Massachusetts

CITATION FOR ADAPTIVE REUSE AND **NEW CONSTRUCTION**

67 Bruner/Cott & Associates Channel Center Boston

CITATION FOR AFFORDABLE SENIOR HOUSING DESIGN

68 Tise Design Associates 90 Bickford Street/Julia Martin House Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts



HONOR AWARD

Loft23

University Park at MIT Cambridge, Massachusetts

Client:

Forest City Residential Group

Architect:

DiMella Shaffer

www.dimellashaffer.com

Project team:

Edward Hodges AIA (principal-in-charge); Kenneth Hartfiel AIA (project manager); Kathy LaDuca NCIDQ (interior designer); Steve Keyser; David Taylor; Jason Hart, Associate AIA, LEED AP; Sarah O'Keefe; Scott Plante AIA, LEED AP

Contractor:

Walsh Brothers

Consultants:

Weidlinger Associates (structural); Cosentini Associates (mechanical/ electrical/plumbing); McPhail Associates (geotechnical); SEA Consultants (civil); Halvorson Design Partnership (landscape); Acentech (acoustical); Collective Wisdom Corporation (specifications); Kaplan Gehring McCarroll (lighting)

Photographer:

Robert Benson

Designer's statement:

Loft23 houses 51 residential units for lease with high ceilings, floor-to-ceiling windows, and flexible open floor plans. The building's side walls, sheathed in green copper shingles that complement the adjacent red-brick buildings, provide more privacy from the neighboring residential buildings, while the transparent end walls open up generously to the adjacent parks.



Floating Box House

Austin, Texas

Client:

Alexa and Blaine Wesner

Architect:

Peter L. Gluck and Partners, Architects

New York City www.gluckpartners.com

Project team:

Delphine Aboulker; Burton Baldridge; Matt Burgermaster; Maria Elena Fanna; Marc Gee; Richard Lucas; L.J. Porter; Stephanie Ragle; Frederik Rissom; Hiroaki Takimoto; Stefanie Werner

Contractor:

AR/CS (Architectural Construction Services)

Consultants:

Robert Silman Associates (structural); S. Berkowitz & Associates (mechanical)

Photographer:

Paul Warchol

Designer's statement:

Standing amid a grove of two hundred landmarked live oaks, significant portions of this house were built below grade to maintain the rural landscape of the site. The box on top is wrapped in a mahogany veneer and sits on an entirely transparent glass enclosure, giving the



Alice Paul Residence Hall

Swarthmore, Pennsylvania

Client:

Swarthmore College

Architect:

William Rawn Associates

Project team:

William L. Rawn FAIA (principal for design); Clifford V. Gayley AIA (associate principal for design); Kevin Bergeron AIA (project manager/project architect); Peter Reiss; Rob Wear

Construction manager:

W.S. Cumby & Son

Consultants:

LeMessurier Engineers (structural); Cosentini Associates (mechanical/ electrical/plumbing); Gilmore & Associates (civil); Ripman Lighting Consultants (lighting); Olin Partnership (landscape)

Photographer:

Robert Benson

Designer's statement:

Anchoring the southern end of Parrish Lawn, Swarthmore College's most iconic open space, this 150-bed residence hall complex defines a new three-sided space, opening toward the lawn and the southwestern sun. Phase I (75 beds, completed 2004) is the first building in this new complex.



Modern Modular

(multiple projects, multiple locations; shown here: Dwell Home)

Architect:

Resolution: 4 Architecture

New York City www.re4a.com (note: credits below for illustrated project only)

Dwell Home

Pittsboro, North Carolina

Project team:

Joseph Tanney, Robert Luntz (principals); Michael MacDonald (project architect); Shawn Brown; Craig Kim; Michael Hargens; Heff Straesser; Jerome Engelking; Catarina Ferreira

Manufacturer:

Carolina Building Solutions

Contractor:

Mount Vernon Homes

Photographer:

Roger Davies

Designer's statement:

Modern Modular was conceived as a study in how residential design can take advantage of the economic, environmental, and structural benefits of standard, proven modular construction techniques. Using a familiar process similar to purchasing readily customized personal computers, Modern Modular transforms the traditional relationship between architect and client.



Westport Meadow House

Westport, Massachusetts

Douglas Reed and William Makris

Architect:

Maryann Thompson Architects

Cambridge, Massachusetts www.maryannthompson.com

Project team:

Maryann Thompson (principal-in-charge); Tom Murdough, Derek Johnson (project managers)

Contractor:

Kendrick Snyder Builders

Consultants:

Richmond So Engineers (engineering); Reed Hilderbrand Associates (landscape); Thad Hayes Inc. (interiors)

Photographer:

Chuck Choi

Designer's statement:

The design of this house responds to the layering of stone walls that surround the 40-acre meadow and a veil of trees at the river's edge. An organizing wall bisects the scheme, providing an additional layer that accentuates the horizontality of the house and reinforces the transition between meadow and river.





AWARD

Front Street, Block 97 New York City

Client:

Yarrow LLC (Zuberry Associates/Sciame Development/Durst Organization)

Architect:

Cook + Fox Architects
New York City

Project team:

Richard A. Cook AIA; Robert F. Fox, Jr. AIA; Daniel Brammer AIA; Fred Metzger; Barry Stein AIA; Amy Coffman AIA; David Cunningham; Ania Gudelewicz; Caroline Hahn; Natalia Martinez; Mark Rusitzky AIA; Scott Steen; Arzan Sam Wadia

Construction manager:

F.J. Sciame Construction

Consultants:

Robert Silman Associates (structural); Laszlo Bodak Engineer (mechanical); NYSERDA/DMJM+Harris, Steven Winter Associates, Water Energy Distributors (energy design); Mary B. Dierickx, Higgins & Quasebarth (preservation); Saratoga Associates (landscape); DTM Inc. (elevator)

Photographers:

Seong Kwon (left) Karin Partin

Designer's statement:

One block south of the Brooklyn Bridge, 11 historic warehouses stood destitute for decades until purchased by developer Yarrow LLC. In weaving three new buildings into the subtle restoration of these richly layered survivors, Front Street demonstrates a modern vision of stewardship, one that calls on the Seaport's heritage in order to reinvigorate an entire neighborhood.



AWARD

505 Greenwich Street

New York City

Client:

Metropolitan Housing Partners

Architect:

Handel Architects

New York City www.handelarchitects.com

Construction manager:

Gotham Construction Company

Consultants:

DeSimone Consulting Engineers (structural); Ettinger Engineering Associates (mechanical); Langan Engineering (geotechnical/civil); Israel Berger Associates (exterior wall); Van Deusen Associates (vertical transport); JAM Consultants (code); Shen Milsom & Wilke (acoustical); Clinard Design Studio (lighting)

Photographer:

James D'Addio

Designer's statement:

This 14-story building includes 104 loft-like units. At street level, an oxidized copper plate, punctuated with light boxes, covers the first two floors. Above, a taut glass curtainwall and precast concrete reinterpret the neighboring printing buildings. The walls of glass set the building apart from the drab brick-and-punched-window multifamily formula.

AWARD

The College of Computer and Information Science and Residence Hall

Northeastern University Boston

Client:

Northeastern University

Architect:

William Rawn Associates

Boston www.rawnarch.com

Project team:

William L. Rawn FAIA (principal for design); Clifford V. Gayley AIA (associate principal for design); Samuel M. Lasky AIA (project architect); Mark L. Warner AIA (project manager); Matthew Stymiest; Victor Liu; Euiseok Jeong AIA; David Grissino; Keith Schwarting; Saipriya Rao; Bruce Danzer AIA

Contractor:

Turner Construction Company

Consultants:

LeMessurier Engineers (structural); Cosentini Associates (mechanical/ electrical/plumbing); Haley & Aldrich (geotechnical); Ripman Lighting Consultants (lighting); Pressley Associates (landscape)

Photographer:

Alan Karchmer

Designer's statement:

Located across from the Museum of Fine Arts, this 18-story tower announces Northeastern University's presence along Huntington Avenue and on the city's skyline. This mixed-use building features the 66,000-square-foot College of Computer and Information Science on the first four floors and contains residential apartments on the floors above.





AWARD

Big Dig House

Lexington, Massachusetts

Client:

Paul Pedini and Cristina Perez-Pedini

Architect:

SINGLE speed DESIGN

Cambridge, Massachusetts www.singlespeeddesign.com

Project team:

John Hong AIA, LEED, Jinhee Park (principals-in-charge); Erik Carlson; Sadmir Ovcina; Chris Minor

Contractor/structural design:

Paul Pedini (Jay Cashman Inc.)

Consultants:

Weidlinger Associates (structural); Cristina Perez-Pedini (water management)

Photographer:

SINGLE speed IMAGE

Designer's statement:

As a prototype for future salvaging efforts, the structural system for this house is almost wholly made up of steel and concrete from Boston's Big Dig, including over 600,000 pounds of "waste" material. Similar to a prefabricated system, the project demonstrates that subtle spatial arrangements can be designed from infrastructural cast-off.



CITATION

Wilkes Passage Lofts

Boston

Client:

Wilkes Passage Associates

Design architect:

Dolezal Architecture + Interior Design

Boston

Architect of record:

Whitney Atwood Norcross Associates

Boston

Design Team:

Dolezal: Doug Dolezal (project designer); David Freed; Tamarit Suchart; Philip Smith WAN: George P. Dakin II (principal-in-charge)

Contractor:

Suffolk Construction

Consultants:

McNamara/Salvia (structural); VAV International (mechanical); Verne G. Norman Associates (electrical)

Photographer:

Paul Warchol

Designer's statement:

Located in Boston's South End Historic District, Wilkes Passage contains 155 condominiums, retail space, and underground parking for 400 cars. Urbanistically, the project transforms scale to mediate between the varied edge conditions of the neighborhood. Architecturally, the building manipulates basic contemporary construction techniques to create meaning. Interior spaces are open and flexible.



CITATION

Atelier|505

Boston

The Druker Company

Design architect:

Machado and Silvetti Associates

www.machado-silvetti.com

Architect of record:

ADD Inc

Cambridge, Massachusetts www.addinc.com

Project team:

ADD Inc: Frederick Kramer AIA (principal-incharge); Michael Doherty AIA, Jon Lannan CSI (project executives); Li Wang AIA (project architect); Jon Cardello AIA; Tom Kinslow AIA; Nasser Benkaci; Joon Oh; Brittney Larrabee; Eric Weyant

Contractor:

Turner Construction Company

Consultants:

Martha Schwartz (landscape); Weidlinger Associates (structural); Daylor Consulting Group (civil); Cosentini Associates (mechanical/electrical/plumbing/fire protection); Schweppe Lighting Design (lighting); Acentech (acoustical); Fisher Dachs Associates/Wilson Butler Lodge (theater): TAMS Consultants (traffic); KV Associates (construction): Jed Johnson Associates (public-area furnishing); Scott Love Design (signage)

Photographers:

Anton Grassl (exteriors) Lucy Chen (interiors)

Designer's statement:

A vital nexus between new and old, Atelier 1505 combines traditional building materials and contemporary details to define the evolving character of the South End. Luxury condos, performing-arts space, high-end retail, fine dining, and parking are woven into a single building that fits comfortably with its Victorian surroundings.

CITATION

Geothermal House

Belmont, Massachusetts

Client:

David Lubin and Nora Huvelle

Architect:

Maryann Thompson Architects

Cambridge, Massachusetts www.maryannthompson.com

Project team:

Maryann Thompson (principal-in-charge); Bill Pevear (project manager); David Suttle; Ioana Urma; Tom Murdough

Contractor:

5 + H Construction

Consultants:

Steve Siegel (engineering); C & J Katz Studio (interior design); Julie Moir Messervy (landscape)

Photographers:

Chuck Choi (right) Stephen Lee

Designer's statement:

The design for this house arose in response to topography and solar orientations. Lavered and interlocking sunlight as one moves from the north-The kitchen faces southeast while the combined living room/dining room/



CITATION FOR ADAPTIVE REUSE AND NEW CONSTRUCTION

Channel Center

3oston

Client:

Beacon Capital Partners

Architect:

3runer/Cott & Associates

Cambridge, Massachusetts

Project team:

Daniel Raih AIA, LEED (principal-in-charge); Henry Moss AIA, LEED, Lynne Brooks AIA, .EED (consulting principals); Curtis Seborowski (project manager); Lawrence

(. Cheng AIA, LEED; Bob Simmons AIA,

.EED; Laurie Soave AIA

)wner's representative:

?.F. Walsh Company

contractor:

..J. Martini (new and rehab buildings) !ichard White Sons (marketing suite)

Consultants:

LeMessurier Consultants (structural); SEi Companies (mechanical/electrical/ plumbing/fire protection); Delphi Associates (electrical): Sullivan Code Group (code); Epsilon Associates (permits); Howard/Stein-Hudson Associates (traffic); Haley & Aldrich (geotechnical); Simpson Gumpertz & Heger (curtainwall); Harry R. Feldman (civil/survey); Cavanaugh Tocci Associates (acoustical); Sasaki Associates (landscape); Charles Spada Interiors (interior design); Kalin Associates (specifications)

Photographer:

Peter Vanderwarker

Designer's statement:

Bruner/Cott melded old and new in this multi-unit complex in South Boston. 25 Channel Center, a new infill building, incorporates new cast-in-place concrete technology, while reflecting the district's industrial character. 35 Channel Center, a century-old former warehouse, offers loftstyle living with high ceilings, tall windows, and natural materials.





CITATION FOR AFFORDABLE SENIOR HOUSING DESIGN

90 Bickford Street/Julia Martin House Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts

Clients:

Jamaica Plain Neighborhood Development Corporation; **Bromley-Heath Tenant** Management Corporation: **Boston Housing Authority**

Architect:

Tise Design Associates

Newton, Massachusetts www.tisedesign.com

Contractor:

Vertec Corporation

Consultants:

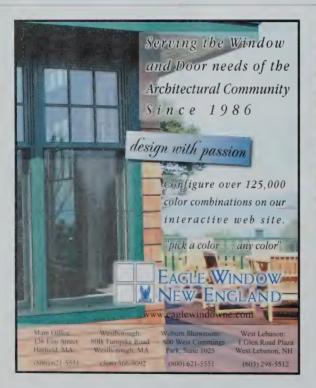
Ginns Dubin (mechanical); Sam Zaks (electrical); Veitas and Veitas (structural); McPhail Associates (geotechnical); Katherine Schreiber (landscape)

Photographer:

Jim Raycroft

Designer's statement:

The Julia Martin House is affordable senior housing designed in cooperation with an energetic focus group of seniors from an adjacent public housing development, who guided the design at each step. Sustainability was also a major focus of the client, and the building features a wide variety of recycled and energy-efficient materials.





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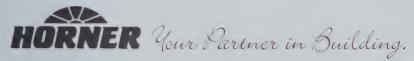


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71 Cambridge Seven Associates with Halvorson Design Partnership Howard Ulfelder MD Healing Garden Yawkey Center for **Outpatient Care** Massachusetts General Hospital Boston

AWARDS

72 Michael Fieldman. Architects Cambridge Seven Associates **Ann Beha Architects** Perkins+Will **Steffian Bradley Architects** Yawkey Center for **Outpatient Care** Massachusetts General Hospital Boston

72 TRO Jung | Brannen Radiation Oncology Clinic Foxboro, Massachusetts

73 Tsoi/Kobus & Associates with Freeman French Freeman The Renaissance Project Burlington, Vermont

CITATIONS

73 EGA Kaplan Family Hospice House Danvers, Massachusetts

74 The S/L/A/M Collaborative Lakeland Hospital Niles Campus Niles, Michigan

JURY:

JURY COMMENTS:

Edward S. K. Bottomley ASID Cama Inc. New Haven, Connecticut

> Robin Guenther FAIA Guenther 5 Architects New York City

Todd Hanson AIA JSA Inc. Portsmouth, New Hampshire Co-Chair, BSA Healthcare **Facilities Committee** This year, the jury reviewed 18 submissions. Since this total included multiple submissions from a few firms, we were surprised that many New England architects who specialize in healthcare design did not submit work. Very few of the submissions this year were renovations, which also surprised us. Many projects clearly paid more attention to the design of building exteriors than to internal planning, which occasionally resulted in less-than-convincing design of the interiors of these healing environments; our review of some projects was hindered by the frequent absence of images of clinical spaces. In general, however, the body of work we reviewed reflected the well-known design skills and design competence of those firms in New England that design healthcare facilities.

Editor's note: The full text of jury comments, including responses to individual projects and advice on preparing submissions, may be found at www.architects.org/awards.





Howard Ulfelder MD Healing Garden

Yawkey Center for Outpatient Care Massachusetts General Hospital Boston

Client:

The Massachusetts General Hospital

Architect:

Cambridge Seven Associates

Cambridge, Massachusetts with Halvorson Design Partnership Boston

Project team:

Cambridge Seven: Steven Imrich AIA (principal-in-charge); Ron Baker AIA (project manager); Adam Mitchell AIA

(project architect); Barbara Reyes AIA;

James Puopolo AIA

Halvorson: Craig Halvorson FASLA (principal-in-charge); Robert Adams (project manager); Charles Kozlowski;

Pranisa Boonkham

Contractor:

Walsh Brothers

Designer's statement:

Located on the eighth-floor roof adjacent to the Cancer Treatment Center in the Yawkey Center at MGH, the new Healing Garden is a welcoming refuge for patients, families, friends, and caregivers. This tranquil, restorative space is carefully crafted to highlight magnificent views of Boston, providing respite and solace to all.



AWARD

Yawkey Center for Outpatient Care

Massachusetts General Hospital

Client:

The Massachusetts General Hospital

Architects:

Michael Fieldman, Architects

(planning and design architect, shell/core/public spaces) New York City

Cambridge Seven Associates

(urban design and executive architect, shell/core/public spaces) Cambridge, Massachusetts

Ann Beha Architects

(historical architect, shell/core/public spaces) Boston

Perkins+Will

(planning and design architect, fit-out) New York City

Steffian Bradley Architects

(local architect, fit-out) Boston

Project team:

Michael Fieldman, Architects: Michael Fieldman FAIA (design principal); Ed Rawlings AIA (project architect) Cambridge Seven Associates: Charles Redmon FAIA (design principal); Ron Baker AIA (project manager); Adam Mitchell AIA (project architect/design); James Puopolo AIA (project architect/construction) Ann Beha Architects: Pamela W. Hawkes FAIA (principal); Scott Aquilina (project architect)

Owner's representative:

Leggat McCall Properties

Construction manager:

Walsh Brothers

Consultants:

Kurt Salmon Health Care Consulting (programming); McNamara/Salvia (structural); BR+A Consulting Engineers (mechanical/electrical/plumbing/fire protection); McPhail Associates (geotechnical); Judith Nitsch Engineering (civil); Carol R. Johnson Associates (landscape): Vanesse Hangen Brustlin (traffic); Walker Parking Consultants (parking); Lerch Bates and Associates (vertical transportation); Quentin Thomas Associates (lighting); Acentech (acoustical); Heitmann & Associates (building envelope); Cini-Little International (food services); Two Twelve Associates (signage)

Photographer:

Bruce T. Martin

Designer's statement:

This new ambulatory building provides a gateway to the MGH campus and uses innovative design and state-of-the-art technology to improve the healthcare experience of patients. This 10-story facility serves as home to a broad range of ambulatory clinics, and includes an underground garage and reconstruction of a portion of the historic Charles Street Jail.



AWARD

Radiation Oncology Clinic Foxboro, Massachusetts

Client:

Caritas Foxboro

Architect:

TRO Jung | Brannen

Newton, Massachusetts www.troarch.com

Project team:

Robert W. Hoye AIA (project executive); Mario Vieira (project manager); Chan Wook Byun AIA (design principal); Albertus Mertoguno (project planner/designer): Joanne MacIsaac IIDA (interior design principal); James F. Newton PE (M/E/P principal); Dennis Stone PE (electrical project manager): Asli Merzeci: Stephen Ostapower; Marc Ross, Assoc. AIA; David MacNeil PE; Donald Luoni, Assoc. AIA; Mark Mulholland

Owner's representative:

WJ Goode Corporation

Contractor:

Bond Brothers

Consultants:

Bay Colony Group (civil/survey); Souza True & Partners (structural)

Photographer:

Gary Kessel

Designer's statement:

Caritas Foxboro needed to relocate its radiation oncology program and chose this site for its convenience and natural setting. The new facility maintains an existing evergreen forest and mirrors the existing building in mass and proportion around a new central courtyard. By adapting the scale and materials of the New England vernacular, the building design de-emphasizes its institutional use.



AWARD

The Renaissance Project

Burlington, Vermont

Client:

Fletcher Allen Health Care

Architect:

Tsoi/Kobus & Associates

Cambridge, Massachusetts www.tka-architects.com

Associated architect:

Freeman French Freeman

Construction manager:

Macomber/Barton Malow Joint Venture

Consultants:

BR+A (mechanical/electrical/plumbing); Weidlinger Associates (structural); Vermeulens (cost); Lammers + Associates (materials handling and distribution); Hamilton/HMC (financial modeling and programming); Garikes Wilson Karlsberger (laboratory); Dufresne-Henry (civil); SE Group (landscape); Lam Partners (lighting)

Photographers:

Peter Mauss/Esto (left) Carolyn L. Bates

Designer's statement:

The Fletcher Allen Health Care and the University of Vermont, College of Medicine project integrates healthcare, education, and research into a cohesive campus environment. The design established a clear sense of place, provided a unifying architectural design, reconnected the campus with the natural environment, improved access by providing a single point of entry, and separated patient and service traffic.



CITATION

Kaplan Family Hospice House

Danvers, Massachusetts

Client:

Hospice of the North Shore

Architect:

EGA

Newburyport, Massachusetts www.ega.net

Contractor:

Martins Construction Company

Consultants:

Reno Engineering & Light Design (electrical); McGill Engineering (mechanical/plumbing); Aberjona Engineering (structural); Siemasko and Verbridge (interiors); HBLA (landscape)

Photographer:

Assassi Productions

Designer's statement:

This 12-patient facility offers terminally ill people the sense of comfort that only a home can provide. Patient rooms include sunrooms, sitting areas, and patios.

Amenities include a kitchen, dining room, living rooms, children's play areas, a library, and a chapel/meditation room overlooking a healing garden. The Hospice House also contains a center for grief and healing.



CITATION

Lakeland Hospital Niles Campus

Niles, Michigan

Client:

Lakeland Regional Healthcare System

Architect:

The S/L/A/M Collaborative

Glastonbury, Connecticut www.slamcoll.com

Project team:

James M. McManus FAIA (principal-incharge); Steven R. Doherty AIA (project manager); Douglas W. Mayne AIA (design architect)

General contractor:

Turner Shelton Construction

Consultants:

van Zelm Heywood & Shadford (mechanical/electrical/plumbing); Wightman & Associates (civil)

Photographer:

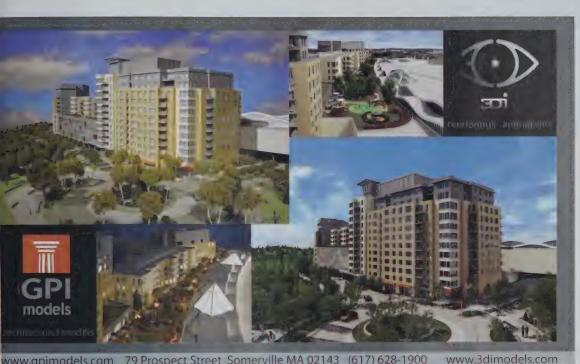
Woodruff-Brown Photography

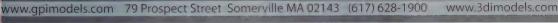
Designer's statement:

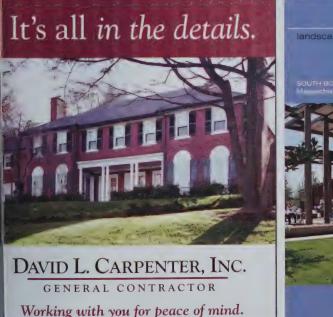
In lieu of yet another "self-contained" addition that would only add to an existing complexity at this small community hospital. a concept of smaller, strategically placed additions was developed to distribute the impact of project resources at hand and yield the most from the existing facility.



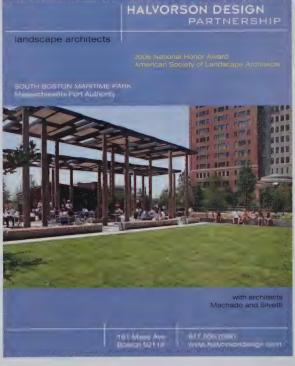








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CAMPUS PLANNING DESIGN

HONOR AWARDS

- 77 Offices N with Bruner/Cott & Associates Master Plan Macalester College
- 78 Sasaki Associates Penn Connects: A Vision for the Future University of Pennsylvania Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

St. Paul, Minnesota

79 Sasaki Associates Innovation and Waterfront Districts University of South Carolina Columbia, South Carolina

CITATIONS

- 80 Payette with Michael Keeshen and Associates High Ground Precinct Plan Clemson University Clemson, South Carolina
- 80 Sasaki Associates Landscape Heritage Plan University of California Berkeley Berkeley, California
- 81 ZNA/Zeybekoglu Nayman Associates New Abu Dhabi Campus American University Abu Dhabi, United Arab **Emirates**

JURY:

JURY COMMENTS:

Rebecca Barnes FAIA Brown University Providence, Rhode Island

Dick Dober AICP

Dober, Lidsky, Craig and Associates Belmont, Massachusetts

Karen Van Lengen AIA

University of Virginia School of Architecture Charlottesville, Virginia

Martin Zimmerman AIA

Charlotte, North Carolina

While the 18 submissions we examined represented a high level of professional competence in general, it is worth noting that we were surprised by the number that failed to deal effectively or thoughtfully with landscape architecture issues; a genuine synthesis of building and landscape was rarely evident in the portfolios. (We also noted how often computer graphics proved to be too abstract to be useful.) As we discussed all of the submissions, we shared a view of planning excellence as something defined by clarity about goals; vigorous analyses of the site; a clear, comprehensive vision; well-articulated solutions characterized by clear connectivity and a strong image of place; persuasive phasing; a strong mission statement; evidence of urban-design creativity (a strong three-dimensional sense); and a big idea. The challenge of working for a university, of course, is that we are typically working for too many clients inside and outside the school. In such circumstances, the designer/planner has an obligation to push the client perhaps even more assertively than might be the case with other project types.

Editor's note: The full text responses to individual projects





Master Plan

Macalester College St. Paul, Minnesota

Master planning and urban design:

Offices N

Cambridge, Massachusetts

Bruner/Cott & Associates

Cambridge, Massachusetts www.brunercott.com

Project team:

Norris Strawbridge AIA (principal-incharge); Leland D. Cott FAIA (principal); Seth Riseman (project designer/ project manager)

Consultants:

Close Landscape Architecture (landscape); Jonas Design (graphic design)

Designer's statement:

The Macalester community has been cultural exchange. This campus master plan defines a new central campus quadrangle and creates new spaces for simultaneous college and neighborhood use.



Penn Connects: A Vision for the Future

University of Pennsylvania Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Master planner and landscape architect:

Sasaki Associates

Watertown, Massachusetts

Project team:

Dennis Pieprz, Assoc. AIA (principal-incharge); Pablo Savid-Buteler (principal architect); Greg Havens AIA; Nishant Lall; Riki Nisimura; Elke Berger; Gina Ford; Chad Machen; Paul Kempton, Assoc. AIA; Maria-Anna Hatziliades; Anne Dauchy

Images:

Michael McCann

Designer's statement:

The plan will provide unprecedented opportunity to establish a major physical presence along the Schuylkill River and create new gateways to the campus from Center City. It will enhance and extend previous planning and design initiatives that transformed the heart of the Penn campus, while enriching interaction with





Project team:

Richard Galehouse, Assoc. AIA; Stuart Dawson FASLA; Igor Andersen; Tseng-wai Chung

Images:

Joe Rogers, University of South Carolina (aerial photography) Dongik Lee

Designer's statement:

that will transform a brownfield and other underused land downtown. The Innovation and Waterfront Districts will become an extension of the city's historic grid; a re-designed Greene Street will be extended via a pedestrian bridge to link the University's iconic "horseshoe" to a new river front park.

High Ground Precinct Plan

Clemson University Clemson, South Carolina

Architect and landscape architect:

Payette

Boston www.payette.com

Associate architect:

Michael Keeshen and Associates

Consultants:

Cary Engineering (structural); Newcomb & Boyd (mechanical/electrical); Dutton Engineering (civil)



Designer's statement:

This master plan encompasses a 26-acre academic precinct for science and engineering. The buildings define four new campus spaces: a formal quadrangle; a garden; a promenade; and a plaza. The organization of these spaces replicates the best existing campus spaces, resulting in a natural extension of the Clemson environment.

CITATION

Landscape Heritage Plan

University of California Berkeley Berkeley, California

Master planner and landscape architect:

Sasaki Associates

Watertown, Massachusetts and San Francisco

Project team:

Jim Jacobs; Robert Sabbatini; Mark Hoffheimer; Cody Andresen

Images:

Timothy Wells

Designer's statement:

Balancing preservation of a cultural orienting the core toward the Golden Gate.





CITATION

New Abu Dhabi Campus

American University Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates

Client:

Investment Establishment

Architect:

ZNA/Zeybekoglu Nayman Associates

Cambridge, Massachusetts www.znarch.com

Project team:

Ilhan Zeybekoglu AIA (principal-in-charge); Yunus Tasci; Felipe Eguia, Jr.; Esra E. Broene; Xu Wang; Xin Tian; Feng Guo; Alfredo C. Rico-Dimas

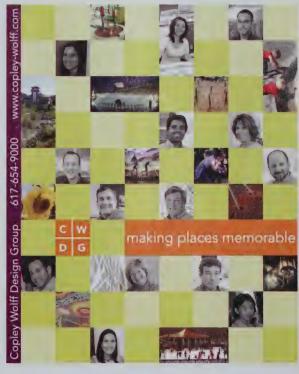
Consultants:

EHAF Engineering (structural); Carol R. Johnson Associates (landscape)

Designer's statement:

The American University in Abu Dhabi presents a state-of-the-art campus and infrastructure set in an urban coastal heritage and dedication to academics, the design of the campus calls for an







INTERIOR ARCHITECTURE/ INTERIOR DESIGN **AWARDS**



HONOR AWARDS

- 83 Bergmeyer Associates with Renzo Piano **Building Workshop** and Lord. Aeck & Sargent Architecture Table 1280 at the Woodruff Arts Center Atlanta, Georgia
- 84 Grant Studio Architects Blu Gallery/101 Realty Boston
- 85 William Rawn Associates '62 Center for Theatre and Dance Williamstown, Massachusetts
- 86 SINGLE speed DESIGN HBNY (Parenthetical Space) New York City

JURY: JURY COMMENTS:

Corky Binggeli ASID Corky Binggeli Interior Design Boston President, ASID New England

Natasha Espada AIA Leers Weinzapfel Associates Boston

Diane McCafferty Stern McCafferty Architects Boston

Kate Wendt IIDA Tsoi/Kobus & Associates Cambridge, Massachusetts President, IIDA New England

Editor's note:

The full text of jury comments, including responses to individual projects and advice on preparing submissions, may be found at www.architects.org/awards.

This year's award winners stand as examples of the shifts in design innovation and ideas, and offer valuable insight into the evolution of the built environment.

Innovation in interior design is being driven by the design of restaurants, retail space, and museums. These project types have become incubators for new ideas and inventive ways of using new and traditional materials. What previously would have been viewed as functional space is now seeking a clear sense of identity. We also observed that "high design" is increasingly making a mark in areas not commonly thought of as designdriven interior spaces, such as infrastructure projects, train stations, parking garages, and power plants.

We noted a movement toward the creation of adaptable interior space to meet ever-changing programmatic needs. Technology, having blurred the distinction between business and pleasure, demands a significant amount of versatility. Sustainable design concerns have similarly affected the quality of interior design in new construction by encouraging more attention to natural light, ventilation, and materials, as sustainability becomes the required norm, not the celebrated exception.

Residential renovations in urban settings are encouraging exploration of denser, more sustainable, and more efficient ways of cohabitating. Conversely, suburban residential design has become less inventive, reverting to a more traditional vocabulary, and there has been resistance to the renovation of Modern houses. If we can convince the public that suburban, residential interiors can be successfully renovated, we will all benefit from the resulting economic, political, and environmental implications.

These shifts in design not only teach us what is current, but hint at the future of interior design. By paying close attention to the work of our peers, we can gain insight into imminent design opportunities, challenges, and demands.

AWARDS

- **87** Arrowstreet North Campus Parking Garage Cambridge, Massachusetts
- 87 Payette Charles Giancarlo **Engineering Laboratories** Providence, Rhode Island
- 88 William Rawn Associates The Music Center at Strathmore Bethesda, Maryland

CITATIONS

- 88 Gensler
 - The Foundation Lounge of the Hotel Commonwealth Boston
- 89 Studio Luz Architects Diva Lounge Somerville, Massachusetts
- 89 Abby Suckle Architects (renovation architect) John Nickols (original architect, 1957) Boardman Residence Carlisle, Massachusetts



Table 1280 at the Woodruff Arts Center

Atlanta, Georgia

Client:

Robert W. Woodruff Arts Center

Architects:

Bergmeyer Associates

(restaurant design) Boston

Renzo Piano Building Workshop

(building design) Genoa, Italy

Lord, Aeck & Sargent Architecture

(building design) Atlanta, Georgia

Project team:

Bergmeyer: Michael R. Davis AIA, LEED (principal-in-charge); Matthew Hyatt RA, LEED (lead designer); Amy Rogovich LEED

Contractor:

Skanska USA Building

Consultants:

Giampietro Associates (food service)



Photographer:

Chun Y. Lai

Designer's statement:

Table 1280 at the Woodruff Arts Center is a clean, modern, and sophisticated environment which serves as a backdrop to an array of contemporary art and food. Overlapping spaces are used for a private dining area, public dining room, exhibit kitchen, bar, lounge, and wine display/storage.





Project team:

Michael Grant AIA (principal); Andrew Wenrick, Assoc. AIA; Robert Levash, Assoc. AIA (project manager); Mimi Kano; Mieke Stethem

Contractor:

Brite Builders

Consultants:

Independent Piping Company (fire suppression); Boxx Design (loose furniture design and fabrication)

Photographer:

Kent Dayton

Designer's statement:

In response to the client's request for a non-traditional office space — art gallery, reception space, and realty office - the design creates a wine-bar-like setting, with an oversized "bar" for comfortable meetings situated within a gallery/event space. The lighting design, including colored LED lighting, allows the space to be transformed to suit the changing roles it plays.

HONOR AWARD Blu Gallery/101 Realty Boston

Client:

Paul Rehme

Architect:

Grant Studio Architects

Boston

www.grantstudio.com

'62 Center for Theatre and Dance

Williamstown, Massachusetts

Client:

Williams College

Architect:

William Rawn Associates

Boston, Massachusetts www.rawnarch.com

Project team:

William L. Rawn III FAIA, Alan Joslin AIA (principals for design); David Croteau AIA (project architect); Randy Wilmot AIA (project manager); Rupinder Singh AIA; Andrew Jonic; Yu-Lin Chen; Ken Amano; Chris Dobosz: Bruce Danzer AIA

Construction manager:

Barr and Barr

Consultants:

LeMessurier Consultants (structural); TMP Engineering (mechanical/electrical/ plumbing); The Halvorson Company (landscape); Horton Lees Brogden (lighting); Acoustic Dimensions (acoustical); Theatre Projects Consultants (theater)

Photographer:

Robert Benson

Designer's statement:

The '62 Center for Theatre and Dance includes four major venues: the 550-seat MainStage Theatre; 200-seat CenterStage Theatre (studio theatre); 210-seat Adams Memorial Theatre (thrust stage); and a dance studio. The center supports the college's theatre and dance departments during the academic year, and houses the Williamstown Theatre Festival in the summer.







HONOR AWARD **HBNY (Parenthetical Space)** New York

Architect:

SINGLE speed DESIGN

Cambridge, Massachusetts www.singlespeeddesign.com

Project team:

Jinhee Park (principal in charge); John Hong AIA, LEED (collaborating principal); Erik Carlson; Youngju Baik; Sadmir Ovcina; Anne Levallois; Hyeyoung Kim

Contractor:

Capri Construction Management

Consultants:

A&D Associates (mechanical/electrical/ plumbing)

Photographer:

Francis Dzikowski

Designer's statement:

As a human-scale solution for the urbanscale phenomenon of nomadic lifestyles led by some urban residents, this loft interior was designed to be shared by multiple families. Parenthesis-like operable curtains and moving partitions give flexibility to the space, allowing custom-fit configurations for individual users.



AWARD

North Campus Parking Garage

Cambridge, Massachusetts

Client:

Harvard University

Architect:

Arrowstreet

Somerville, Massachusetts www.arrowstreet.com

Project team:

James Batchelor FAIA, LEED AP (principalin-charge); James Flajnik AIA (consulting principal); Anthony Iacovino AIA, LEED AP (project architect)

Contractor:

J.F. White Contracting

Consultants:

Walker Parking Consultants (parking); Weidlinger Associates (structural); Haley & Aldrich (geotechnical); Green International Affiliates (civil/utilities); Cosentini Associates (mechanical/electrical/ plumbing/fire protection); Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates (landscape)

Photographer:

Richard Mandelkorn

Designer's statement:

Harvard University wanted its new, 731-car, underground garage to feel safe and familiar to employees and visitors. Considered as both an interior and graphic design commission, the design allows users to orient themselves from any point. Each elevator lobby is colored distinctively and themed with imagery from one of Harvard's museums.

AWARD

Charles Giancarlo Engineering Laboratories

Providence, Rhode Island

Client:

Brown University

Architect:

Payette Boston

www.payette.com

Construction manager:

George B.H. Macomber Construction

Consultants:

Simpson, Gumpertz & Heger (structural); Vanderweil Engineers (mechanical/ electrical)

Photographers:

Jeff Goldberg/Esto Bruce T. Martin (right)

Designer's statement:

This infill pavilion for Brown's Department of Engineering forms a new "front door" that raises departmental visibility and simplifies circulation and accessibility. It creates a formal link to the campus and extends the primary pedestrian thoroughfare. The pavilion adds a computing room, seminar lecture hall, and electronics lab.



INTERIOR ARCHITECTURE/INTERIOR DESIGN AWARDS

AWARD

The Music Center at Strathmore

Bethesda, Maryland

Client:

Montgomery County, Maryland

Architect:

William Rawn Associates

Boston

www.rawnarch.com

Project team:

William L. Rawn III FAIA, Alan Joslin, AIA (principals for design); Clifford V. Gayley AIA (associate principal for design); Jeanne Kuespert AIA (project manager); Philip Gray NCARB (project architect); Gary Gwon; David Bagnoli; Victor Liu; Euiseok Jeong AIA; Bruce Danzer AIA

Contractor:

Clark Construction Group

Consultants:

LeMessurier Consultants (structural): TMP Engineering (mechanical/electrical/ plumbing); Louise Schiller Associates (landscape); Fisher Marantz Stone (lighting); Kirkegaard Associates (acoustical): Theatre Projects Consultants (theatre)

Photographers:

Alan Karchmer (right) Ron Solomon

Designer's statement:

The Music Center at Strathmore. a 1.976-seat concert hall located in Bethesda, Maryland, is the second year-round home of the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra. The Center also features a 40,000-square-foot Education Wing with four rehearsal rooms, nine practice rooms, and other teaching facilities.





CITATION

The Foundation Lounge of the Hotel Commonwealth

Boston

Client:

Vanilla Box

Architect:

Gensler

Boston

www.gensler.com

Project team:

Douglas C. Gensler AIA (principal/project director); Victoria Tentler-Krylov LEED AP (project designer); John M. Kelly (project manager); Shannon Beauchaine

Contractor:

Commodore Builders

Consultants:

Richard D. Kimball Company (mechanical/ electrical/plumbing/fire protection); LAM Partners (lighting); Advanced Signing (signage); Trimark United East (furniture)

Photographer:

Eric Levin

Designer's statement:

Within the Hotel Commonwealth, this lounge is a destination for those seeking a sophisticated, distinctive social experience. Modern elements and rich materials work together to establish strong identity and create zones within the lounge. The design's intentions are to provide opportunities to be seen and to create intimate spaces.

CITATION

Diva Lounge

Somerville, Massachusetts

Client:

One World Cuisine

Architect:

Studio Luz Architects

Boston

www.studioluz.net

Project team:

Hansy Better Barraza, Anthony J. Piermarini AIA (design principals); Michael Beaman (team leader); Jason Frantzen; Rachel Schauer; Shane Zhao



Contractor:

Consultants:

Albert Costa Architects (code); Sinote Ibrahim (mechanical/electrical/ plumbing); Light This! (lighting); Sarkis Zerounian (structural)

Photographer:

John Horner

Designer's statement:

Diva Lounge is designed to immerse patrons in the lounge experience. The new space undulates with billowing illuminated panels that have clouds of colored light, which condense around areas of social gathering. Natural materials complement the illuminated panels: the bar is hand-peeled salvaged log, and bench backs are of the same wood, featuring open backs for rubbing shoulders.

CITATION

Boardman Residence

Carlisle, Massachusetts

Client:

Barbara and David Boardman

Architects:

Abby Suckle Architects

(renovation architect) New York City www.abbysuckle.com

John Nickols

(original architect, 1957)

Project team:

Abby Suckle FAIA, LEED AP (principal-in-charge)

Contractor:

Barbara Boardman

Photographer:

Jason Rogers

Designer's statement:

This project brings the cutting-edge 1957 steel-and-glass house back to what it was when it was designed, and reinterprets and enhances the original vision to adapt to material and lifestyle changes without unlimited resources.





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[1948]
THE WOMB CHAIR
DESIGNED BY EERO SAARINEN



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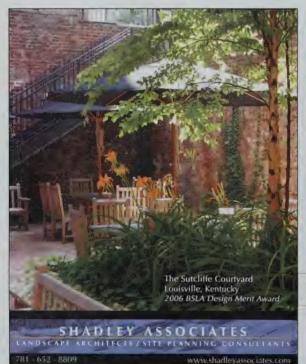
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THE COX CHAIR

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JURY:

Henry Moss AfA, Chair Bruner/Cott & Associates Cambridge, Massachusetts

> Michael Cannizzo AIA Boston Redevelopment Authority Boston

Phoebe Crisman Crisman + Petrus Architects Charlottesville, Virginia

Natasha Espada AIA Leers Weinzapfel Associates Boston

Deborah Fennick AIA Fennick McCredie Architecture

Peter Lofgren AIA Symmes Maini & McKee Cambridge, Massachusetts

J. Meejin Yoon Massachusetts Institute of Technology Cambridge, Massachusetts

Editor's note: The full text

This year's designers exhibited little interest in experimental building envelopes. Tectonic fantasies and dreams of heightened performance were fewer, but two projects we have elected to honor are schemes that reacted to their science-fiction settings with hallucinatory technologies. More boards than usual employed sophisticated graphic software. Hand-drawn items are increasingly rare, even as scanned and manipulated pieces within digitally composed arrays of words and images.

The text in almost every architectural submission referred to its sustainable content, typically citing green roofs, geothermal wells, and reuse of rainwater, as if these were boxes to be checked. These allusions indicate a growing awareness that sustainable buildings and landscapes are desirable, but little grasp of how this may affect design. This aspect of architectural thought remains remarkably lacking in material association or in appreciation of the quantitative aspects of energy flows, rainwater volume, or natural light and ventilation.

Remarkably few architectural or landscape projects addressed (or even implied) the recalcitrant qualities of a site or even a generalized context. Parks, schools, and nature centers hover in abstract space. A number of jurors noted that program ideas were more interesting than the forms that emerged from them.

Designers are still drawn to the challenge of memorials, typically offering some version of a collective tombstone. The jurors beg designers to observe a decent interval of at least 15 years before they attempt to immortalize any painful event architecturally.

Of the 106 entries reviewed, we are honoring eight projects in two tiers: Honor Awards and Awards. This year's submissions did not yield a comet-like clear winner trailed by also-rans; we find these projects most compelling as a collection and hope they will be considered as such.

HONOR AWARDS

- 93 archimania Farmhouse Eastern Tennessee
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- 95 Johannes M.P. Knoops. Assoc. AIA **Precious Memories Floating** on a Mystic Horizon Oslo, Norway
- 96 Liminal Projects Fog Harvester

- 97 Anmahian Winton Architects Horticulture Support Facility Arnold Arboretum, Harvard University Jamaica Plain. Massachusetts
- 97 Peter Marino Architect Residential Tower. 105 West 57th Street New York City
- 98 Moskow Architects Habitat for Urban Bicycles
- 98 Marc Salemink Vertical Urbanism Barcelona, Spain



Farmhouse

Eastern Tennessee

Designer

archimania

Memphis, Tennessee

Project team:

Todd Walker AIA; Andrew Parks;

Matt Seltzer

Designer's statement:

The second to your many to your





FCL/Energy Farm

Seoul Performing Arts Center Nodeul Island, Korea

Designer:

Future Cities Lab

Charlottesville, Virginia

Project team:

Jason Johnson; Nataly Gattegno

Designer's statement:

Conceived as a massive urban "energyfarm," fields of suspended heliotropic sky-pins generate energy and activate the island with variable intensities of light, color, and sound. The urban-scale framework sits over a varied ground condition that encloses shopping, restaurants, and public spaces, as well as parking and services.



Precious Memories Floating on a Mystic

Oslo, Norway

Designer:

Johannes M.P. Knoops, Assoc. AIA

Designer's statement:

The state of the s





Fog Harvester: An Ecosystem for Arid Farmland Highway Stops

Designer:

Liminal Projects

Project team:

Laura Garofalo; Chris Machowiak; Kim Suczynski; Adam Krywinsky

Designer's statement:

This steel-mesh structure uses fog to construct an evolving and self-sustaining landscape. It accumulates fog droplets on its micro-ridged surface to irrigate the underlying ground. Wind-blown topsoil and seeds collect in the mesh, allowing nature to take over the grid, highlighting its function as the





AWARD

Horticulture Support Facility

Arnold Arboretum, Harvard University Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts

Designer:

Anmahian Winton Architects

Cambridge, Massachusetts

Project team:

Alex Anmahian AIA; Nick Winton AIA; John Paul Dunn; Aaron Stavery AIA; Makoto Abe; James Machek

Designer's statement:

The program for this comprehensive naintenance facility, designed in conjunction with the master plan for the Dana Greenhouse parcel, is mixed-use, and will include the expansion of facilities for the Arboretum grounds maintenance operations of the programment of the existing offices and the expansion of the programment of the existing offices and

replacement of the existing offices an
Hunnewell Building, and or



AWARD

Residential Tower, 105 West 57th Street New York City

Designer:

Peter Marino Architect

New York City www.petermarinoarchitect.com

Project team:

Peter Marino FAIA; Craig Greenberg AIA; Darren Nolan, Assoc. AIA

Consultants:

DiSimone Consulting Engineers; Milrose; Cosentini

Designer's statement:

This design concept was driven by its prime Central Park site, the limited size of the plot, and unlimited height restrictions. Emphasis was placed upon maximizing the building's height to capitalize on park views. A series of interlocking apartments, each with mixed double- and single-height spaces, creates the façade design.



AWARD

Habitat for Urban Bicycles

Designer:

Moskow Architects
Boston

Project team:

Keith Moskow AIA; Robert Linn; Cassie Thornburg

Designer's statement:

The Habitat for Urban Bicycles provides a user-friendly facility for bicycle commuters. A glazed, elliptical enclosure houses lockers and an information/service center. A steel-and-glass armature supports a conveyer belt from which the bicycles are hung. Bikes are called to the drop-off location with a key or security code.

AWARD

Vertical Urbanism

Barcelona, Spain

Designer:

Marc Salemink

Malden, Netherlands

Designer's statement:

The city of Barcelona is constructing a new metro line, Linia9, offering possibilities for developing other programs integrating architecture and infrastructure. By combining the theater and metro into a single design, the metro station profits from spatial qualities provided by the theater. Also, the theater's dancers act as a "living advertisement," seducing travellers.



Honor Awards Socially Responsible Housing Build Boston Juried Exhibits Harleston Parker Medal Urban Design Higher Education Educational Facilities Research Grants 2007/2008 Accessible Design

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SPECIAL AWARDS

Every year, BSA members and their colleagues are honored nationally for their contributions to design, to the profession, and to the communities they serve. During 2006, such recognition included:

AIA Institute Honor Award for Interior Architecture

Skillman Library Lafayette College Ann Beha Architects Boston

Schepens Eye Research Institute Laboratory Renovation Payette Boston

AIA Institute Honor Award for Regional and Urban Design

North Point (Cambridge, Boston, and Somerville, Massachusetts) CBT/Childs Bertman Tseckares with Greenberg Consultants

AIA Design Award for Small Project Practitioners

Arbor House Moskow Architects Boston

Whitney M. Young, Jr. Award

Theodore C. Landsmark, MEvD, JD, PhD, Assoc. AIA

Elevated to AIA College of Fellows

James P. Batchelor FAIA Pamela W. Hawkes FAIA John Prokos FAIA

Young Architects Award

John Hong AIA

Honorary AIA

Elaine Ostroff, Hon. AIA Jean Valence FSMPS, Hon. AIA

Each year, the BSA also identifies architects, colleagues, and institutions deserving special recognition for their contribution to the architectural community and to the enrichment of the built and natural environments. In 2006, the BSA conferred these honors:

BSA Award of Honor

Rebecca Barnes FAIA (see page 22)

Commonwealth Award

The Boston Harbor Associates

BSA Fellows Award for Excellence in Teaching

Robert Hsiung FAIA

Women in Design Award of Excellence

Doris Cole FAIA Coco Raynes Adèle Naudé Santos FAIA

Honorary BSA

Nancy Levinson, Hon. BSA





North Point



Skillman Library

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1981 HARLESTON PARKER JURY:

William L. Porter FAIA, Chair Louis J. Bakanowsky FAIA Otakar Dvorak AIA Joan Goody FAIA Warren Schwartz FAIA John Sharratt FAIA Donald Stull FAIA

The winner of the 2006 Harleston Parker Medal is the Lulu Wang Campus Center at Wellesley College, by Mack Scogin Merrill Elam Architects. See page 31.

Federal Reserve Bank of Boston Hugh Stubbins and Associates

(now The Stubbins Associates)

he Harleston Parker Medal, Boston's most prestigious architecture award, was established in 1921 to recognize "the most beautiful piece of architecture, building, monument, or structure within the limits of the City of Boston or of the Metropolitan Parks District."

Twenty-five years ago, the Parker Medal jury chose to honor the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston, commenting:

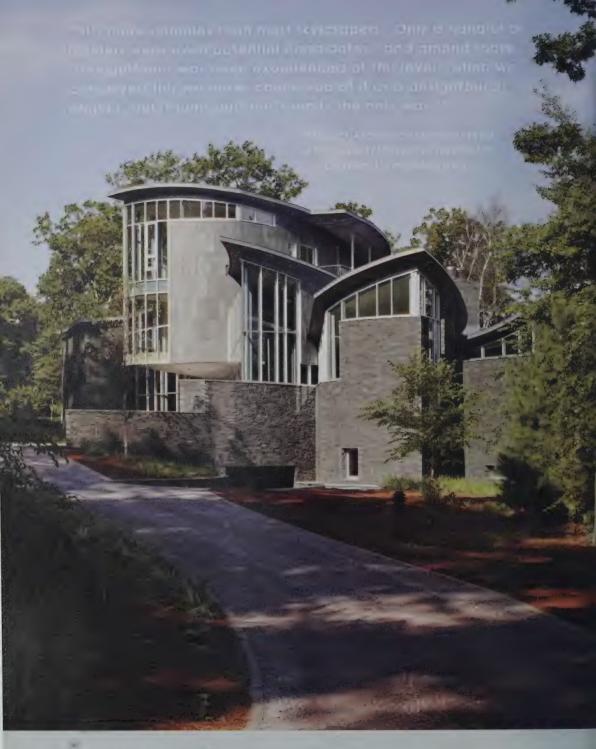
Anyone sailing into Boston Harbor who has seen the Federal Reserve glowing in the sunset knows the evocative power of this building. Its position on the waterfront, its distinctive profile, and its aluminum cladding, so dramatically alive to changing conditions of light, mutually contribute to its singularity and excitement. Moreover, as a solution for its particular program and site, it is at the same time forthright and ingenious.

The jury's comments (available at www.architecture boston.com/HP_1981), much longer than in previous years, thoughtfully describe the building's components, siting, and strategic presence as a gateway to future development. Jurors were also conscious of the building's limitations, especially its lack of ground-level activity, some of which were conditions of its use. Even so, they concluded that the building was "an object lesson in good and humanly responsive design."

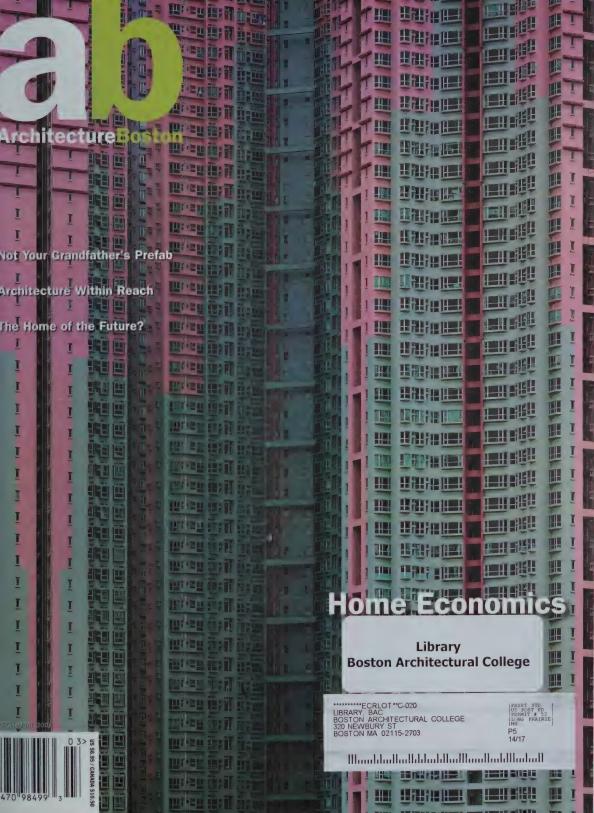
The jury's judgment has withstood the test of time. In her wonderful essay on the Fed (*ArchitectureBoston*, July/August 2006), Susanne Schindler noted, "I am tempted to say that this is a perfect building. Perfect not for an alleged universal applicability. Perfect in its uniqueness and oddity. Perfect—and this is what we can learn from it today—in embracing engineering possibilities without resorting to cold abstraction."

Hugh Stubbins, Jr. FAIA passed away on July 5, 2006, at the age of 94.





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Cover: Detail, Architecture of Density #a39, Hong Kong, 2005, Michael Wolf.



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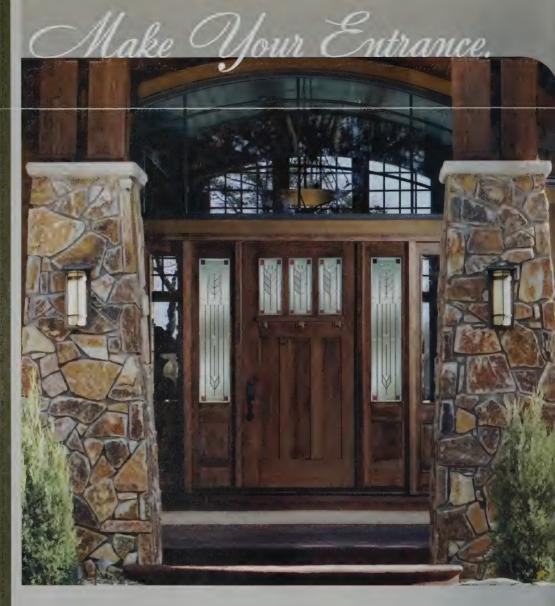
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All Else Equal

he contractor surveyed the expanse of bluestone pavers. They had been installed 35 years ago in accordance with drawings prepared by an architect with the foresight to annotate the area with the now-common upscale term "terrace." Back in 1971, everyone else would have called it a "patio." We had called in this contractor to take a look at a corner that had settled, the assumed source of a leak in the basement. But now he looked grimly at the terrace itself. "Of course," he said with a faint but unmistakable note of disdain, "the whole thing looks a bit tired."

Be assured that across America, even featured in ads by noted landscape architects in this very magazine, bluestone "terraces" are being installed that look much like ours — minus the moss that has comfortably settled into some of the mortar lines. We were able to resist the fleeting thought that perhaps we really ought to redo the entire area. But the contractor's sentiment was familiar. When we asked a builder friend to help us scope out the costs of some needed repairs when we first bought the house, he looked around the kitchen with an expression we have since come to know well. His nostrils fairly twitched at the sight of the painted wood cabinets — traditional overlay, exposed hinges — and the Formica countertops. "Of course," he said airily, "you'll want to update all this." Well, no. (Although, eight years later, we now admit that the countertops have reached the end of their days.)

These little episodes were an insight into one side of the housing industry. These contractors were practicing a form of marketing — a strategy that is probably reasonably successful with clients who have managed to tune out the pre-consumerism New England mantra "use it up; wear it out; make it do; do without." But more significantly, these exchanges are a reminder of a mechanism that is key to understanding the complex field of housing economics (or indeed, economics in general): decisions are made every day by individuals acting in their own best interests (or at least, trying to) through interactions with other individuals, and it is the cumulative impact of many such decisions that form an entire industry. And while those decisions are sometimes quantifiable — downsizing to avoid high property taxes and provide a retirement nest egg; moving to a suburb with a good school system to avoid private school tuitions — they are also made within a cultural context that sends insistent and compelling messages: hard-working people deserve splurges;

new is better than old; luxury is not just for the rich. Some of these messages — cities are cool, for example — serve the greater good. Others are more pernicious, contributing to scary levels of consumer debt, wasteful consumption of resources, and loss of our natural and cultural heritage.

Architects might easily imagine that the forces that influence housing economics are beyond their control, given the fact that they design so few of the houses built or renovated each year. The vexing conundrum that is affordable housing seems particularly daunting, especially when we realize that affordability is a global problem, as contributor Anthony Flint observes (see page 38). And yet, because they work at the level where individuals make the very decisions that have cumulative impact, architects have far more influence than they realize. It is because of good design that loft units may be one of the most significant contributions to housing since the triple-decker; even "luxury loft" is no longer the oxymoron it once was. It is because of good design that prefab housing is newly hip. Architects are in the unique position of

Architects are in the unique position of matching the cultural zeitgeist with the pragmatics and, yes, economics of the built environment.

matching the cultural zeitgeist with the pragmatics and, yes, economics of the built environment. Perhaps the next such example will be a rediscovered interest in historic houses by homeowners committed to sustainability, as suggested by contributor James Hadley AIA. Economist (and roundtable participant) Edward Moscovitch has found that "older homes are worth more — an extra 100 years (all else equal) adds \$53,000 to home value"; architects such as George Terrien AIA (see page 47) are already demonstrating ways to make "all else equal" through green design. Economists and architects rarely work together, which may present an opportunity. Making all else equal in terms of access to good housing is a goal they share.

Elizabeth S. Padien FAIA Editor



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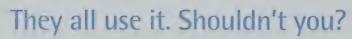
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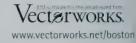


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Letters Letters Letters

I am writing to comment on advertisements appearing recently in Architecture Boston for the New England Concrete and Masonry Association (NECMA), Concrete and masonry are essential materials for the architect's palette, and can be a safe and economical choice in most applications. However, the advertisements placed by NECMA have more in mind than calling these truths to your readers' attention. This organization is working actively in Massachusetts and elsewhere to amend state building codes and, failing that, to pass legislation to limit choice in the use of construction materials by mandating the use of noncombustible materials for all schools, dormitories, and nursing homes. While their position is framed as an argument for "balanced design," it is hard to escape the conclusion that their real concern is market share.

The International Building Code has adopted height and area provisions for construction materials that allow buildings to be of greater area and/or height. This results in allowable areas for other construction materials within buildings to be larger than those which were permitted by the current Massachusetts building code, although they may have been permitted in other states. Having failed to alter this outcome through the International Code Council's code development process, NECMA and other similar trade organizations are seeking to amend local codes or legislate construction type without the technical review the codes and standards development and adoption process would require. In Massachusetts, they have hired as a consultant the only registered architect appointed to represent the interests of design professionals on the Fire Protection/ Fire Prevention advisory subcommittee of the Board of Building Regulations and Standards, and they have repeatedly lobbied to have legislation enacted to mandate that the building code require the use of noncombustible construction for certain use groups.

While I respect the importance of maintaining autonomy between the editorial and advertising aspects of the magazine, I believe it is important that the presence of advertising by this organization not be construed as an endorsement for their agenda by Architecture Boston or the Boston Society of Architects.

> A. Vernon Woodworth AIA Chair, BSA Codes Committee

In "The Next Layer: Boston in the Age of the New Towers" [January/February 2007], George Thrush has again won the prize for dangerously superficial rhetoric. I was heartened at least by Joan Goody's quoted response to Mayor Menino's proposal to develop a 1,000-foot tower on Winthrop Square. To compare the Hancock tower (60 stories), as Mr. Thrush does, to a 1,000-foot (perhaps 80 stories) high-rise tower on Winthrop Square which is a postage-stamp site in comparison to Copley Square — demonstrates no concept of "sensibly placed" towers (no way will you get away from that shadow any time of day). For a start, just imagine the Hancock tower on Winthrop Square. I think it is obvious that Mr. Thrush is more enamored with some idea of "architectural elegance" ("impressive new heights of civic grandeur"?) than he is with a long-term livable Boston. And I think it says a lot that Mr. Thrush implies that the West End is less a loss because it would likely have been taken over by "condominiums and millionaires."

But then one wants to ask Mayor Menino, where was the leadership that might have encouraged balanced urban development in the South Boston Seaport? Lots of space for towers there. And if one is looking for land which the city owns, why not a 1,000-foot tower on City Hall Plaza — apparently the mayor thinks relocating City Hall to the South Boston Seaport would really "re-energize public life." But one only has to look at the silly new tower at the Prudential Center to

get a sense of his vision for a world-class Boston. I'd vote for Joan Goody!

West Townshend, Vermont

"25 Years Ago ... " in the January/February 2007 issue hailed the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston, winner of the Harleston Parker Award of 1981, for which I was chair of the award jury. Recently, thanks to a commission by the bank, I've had the opportunity to work on the redesign of its site in collaboration with my colleagues at Four Architecture and with the Halvorson Company, Since its construction, there have been substantial changes to the local environment. Pedestrian traffic has dramatically increased, and Fort Point Channel and South Boston are now lively destinations. The bus station across Atlantic Avenue has been replaced by a sophisticated master plan and design for Dewey Square. The raised Central Artery is down and replaced by a Greenway that will include parks and cultural activities. And there are now post-9/11 security imperatives that demand to be addressed.

And yet the building has, indeed, stood the test of time. We would like to commend the client for calling upon and supporting our efforts to honor this fine building and to celebrate its particular place in the city.

> William L. Porter FAIA Boston

Here is a late entry to your "Cool Thinking" competition [November/December 2006]. Open the State House windows for an hour two times a day, so all that pent-up hot wind may escape and warm the streets of Boston. Also, make the Designers' Day at the State House a monthly event from December to March, so people may have hot coffee and hearty laughs with their elected officials.

> Anatol Zukerman NCARB Newton, Massachusetts

music, and public events at every major square along the way, would turn February

into Boston's festival month.

ArchitectureBoston again has raised another important aspect of urban life needing attention. It is now up to the BSA, BSLA, and other organizations to join with our community and public leaders to create opportunities for making Boston better by exploring it through a winter lens. Boston's winter welcome mat needs to come out and celebrate the days getting longer.

> Charles Redmon FAIA Cambridge, Massachusetts

[November/December 2006] reminds us that we can do better in our city. Even though Boston doesn't qualify as a"winter city" in Norman Pressman's book, we can certainly improve the shape of our public realm to accommodate our citizens during winter months. Jeff Stein's interview with Pressman yields many examples of simple strategies we might employ in Boston to make winter more enjoyable, tolerable, and healthy for both residents and visitors. Likewise, Justin Crane's "Winterscapes" article helps us to see winter optimistically through the artist's lens. Below are some thoughts for policy, action, and fun. Policy: What if the BRA insisted that

ArchitectureBoston's "Winter" issue

all projects prepare winter-use plans for the streetscape and public-realm aspects of each project's design as part of its normal review process, and then took their evaluation seriously? What if there existed a set of winter-design visions for every district in Boston to help guide new projects in addressing the impact of winter conditions? Does Boston have a Winter Sister City with which to exchange ideas, events, and strategies?

Action: What if the BSA, BSLA, and WalkBoston prepared a winter conditions map of Boston illustrating intolerable areas needing care and attention, and then through a series of charrettes proposed new solutions for winter use? What if Boston expanded First Night into three or four more events to counter winter's hold on the city? What if our design schools insisted that climate impacts should more strongly shape student projects?

Fun: Imagine looking forward to staying at home during February vacation! Offer three-for-one passes to the Children's Museum, Aquarium, Zoo New England, and Museum of Science coupled with three-for-one T passes during February school vacation week. Imagine four February Saturdays and Sundays with half-price sales along Newbury Street, Downtown Crossing, Tremont Street, and Washington Street (along the Green and Silver Lines). Two-for-one T passes and free hot chocolate on every block of each shopping street, coupled with festive winter lighting and art, food-tasting,

Corrections:

In the review of Builder's Guide to Cold Climates [November/December 2006, page 64], the author was incorrectly listed as Joseph Lstiburek PE. He is Joseph Lstiburek PhD, P.Eng.

The images illustrating the 2006 Rotch Travelling Scholarship [January/February 2007] should have been captioned: Top image, site plan, and diagram by Elizabeth Leidy. Additional renderings by Neil Strup.

The credit list for the Lulu Chow Wang Campus Center at Wellesley College [2006 Harleston Parker Medal, January/ February 2007] should have included Genesis Planners, Inc., the projectmanagement consultants.

The photographs of "Modern Modular" by Resolution 4: Architecture [Housing Design Award, January/February 2007] should have been captioned, clockwise from top left: The Dwell Home, Pittsboro, North Carolina; Camp Smull, Annapolis, Maryland; The Mountain Retreat, Kerhonkson, New York.

We want to hear from you. Letters may be e-mailed to epadjen@architects.org or sent to ArchitectureBoston, 52 Broad Street, Boston, MA 02109. Letters may be edited for clarity and length, and must include your name, address, and daytime telephone number. Length should not exceed 300 words.

BSA

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Alter Altar Table. 2006. Clifton Monteith.

Inspired by China

Contemporary Furnituremakers Explore Chinese Traditions Peabody Essex Museum, Salem, Massachusetts

October 28, 2006-March 4, 2007

Inspired by China, an exhibition of classical Chinese furniture and works by contemporary studio-furniture artists, is an exhibition about influence and originality, as well as individuality and shared cultural norms.

For the show, the Peabody Essex
Museum brought together a group of 22
furniture makers from the United States,
Canada, and China for a three-day, handson examination of the museum's collection
of historic Chinese furniture. The makers
were then asked to return to their studios to
design and build a piece of contemporary
furniture that would represent their
response to the Chinese antecedents.

The result is an exhibit that will open your eyes to the opulence and elegance of classical Chinese furniture as well as the creative and increasingly influential world of contemporary studio-furniture makers. The contemporary furniture is as varied as

you would expect from 22 individual artists working around the world, and the strength of the show is not so much in each of the pieces, but in the cultural connections, suggestions, and reinventions that can be seen in the ensemble. One of the most impressive examples is a reinterpretation of an 18th-century Chinese altar table in willow twigs by Clifton Monteith. Working in the quintessential, rough-and-tumble American tradition of rustic furniture, Monteith has created a table even richer and more complex than the original.

Architects often detour into furniture design, and even into furniture making. The two fields are closely related, and share concerns over form vs. function, originality vs. tradition, and attention vs. inattention to materials and details. Add to those issues a study of Eastern and Western cultures, and the result is *Inspired by China*.

Miguel Gómez-Ibáñez AIA, an architectturned-furnituremaker, is executive director of North Bennet Street School in Boston.

talk20

Various cities and dates www.talk20.org

Fight Club

MIT, various dates

http://mit.edu/~coryn/www/fightclub

Tired of standard show-and-tell architecture lectures? The two schools of architecture in Cambridge appear to be. Last fall saw the launch of events at each that challenge the typical format of the archi-lecture.

The first local installment of the international series talk20 took place at Harvard in November. Rather than devote an hour to one presenter, talk20 invited nine designers to each blister through 20 slides at 20 seconds a pop. The auditorium and seating arrangement were at odds with the stated mission of "an informal exchange of ideas," but the rapid-fire pace and beer helped. The week before, MIT hosted its

first round of Fight Club. The event, refereed by Sanford Kwinter, pitted veteran Yung Ho Chang against young Belgian upstart Alexander d'Hooghe,



duking it out over "fabric" versus "monumentality" in urban design — an exercise in good campy fun.

Both formats fell short of radicalizing the way architecture is presented — we've all seen similar variations before (Pecha Kucha is one example). Nevertheless, both are more than welcome additions to the Boston scene.

Coryn Kempster is a third-year student in the M.Arch. program at MIT.

Education and Practice Forum

Harvard Graduate School of Design

November 3-4, 2006

Quiz: What do Harry Cobb, Rafael Moneo, Jorge Silvetti, Peter Eisenman, and Mack Scogin have in common? If you were to say a predilection for long-winded soliloquies, you'd be four-fifths correct; Cobb is actually rather terse. The real answer is that they've each played a significant role in shaping architectural education today and were willing to sit on a panel and devote a weekend in the company of Toshiko Mori, Michael Hays, Jeff Kipnis, Gerry McCue, and Guy Nordenson to discuss the future of history and theory in design education.

When Cobb was a student at the GSD in 1941, theory was nonexistent; teaching was all about ideology. And if you wanted history, he said, you'd go over to the Fogg Museum, which was discouraged. Silvetti, younger than Cobb, said that when he went

to school, history and theory were checks on each other, determined entirely by ideology. "But history is like remorse," he warned, "it always comes back." Silvetti believes that architectural education suffers today because theory has become its own discipline.

Moneo disagreed, pointing out that discussions in the schools have moved on from theory to new turf: the relationship between representation and production. Scogin backed him up. "That's right — the ease of representation versus the realities of construction," he said. "There is a rush to use new materials and to build. The real difficulty is in finding time to reflect."

Perhaps, but Eisenman was getting antsy. Doctoral programs are "merchandizing theory!" he proclaimed. "The PhD programs are killing architecture schools!" He added, "My students love Photoshop more than building because that's how you win things. Plans are out! Theory is out! How do we get a student to focus? How can you punctuate architecture when you can't punctuate a sentence?"



Just as Michael Hays, the GSD's current theorymeister, got up to take a swing at him, Eisenman cried out, "Too many Howard Burnses and not enough practicing architects!" Howard Burns, an eminent historian of the Renaissance now teaching in Italy, would surely be bemused. But no more than practicing architects who, remembering Eisenman's dalliance with Deconstructivism and Derrida, might wonder if he has measured the new zeitgeist and moved on to "merchandizing practice."

Rachel Levitt, M.Arch. is a writer in Cambridge, Massachusetts.





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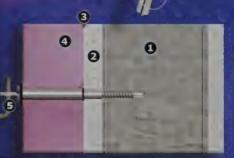
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Dense, **But Not Stupid**

The city: Somerville, Massachusetts, which borders Boston, Cambridge, and several smaller cities and towns. With a population of roughly 77,000 packed into four square miles, Somerville is the densest city in New England, and one of the four or five densest in the US.

The planning and community development director: Jim Kostaras, who teaches urban planning at Harvard and spent almost 18 years at the Boston Redevelopment Authority before being recruited by Somerville mayor Joe Curtatone in 2004. Jim runs the mayor's strategic planning office, created by merging the departments of inspectional services, housing, planning, development, and transportation and infrastructure. "The people who work here are like Swiss Army knives," Jim says. "Everything overlaps."

9:37 Jim joins a weekly meeting of department heads. He describes a dinner he attended last night for a statewide association of affordable housing groups, where there was lots of talk about the upcoming election, now less than two weeks away. A Democratic congressional victory, hoped for but by no means counted on, would reassure affordablehousing advocates about the future of government-sponsored block grants a relatively large source of funding.

10:09 Jim mentions the new North Point development on the Cambridge-Somerville line, which broke ground the week before: 2,000 residential units, office space, and a new T stop on the site of the old Lechmere station. The Somerville part of the project hasn't undergone permitting yet, "but it's going to be a big gateway project for us"part of a planned extension of the Green Line into Somerville. He passes around an illustrated brochure.

"Doesn't look much like the Lechmere station I grew up with," someone says.

"Yeah, they're going to import special pigeons."

10:12 Discussion of five open-space projects — three parks and two community gardens. Public recreation space is especially prized in this city where house lots are so small. Construction on all five projects — with designs by landscape architects Reed Hilderbrand, Chris Reed, and Antonia Bellalta — is scheduled to begin in the spring.

Jim: "OK, worst case --- what are the hurdles that could throw us off?"

The hurdles include hazardous-waste cleanup, funding that may run out before the work can be completed, and abutters who don't want to live next to a dog park.

11:00 An internal meeting about Union Square, which is being re-zoned as an artists' district - zoning that will also allow the area to be more densely developed. An upcoming public meeting will elicit support for, and ferret out opposition to, the project. One neighborhood group is concerned that new construction will obstruct the views from their houses. Phil, Jim's deputy director, says, "I think they're scared because of what's happened



with the Harvard-to-Central-Square corridor — they're scared of big buildings." Jim: "So it's worth spending time with them."

11:50 Another internal meeting, about a stem-cell conference co-sponsored by the mayor and a private research organization, scheduled for next week. Attendees are expected from Great Britain and Australia, as well as from all over the US. As prices in Cambridge escalate, Somerville would like to make it onto the international map as an alluring destination for biotech companies.

12:12 Jim mentions that the mayor is considering another symposium on strategic growth, building on one held two years ago. "So I'd like us to review the video we did back then. But we won't play that spaceage music again — that was awful." The group watches the video, as Jim reminds them of what the narration would cover: "Just as Boston's waterfront was the focus of development for the past decade, the next frontier is this northern corridor, including Somerville. Alexander Graham Bell did something here, I can't remember what. Streetcars and Marshmallow Fluff were invented here. Happy kids in sprinklers...

diversity of businesses ... edgy design and architecture ... the kind of people you'd want to hire would like living in Somerville."

1:10 Lunch in a Thai restaurant with two affordable-housing advocates. Speculation about elections: the one coming up, and the presidential one two years down the road. Would a Hillary-and-Bill ticket be possible?

1:30 The food comes. The real conversation starts. A complex of buildings in East Somerville has been bought from the archdiocese and will be developed to include a Haitian church and mixed-use housing, including transitional housing for mothers and children. The housing advocates are interested in "revitalization without gentrification": keeping a wide range of stakeholders, minimizing displacement.

Jim: "Where do you see us fitting in?" Advocate: "Where do you see yourselves fitting in?"

2:15 The check is quickly and evenly divided; no one pays for anyone else's lunch.

2:30 Back at City Hall, a meeting with the developer of Assembly Square, an enormous (eventually, 11 million square feet) project including an Ikea store. For years, the city and developers have been opposed by an impassioned, determined citizens' group that saw the project as undesirable big-box retail development. With the help of independent mediators, a compromise has just been reached. Jim, his staff, and the developer go over the schedule — it's tight - for design review, peer review, and zoning presentations. The developer shows sketches, rattling off key points:"... Ikea has been pulled back so there's a green park along the waterfront... Main Streets, cafés, a T stop...an exciting, vibrant place to live, work, and play."

3:46 The developer leaves. Jim's assistant tells him, "You gotta get over to DPW by 4, because that's when those guys go home."

4:02 The DPW building is locked. But Jim runs into a woman he knows who lets him in through a back door. Inside, George, the

head of inspectional services, and Paul, the city's expert on building codes, have stayed around for their meeting with Jim.

4:05 The Assembly Square plans are unrolled on a table. As melodies from *Die Fledermaus* emanate from George's computer, Jim outlines an aggressive schedule for the project: a presentation to the planning board in three weeks, and a vote on the zoning two weeks after that.

4:10 Paul points out that utility permitting will take a while. "It's going to take a lot to feed Ikea alone — new streets, fire access, service access, street lighting —"

"The parcel doesn't really exist yet," George says. "It's being created along with the project."

"We've been so preoccupied with zoning we haven't had a chance yet to look at this stuff," Jim says. "Send us a bulleted memo on the site work, and let's get going."

4:17 A long, heartfelt discussion of building codes and the volume of information local inspectors and building commissioners





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need to master in order to be certified. George's computer plays Tales from the Vienna Woods.

4:29 "Are there other things we should be flagging?" Jim asks.

George: "Environmental stuff. There was a taxi company on the site, so there's going to be stuff."

Jim: "Right, so we assume it's contaminated. It'll have to go through state environmental review."

"Well, Rome wasn't built in a day," Paul says. "And neither was the John Hancock."

4:45 A run-down of other projects currently being dealt with by inspectional services. Mention is made of a large biotech company, which is siting a distribution and storage facility in Somerville - partly because the permitting process moved so attractively fast.

Jim: "Great. Let's have a ribbon-cutting. Let's get the mayor."

6:20 A reception at Brickbottom Studios to showcase winners of an ideas competition

co-sponsored by the mayor's office and the Boston Society of Architects. Brickbottom, a long-established live-and-work building for artists, currently sits alone in a wasteland of warehouses and parking lots. Entrants were invited to broadly conceptualize a new "Brickbottom district." Jim makes some opening remarks to an audience of artists sitting in the lobby on folding chairs. "We solicited from all over the world, 70 entrants submitted boards, these were blind entries - and lo and behold, one of the four winners turned out to be from Somerville."

6:50 One of the competition winners is midway through his presentation at the front of the room. At the back, a minor commotion: the mayor has arrived, beautifully groomed, sharply dressed. A lot of whispering among his aides - should they introduce him before the next winner gets up to speak, or wait for all the speakers to finish? The mayor signals that there's no rush, and stands at the back drinking Poland Spring while the competition winner talks on about infrastructure and makes comparisons to Venice and Rotterdam. 7:09 The mayor's people are twitching and making signals to the designer, who nods and keeps talking.

7:31 Jim introduces the mayor, who talks about how exciting it is to see people beginning to think about the future of this part of Somerville. "And I want to invite your engagement. Let's work together, right from the beginning. I don't want to do this in a vacuum."

7:40 Jim gets up again and thanks everyone who participated in the competition. "This is the first stage. We'd like to end up with a strategic development plan for next June, a real plan of action. We know it's ambitious. Stay tuned." ■

Joan Wickersham is a writer in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Editor's note: Just before this issue went to press, Jim Kostaras resigned from his position in order to spend more time teaching, writing, and consulting.





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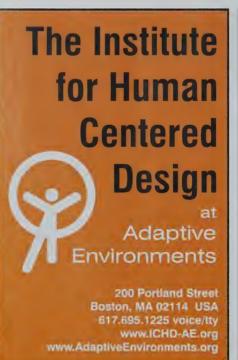
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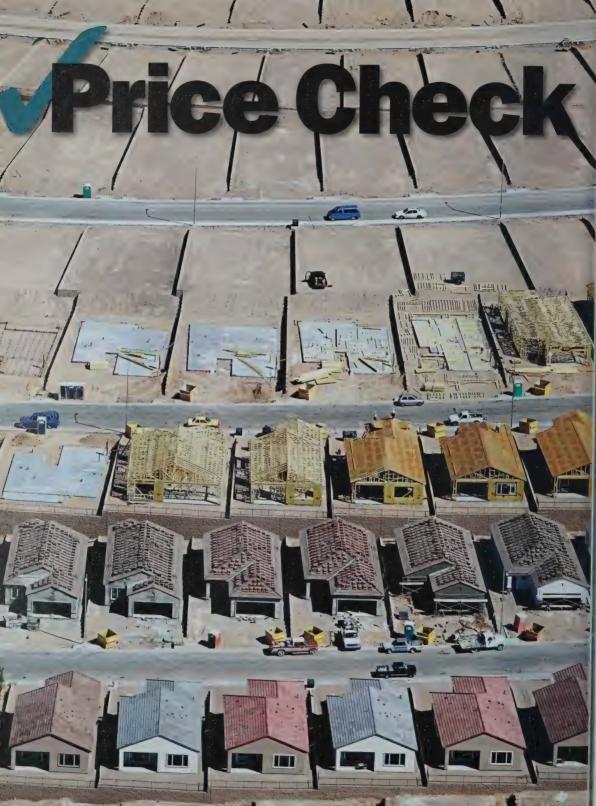
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Charles Grigsby is senior vice president of the Massachusetts Life Insurance Community Investment Initiative (The Life Initiative) and was previously director of the City of Boston's department of neighborhood development.

David Luberoff is executive director of the Rappaport Institute for Greater Boston at Harvard University.

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Elizabeth Padjen FAIA is the editor of *ArchitectureBoston*.

Richard Peiser is the Michael D. Spear Professor of Real Estate Development at the Harvard Graduate School of Design.

Left: Production houses, Las Vegas, 2005.

Elizabeth Padjen: In just the last year, this region has seen a shift in the housing market — declining prices and stale inventory. This has happened despite the general recognition that affordability is still a significant dilemma for the Boston area. Let's start by placing the current market condition in the larger context of housing trends in this region.

Barry Bluestone: Despite the recent price declines, this is still a very expensive market. We're beginning to understand that housing prices drive economic development, particularly in the most expensive metro areas in the country. In a recent study, I found that 26 of the 31 most expensive regions lost population over the last five years, and a large number of those also lost jobs. We've heard over and over that young couples have given up on the housing market here, and are moving out of Massachusetts, sometimes into New Hampshire or Rhode Island, and frequently out of the New England region altogether to areas where the cost of living is lower. The problem is we are losing the young people—the young workforce on whom any economy is based.

Edward Moscovitch: If you look at individual metropolitan areas across the country, almost without exception, the rate of employment growth is very tightly related to the rate of housing growth. It's not exactly clear where causation lies, but in some sense it doesn't matter, because what it suggests is that an area like ours, which is absolutely dedicated to preventing the construction of housing, almost certainly prevents the development of additional jobs.

David Luberoff: It's interesting that there have been several recent studies of the economics of housing in this region, and all of them came to essentially the same conclusion. And economists are not a group that's known for consensus.

What's really striking is that this is a dramatic yet very simple supply-and-demand issue. We had a tremendous housing recession in the late '80s and

early '90s. As prices came back in the '90s, the normal response in any market should have been the construction of more housing. Yet the number of permits was roughly stagnant. Normally, when demand goes up, supply is supposed to go up. But we didn't increase supply — for a variety of reasons that I'm sure we'll talk about — and consequently, housing prices went through the roof. We seem to be reaching a tipping point somewhat akin to the Yogi Berra observation — a place that's so crowded, no one goes there anymore.

Charles Grigsby: There's another phenomenon that has occurred in the last decade or so that has had an enormous influence on the situation. And that is the availability of capital, which has driven development in areas of the city that were previously considered unlivable. As money sought to escape the securities market, it sought refuge in real estate. And that abundance of capital influenced what was developed — Boston saw the conversion of commercial properties to residential uses in places like the Leather District, and Albany Street and Harrison Avenue in the South End. Interestingly, capital also drove design, in that it influenced the upscale character of these developments and it drove the development of loft space. I don't think anyone would have previously imagined a large demand for loft space in Boston.

Richard Peiser: But as you suggest, that capital has all been invested in luxury housing, or at least, upscale housing. The question for us now is, what does the recent drop in prices mean? Prices in some areas might be down 20 percent or more, but that's after a big run-up. So in one sense, prices are just rolling back to what are still very high prices. I don't see much evidence of a significant return to affordable prices or a significant increase in the supply of affordable housing. The dip in prices has not been a cause of much optimism for creating more affordability.

Barry Bluestone: The major problem in eastern Massachusetts is in a particular

segment: starter homes. If you look at the housing stock that was built right after World War II under the GI Bill, you find homes that people could buy with a very low down-payment and veterans' or FHA mortgages. These were typically twobedroom, one-bath homes on slab foundations. But the economics doesn't allow that any more. And much of the economics is driven by zoning. If the minimum lot size is an acre, it's very hard to put a two-bedroom slab house on that lot, because the land itself is so expensive.

David Luberoff: What constitutes starter housing in other regions?

Richard Peiser: In Orange County, California, which is also an expensive market, the standard starter houses are still outrageously expensive by most standards -\$300,000 — but you can find them in developments with densities of eight to 14 units per acre. And 12 to 14 single-family units per acre gets the price down about as low as you can get it. Those are densities that aren't allowed anywhere in Massachusetts.

Charles Grigsby: Another factor that we have to keep in mind is the unintended negative consequences of federal government involvement in housing—despite the fact most of us would want to encourage federal involvement. For example, if there is federal money in a housing project, you are not allowed to sell your unit to your brother or your aunt, the way that house might have been sold 50 years ago, when one immigrant came to this country, bought a house, then later sold it to the next person from his family. Fair-market housing requires you to advertise broadly and sell to whomever shows up. That's great in many ways, but it's killing off a natural phenomenon, family accumulation of wealth through housing.

Another perhaps more significant factor is that Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac have oversold the "American Dream." In their

view, every home has to be a free-standing, single-family house, with a picket fence and a yard and a driveway. When you say to someone from Fannie Mae, "What about co-ops?" you get a glazed-over stare. So we have been locked into a definition of a starter house that precludes other models of affordable housing.

Barry Bluestone: The irony is that the Boston/Cambridge area around the turn of the 20th-century offered a spectacular model for starter housing in an era that saw a large immigrant population: the triple-decker. You could come to America, work hard, and be able to buy a tripledecker, which offered two rental units for other immigrant families or relatives. Today we have similar levels of immigration, but you can't build a triple-decker, in part because of building codes and in part because of zoning.

Edward Moscovitch: The average house in eastern Massachusetts is built on a lot roughly equal to the size of the playing field of Gillette Stadium - if you include the end zones. What is really bizarre is that if you have two otherwise identical houses, with the first on a one-acre lot and the second on a twoacre lot, the house with the extra land will command a price only \$10,000 or \$15,000 higher. In other words, home buyers don't put much value on larger lot size — which is especially interesting in that you would have thought that this pattern of suburban development, which is so very land-intense, was driven by consumer preference. But my studies suggest that's not true.

Richard Peiser: How much of that do you think is driven by NIMBYism [not in my backyard] and community preferences for large-lot zoning?

Edward Moscovitch: All of it. And the preference for large-lot zoning is an interesting example of what economists

would call "the fallacy of composition." Each community thinks it can preserve its character by limiting construction of housing through large-lot zoning, which will push development somewhere else. But when every community does the same thing, you start to see wider negative effects: high prices that drive out the town's teachers and police officers and young people, despoiling of the environment, more reliance on cars, and loss of community.

Richard Peiser: There's another very important factor that plays into housing costs. Since moving from California to Massachusetts nine years ago, I have been astonished that there are very few productionhousing builders here. The subdivisions here are tiny by comparison to the fast-growing areas of the country. It is rare to find one that has more than 100 houses; it would be rare in California to find a subdivision that has fewer than 200 to 300 houses. This region is missing out on the economies of scale that production housing provides.

Edward Moscovitch: It's tempting to think that if we could just stop harassing builders and allow them to build homes, we could solve much, if not quite all, of our housing problem without massive subsidies. But that doesn't actually address the problem completely.

Barry Bluestone: Part of the problem has been the run-up in construction materials costs and in labor costs. That's gone up a little faster here in Massachusetts than it has nationwide. Community development corporations (CDCs) here will tell you that even if they were given the land free, it would still be very difficult to build a small, threebedroom home for much less than \$200,000 to \$225,000

Edward Moscovitch: That's less than half the current average cost of a house in this area.

🗸 In the 25 largest metro areas in the United States, people holding important community infrastructure jobs police officers, teachers, nurses — can afford homes in less than one-half of the census tracts. (Consus tracts are physically defined districts with populations between 2,500 and 8,000.)

In Boston, the share of census tracts affordable to teachers is 9.3 percent; to police officers: 9.3 percent; to nurses: 3.4 percent; and to retail sales professionals: 0 percent.

(Source: National Association of Homebuilders)

This region is missing out on the economies of scale that production housing provides.

- Richard Peiser



Boston's affordable past: South Boston.

David Luberoff: But it's still about twice the cost in other parts of the country. For whatever reason, it's a lot more expensive to build here.

Edward Moscovitch: And vet the 2005 National Building Cost Manual, which has extensive detail on all of the elements that go into building a house, puts the actual construction cost of a house in Massachusetts at about 16 percent higher than the national average. It's a stunning number, not because it's so high, but because it's so much lower than most of us would guess. It suggests that the problem isn't just construction cost; it's all the associated costs.

David Luberoff: I've had recent conversations with housing developers that would support that. Maybe the soft costs drive the problem more than we think - nobody can quite get their arms around them.

Barry Bluestone: Staff costs and labor costs are a little bit higher here because we pay higher wages in Massachusetts. But we get hit very hard on land costs because of zoning restrictions and on soft costs because of regulations.

Charles Grigsby: We're also seeing high costs associated with the time required to assemble capital. A CDC typically

spends three years, maybe more, to assemble the capital to do even a small affordable-housing project. And that means carrying the staff, land, acquisition, and design costs - all the predevelopment costs — until they finally get that letter from the state saying that the low-income housing tax credits are available to them, and they can start next year. So the time required to assemble the capital for affordable housing is very different from the time required, say, for a non-controversial condo conversion someplace on Beacon Hill or in the Back Bay. Those developers can assemble capital and start right away.

It's the awareness of this problem that is leading to the development of something called the Workforce Housing Equity Fund, which will address the gap between the pool of funds available for affordable housing and the luxuryhousing equity developers. This fund is being developed by the Conservation Law Foundation Ventures, Inc. The intention is to provide a pool of equity for workforce housing and provide funding decisions within 90 days. The zoning and siting problems will still exist, of course, but the assumption is that cutting down three years of capital assembly will reduce costs and lower the price of the product.

Elizabeth Padjen: Is there a precise definition of "workforce housing"? Is it different from affordable housing?

Charles Grigsby: It refers to housing for people earning between 120 to 150 percent of the area median income — a nurse's aide, for example, or a policeman.

Barry Bluestone: The technical definition of affordable housing is housing that a family earning 80 percent or less of the area median income can afford meaning that family doesn't have to spend more than about 30 percent of its income to pay the carrying costs or

Edward Moscovitch: What does that mean in Boston?

Charles Grigsby: For a family of four in Boston in 2006, the median income was \$82,000; just for the sake of comparison, in Springfield, it was \$62,900. So, earning 80 percent of the Boston area median income means an income of \$65,600. Spending 30 percent of their income on housing means that family can afford to purchase a home for \$210,000.

Edward Moscovitch: And what percentage of our houses sell for that? Close to zero.

- The estimated one-year impacts of building 100 single-family homes in a typical US metropolitan area include; \$16 million in local income; \$1.9 million in taxes and other revenue for local governments; and 284 local jobs.
- The estimated one-year impacts of building 100 multifamily units in the typical US metropolitan area include: 57 million in local income; \$710,000 in taxes and other revenue for local governments; and 133 local jobs.

(Source: National Association of Homebuilders)

Elizabeth Padjen: And who's actually spending only 30 percent of their income on housing? Isn't the number in fact more than that?

Barry Bluestone: We have quite a number of renters paying much more than that. Approximately one quarter of renters in Greater Boston spend more than 50 percent of their income on housing alone, which means that they have to scrimp on everything else—often including food.

We can talk about the technical definition of affordable, but we're also talking about housing that's affordable in a more general sense. Consider the young working family — those are the ones that

Approximately one quarter of renters in Greater Boston spend more than 50 percent of their income on housing.

- Barry Bluestone



Boston's affordable past: Jamaica Plain.

we're all most worried about losing here in Massachusetts. They may be considerably above 80 percent of the area median income, but they still can't find a home here that allows them to spend as little as 30 percent of their income on housing. Or if they do find such a home, they know they can get that plus another 50 percent more housing in Raleigh-Durham or Chapel Hill. If you look at total cost, not just housing, for a young family of four to live in Greater Boston, you're looking at \$64,600 for a very basic budget. We're not talking about fancy living; this will just cover housing, transportation, healthcare, childcare, and so forth. To have an equivalent standard of living in Raleigh-Durham or Chapel Hill would require only \$44,000.

Richard Peiser: What explains that?

Barry Bluestone: In addition to much higher housing costs, we have much higher healthcare costs, because we do so much of it through teaching hospitals, very high childcare costs, and high energy costs. We're actually a little cheaper on transportation.

What does that mean in terms of business and workers? For a company like Fidelity, let's say the average cost of one of its staff is \$64,000. Fidelity can move down to North Carolina and reduce that employee's cost to \$54,000, which from the employee's point of view ends up feeling like a \$10,000 raise because they only have to spend \$44,000 for an equivalent standard of living. When you have those kinds of large cost differentials, it makes sense for companies to move out, and it makes sense for the workers to go with them. That is the problem we're facing.

One anecdote is worth a million statistics: on a recent flight, I sat next to a young woman, a resident pediatric dental surgeon at Massachusetts General Hospital. She and her husband have been in Boston for three years and love it they go skiing and kayaking, they enjoy the Museum of Fine Arts and the Symphony. Without any prompting, she said, "Of course, my husband and I are now starting to look for work in other parts of the country - North Carolina, Oregon, Arizona." And when I asked why, she said they were thinking about having kids and don't believe they can find the kind of housing they would want in a good school district. "We'd love to stay here," she said, "but we can't afford it." She's a pediatric dental surgeon, and I presume her husband's a professional as well. So even at that income level, even though they could find housing that would be in some sense affordable, the gap between what they can buy here and what they can buy elsewhere is so enormous that they're willing to give up some of the amenities to move somewhere else.

Richard Peiser: I have some good news for you — North Carolina is becoming less of a threat. I was there recently and can report that prices around Chapel Hill have gone up more than 50 percent in the last couple of years. But even so, when you look at the landscape around Raleigh-Durham, you see very large tracts of undeveloped, presumably unincorporated land. This supply of developable land helps to increase the amount of affordable housing. It suggests that another factor affecting housing in Massachusetts is home rule and the sheer politics of local control.

David Luberoff: I think your instinct is right. My mother lives in North Carolina, where counties have much more power than they do here. City and town governments tend to be more responsive to homeowners, which means they're less likely to be responsive to developers.

Massachusetts of course has taken on the home-rule issue with Chapter 40B, our

Nationwide, the number of second homes increased by 1,2 million units, or 22 percent, between 1995 and 2005.

Accounting for nearly two-thirds of household growth in 1995–2005, minorities contributed 49 percent of the 12.5 million rise in homeowners over the decade.

⁽Source: Joint Center for Housing Studies, Harvard University)

affordable housing program, which is despised in suburban communities. Under that program, if you include long-term affordability restrictions on 25 percent of the units in a multi-family development, you can essentially get the state to let you overrule local zoning.

Richard Peiser: It may be unpopular, but it's the single most effective housing program that I've seen anywhere in the country.

Charles Grigsby: The critical thing to remember about 40B is that it's a suburban solution. The cities are more constrained — ironically, the best they can hope for is a small recession in which people are doing badly. A downturn allows cities to acquire tax-title properties, which they can then develop into affordable housing. The city of Boston has been reasonably successful at this, and now most of its inventory of taxheld properties has been directed toward housing production.

David Luberoff: Mayor Menino really drove that program, and it's true, the city has done an incredible job. But you're right — 40B is directed at suburban homeowners who worry that the development you put up in the pretty field next door is going to make their life worse and drive down their property values. But they're also pretty rational. They say that each new house with kids in it is going to put \$10,000 worth of demands on their school system, and it's only going to pay \$5,000 in taxes. Why would they want to allow something that's going to make their schools worse and their taxes go up? So the next step was the work that Barry and his colleagues did on Chapter 40R and 40S to address those fears and offer incentives.

Barry Bluestone: We have a natural experiment going on right now, because seven communities in Massachusetts have already passed 40R districts since the law



Boston's affordable past: East Boston.

was passed in 2005, and we have another 30 that are looking actively at doing that. Chapter 40R allows a community to take a piece of land near the town center or a transit node, or even an abandoned or underutilized property, and rezone it with an overlay district to permit as-ofright development of denser housing—a minimum of eight units of single-family or 20 units of multi-family per acre. In return, the state gives the community certain financial benefits: some funds for simply passing an overlay district and another \$3,000 or so for each permit pulled, to encourage the town not only to do the zoning but also to find a developer. About six months later, we were able to pass a second bill, Chapter 40S, which essentially holds communities harmless against school costs that would go beyond what the town or city could pay. Together Chapter 40R and 40S are a complement to 40B, which is a big, powerful stick; 40R and 40S are potentially powerful carrots. We hope they're powerful enough. The intention is to find a way to increase production and to encourage denser, smart-growth housing in the right locations, with a minimum of 20 percent affordable units.

Elizabeth Padjen: How long does the school funding run?

Barry Bluestone: Forever. We call it a school cost insurance program. It funds the difference between what the town would pay to educate each new kid and the portion of that cost covered by the additional property tax paid on the new units of housing.

David Luberoff: Once you set up one of these districts, it's as-of-right zoning, so the locals have to give up a fair amount of control. I think they're still very scared of this. So far, it looks like they've been establishing districts in areas that are less controversial or less sensitive.

Richard Pelser: You're hitting on one of the most critical differences between hardto-build regions such as the Boston area and the South and Southwest, where new housing costs a fraction of what it does here, and that is as-of-right zoning. Where I grew up in Texas, it was your God-given right to develop your property exactly as you wanted - you didn't have any of the discretionary approval processes that are pretty much taken for granted here. The difficulty with discretionary approvals is that every time a developer needs to go back and face a public hearing, the developer is facing more costs and greater uncertainty. And the process itself automatically reinforces the power of the

New single-family home construction in the Greater Boston metropolitan area is consuming about twice as much land as existing single-family housing, and half of the region's 30,387 recent new single-family homes were built on lots of nearly an acre or larger.

(Source: Massachusetts Housing Partnership and the MIT Center for Real Estate)

NIMBYs, which is why we almost always end up with the lowest common denominator in terms of density and the largest, most expensive houses.

David Luberoff: We're seeing another related difference in regions such as Texas and the Southwest, which is the development of private communities — what we might call gated communities. In such places, the owners' association not only provides a host of basic services, but it also tightly regulates what you can do with your property. Interestingly, this also means that the private community association can sell zoning rights — something that local governments technically are not allowed to do.

Richard Peiser: That's one system. In California, you also see development rights negotiated through a development agreement with a community. It can take years to negotiate, but once it's done, you don't have to go back for approvals every time. I think it is the norm, not the exception, for both small and large

builders in the Southwest and even the Midwest to expect as-of-right zoning.

Elizabeth Padjen: We've been talking about supply and demand, which comes down to the need to increase housing production in this state. Do you have a sense of how increased production actually affects prices?

Barry Bluestone: What is surprising is that you only need to have a marginal increase in the number of units of housing of an appropriate type to have a fairly significant impact on housing prices. The normal vacancy rate for single-family homes is somewhere between 1.5 and 2 percent, meaning that if 1.5 to 2 percent of the housing stock is available for purchase, prices will rise at not much more than normal inflation. However, as the amount of housing available for purchase drops below that level, you begin to get a powerful seller's market. That is, buyers are in a musical-chairs game trying to buy homes and they bid up prices, even beyond the sellers' asking prices — that's the

situation we had here a few years ago. Boston dropped down to a 0.6 percent vacancy rate during that period. But when you get up to somewhere around a 4 percent vacancy rate, prices begin to fall fairly rapidly, particularly if that condition lasts for more than a year. So increasing the available housing from 2 percent of the total housing stock, adding just a halfpercent more housing, can cause housing prices to rise much more slowly and have a substantial effect on stabilizing the market. Today, the vacancy rate in Greater Boston is approaching 2 percent and the result has been a modest decline in average prices.

Elizabeth Padjen: And what is the actual number of units that would have to be built in this state to substantially solve our affordability problem?

Barry Bluestone: The best estimate is that we would need somewhere around 30,000 units over the next 10 years. But the problem is that this is in addition to normal annual production, which is about 15,000 to 18,000 units.



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Elizabeth Padjen: There's another piece of the housing economics puzzle that we haven't addressed, and that's the construction industry itself. In this state, many of the builders are small businesses. I'm not sure what construction represents in terms of the state's overall economy, but I imagine it's significant. In some towns, in regions like Cape Cod, it's an enormous driver.

David Luberoff: And when people think their home values are going up, they're more likely to take out home-equity loans to renovate and expand their homes. But when values decline, people are more cautious, which means that, at least in the short term, contractors will have less work building new houses and less work renovating existing ones.

Barry Bluestone: This is why the government is very worried about a housing bubble. When there is a glut of housing out there, people stop building. That means you lay off architects and engineers and

carpenters and plumbers and electricians. But beyond that, as David suggested, if people see their housing values going down, they feel poor, and spend less. One of the things that the Federal Reserve Bank has been worried about is that if the housing bubble bursts in enough places around the country, it could actually trigger an economic recession through this declining wealth effect.

Elizabeth Padjen: At the same time, at the time of this discussion, we've seen a runup in the stock market — there's a lot of wealth out there.

Charles Grigsby: There's a lot of cash sloshing around in the market, and a lot of it is starting to head into commercial real estate. That is a solid product. People are backing away from residential development because there's so much inventory right now. I sit on the board of a bank that has seen increases in applications for commercial development, while the applications for residential development have shrunk. It's

just a question of where people can turn their money the fastest. And it has nothing to do with anybody's plan or policy.

Richard Peiser: Five years ago we had exactly the opposite condition. Capital markets today are very different from what they were in the late '80s, early '90s. There is more money available for equity for everything, including all forms of real estate, than we've seen in decades. I agree that we're seeing a lot more money flowing into commercial real estate right now, partly because there was a huge oversupply and very depressed prices and rents. Locally, the growth of the Massachusetts economy has finally eaten up a lot of the vacant space, so rents, which were down in the mid-\$20s and low-\$30s for office space, have come back to the low \$50s per square foot — and that's enough to generate interest in new buildings. We'll eventually see that same cycle in residential development.

Elizabeth Padjen: The venture capital industry has so much money that people

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People are backing away from residential development right now. It's a question of where they can turn their money the fastest.

- Charles Grigsby

are running around looking for a place to put it or committing to deals they might have passed over a few years ago. Is there a similar situation in the real estate industry?

Charles Grigsby: No. The phenomenon we're seeing in venture capital is that they're actually starting to give money back to their investors. Firms are saying there's so much money chasing so few deals, that they can't get a 20-percent annual return

and so they might as well give it back to you. It's a completely new phenomenon.

Richard Peiser: Real estate has some similarities - a lot of money looking for deals - but the difference is that the size of the real estate market is many times that of the venture capital market.

Charles Grigsby: We're also seeing larger players in real estate — investment trusts and funds that are \$10-billion entities.

David Luberoff: There's a paradox — the office market in Boston is essentially one increasingly dominated by large national players, while the players in the residential market in this region tend be very local and relatively small. Why would one sector have gone national and the other staved local?

Richard Peiser: It's a question of scale. In multi-family development, we are actually seeing more of the national players in this region now. We don't see them participating in the single-family market because it doesn't pay for them to build 50-home communities. which they would consider very small.

David Luberoff: And by our standards, a 50-home single-family project would be enormous.

Barry Bluestone: What comes across in this conversation is the way housing ripples throughout the economy. Think about it in terms of its role in economic development. Think about it in its role of providing families with a stock of wealth. Think about how housing prices contribute to sprawl. Think about the tax system and, in this state, the dependence upon property tax. The kinds of housing we build and where we build it all have to do with such a wide, complex array of factors that different conditions in different parts of the country lead to very different housing markets. And here in Massachusetts, we now happen to have what seems to be a perfect storm of a tax system, a home-rule system, and a subsidy system — all of which have conspired to give us a serious housing problem.



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TIME IS ON YOUR SIDE

Architects are fond of telling their clients, "Good design costs no more." That's sometimes even true. Good design certainly costs no more than the energetic excess that often characterizes some of the most egregious design. And it costs no more than the price paid by unfortunate owners who are stuck with apathetic buildings that are shoddily detailed, that do not address their needs, and that fail to add a measure of delight to their lives.

But in fact, good design does exact a price: time. It takes time to be thoughtful—to develop, consider, and execute choices.

The three projects that follow represent residential work on a budget: one new house, one renovation, one loft. Each is an elegant solution, in both the mathematic and the aesthetic sense of the phrase, that belies its hardscrabble origins. What they have in common is relatively inexpensive property acquisition costs, inventive use of inexpensive materials, and copious amounts of sweat equity — in short, an investment of time.

The loft project ("Z-Box") is a simple but clever response to the dilemma of daily life when multiple creatures (husband, wife, baby, dogs) occupy an openplan space. The owners contributed most of the labor in what designer Dan Hisel describes as "a concentration

of efforts to achieve the most impact with the least amount of effort and expense."

The house projects were designed by architectowners who acted as their own general contractors and, frequently, laborers. The Newell Street house took three years to build; S House took two. The properties presented some daunting challenges: The original S House cottage was plagued by mold, asbestos, and structural issues. The soil conditions at the Newell Street lot were so poor that an existing house (now demolished) was structurally unsound, and the new building required concrete caissons (at a cost of \$80,000). In each case, the owners took an entrepreneurial approach to real estate. The gains from the sale of an appreciated condo were applied to Newell Street; the appreciated value of the renovated S House allowed a second mortgage to further improve the building and led to the acquisition of an adjacent lot.

Of course, not everyone who would like to build on a budget can follow these prescriptions exactly. But the larger lessons are still applicable. Good design takes time. Time is money. And as architect Elizabeth Gibb observes, "The biggest cost saving I found is that if you have the time, you can get the best price."

- Elizabeth S. Padjen FAIA





NEWELL STREET RESIDENCE, 2004

Cambridge, Massachusetts

Architect: Elizabeth A. Gibb, Architect www.elizabethgibbarchitect.com

The lessons of this new 4,011-square-foot two-family house, built at a cost of \$187/sf, include the value of sweat equity and taking time to do research. Architect-owner Elizabeth Gibb researched tax records to find the property, and later acted as her own contractor and, on occasion, laborer. She also spent time finding the best possible prices on materials. Some were bought wholesale; others were bought abroad, allowing her to take advantage of exchange rates and surprisingly low shipping costs. Friends and family pitched in; Gibb's father fabricated the stair and railings. Other savings come from the combined simplicity of form and material. The house was designed with living costs in mind: the second unit, a 600-square-foot studio apartment, currently serves as rent-free office space and can be converted to a rental.











S HOUSE (Clifton Street Condominiums), 2004

Cambridge, Massachusetts

Architect: Uni Architecture www.uni-a.com

This 1,000-square-foot renovation of a rundown, 19th-century worker's house was accomplished with a construction budget of \$50,000. The tight budget imposed a pragmatic functionalism on the design, which combined a low-cost minimalist aesthetic with innovative uses of low-cost materials. (Architect/owners Chaewon Kim and Beat Schenk also contributed sweat equity and multiple trips to Home Depot.) CorTen corrugated steel (\$2/sf versus \$5/sf for typical wood shingles) now wraps the sidewalls and roof. The rear end wall is made of translucent polycarbonate siding (\$3/sf), which admits daylight and glows at night. Walls are painted, without trim or moldings. The kitchen countertop was first made of plastic cutting-board sheets, although the appraised value after construction permitted a second mortgage and funds for kitchen upgrades and an addition. The designers have employed similar restraint in their newly constructed "XS House" next door.









Z-BOX, 2004

Lynn, Massachusetts Designer: Dan Hisel Design www.danhiseldesign.com

Built for Robert Fathman (the well-known chef at the Boston restaurant Azure) and his wife, Janis Fathman (a grade-school teacher), the Z-Box is an efficient, compact, free-standing cube (12-by-12-by-10-foot high) built inside a previously renovated 1,400-square-foot loft. Built at a cost of \$18,000, the box provides a wood-lined sleeping space (Zzzz...hence, Z-Box) and shelving, closets, and dog beds cut from the translucent walls. To help save money, the owners contributed much of the labor on the project; other savings were achieved with the use of simple materials. The box has contributed to the loft's flexibility by separating the public spaces of the living and dining room from the sleeping space and from what was once a painting studio and is now a baby's room.







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There is a house in law Orleans

WHAT BOSTON CAN LEARN FROM THE BIG EASY

By Willy Sclarsic AIA

There is a house in New Orleans
They call the house of the rising sum
And it survived the ruin of many others
And God I know, I tried to buy one.

In August 2005, the City of New Orleans was struck by Hurricane Katrina and the associated storm surge from Lake Pontchartrain. Despite the extensive flooding that devastated some of the city's poorest districts, surprisingly large areas of the city suffered little damage. And therein lies a tale of simple economics.

The undamaged properties included many of the city's office and industrial buildings, which were left essentially unharmed because of their location and also because many had been built to higher standards than had many of the residential properties. This meant that many jobs survived as well, creating a surge of displaced middle-income residents who were able to stay in the city and who suddenly entered the real estate rental market. However, enough middle-income multifamily housing was damaged or left without



utility or infrastructure services to create an immediate reduction in housing supply and therefore a corresponding inability to meet the new demand. Ironically, the real estate consequence of Katrina was an overnight change in local market economics that resulted in boom conditions for the remaining undamaged residential real estate.

From an investor's point of view, the New Orleans market area —the region around Lake Pontchartrain as far as Baton Rouge suddenly presented ideal multifamily rental conditions: no vacancies; long waiting lists; no rent concessions; and, inevitably, increased rents. Moreover, investors felt reassured that because the undamaged real estate had survived Katrina, it could therefore survive anything. Property values immediately increased significantly, reaffirming a basic economic principle of supply and demand: reduced supply leads to higher rents.

Now the only thing a gambler needs Is a suitcase full of signed leases And the only time he's satisfied Is when all his units are full.

However, even in this highly inflated rental environment, multifamily residential rents were still significantly lower than multifamily rents in Massachusetts. Post-Katrina inflated rents for new Class A multifamily apartments ranged from \$1.00 to \$1.50 per square foot per month (i.e., an 850-square-foot unit would rent for \$850 to \$1,275 per month) compared to similar new class A properties in Massachusetts that rent from \$2.50 to

\$3.50 per square foot per month (\$2,125 to \$2,975 per month). Rents comparable to the New Orleans market can be found throughout the Sun Belt, from Georgia to Arizona, and in much of the Midwest. In many cases, in addition to the price advantage, Southern rentals include more amenities, such as clubhouses, multiple pools, large fitness centers, media and Internet centers, better finishes, washers and dryers within the units, and high ceilings. Condominium and single-family home prices reflect similar regional differences. In 2006, median condo prices were \$300,000 in Boston; \$116,000 in Atlanta; and \$112,000 in Dallas (\$224,000 for the US as a whole). Median single-family prices were \$412,000 in Boston; \$168,000 in Atlanta; and \$146,000 in Dallas (\$218,000 for the US as a whole). The attraction of such affordable housing to young individuals and families and to their employers is obvious and is part of the fuel that sustains the growth of the Sun Belt.

Oh, mother tell your children Not to do what I have done Spend your life in affordable luxury In the land of the rising sun.

In much of the US, housing is affordable to middle-income people. Why is it so much less expensive than in Massachusetts and other high-cost areas of the US? After all, it's the same country! The costs of a car, television, restaurant meal, gasoline, and most other products and services are fairly standard throughout the US. There are some regional difference in all prices, but nowhere near the regional differences in housing prices. What causes this aberrant condition in Massachusetts? What conditions exist in other regions that lead to affordability?

The most obvious characteristic of regions with an abundance of affordable housing is that they welcome growth. This pro-growth attitude leads to:

- Pre-planned and pre-zoned land: developers can expect to know the size and type of project that will be permitted before they purchase property
- Economies of scale due to higher permitted densities
- Lower costs to hold land during a much shorter permitting and approval process
- Lower legal and other fees due to a shorter and less contentious permitting process
- Lower development costs from a lack of municipal exactions, mitigations, and mandated below-cost units that must be subsidized by the market-rate units in the project
- Lower costs due to less aggressive state building, fire, and accessibility codes
- Lower carrying and marketing costs because of much shorter absorption times due to higher demand from steady population growth

Another obvious factor contributing to more affordable housing is lower construction costs. Construction costs are by far the biggest component of the development pro-forma and many of the other costs are pegged to construction costs. The causes of regional differences in construction prices (including transportation, energy, and labor costs) are complex and multilayered, but in any case unlikely to be easily or quickly resolved through public policy. Regions such as ours that are burdened with expensive housing need to find other, more immediate solutions.

Unless housing in Massachusetts becomes more affordable for middle-income people, the state faces the serious risk of losing corporations and workers — notwithstanding the region's architectural and cultural charms. We lost the shoe and textile industries in the last century; we can lose the financial services, high-tech, and biomedical industries in this one. The economic lessons are obvious to anyone who has moved south: lower housing and operating costs mean an effective increase in salary and an improved standard of living.

Well, I got one foot on the platform
The other foot on the train
I'm going back to New Orleans
To lease that affordable two-bedroom.

>:

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If the new Massachusetts economic engines are to thrive, they will require more affordable housing, both to attract and retain employees now and to meet future demand for personnel created by corporate growth. Despite encouraging signs such as Chapter 40R, demonstrating that affordability is increasingly recognized as a state responsibility requiring comprehensive changes in policy and attitudes, substantive change will require new, visionary, and radical housing models.

One possible comprehensive solution would draw from the economics lessons and pro-growth attitudes of the Sun Belt. New high-density housing zones could be strategically established near highways and transportation systems at the edges of welllocated but economically challenged cities such as Brockton, Worcester, Lowell, and Lawrence — communities that might welcome growth. These housing zones, featuring streamlined, predictable approvals and permitting processes, could be preplanned and pre-zoned as high-density, mixed-use neighborhoods with new mid-rise and high-rise structures. Combining high densities with innovative architecture, they would create exciting, unique, desirable, and more affordable residential neighborhoods. The resulting increase in the supply of housing would restore balance to the economic principle of supply and demand, leading to greater affordability.

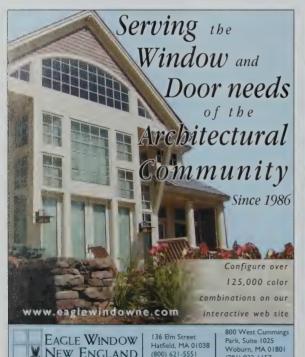
The challenge for architects would be to abandon the neo-amalgam 19th-century architectural styles so prevalent in many residential

designs, and to create a new 21st-century architecture that would have as much or more appeal to a new generation of residents who have grown up in the high-tech video world, are now working in high-tech industries, and are more open to a new aesthetic. By pairing the concept of "housing zones" with the idea of "new architecture zones," these cities would restore architecture as a marketing advantage and restore civic pride, much as the Guggenheim was intended to do for Bilbao.

The larger challenge is political, although this may be an opportunity for architects to assume a leadership and visionary role. If the political leadership of the state accepts this planning responsibility as a priority, as has been case in the Southern and Midwestern regions of the US, Massachusetts may be able to secure a more stable and affordable housing future for its residents, and thereby protect its future economic base.

There is a house in Orleans They call the house of the rising sum And it's been the ruin of many a developer And God I know I hope not to be one.

Willy Sclarsic AIA is a senior vice president of Bluestone Realty LLC in Newton, Massachusetts, which owns and manages residential and commercial properties from Massachusetts to Texas. He is also co-chair of the BSA Housing Committee. He may be reached at: wsclarsic@bluestonerealty.com.



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The global problem of high-cost housing

By Anthony Flint

In Seoul, 1,000 square feet of living space costs a million dollars, and professionals rise before dawn and work late into the night to pay for housing.

In London, families are doubling or tripling up, delaying parenthood to maintain two incomes and heading out to far-flung neighborhoods in search of a place to live. At the highest end of the market, the cost of luxury properties last year surpassed longtime leader New York as the world's most expensive, according to a recent study by CB Richard Ellis Hamptons International.

Affordable housing has been a hot topic for years in Massachusetts and increasingly in major metropolitan areas throughout the US. But few may be aware that the rest of the world has been grappling with soaring housing costs too. In several countries — in the United Kingdom and elsewhere in Europe, Russia, and Asia — housing has reached a crisis point, according to leading researchers and policymakers.

Government policy on land and housing varies substantially in all of these countries, complicating comparisons with the US. Nonetheless, the conditions influencing the affordability crisis overseas may hold valuable lessons on these shores.

One thing is certain: Massachusetts isn't the only place with an affordability problem. Indeed, Tokyo, Moscow, and London can make Boston look like a bargain.

Cost of Living

Worldwide Rankings 2006

RANK	CITY
1	Moscow
2	Seoul
3	Tokyo
4	Hong Kong
5	London
6	Osaka
7	Geneva
8	Copenhagen
9	Zurich
10	Oslo
10	New York City
12	St. Petersburg
13	Milan
14	Beijing
15	Istanbul
15	Paris
17	Singapore
18	Dublin
19	Sydney
20	Shanghai
21	Rome
21	Kiev
21	Vienna
24	Tel Aviv
25	Helsinki
25	Dubai
27	Douala
28	Taipei
29	Los Angeles
30	Abu Dhabi

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The global context is useful for policy considerations normally limited to the Boston metropolitan area, which tend to compare Massachusetts with New Hampshire or Rhode Island, or New England with the Sun Belt. In Massachusetts. constraints on supply - generally attributed to large-lot zoning, home rule, local regulation and restrictions on density, as well as limitations on buildable land have contributed to a red-hot real estate market. Prices started to dip over the course of 2006, but the state has consistently ranked near the top of surveys for the most expensive housing in the US. The median home price in Greater Boston is \$412,000.

Overseas, some of the prescriptions are familiar attempts to increase supply and ensure affordability, even though the conditions leading to the current spate of high

solving the housing problem in the UK. In London, the average price of a residential property is about \$491,000. First-time buyers tell Britain's largest mortgage lender that nine out of 10 towns in the country are unaffordable. While wages have increased nationwide by almost 80 percent over the last 10 years, housing prices have gone up 180 percent, according to the National Savings and Investments Department.

The result is similar in some respects to the situation in Massachusetts teachers and police officers unable to live in the communities in which they work. In the UK, and increasingly in Ireland, first-time homebuyers are delaying home purchases, friends are teaming up to pay for mortgages, and adult children are living with their parents.

"They'll never be able to afford their own property in Dublin," retired bank

In the UK, first-time homebuyers are delaying home purchases, friends are teaming up to pay for mortgages, and adult children are living with their parents.

prices have been very different. A look at the United Kingdom and Korea provides a glimpse of the differences and similarities.

In the UK, housing has long been viewed not as a privilege but as a right. "In all of Europe, housing is treated like infrastructure, the way we treat our schools or roads," says Emily Talen, associate professor of urban and regional planning at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and author of New Urbanism and American Planning: The Conflict of Cultures.

Current UK policy includes massive government subsidies, government-driven public-housing developments known as "social housing," long-term leasing arrangements, and financial assistance. Some 20 years ago, British prime minister Margaret Thatcher launched a privatization effort, hoping to enlist the private market in the production of housing and —like US federal policy - ease the government out of the public-housing business.

Neither policy — government support or privatization — has come close to

manager Dennis Rafferty told the Associated Press, referring to his two youngest children, now in their 20s, who still live with him. The average home price in Dublin is about \$451,000. "They'll just have to inherit our home once we're in the ground."

Government planners have been trying to attack the affordability problem from different angles. The farmland and "greenbelt" open space around London is being eyed for housing; one government recommendation calls for half a million units on greenbelt land southeast of London. Government officials also increased the home price threshold before an onerous 4-percent "stamp duty" kicks in, loosened restrictions on the construction of new houses, provided surplus public land for starter homes, and encouraged workforce housing, through incentives for businesses to build homes in southern England where hundreds of thousands commute into London every day.

Another strategy is based on the concept of the community land trust (CLT),

as seen at Poundbury, the neo-traditional urban village underwritten by the Prince's Foundation for the Built Environment, where a portion of homes is set aside as affordable on the community land trust model. Under a CLT, a nonprofit organization purchases the land for a housing development, and homebuyers pay only for the building.

Community land trusts are an increasingly popular affordable-housing strategy in the US, one example of an initiative that had roots overseas, says Rosalynd Greenstein, chair of the department of economic and community development at the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy in Cambridge, Massachusetts. "CLTs have borrowed a page from the UK," she says, noting the formation of the mechanism in 19th-century England and Ireland, in Ebenezer Howard's Garden City movement, and the Gandhian gramdan or"village gift" movement of the 1950s. "With the land owned by a CLT, land value

increases don't push up the cost of the house on resale. It's a way to provide a perpetual stock of below market-rate housing."

Halfway around the world in Seoul, a two-bedroom, 1,000-square-foot tower unit typically sells for \$1 million. In the cost-of-living survey conducted by the

market-rate housing, rapidly build satellite "new towns" providing thousands of housing units, and accommodate lowerincome families through such arrangements as long-term rentals.

One basic problem is that the urban core remains at a premium, because a knowledge-based and high-tech economy

In Korea, density is well-accepted, necessary, and even preferred; but dense, in the context of land-scarce Asian cities, has also meant expensive.

human resources company Mercer, the city vaulted from 5th place in 2005 to 2nd place in 2006, behind Moscow, and ahead of Tokyo and Hong Kong.

The red-hot real estate in Seoul, where half of South Korea's population lives, comes despite conscious government efforts to increase supply, mix public and

is a fundamentally city-based one. The influx of workers from rural areas into Seoul has created a disproportionate number of people trying to live on a limited amount of land. In Korea, density is well-accepted, necessary, and indeed even preferred; but dense, in the context of land-scarce Asian cities, has also often meant expensive.

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"There's always a level of anxiety about housing. It's so dense, yet there's a shortage. It pervades the culture," says John Hong AIA, a partner in the Cambridge, Massachusetts firm SingleSpeedDesign, whose wife and partner, Jinhee Park, grew up in Korea. "Whenever someone runs for president, they always have a housing platform."

Another underlying theme in Seoul and throughout many parts of Asia is the fact that real estate is seen as a primary vehicle for investment, bumping up prices in a kind of stampede mentality.

"Having a home is something you have to do. It's not that people buy a house to enjoy life inside of it. What matters most is whether the property value is going to go up," says Jinhee Park. "The quality of living space is less important than property value and proximity to local schools. So no matter how much public housing the government provides, the cost of all housing goes up."

The result is that professionals and families now work long hours in order to afford small spaces that they don't spend a lot of time in. Many functions of life that Americans take for granted in the private realm are conducted outside the home in Asia, such as renting a room to watch a movie with friends.

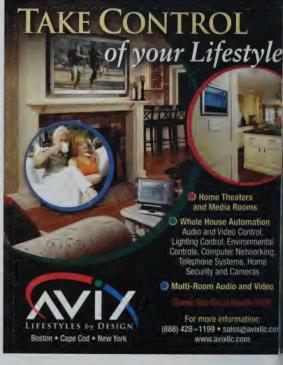
Government efforts to wrestle the real estate market to the ground have included a tripling of tax rates for people who hold more than one property, but officials found that many owners simply purchased additional properties abroad. The Korean National Housing Institute continues to build new towns at a rapid pace sometimes within an astonishing six months. Another arrangement is "key money," whereby a family might lease a two-bedroom living space for \$100,000 for three years; the property owner takes the money and invests it, and then returns the \$100,000 at the end of the lease term.

Around the world, affordability is being addressed by allowing the market to increase supply, by providing more dense housing close to amenities such as parks and transit, and through government interventions to try to tame skyrocketing prices. But the extent of the global problem is reflected in recent comments by Mercer senior consultant Rebecca Powers, who observed that it is "more expensive to send employees to work in Russia or Korea than places like Japan or Switzerland, which are often perceived to be more costly."

It is humbling to think that, globally speaking, keeping such workers in Boston would be cheapest of all. .

Anthony Flint, author of This Land: The Battle Over Sprawl and the Future of America and a forthcoming book on Jane Jacobs and Robert Moses, is public affairs manager at the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy in Cambridge, Massachusetts.





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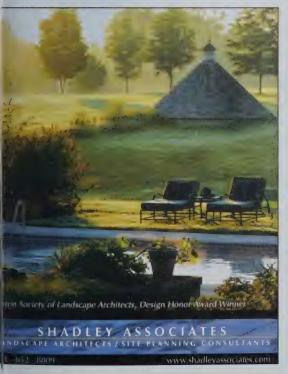
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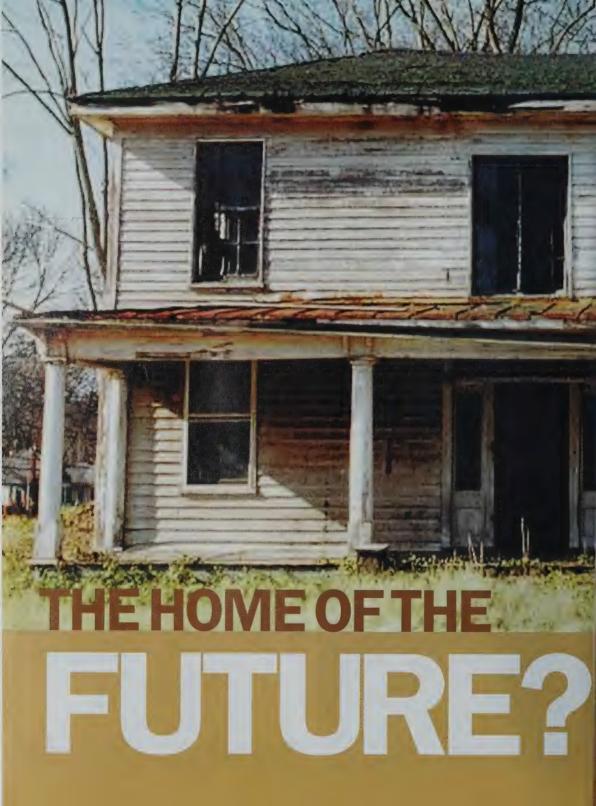


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The home of the future may be older than you'd guess

BY JAMES HADLEY AIA

Ask American architects what the home of the future will be and chances are you will hear about energy and resource conservation, healthy materials, recycling and waste-stream control, and perhaps a bit about neighborhood design. Who can blame them, after all, for architects are reminded every day that their work is a substantial cause of the build-up of carbon

in the atmosphere and that they damn well better do something about it, and quickly. It is unlikely that style, hominess, or a sense of tradition will come up in such a conversation, even though these are the things that most non-architects talk about when home is mentioned. It seems that Le Corbusier's machine á habiter (machine for living) is making a comeback, via the

green-design movement, sweeping aside passé ideas of gemütlichkeit and the charged imagery associated with the past.

To illustrate this point, Donovan Rypkema, a preservation economist, cited the following example in a 2006 article in *Forum Journal*:

Over a year ago in Boulder [Colorado], a homeowner in a local historic district applied to paint his window sash and trim, and approval was given the same day. Two weeks later, the landmarks commission learned that the historic windows had all been removed — a clear violation of the local ordinance — and had been replaced with new windows. This was done by a contractor who claims to specialize in "ecologically sound methods" and bills himself as "Boulder's greenest contractor."

The landmarks commission sent a letter directing that the original windows be retained and their condition documented. The contractor responded saying that the greater energy efficiency of the new windows should outweigh the regulations that apply to houses within the historic district. A subsequent commission hearing upheld the staff position and a city council hearing supported the commission's ruling.

Here's the next chapter — a reporter for the local alternative newspaper decided to take matters into his own hands. He went to the house, picked up the historic windows, took a sledgehammer to them, hauled them to the dump, and arranged to have a buildozer run over them.

But the truth is, as Rypkema points out, preservationists and environmentalists have more to agree on than to fight about these days, and as global warming continues to cook both groups indiscriminately, they are likely to become closer, rather than farther apart. A major reason is the value of the "embodied energy" (see definition below) tied up in the built environment: those old windows took energy to construct, energy to remove, and energy to destroy — all of which was lost after replacement. (As Rypkema shows, the diesel that powered the bulldozer alone consumed more fossil fuel than would be saved over the lifetime of the replacement windows.) Preservationists and environmentalists would also agree about resource conservation. The windows were made of old-growth lumber, as irreplaceable as an ancient tree at this point. Preservation, it turns out, is a green strategy.

A 1998 study by the University of Michigan compared the total energy consumption of a typical new 2,300-square-foot house in Michigan to another, hypothetical house that incorporated energy-saving strategies in the design. The comparison assumed a 50-year lifecycle for the houses. The study found that the energy-efficient house consumed only 37 percent of the energy consumed by the standard house, a savings of 1,598 barrels of oil over its lifetime.

But even more interesting are the implications of the relative percentage of embodied energy (which the study called the "preuse phase") in the two houses, a concept that becomes important once we start to evaluate structures in terms of their lifetime energy consumption. As we might expect, the construction of the two houses required approximately equal amounts of embodied energy — about 900–950 GJ (gigajoules). But because the total, 50-year energy use of the energy-efficient house was so much less, its embodied energy amounted to a much greater percentage of its lifecycle total — 16 percent versus 6 percent in the standard house. This suggests that even with lower consumption once the house is occupied, there is still an opportunity for substantial energy savings by reducing the structure's embodied energy. And one easy way to achieve that goal is to remodel an old house rather than build a new one.

Put another way, Americans tend to move in cycles far shorter than 50 years as family size, income, job location, or lifestyle changes; this cycling creates our housing market. In fact, the lifetime of a typical home mortgage is about 7½ years. Interpolating from the Michigan study, the embodied energy in an energy-efficient house built in 2007 will amount to about 60 percent of its total energy consumption by the time its owner is likely to move in 2014 (the percentage of embodied energy is highest in the first year and decreases over the lifecycle). In 20 years, it will still be a third of the total. Clearly, we can't keep tearing down and rebuilding and call ourselves environmentalists.

The US Green Building Council (USGBC) is the group that has assumed leadership of the environmental movement within the building trades in this country. The LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) rating system that the USGBC has put together is the gold standard for environmentally responsible buildings today. Preservationists like to complain that the LEED ratings are unfair to preservation as a green strategy —

EMBODIED ENERGY

A building's embodied energy is the energy used in its production and, eventually, demolition. This includes the energy required to extract, process, manufacture, transport, and assemble materials, as well as the energy required for related equipment, services, and administration. Materials associated with high embodied energy include aluminum, copper, plastics, and glass. Those with relatively low embodied energy include wood, gypsum, fiberglass, and natural materials such as stone.

an inconsistency acknowledged by Max Zahniser, the USGBC's LEED certification manager, who indicates that upcoming revisions in LEED 3 will correct some of this imbalance. (Preservationists can and should participate in the comment process.)

Why does preservation need LEED? The simple answer is that in a society that demolishes 200,000 buildings a year — generating 124 million tons of debris, enough to construct a wall 30 feet high and 30 feet thick around the entire coastline — preservation needs all the help it can get, and can't afford to choose where it comes from. Not all demolitions in the US target important historic buildings, but enough historic structures are lost to make "tear down" a pejorative term in most communities. Tear-downs threaten even those towns that value their history. The Cape Cod town of Chatham, for example, has witnessed eight demolitions of historic houses a year over the last several years, despite an active historic commission opposing those demolitions and invoking the demolition delay by-law.

The truth is that the bulk of Americans don't care to live in either LEED-rated houses or historic ones. (It helps to know that Better Homes and Gardens magazine has a circulation about 25 times that of Dwell, a popular publication that frequently features LEED-rated houses, and over 40 times that of Cld House Journal.)

It is only by affecting the choices that drive the enormous housing market that progress can be made in saving either history or energy.

The basic American home is a stage set where predictable events occur, not a machine for saving energy. It is an evocation of history, but seldom history itself. Unfortunately, it is only by affecting the choices that drive the enormous housing market that progress can be made in saving either history or energy. Both need saving, in the interest of our well-being and of our cultural sanity.

It is possible that the best hope for affecting housing choice in the American market remains government action — incentives for preservation and energy conservation, disincentives for demolition and wasting energy. Carrots and sticks, however, seem unlikely to work when the choice of a house in an affluent society is a "want to," not an "ought to" or even "need to" decision. But what if we could offer housing with the emotional comforts of the past and with cuttingedge, low-energy technology? The incentive for the conservationist is the possibility of getting close to a real zero-energy house; for the preservationist, it is the hope that more buildings will be saved. For an increasingly Internet-savvy public on the lookout for the latest thing in housing, something old might just be the answer. •

James Hadley AIA is a partner with his wife Patricia Crow, a landscape architect, in Hadley Crow Studio in Orleans, Massachusetts, specializing in preservation and environmental planning. His recent work includes a recycling center for Caribbean resorts and a preservation plan for a church meetinghouse.



n a street in Rockland, Maine, architect George Terrien AIA is renovating a house for himself and his wife, the painter Connie Hayes. A former president of the Boston Architectural Center (now Boston Architectural College), George has been a techie as long as I have known him; one of his first projects incorporated a rock-bed thermal storage system. His Rockland house comes as close as anything I know to the ideal blend of preservation and energy. efficiency that might appeal to today's homebuyers.

First, the work has followed the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the rehabilitation of historic properties. Historic wood windows were retained or duplicated, plaster walls repaired, trim and woodwork was stripped and refinished, and the floor plan and use patterns remain largely the same.

Second, the house represents cutting-edge thinking about energy use. It is heated and cooled by a large geothermal system that has been seamlessly installed into the house; George assembled and supervised the design and installation team, and commissioned the system, including the sophisticated controls. The electrical energy that powers the house comes from renewable sources, a choice available to homeowners in that part of Maine.

Finally, the house makes use of the infrastructure of an older community and therefore requires little energy to obtain its necessary services. So the house has reused the embodied energy both in the structure and in the community to the maximum extent possible. Alas, since George and Connie like to cook, they chose gas appliances, so some carbon dioxide escapes now and then when exterior doors are opened. Still, this is user-friendly, zero-energy. design as it might be practiced throughout the US. Will. Americans buy the concept? Perhaps - but only if they have the chance to see more examples of it across the country.

Not Your Grandfather's Prefab

A 48-year-old company in Massachusetts is re-engineering the idea of the pre-engineered house Jhaelen Eli talks with Jeff Stein AlA



Jhaelen Eli is the consulting designer for the Empyrean Design Partnership (Empyrean International, LLC) in Acton, Massachusetts, where he has worked with firms such as Kaehler Moore Architects, Toshiko Mori

Architect, Office dA, Ruhl Walker Architects, and Hutker Architects. He received an M. Arch. from the Harvard Graduate School of Design and a BA in architecture from University of California, Berkeley.



Jeff Stein AIA is head of the School of Architecture at the Boston Architectural College and is the architecture critic for Banker & Tradesman.



Studio ABK with Empyream, 2007

Jeff Stein: Empyrean International is the new name of a company that has long been familiar to many architects and many New Englanders. Your office, in a model Deck House, is the first clue. Deck House — the company — was started in 1959 by William Berkes, a graduate of the Harvard Graduate School of Design and a student of Walter Gropius. Its longtime sibling firm is Acorn Structures, which was started a decade earlier by John Bemis of MIT, whom Carl Koch called "the grandfather of prefabrication." They've recently been joined under the Empyrean umbrella with a new, third sibling known as The Dwell Homes by Empyrean, which is the focus of your own work. Do you feel the presence of those earlier Modernists who started this business that you're now helping to carry on?

Jhaelen Eli: I don't feel the legacy of those individuals as much as the sense that we are at last seeing the realization of prefabrication for architects. That hasn't been easy. There's a wonderful book written by Colin Davies called The Prefabricated Home, It's one of the rare books that doesn't take a romantic view of the history of prefab. The first several chapters are actually a pretty scathing critique, because he's describing the prefab architecture movement in America, and saying, essentially, that all the big "A" architectural forays into prefabrication have been failures.

Jeff Stein: Certainly all the Modernist ones were. I happen to live in a prefabricated house myself, just down the road — a Sears kit cottage built in 1913; the Sears houses were pretty successful.

Jhaelen Eli: Exactly. Prefab has been an enormous success in terms of small "a" architecture — which is to say, architecture that doesn't involve architects. Forty percent of new houses are prefabricated in some sense.

Jeff Stein: In fact, you could say that there is very little construction that doesn't have some prefabricated element to it.

Jhaelen Ell: That's right. The question Davies poses, and the question that Empyrean is tackling is, why is it that architects, who have been trained as specialists in designing physical environments, have had the least success in deploying prefab as a sustainable way of designing and of doing business?

Jeff Stein: One of the answers is that the people who typically engage the services of architects expect something that they don't think they'll get from prefabrication. When they go to an architect, they want a totally custom-designed home.

Jhaelen Ell: Which is something of a paradox. Because at the same time, many architects are looking for ways to bring highend design to more people, sort of a democratization of design. There's always been an apparent chasm between the cost of high design and the desire to be able to design a "house for your mother"—the concept of the architect's mother's house being one of experimentation for a middle-class client. The promise of prefab was that you would be able to develop a process that could reduce labor costs and enable an architect to provide good design for more people. But architects could not live with the construction details that the conventional prefab business provided, or with its operational and design culture.

Jeff Stein: Prefabrication has been called the oldest new idea of the 20th century. Yet it does seem to hold some sway in the current market and there has been a rebirth of interest recently, especially among young designers.

Jhaelen Eli: Despite its history, architects haven't totally given up on the idea of prefab. In today's culture, prefab, and by extension Modernism, has shed its utopian roots. Prefab today is seen as something that is much more trendy, representing a way of life. It isn't the response to postwar reconstruction that it once was. It's more about amenities, about the particular look of the Modern house. Any lingering sense of the utopian lies in the attempt to improve quality of life through the democratization, and therefore affordability, of good design.

Jeff Stein: The Dwell Homes clearly address that change. The story of the roots of the Dwell Homes has a wonderful origin-myth quality to it: the CEO of Empyrean goes to Dwell magazine to pitch a story to its editor, who was then Allison Arieff. She shows him a photo of a prefabricated house designed by Charlie Lazor, an architect from Minnesota who is looking for someone who can build it. Fast-forward a couple years, and now you're in a partnership with Dwell, working with Lazor Office and Resolution 4 Architecture, a firm in New York, to develop and build housing prototypes.

Jhaelen Ell: We started the program in 2005 and now have over 50 houses that are on the boards or in production. As we're launching our business, we're also making our various kits-of-parts available

to independent architecture firms, through what we call our Design Partnership. We're working with firms to familiarize them with our kits before they even start drawing.

Jeff Stein: What is your kit-of-parts?

Jhaelen Eli: We have two, actually — both our Deck House kitof-parts and our Acorn kit-of-parts. Acorn is strictly a panelized system and Deck House is post-and-beam.

Jeff Stein: And they are presumably manufactured in certain sizes and multiples, with the idea that any architect familiar with these basic systems could design something that would meet a client's needs in different regions of this country?

Jhaelen Eli: That's right. We ship nationally and internationally — we have projects in California, Hawaii, Japan, Israel, and the United Kingdom. In fact, 10 percent of our business is in the UK; what is interesting is that the homes that we're shipping to England are all part of multi-family developments. We have to deal with snow loads in Colorado and wind loads on the Florida coast. The architect usually finds the client independently, and maintains that design relationship with the client through schematic design. Then the project is handed over to us and we take it into design development and construction documents through delivery. We have a network of 300 builders across the country who know our systems intimately, so we add value to the

Dwell Home by Empyrean. **Prefab today** is seen as mu more trendy. representin a way of lif -Jhaelen Eli



Acorn, 1960s.

process by not only delivering a kit-of-parts but also coordinating with an experienced builder.

Jeff Steln: Two early Modernists who tried to make prefab work were Gropius and his partner Konrad Wachsmann — they developed a prefab house design for General Panel Corporation in 1942. They built a few and that was that. Why couldn't they make a go of it?

Jhaelen Ell: They really got into the details and kept refining them over and over again, but when it came time to go to market, the system was so expensive that nobody could afford it, and it was so time-consuming to build that it was no longer relevant. What was missing was an alignment of all the elements that were necessary to make it work. When architects talk about prefab, they tend to focus on the very big idea of democratizing design, but they usually have no business plan, a limited understanding of relevant manufacturing and operations, and a vague sense of the market.

Jeff Steln: How does your own role as "design consultant" fit into Empyrean's business plan? And how did you find your way into this role?

Jhaelen Ell: My job is to introduce architects to our systems and help them understand the rules of the games, so to speak, so they can capture the economy of the system. And in turn, we try to find ways in which the system can facilitate their design goals. I had been working at Office dA in Boston, where we were investigating the idea of doing a prefab house. I was given the task of getting in touch with Empyrean. Later, Empyrean invited me on board. The offer came at a time when I was thinking about all sorts of career-related questions: from a social standpoint, how do you make the most difference possible in your given trade? Why do architects design so little of the built environment? Can we counter that with alternative business models and practices and be better compensated?

Jeff Stein: So now you are working with a company that is offering



Acorn. 1998.

architects a different way to think about building.

Jhaelen Ell: That's right. Traditionally, architects are not focused on means and methods in terms of constructing and assembling the house — that's the contractor's responsibility. What's different about this process is that we are thinking about means and methods. We're thinking about sub-assemblies, the economy of, say, using cranes to offload our materials from the trucks to the site so they can be quickly assembled. That means that there's an interesting convergence in our partnership with architects thinking about the efficiency of means and methods becomes part of the conversation and is integral to the design itself.

Jeff Stein: There is a cozy quality to the Dwell Homes, even though they feature Modernist expanses of glass. Some of that has to do with the size of the buildings, which is actually pretty small.

Jhaelen Ell: Some of it has to do with the sensibility of the Dwell brand. The magazine's mission is to present Modernism as accessible, something that people can live in comfortably. If you look at mid-century images by Julius Schulman, the iconic architecture photographer, you'll notice that there are no people in his photographs. You open up Dwell, and there's nothing but barefoot people inhabiting this cozy Modern architecture. It begins to move Modernism in a direction that Deck House and Acorn were already suggesting - a meshing of the Modern sensibility and the inhabitable home.

Jeff Stein: When I talk to people about Empyrean, the term "mass customization" comes up. There is in fact a whole vocabulary around your industry: "modular"; "precut"; "panelized."

Jhaelen Eli: Modular refers to one subset of prefab construction; precut and panelized are two other subsets. We would describe a modular unit as a pre-assembled box that comes on a truck and is set onto a slab or foundation. Our systems are either panelized a complete wall assembly, for example — or pre-cut, meaning the "sticks" in post-and-beam construction; they are shipped flat or in



Deck House, 1960s.

bundles to the site and then assembled. A lot of modular firms also use the phrase "mass customization." But I would argue that they simply provide mass production because their degree of customization is essentially bound by the rules of highway design transportation engineers have already determined the widest module you can use.

In a tectonic system using panels or pre-cut components, the constraints involve the law of gravity and the nature of the tectonic



Deck House, 2006,

system: what's the longest cantilever you can get? What's the maximum span? Or: I'm trying to turn a corner in this particular way, but I've only got these three choices. What if I combine choice A with choice B to get choice D? A lot of architects look for limitations, both as a way to force decisions, but also as a way to stimulate creativity. That process ups the ante for us, too, in terms of suggesting things that we hadn't imagined before. We use a phrase, "innovation is born out of constraints." There's incredible



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challenge but also great reward when you view something from that perspective. The most amazing innovations in history always come from some kind of constraint.

Jeff Stein: Presumably your control of the construction process typically translates into less time and less money.

Jhaelen Ell: We facilitate custom design at a reasonable, but not the lowest, cost. A typical custom house, using the traditional architect and contractor models, rarely gets below \$300 per square foot. We're certainly much less than that, but we're not a Toll Brothers production house, either. A lot of our market is second homes for owners who want a custom design. But it varies. We're doing a house in Fairfield County, Connecticut, which is less than half the cost of what it would have been using traditional stick-built construction, and with better materials. That's a high labor-cost market, and the savings from sub-assembled panels was significant.

Jeff Stein: I would think there would be other labor savings, too, that might be harder to quantify: better health, greater safety, and presumably longer life expectancy for laborers who are working indoors.

Jhaelen Ell: The factory environment also allows us to control material utilization, which is close to 100 percent. We use everything. After a week of production, we end up with a pile maybe a couple feet high — basically short end-cuts of wood, less than

maybe eight inches long, that we haven't found a way to use. Every once in a while we put out a big box and say, "Take this wood." It gets recycled.

Jeff Stein: So how energy-efficient are these buildings once they're built?

Jhaelen Ell: We just did an Energy Star model home down in Annapolis. We have a green team in-house, which consults on our own systems and designs and is available to architects in our Design Partnership program who want to design in a more sustainable manner. But we're finding that sustainability is an embedded practice now with many of the architects we work with. It's moved from the "it" thing that was a marketing gimmick to an expected aspect of everyday practice.

Jeff Stein: Is your work with Empyrean a way to move architecture back into the world of residential design if indeed it ever was there?

Jhaelen Ell: I would say that it was never there. Architects have never had much presence in residential design. For me, the move to Empyrean was about the dream of taking on that challenge. Houses make up the largest component of the built environment, in terms of the sheer number of them and the number of resources that they consume. To make a difference in housing, you've got to tackle it on a huge scale, but one house at a time.





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Covering the Issues

Architecture is gone... Architect is here. This recent launch (premiere issue, November 2006) pledges to focus on the people, process, and business of the profession. Hoping to transcend a mere record of buildings (hint, hint), it aims to "portray architecture from multiple perspectives" and celebrate the "complexities, values, and concerns of the discipline itself." Enough lofty goals. Of course we shouldn't judge by the cover, but it seems fair to assume that this is expected with a first issue. What does it suggest to have a middle-aged white male partner from SOM on the front? Enough said.

Forget year-end lists... "Who are the most influential figures in American history?" asks the Atlantic Monthly in this seasonal wrap-up (December 2006), presenting the top 100 of all time. Special sidebars highlight influential poets, filmmakers, critics, and, yes, architects. Williams College historian Michael J. Lewis argues that those whose effect we feel most are Andrew Jackson Downing (suburban America), Daniel H. Burnham (bringing business values to architecture), Morris Lapidus (20thcentury postwar vernacular), Frank Lloyd Wright (of course), and Howard Roark. Roark? A fictional architect? Lewis credits Roark's character for transforming the image of the architect from a bookish service provider to the celebrity starchitect, like those who rule today's headlines.

Urban Ring, Southern style... If Atlanta is doing it, so can Boston. According to Esquire (December 2006), Ryan Gravel's thesis project is on its way to reality. As Justin Heckert reports, the Georgia Tech architecture student wrote his thesis about a series of abandoned railroad tracks dubbed the "Beltline." Heckert identified where rights-of-way still remain and showed how they could be connected around Atlanta,

linking 45 neighborhoods, providing a light-rail alternative to that infamous traffic, and spurring the development of parks, housing, and businesses along the way. After several years and countless presentations, the idea now has momentum: Mayor Shirley Franklin has established a Beltline tax district to provide 60-percent financing. The rest, we hope, will someday be history.

Conventional thinkers need not apply...

OK, so the crumpled-paper model looks cool, but then what? In "Edifice, Complex" (Wired, December 2006), Karrie Jacobs profiles the engineers and designers at Permasteelisa, the Italian curtainwall manufacturer, as she celebrates these unsung heroes of the construction industry. Permasteelisa has tackled the challenge of making Frank Gehry's curved glass on the InterActiveCorp tower; the interlocking glass panels on Norman Foster's new Hearst building; the creased, double-skin façade of Cook + Fox's Durst tower; and the deceptively simple, clear cladding of SOM's 7 World Trade Center. Think about it. It's one thing to translate Gehry's curves into a material that bends (like titanium), or to build them up from small pieces (like bricks) — but glass? Nearly every panel is a unique shape with a different radius. Design, engineering, communication, and faith are required to make the far-fetched ideas real - and beautiful.

Aftermath... In "After Katrina," in the New York Review of Books (November 30, 2006), John Updike reviews Robert Polidori's photographs of New Orleans after Katrina, the subject of a recent book and exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum. Updike comments on this photographic evidence of the "flimsy stuff of American housing"—mounds of fiberglass insulation, plywood, drywall, aluminum siding, waiting to be



carried away — seeing at once the tenuousness of American shelter and the permanence of this trash.

What makes a good American city? Boston's new ICA, or Mayor Menino's Main Streets program? In the new online quarterly democracyjournal.org, suburban champion Joel Kotkin and Harvard professor Jerold Kayden go head to head (more like back to back) on how best to improve urban areas. In "Urban Legend" (Fall 2006), Kotkin writes that historically, US cities have been places for aspiration, where diverse populations have come to work hard and strive to achieve the middle class. Kotkin argues that too many cities today - especially those in the Northeast—cater to the middle class rather than create it, building arts museums and coffee shops instead of roads, schools, and basic services. "It's Not Schools vs. Scones" responds Jerold Kayden (Winter 2007), who suggests planning is not quite so simple.

Gretchen Schneider, Assoc. AlA, is a designer at Rogers Marvel Architects in New York City.



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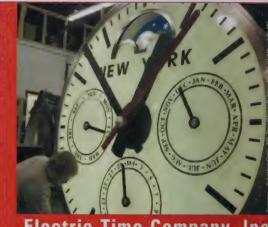
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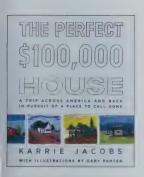
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THE PERFECT \$100,000 HOUSE: A TRIP **ACROSS AMERICA AND BACK IN PURSUIT** OF A PLACE TO CALL HOME

by Karrie Jacobs Viking, 2006

There's nothing Americans like better than a good road trip. Except maybe talking about real estate. Former Dwell editor Karrie Jacobs, in an admirable bout of efficiency, managed to combine these not-so-guilty pleasures. In her 14,000-mile tour across the US, she met passionate architects, visited renegade design communities, discovered iconic Modern structures, and coped with the same exhilaration and disappointment met by any stouthearted pilgrim on a quest.

Jacobs' quest? To find 1,000 square feet at \$100 each situated in some tolerable place and designed with enough Modernist mettle for her, a single writer with cats, to call home. Having spent a good portion of her career reviewing the work of designers who shared her vision of affordable, sustainable, mid-century inspired dwellings, Jacobs devised a road map that led her (among other places) north to Vermont; west to Kansas, California, and New Mexico; south to Marfa, Texas; then back up the coast to Charlottesville, Virginia, and Monticello, a setting that, after all those flat-roofed cubes, she found quite beautiful.

Her observations about the architects who guide her, mostly well-educated white guys inspired by the likes of Sam Mockbee

and the great forefathers of the Bauhaus, read like good characterizations in a novel. Jacobs has a keen eye for interpreting some of the passions that underlie their own obsessions with alternative design, obsessions that often drove them to live and work in obscure, out-of-the-way places.

Jacobs kicked off her junket with a twoweek stint at Yestermorrow, the design/ build school in Vermont where she'd signed up for a two-week, hands-on workshop that was intended to teach participants the basics of the relationship between, well, designing and building. Good decision. Indeed, the rest of her adventure and all the structures she beheld while on it were informed by what she learned in Vermont: chiefly, that building is tricky, that there is something ephemeral, magical, and hard about carrying an idea from imagination to a written program, from measured drawings and materials selection to walls, roof, and floor.

Jacobs, a devotee of Modernism and alternative building materials and methods, came to the game thinking \$100,000 might buy her a concrete box with a flat roof that could contain doublehigh book shelves and a sleeping loft, and still reflect her socio-political and aesthetic ideals. She ended up with a better understanding of the politics of development, a greatly diminished belief that better design always promotes better living, and the recognition, however sadly, that it is still cheapest and fastest to build with conventional methodologies and with materials that have long been codified and understood. For her, that may mean that someday she'll hire one of the "new pragmatists" she met along the way to design and build a nice 21st-century, stick-built A-frame.

Pamela de Oliveira-Smith is the managing of communications and marketing for



OFF THE GRID: MODERN HOMES AND **ALTERNATIVE ENERGY**

THE RENEWABLE ENERGY HANDBOOK: A GUIDE TO RURAL ENERGY INDEPENDENCE. **OFF-GRID AND SUSTAINABLE LIVING**

by William H. Kemp Aztext Press, 2006

These books remind me of a model that every book on alternative housing should emulate. First published at the time of the OPEC oil embargo in 1973 and now out of print, Handmade Houses: A Guide to the Woodbutcher's Art, by Art Boericke and Barry Shapiro, is a paean to graceful, elegant, resource-efficient building. Unabashedly low-tech, its examples combine an untrained resourcefulness with a commitment to simple living, both now out of favor with the dominant culture.

Off the Grid, by contrast, is a coffee-table adornment geared to easing a formal design sensibility comfortably into the realm of resource efficiency. If good architecture makes the complicated look easy and handsome, the examples in Off the Grid are excellent architecture, artfully demonstrating the integration of new technologies into high design. A primary objective of these homeowners is to maintain an up-to-theminute lifestyle while separating themselves from mainstream power production living off the power grid and meeting their own energy needs.

The initial chapter provides a brief introduction to the concepts of sustainability, though very little argument for their adoption. Agreement on the environmental reasons for change is assumed, and the drivers seem aesthetic rather than practical.

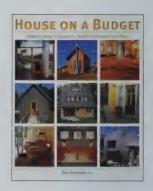
The photographs are of the highest quality, though the book suffers from a frustrating lack of diagrams explaining some of the systems glimpsed in the photos or referred to as "the alternative energy system."

Another approach to residential design adds emotion to aesthetic sensibilities. The illustrations in *The Renewable Energy Handbook* are all black and white, and the houses exhibit a certain ruffled-curtain aesthetic. This is a book, however, for people who want to get their hands dirty, and one has the sense that the owners all have first-hand experience with photovoltaic arrays, inverters, and small hydro plants. There are satisfyingly complete diagrams, formulas, and useful information on these and a host of other technologies. As a primer for these alone, it's invaluable, a comprehensive introduction to the nuts and bolts of renewable technologies.

An early chapter explores some of the environmental issues around sustainable practice, and another provides a good introduction to strategies for energy-efficiency in older houses. The book's one failing may provide an opportunity for the author to write a companion volume, as the plethora of information on energy technology leaves little room for investigation of alternative construction methods such as rammed earth and straw bales.

As an aesthetic justification for moving towards environmental responsibility in housing, Off the Grid serves admirably. The Renewable Energy Handbook will help take the first step. Neither book addresses the mass market or affordable housing, but together they provide a window into the current state of resource-efficiency in custom residential design.

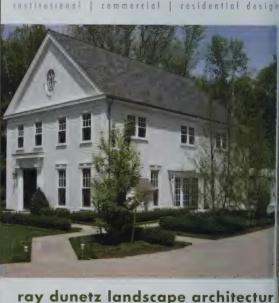
Andrew St. John AIA, LEED AP, is a principal with Smith + St. John in Essex, Massachusetts, offering real estate advisory and development management services.



HOUSE ON A BUDGET: MAKING SMART CHOICES TO BUILD THE HOME YOU WANT by Duo Dickinson AIA Taunton Press/AIA, 2007

We are inundated with books telling us how to design, build, buy, or commission a house. The positive side of the genre stretches from Sarah Susanka's successful





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small house series to Jeremiah Eck's wonderful design prototypes. So any book trying to establish itself apart from the pack sets a lofty goal.

In House On A Budget, architect Duo Dickinson takes on the challenge of presenting houses that are as cost effective as production homes, yet retain design integrity while responding to their sites and their owners. Apart from its rather uninspired title, this book succeeds and is worthy of attention.

In the first chapter, the author sets forth rules to accomplish the goals. Don't be put off by their oversimplification (Rule 1: "Use standard materials creatively"; Rule 4: "Take your time"). They merely set the framework. The real gems are the following chapters. Each presents a case study of one of 19 newly constructed single-family homes. The houses are presented in text and in beautiful photographs (all by Ken Gutmaker); the area, site costs, construction costs, and design fee are listed in a sidebar box. All of the homes are well-designed and all have been built for a very modest cost.

It is apparent that the author has worked hard to understand what makes each house successful and to pass on his understanding to the reader in clear text without buzzwords or pedantic prose. He offers specific solutions and details, such as how inexpensive plywood can be used instead of wallboard, how a curved wall can be built simply and inexpensively, and how to save on fabrication and installation costs. In one of his own projects, he bravely admits to downgrading the materials the farther they get from the viewer.

Most concepts will be familiar to residential architects, but the specific applications of the rules offer plenty of inspiration. Reading and discussing the book with a client at the beginning of a project may well be a valuable exercise, although many architects may be disappointed by some of the low design fees. Dickinson is somewhat defensive on this subject, reminding the reader that the less one pays for an architect, the more homeowner time will be required. He might also have mentioned the increased risks for both the homeowner and architect.

Controlling the cost of construction is the bane of architects. On one hand, they are often seen as responsible for the infamous scope creep and for client-initiated change orders. On the other hand, almost every practitioner has looked at some published house and thought, "there but for an unlimited budget go I." Duo Dickinson demonstrates that neither of the above need be true. Wonderful design and architecture can be created in a "house on a budget." Perhaps the title fits after all.

John Freeman AIA is a principal of Platt Anderson Freeman Architects in Boston.



THE AFFORDABLE HOUSING INSTITUTE

www.affordablehousinginstitute.org

The Affordable Housing Institute imagines a nation's housing finance and delivery system as a complex "ecosystem" — a simple, smart idea that it applies to housing around the world. Check out the blogs — especially David Smith's January 2007 musings about mobile homes.

OFF-GRID

www.off-grid.net

Off-Grid is here to do for environmentalism what Dwell did for Modernism: turn it into the latest hipster lifestyle. Beyond stories about Ed Begley Jr.'s new reality show, a starlet living on a goat farm, and Prince Charles' plans for a \$10-million off-grid "eco-palace," find advice on the best wood-chip boilers, cooking with bio-gas, and next-generation batteries. Check out the guide to off-grid hotels.

SOME ASSEMBLY REQUIRED: CONTEMPORARY PREFABRICATED HOUSES

http://design.walkerart.org/prefab

If you missed this exhibition in Minneapolis or New Haven, you can still catch it in Los Angeles or Richmond, Virginia. Or you can peruse it online from your favorite comfy chair.

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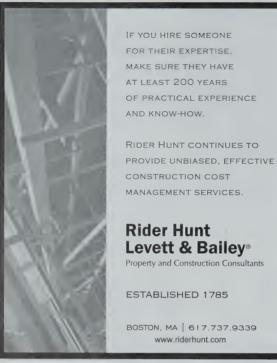
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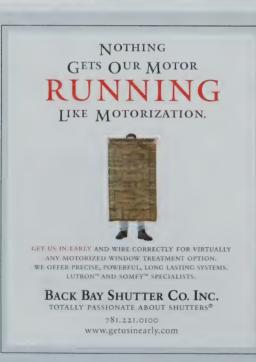
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A House in Northampton

Sometimes a perfect plan works out.

Such was the plan with my old house in Northampton. I had bought low, and I was gonna sell high.

I got a good deal on the place in 1997, just before the Northampton market started heating up. It was priced to sell because it wasn't showing too well; 10 years of being a rental unit - most recently to a professional juggler — had left it looking a little sad. No problem — I started using dangerous tools way back in fifth grade, and I wasn't about to stop now. I could fix it up all by myself.

And I did. All at once, seven years later. when I needed to sell it. I'd done some landscaping and started a few projects over the years. But after my realtor (sorry, Realtor®) marched all his associates through the house, nobody was impressed. Nobody saw the potential. Worst of all, not one of them said they'd list it for anything near what I thought it was worth.

Enter the perfect plan. I knew the Pioneer Valley was — at least in its own mind unconventional. And my house was unique: a post-and-beam contemporary, lots of glass, nestled into the woods.

Nestled into the woods. I'll never buy a house like that again. Let me explain.

If you live in New England, your house is probably made out of wood, and you probably have trees on your property. The trees know what you did. They know you, or your predecessors, killed some of them and built a house out of them — and they are



going to get even. So don't let them near your house. From a distance, the best they can hope for is to get struck by lightning and start a fire that somehow races across your lawn and engulfs your garage. But some very lucky trees find themselves right next to a house. These are happy trees, Because a tree can also be thought of as an insect-anddebris generator, a biological machine that sends branches over your roof and begins a slow rain of insects and debris that attacks from above, eating and decaying its way through the roof and into your bank balance. Do not let this happen. Trees kill houses. Remember that.

Anyway, I figured there would be plenty of other people like me who like to stick it to the man by living in a house with an open floor plan. So I was going to take advantage of all of that and turn the place into a Zen temple. I'm happy to report that two months, thousands of dollars, and a mountain of earplugs later, that's just what I had. Gleaming oak floors. A glowing new shower. The successful resolution of a mouse infestation that nearly required the services of a priest. A new roof and the final

triumph in the war with the trees. I put everything I owned into storage except the bare minimum of furniture and decoration. It was pretty cool — I could really think without all that clutter. And, of course, it worked. I sold the place in just a few weeks.

I didn't get what I was asking (who does?), but I sold it for a comfortable year's salary above what the entire realty office was giving me early in the game. I stopped by a few months after the buyer moved in. He'd gutted half of everything I'd done. I'd handmade two replacement light fixtures, for instance. They're in the dump right now. The carpet I laid by myself? A-mouldering. All that money and all that work undone. And damn, the place looked great, I wanted it back, Still do.

But I have a new, much more affordable place now. I've been here almost a year. It needs some work too. But I'm a little bit smarter this time. I've started working on it right away. It's silly to make your place all it can be just because you're selling it.

Gregory Lauzon is a writer in Deerfield, Massachusetts.

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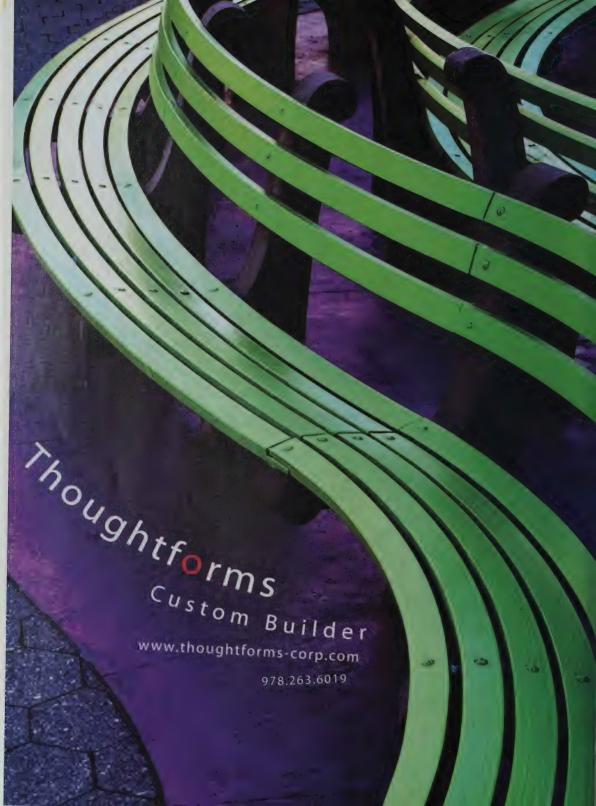


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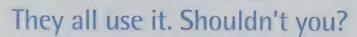




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Imagine This

ometimes you can see it coming. Is there a Bostonian who has not been stuck in a mid-day, no-reason-at-all traffic jam, passing the time in contemplation of one of those ubiquitous blue "Evacuation Route" signs? Rating their placement for degree of absurdity can offer a certain amount of entertainment. My own favorite is on Beacon Street in the Back Bay, where one sign offers the choice of turning onto Storrow Drive, a laughable commuter evacuation route on the best of days, or proceeding down Beacon Street, where for weeks, street construction added yet another twist to the usual bob-and-weave around double-parked cars. Mere mention of these signs brings a smile — a normal human reaction to complete absurdity and the comedy of errors that often accompanies a fiasco-in-the-making.

But sometimes you don't see it coming. On January 31, 2007, another set of signs triggered a bomb scare; fear and uncertainty rippled throughout the city. These, of course, were the nowfamous LED devices that were part of a guerrilla marketing campaign for A Cartoon Show That Shall Not Be Named (no need to supply yet more publicity). City and state emergency personnel responded efficiently and professionally to the presence of wired devices affixed to elements of the city's infrastructure. This response, generally supported by the public, nevertheless drew guffaws from some individuals who were too cool for their own good. These were people suffering from either a failure of imagination or cultural illiteracy - after all, the robber/terrorist/villain disguised as a cartoon character is one of the great clichés of film and television. We can only hope that, in the event of a similar occurrence, emergency personnel are not hampered by fear of ridicule. The feint is another great cliché of film and television.

And yet this was an undeniable fiasco - not in terms of the emergency response, but in terms of the campaign itself. A network executive resigned; the two men who installed the devices were arrested on felony charges; the network has agreed to pay \$2 million in restitution; and, most gratifying, the publicity had a negligible effect on the cartoon show's Nielsen ratings.

This episode suggests why Architecture Boston is exploring the nature of fiasco in this issue. Architecture is often said to be part of the "creative economy"; it could even be called the imagination profession. And yet, fiasco and imagination are inextricably linked. Sometimes, as in the case of the cartoon caper, limited creativity leads to a failure to imagine what might go wrong. More tragically, a failure to plan for what has been imagined is often at the root of a fiasco. The events of 9/11 demonstrated that anything imaginable is possible no matter how much we might wish to deny it; we learned the lesson again with Katrina. Failure to plan for an imagined scenario requires a perfectly orchestrated response in order to avoid a fiasco — which is asking a lot. And so 9/11 has led to a war widely considered a fiasco, and Katrina led to a still-failed recovery effort that must count as one of the greatest social and political fiascos in American history.

But just as denying the imaginable can lead to disaster, so can embracing the imaginable. Over-reaching — stretching to make the imaginable real — can lead to spectacular failure. Ego and

Fiasco and imagination are inextricably might go wrong.

hubris are common contributors, but so are the urge to invent and the quest to excel. There is no one in a creative field who does not know the frustrations of trial and error or the pleasure of the happy accident. These are the failures that are eventually seen to have advanced the human condition.

Indeed, failure is so much a part of the human condition that we have developed a vast vocabulary with which to convey all its possible nuances, from "gaffe" and "pratfall" to "cataclysm" and "apocalypse." Failure has its purpose, and it need not be a fiasco.

Elizabeth S. Padien FAIA Editor



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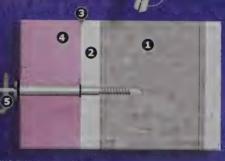
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Letters Letters Letters

I say "amen" to the "Home Economics" issue of ArchitectureBoston [March/April 2007]. Our regional economy is being strangled by this Gordian knot: not building enough affordable housing to maintain and increase the presence of the talented and competitive young workforce graduating from our colleges and universities; legitimate concerns about escalating property taxes and school costs; protracted permitting delays and large-lot zoning that constrain supply, driving real estate appreciation to outstrip returns on other investment vehicles; the participation of the federal government in subsidizing home owners with tax relief in the form of mortgage interest deductions; and the intractability of a unilateral directive to increase density, given the New England tradition of a town meeting form of government. The tools we have to cut through the knot are inventive, but will Chapters 40B, 40R, and 40S be enough? Interesting as it is to know, it is of little solace that Boston isn't as bad off as London or Seoul. It reminds me of my mother chiding me to finish my spinach because children in China were starving.

According to the Urban Land Institute, residential development in the 1950s was fueled by the overwhelming market demand for housing the traditional family of Dad, Mom, and two kids. That demographic is no longer the primary driver of the residential market. The new market is composed of young singles, empty-nesters, single-parent households, the elderly woman returning to the region to be closer to a daughter after her husband dies. As wonderful as New England is, with its manifold blessings of open space, seashore, historic buildings, and educational and medical facilities that are the envy of the world, if we ignore the sign of the times that people are either leaving or refusing to relocate here because they cannot afford to buy a house or rent an apartment, we do so at our peril.

> Diane Georgopulos FAIA MassHousing Boston

Thanks for reminding us that fixing up our old places can be more energy efficient than tearing down and re-building.

> Walter Dufresne Brooklyn, New York

My analyses during the 1980s suggested that the energy embodied in the construction of houses more or less accords with what James Hadley reports relative to the energy consumed over 50 years of operations ["The Home of the Future?" March/ April 2007], but I think that the Michigan study he cites overstates the barrels of oil saved. In my experience in this Northeast climate, the best-performing house that we have completed is (as Hadley reports) about 30 percent of the heating load of the current code minimum, but it is an improvement (load reduction) from 30 down to 10 x 106 btu/sf/year, which amounts to around 250 barrels (rather than the 1,598 that he reports) over 50 years for a 1,500-squarefoot house. Not a big deal perhaps; maybe Michigan is colder; maybe the study house was very large. However, the cited reference to the bulldozer's consuming more fuel to crush those old windows than would be saved by the lifetime of their replacements is hugely off. In fact, 200 square feet of good replacement windows would save the dozer's fuel cost in less than one hour during the coldest day of the Boston year. So let's be careful when citing other people's numbers. It is always worth checking both their assumptions, and their math.

Hadley's view that a trend toward resourceful building will enfold the preservation of existing buildings is sound. Durability is a cornerstone of sustainability, and we will progressively develop a mindset and the techniques to affordably (and matter-of-factly) convert them to much higher levels of performance. This has been the trend throughout the 40 years of my practice, and there is much more to be achieved. Beyond the conversion challenge,

however, is the deconstruction challenge. This also has a mindset: it is that those who produce have perpetual responsibility for the resources they assemble. Developers and the designers they employ will be driven to plan for the "deconstruction" or the "remanufacturing" of their buildings. The home of the future will be designed for complete and straightforward material recovery.

> Bruce Coldham AIA Coldham & Hartman Architects Amherst, Massachusetts

James Hadley AIA responds:

The University of Michigan study, entitled "Life Cycle Analysis of a Residential Home in Michigan" may be specific to colder climates, as Mr. Coldham suggests. It can be read in full at www.umich.edu/ ~nppcpub/research/lcahome/. As to the merits of replacement windows, I can't verify Mr. Rypkema's claim, but the Winter 2007 newsletter of the AIA Committee on the Environment, quoting the new mantra "the greenest building is the one that's already built," has this to say on the subject: "...window repair is often more cost-effective and sustainable than replacement windows. The sustainable benefits of waste reduction and the historic benefit of maintaining architectural integrity may balance the loss of increased energy efficiency of new replacement windows in the long run, especially since there are often alternate methods of increasing energy efficiency without sacrificing the original window." My feelings, exactly.

I found your recent "Home Economics" issue [March/April 2007] very compelling because it touched on a wide range of topics, from density to affordability, construction methodology, and historic preservation. As a green design professional, all of those topics resonated with me. The historic preservation piece in particular touched on an issue that I'd

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like to draw more attention to. Healthy, efficient (green) design is still too often referred to in a context of "either/or." Either affordable, or green. Either historic preservation, or green — as if green is always an alternative that you must compromise to achieve. Your article presented a well-balanced approach to reconciling and understanding that green design is not a separate add-on, but an intrinsic and integral approach to design. To some, historic preservation may be easier to understand because it is fundamentally conserving resources. However, there is still a pervasive mindset that in new construction or renovation, the decision to go green is driven by external factors such as cost or availability of products; it is not yet perceived as the baseline of good design. Design professionals do not understand that basic green design is not cost dependent, but strategy dependent. Further, there is very little recognition in the community that the process of design — the degree to which it is collaborative - influences the extent to which a project is green much more than technology or products do. Costneutral strategies - including appropriate siting, massing, fenestration, non-toxic materials, building-system optimization, energy conservation, and many other aspects -- can make a greener building than adding widgets and new technologies. The more that publications like yours infuse their content with these concepts, as you

> Barbra Batshalom The Green Roundtable Boston

lenjoyed reading Jeff Stein's interview with Jhaelen Eli from Empyrean ["Not Your Grandfather's Prefab," March/April 2007]. Anyone seriously interested in the history of the American house has to be intrigued by what I'm going to call the "Dwell approach." Problem is, it's only a very small part of delivering a better American house. Embedded in the article, and even in the photo on the title page, is a fact that architects often ignore. Look at the

have done, the more the community will

approaches are with economic and social

issues as well as with design excellence.

understand how interwoven these

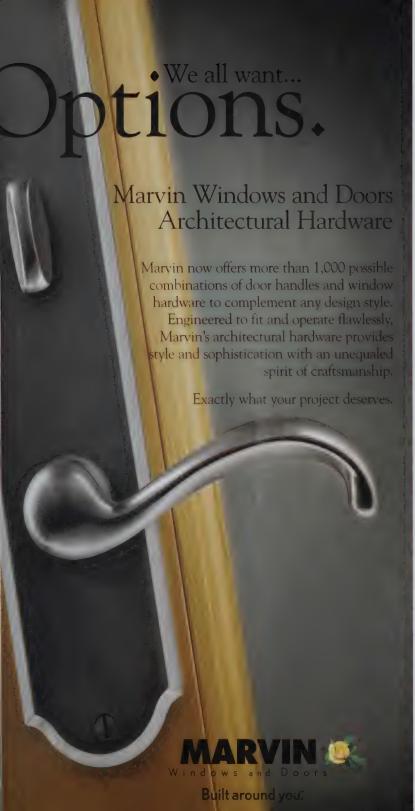
traditional houses that sit in the same neighborhood and wonder why Better Homes & Gardens outsells Dwell by far. Despite Jhaelen's contention that prefab is now "more trendy, representing a way of life," most Americans have never been very comfortable with Modernism. Implicit in the article is the continuing assumption that "we" know better than "they." Prefabrication may well be the future, but I would not bet on a style essentially formed by highway standards. Only when architects can learn to use prefabrication to produce a wide range of site, plan, and style responses — traditional or contemporary — will we be really using our talents to produce a better, more accessible, American house. Paradoxically, that's where Acorn and Deck started 48 years ago.

Jeremiah Eck FAIA
Eck | MacNeely Architects
Boston

I just read Willy Sclarsic's fine article in ArchitectureBoston ["There Is a House in New Orleans," March/April 2007] and must say I share his views on our Massachusetts development climate. From the personal experience of seeing my three kids and their many friends who have fled the region, I feel a sense of living in a black comedy where we architects are being constantly hired to design ultra-expensive 19th-century-style homes while the larger economic and real life issues — salaries, healthcare, education costs, housing costs, transportation — are somehow pushed to the side and ignored by most (wealthy) people. If there ever was a time for some radical new thinking along the lines he discusses, it is now. Bring on the lofts and the density.

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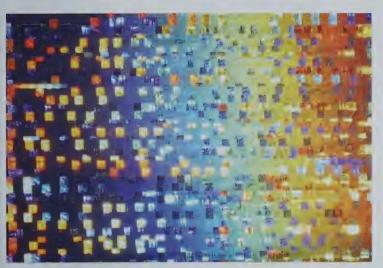
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Abhinand Lath's SensiTile walls

Design Life Now: National Design Triennial

Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum, New York City December 8, 2006-July 29, 2007

It's just fun. Design Life Now, the latest installation of the Cooper-Hewitt's National Design Triennial, fills all three floors of the museum's historic mansion with "the most innovative American work of the past three years." It's a buffet of all things design: graphic, product, and fashion as well as architecture and landscape architecture. The 87 featured designers include industry giants (Herman Miller, Boeing, Apple, Google) side-by-side with the notyet-famous. Projects range from book jackets to aluminum chairs, from tents to landscapes. Inspiration abounds. Some objects — like ReadyMade's FedEx-box CD rack — even offer ideas to try at home.

Design Life Now's most intriguing objects are those that you can touch, hear, or interact with. With no electronics, Abhinand Lath's SensiTile walls and flooring conduct and transmit light as they respond to the shadow of your hand moving across the surface. More high tech, the luminosity and sound intensity of Meejin Yoon's LED installation varies as people

walk by; kids and adults alike can be seen dancing in the path of the beams. Like a new twist on Impressionist painting, the super-size images on Lia Cook's woven tapestries dissolve into a series of pixilated stitches when you get up close. The architecture and landscape projects — represented by drawings and models — fall flat compared to their more tactile counterparts.

The Cooper-Hewitt claims that the work follows four themes -- "emulating life,""community,""hand-crafted and do-it-yourself," and "transformation" -though without the press packet I would never have known. Neither overly didactic nor overwhelmingly organized, the exhibition (developed by curators Barbara Bloemink, Ellen Lupton, Matilda McQuaid, and Brooke Hodge) lets the objects speak for themselves. Walking through is like a romp through a very cluttered attic filled with the coolest of things.

NEXUS

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Tenacity, vision, deep pockets, shrewd advisors, and political ambition: after six years. The Green Roundtable, with the support of dozens of sponsors, has opened NEXUS in downtown Boston. Calling itself the nation's first full-immersion green building experience, NEXUS includes over 6,000 square feet of green product showrooms, a resource and sample library, networking areas, a café, and a team of experts ready to guide visitors through the handsome, open, museum-like space.

Talk about drinking your own Kool-Aid. Every material and system in the space was designed and built using sustainable measures and methods. Walk right in during business hours or rent the place to hold a meeting or throw a party. NEXUS offers programs for many audiences, including the general public. It's also a clearinghouse for information from allied organizations. Interested in LEED, energy conservation, sprawl, policy, clean water, affordable housing, or brownfields? NEXUS will make you smarter. And you can enjoy a nice cup of tea in the bargain.

Pamela de Oliveira-Smith is the managing editor of ArchitectureBoston and director of communications and marketing for the BSA.



Harvard Design Magazine Forum

Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston January 17, 2007



The ICA has dominated the press recentlyit's the first museum to be built in Boston in a century, it's the first major American building by Diller Scofidio + Renfro (which was why they were considered for the ICA competition), and it's a lot cooler looking than most of the other things going up around here. As part of the opening celebration, the ICA teamed up with the

Harvard Graduate School of Design to hold a panel discussion about its concept, design, and construction. The four panelists, Elizabeth Diller, Preston Scott Cohen (a GSD professor), Robert Campbell, and William Saunders, editor of Harvard Design Magazine, sat at a table in the new theater space with their backs to the harbor view.

Diller described how she and her partner Ricardo Scofidio won the ICA competition. They had precious little built work. The only thing approximating construction was hlur, an installation for the Swiss Expo 2002, which Diller called "the world's largest sprinkler." In fact, Diller revealed, Peter Zumthor was ICA executive director Iill Medvedow's clear favorite. "But Zumthor blew the public forum part of the selection process," she said, "He was too self-assured and wasn't generous about his work in the context of Boston. He didn't show pictures, claiming his work 'unphotographable," Suddenly she and Scofidio found themselves at the top of the list.

"We never wanted to be architects," Diller said, referring to the work she had done with

Scofidio prior to the ICA competition. "We spent most of our time on the other side of the museum wall as artists." Sincere theoreticians, they published, taught, and dreamed about how architecture and technology mediate our experience. Their speculative proposals involved TV monitors, X-ray machines, Duchamp-inspired valises, and bizarrely ironed shirts. Their work revealed rare academic humor that few partnerships achieve.

Diller and Scofidio's ICA building makes me wonder how practicing theorists are changing what architecture looks and feels like. Cohen, a theorist himself who is deeply involved in construction drawings for his first building project, in Tel Aviv, made several attempts at the forum to engage the panelists on a pedantic level by trying to draw inferences from Diller's earlier work. Within five minutes of his quasi-lecture, he looked very lonely next to the architect, the writer, and the editor.

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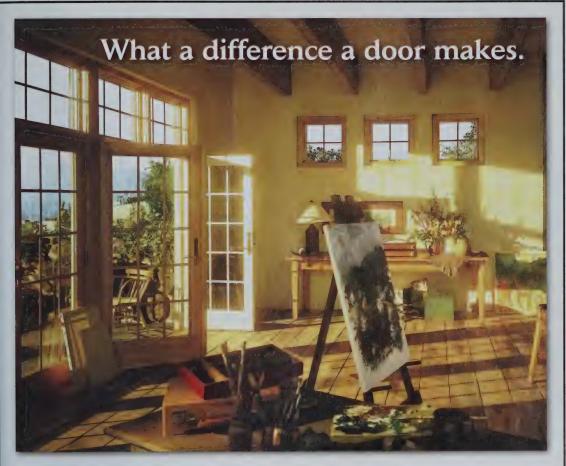
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The Foundation

The place: The MacDowell Colony in Peterborough, New Hampshire. Founded in 1907 continuously operating artists' colony. Willa Cather, Aaron Copland, and Thornton Wilder all came here to work. Today the Colony offers residencies to writers; composers; architects; and visual, performance, and inter-disciplinary artists.

The building: The Log Cabin, built in 1899 for Edward MacDowell to use as a studio. It is the Colony's seminal building: Edward's experience writing music there, alone, deep in the woods, inspired the MacDowells to begin building other artists' studios on their 450 acres.

The project: Years of frost heave and groundwater have slid the cabin forward on its old rubble foundation; it looks like its big stone chimney is trying to shove it down the hill. The current project will rebuild the foundation, add a passive drain-tile system to route water away from the building; and create on-grade access to the site. Today's job: to pour the new concrete foundation.

8:15 Randy and Shawn, from the concrete company, arrive at the site. Like all of the Colony's 32 studios, the cabin is secluded and private, hidden down a dirt road in the woods. Over the past few days, Randy and Shawn have built a concrete platform deep beneath the jacked-up cabin, traced the lines of the new sub-foundation on it in chalk, and built thick plywood formwork into which the concrete for the foundation walls will be poured.

8:18 Another truck drives up. "Who's that?" Randy wonders.

A man and a woman, both holding lit cigarettes, jump out. They're the masons, a husband-and-wife team, who will pile up the original stones to recreate the appearance of the cabin's rustic foundation once the new concrete work is finished. They stalk around the building, getting a sense of what the job is going to be like, and talking about scheduling. "We'll be out of here by tomorrow," Randy says.

The woman drags on her cigarette and

nods. "We'll be back Monday, then."

One version of the story is that Marian built the log cabin as a surprise for her husband, because he found working at home too distracting. When it was finished, she took him out for a walk in the woods and astonished him by leading him to his new studio.

8:24 A last piece of the plywood formwork still needs to be constructed underneath the cabin's stone chimney. Shawn climbs down into the tight space, dislodging loose dirt as he goes. "By the time I get out of here I'm going to look like a piece of Shake'N' Bake chicken."

8:25 Shawn says from the hole: "Hey, mister, we've got a problem. This isn't going to work."

The big steel beams on which the cabin rests won't allow for proper positioning of the plywood forms.

"Take a saw," Randy says, "and cut a couple of curves into the plywood."



8:35 Both men are down in the hole under the chimney, using a power saw to cut notched contours into a plywood form, gauging it against the beam as they go.

8:41 Shawn has climbed out of the hole and is handing down different widths of plywood to Randy.

"You got any twelves left?"

"Just some short twelves. I've got some fourteens though."

"OK, give me a fourteen. That'll work." The dimensions and contours beneath the cabin are irregular and nothing is quite square, so Randy is solving spatial puzzles and improvising, down in the darkness.

Sounds of hammering, and Randy whistling.

Another version is that Marian intended the log cabin as a surprise; but Edward was walking in the woods one day, found the workmen, and at first took them for trespassers or poachers. When they told him what they were actually doing on his property, Edward was delighted and got involved in the cabin's design.

9:10 Shawn and Randy work their way around the plywood forms, reinforcing the corners and walls with metal strapping, to ensure maximum stability when the concrete is poured.

9:50 Using a level as a guide, the men hammer nails partway into the plywood every couple of feet. When the concrete is being poured, the nails will serve as visual indicators of the grade changes along the slope, so that the concrete can be leveled off just below grade.

10:12 Randy calls the office on his cell phone. "Hey, mister. Nineteen seventy-five. And keep it at four." The first number refers to the yardage of concrete that will be required; the second figure indicates the consistency of the mixture. Four is a relatively tight mix, which Randy has specified in order to prevent slumping, a potential concern on a sloped site that involves so many drops and level changes.

10:24 Attaching a slim hose to a tank on his truck, Randy begins spraying the insides of the plywood forms with oil, like greasing a cake pan before the batter is poured in.

The concrete mixer comes slowly through the foggy woods, looking like an illustration from some jaunty old children's book.

Shawn is working with a level in the deep hole beneath the chimney, a tricky space because he has to maneuver around the two massive steel support beams. These guys have worked together forever; they don't seem to be paying any attention to each other, but the instant Randy has finished spraying the easily accessible areas, he holds out the hose and Shawn is there to take it and start greasing the space under the chimney.

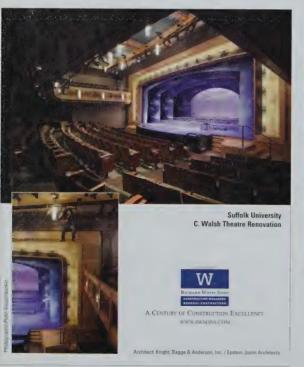
The other version is that Marian had the log cabin built for her husband, and that he knew about it all along.

10:44 It's raining and very cold. Randy and Shawn begin wedging a series of drop panels at intervals between the plywood forms; these will allow the concrete in different sections to be topped off at different levels, so that the contour of the foundation will step, rather than slant, down the steep hillside.

11:00 Randy oils the drop panels and coils up the hose. Shawn does some further reinforcement of the plywood forms, strapping the seams and corners even more tightly.

11:05 Tidying the site and preparing for the arrival of the concrete truck. Randy tosses down some shovels to Shawn, who is standing on one of the big steel beams beneath the cabin, and Shawn tosses him the levels and the saws — all this throwing and catching of heavy equipment happening with the balletic ease of a juggling act.

Shawn: "OK, mister, I think that's it." Randy, walking around for one last





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critical look: "Just a little more strapping on this corner."

11:26 The concrete mixer comes slowly through the foggy woods, looking like an illustration from some jaunty old children's book: red diamond shapes on its spinning drum, steam chuffing from its funnel, its long segmented chute sticking out in front like an elephant's trunk.

11:27 Right down to business. The truck pulls up, the chute unfolds, and wet concrete starts spurting out of it with a gravelly rushing sound before Randy has even made it out of the hole where he's been positioning the chute. He stands astride the plywood forms, cuing the truck operator with quick hand signals — speed up, slow down, stop, go, left, right. When the first section is roughly filled, the driver raises the chute, Randy repositions it, and Shawn uses a shovel to tamp down the heavy mixture.

11:50 The first concrete truck backs away from the site to be replaced by a second.

The driver of the second truck gets out to chat briefly with Randy and Shawn. "How's it going?"

"Same old same old."

The first driver parks farther down the dirt road and begins a meticulous cleaning of his truck, hosing down the surfaces, brushing the chute.

The rain has turned to sleet.

Edward used the cabin as a studio for only a few years before his health failed. Not wanting the space to sit empty, the MacDowells decided to invite another artist to come work there. Edward, a trustee of the new American Academy in Rome, began to imagine a similar retreat that would offer artists a combination of solitude and community. After his death, Marian mortgaged, concertized, and lectured—relentlessly raising money to expand and fortify the Colony.

1:00 The last concrete is poured. This layer is wetter, so the mixture is easier to handle. Randy and Shawn go over its pudding-like

surface with shovels and paddles, leaving it smooth and shining. The concrete trucks have left. Randy and Shawn pack up their tools — the shovels, the extra plywood pieces — and drive away. They'll come back tomorrow to remove the formwork from the concrete, which will take only a day to become solid.

The interior of the Log Cabin is temporarily inaccessible, marooned in mid-air by the foundation work. But the building's simple contents, preserved from Edward's time there, are easy to visualize, having been replicated repeatedly in the Colony's other studios. The façades of the various studios range from Tudor half-timbering to white clapboard to an elegant, austere reproduction of a Swiss chapel Marian admired. But inside there is always a generous writing table, and a fireplace and a cot. And light, and time, and silence.

Joan Wickersham's new book, most of which was written at the MacDowell Colony, will be published by Harcourt in 2008.

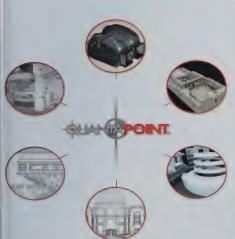
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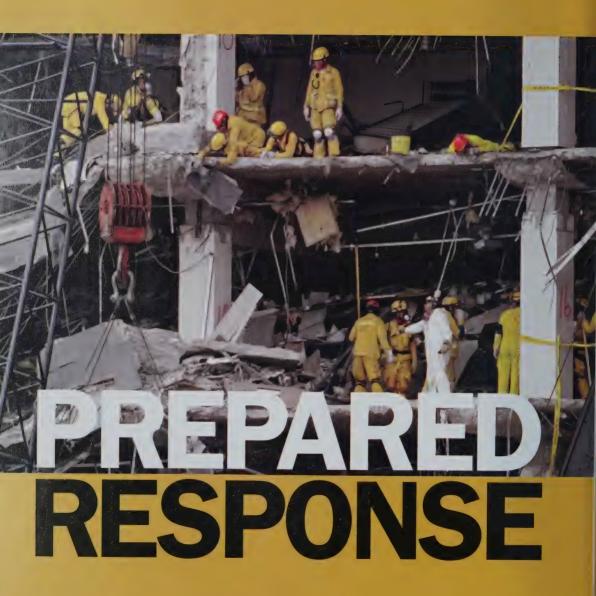
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Elizabeth Padjen: Our response to disaster seems to follow a predictable pattern: something terrible happens, everyone reacts to it, life gets back to normal, and no one wants to think about terrible things any more. But these days, there seems to be more general awareness that terrible things do happen, perhaps because of events that have been in the news recently: Katrina; the tsunami in the Indian Ocean; the explosion in Danvers; the floods in Jakarta; the ongoing discussion about LNG tankers; and of course, the events of 9/11. All that contributes to a new awareness that disasters can happen anytime, anywhere, for any number of reasons. It seems to be a good moment to talk about preparedness and response and to explore the role of the design community in planning for such events.

enough, or far away enough, that they were just another minor news item and we moved on. The Indian Ocean tsunami, with the magnitude of the devastation and the unpreparedness of the region, was one of the first to draw international awareness and trigger a massive response. Then there was Katrina, in many ways the same thing: a disaster of substantial scale, impacting a broad area that already faces economic challenges. And again, there was a huge response.

Rescue workers in the aftermath of the Oklahoma City bombing.

Arnold Howitt: The question of scale is an interesting one. We're building things in harm's way to a greater degree than ever before. In our society, people are drawn to coastal areas and to flood plains for a variety of reasons, and of course these are the regions that are particularly vulnerable. In less-developed countries, they are also often the cheapest places to build.

But it's the almost-instantaneous availability of photographs, video, and communications about these events that is shaping our reaction to them. Had the tsunami happened 50 or 75 years ago, it would have taken a while for us to find out about it. The experience would not have been conveyed so vividly, and people undoubtedly would have had a much harder time putting themselves in the position of those who were affected by it. But when you saw those images, and perhaps in that case also because there were a lot of Western tourists who were affected, the stories resonated in a way that made them real — as with New Orleans and certainly the World Trade Center.

Robert Cowherd: The New York Times did a fascinating piece shortly after the tsunami [January 2, 2005], which looked at several natural disasters that happened in the past. They looked at population concentrations and settlement patterns. For example, the population of Assam, India has tripled since the 1950 earthquake that caused the deaths of 1,500 people. They asked how many deaths there would be if that same earthquake happened today. And it was an order of magnitude larger. That same earthquake would kill between 30,000 and 50,000 today, simply because the settlement patterns in the past few decades have changed so radically.

William Barry: You would hope that that increased order of magnitude would be somewhat tempered by better design and construction technology. But in reality, that improved knowledge affects a relatively small percentage of structures, mostly at the higher end. Most of the people living in harm's way are not living in structures that are designed and built to the best of our technical ability.

Elizabeth Padjen: That's certainly true here in Boston. We had a significant earthquake in 1755 centered on Cape Ann, yet the seismic code here wasn't introduced until 1975. A very small percentage of buildings here have been designed with seismic considerations in mind. So the size of the population that might be affected by an earthquake is enormous.

Arnold Howitt: My colleague Dutch Leonard talks about alternative time-frames for thinking about disaster and response. For example, considering Katrina, you would say that the first would be centuries long: the path of the river, the way in which the sediment builds up, the initial decision to locate the city of New Orleans at that point in the river. Then there are factors that evolve over the course of decades, such as building codes and neighborhood development patterns. Then there are the issues that fill a time-frame of a few years, such as the development of emergency evacuation plans. And finally you have the very tight time-frame immediately before and after the hurricane struck, in which decisions were made by individual agencies at various levels of government. Each of those time-frames,

with the possible exception of those occurring over centuries, represents a conceivable target of interventions or changes in policy.

Elizabeth Padjen: Charlie, what's been your experience in coming into a community after a disaster? What are the common factors?

Charles Harper: In some respects, the worst of a disaster occurs about 90 to 120 days after the event, which is when the mental health of the community takes a hit. But all disasters look pretty much the same the day after. There's always a group of politicians and community leaders sitting around, saying, "Don't worry, we're going to put it back just like it was." Which in my opinion is the biggest mistake you can make. You need to put it back better than it was, which means you've got to make decisions about mitigation. Otherwise, you're just rebuilding the disaster all over again. If you make it better than it was, that alone will build a worthwhile memorial to the people who suffered and died in the disaster. But it's very difficult to get the politicians off the "just like it was" shtick.

Robert Cowherd: The remarkable similarity between the postdisaster situations in Sumatra and New Orleans was the shocking realization that government, while it's uniquely capable of doing certain things very well, is remarkably incapable of doing many of the things we all assume it would do well. The disappointment with government in New Orleans is well known. In Sumatra, the survivors were waiting around for help, and it took a while to realize that help wasn't coming, that they needed to organize on their own and mobilize their own efforts. The organization I worked with was a survivor-based organization that gathered young men between the ages of 15 and 50 — young men were really the only ones who survived, as women, children, and the elderly died in disproportionate numbers. This had the double benefit of getting something done and also giving them something to do, rather than sitting around in tents getting bitten by mosquitoes and wondering how they can go on without their families.

Charles Harper: That's an important lesson. People need to be empowered so they can act. I think the response to most of the disasters that we have in this country is victimization, which is not helpful or healthy. Generally speaking, our government responds pretty well, but the response, or lack of response, to Katrina was probably one of the worst things that has ever

happened in this country, and it was perpetrated by the federal government. Still, Katrina was a completely different disaster in Mississippi from what it was in Louisiana.

William Barry: That was because of the physical differences — topography, geology, development patterns, and building — and the differences in populations. The people in Mississippi tended to be better off economically and they were geographically more dispersed. But at the risk of getting myself in trouble with all my Louisiana friends, I'd say a big difference was the pre-disaster effectiveness of government, which functioned reasonably well in Mississippi. The ability to respond and provide assistance as well as to accept assistance offered from outside is directly impacted by how effective that government was before the event.

Elizabeth Padjen: What are some of the differences in state and local governments that make some better able to respond?

Arnold Howitt: There are a number of factors. Certainly, there are different cultures of emergency management in different states and different metropolitan areas. It's very striking to compare what you see in California and Florida with other states — California and Florida are accustomed to frequent natural disasters and the level of preparation is very strong. By contrast, Colorado and Massachusetts don't have a lot of natural disasters; recent ones have mostly been severe winter storms.

Another kind of culture of preparedness grows around major special events. For example, in recent years, Colorado has had visits by the pope and meetings of the G7. Boston frequently hosts big events: Tall Ships, Fourth of July, First Night, the last Democratic national convention. So the emergency management culture of those states is oriented toward relatively mild natural disasters and special events. The significant difference is that they are predictable events. They require preparation, but they often don't require execution of emergency responses. And that's a very different mindset.

The second dimension that's really important is that nobody would have put either New Orleans or the state of Louisiana on the list of best-governed communities in the United States. Although Mississippi has historically not been high on that list either, it has actually improved significantly over the last couple of decades. The current governor of Mississippi is very well plugged in to

DISASTER OVER TIME

Mount Vesuvius, Pompeii

Great Boston Fire

Galveston Hurricane

1872

79 A.D.

1900







federal circles because of his political background and is apparently a very capable manager.

Elizabeth Padjen: Charlie, do you see differences in terms of how organized the design professionals are in different regions?

Charles Harper: Enormous differences. Two of the things that help an area recover quickly are strong politicians and the degree to which the local design professionals participate in political life. After the initial response, architects can bring a special expertise to disaster recovery; their training prepares them for those situations and they probably react to them better than a lot of other people. But one of the big problems with the design profession is that we hesitate to step up beforehand in the planning and preparedness process and, as a result, we get left out when the time comes.

William Barry: Looking back on it, I wonder if the design community, urban designers in particular, didn't descend upon New Orleans all too quickly with all too much vim and vigor, when people were still in shock.

Charles Harper: Absolutely. That was not the time to get involved. There are different points in the timeline after a disaster that require different kinds of responses from professionals. After the initial emergency, you need assessment and stabilization.

Elizabeth Padjen: That brings up the question of the role of outside experts and how they are perceived. What is the role for outsiders versus the people who are within the community?

Charles Harper: My whole push has always been to organize the insiders — to prepare the local people to act when the time comes. They're going to be accepted better than anybody else. As an outsider, you can only stay so long before you wear out your welcome. In the disasters that I have experienced, recovery has been best and most sustained when the local people are strong, get involved, and drive the process. My city of Wichita Falls, Texas, suffered a tornado in 1979 that was at the time the largest insured disaster to date. A billion dollars, which doesn't seem so much now. But the recovery process was remarkable — it actually won awards — because of community organization and participation. Today you would not know we suffered such a catastrophe.

Architects bring a special expertise to disaster recovery.

- Charles Harper FAIA

Elizabeth Padjen: New Orleans and the tsunami have been the focus of an outpouring of goodwill. This may be an unkind question, but how useful, really, are some of these efforts? It seems as though every design school has sent students down to New Orleans, and they all have offered studios on redesigning sections of New Orleans or designing new housing prototypes. It undoubtedly has enormous educational value, especially in terms of sensitizing a generation of students to some critical social, technical, and ecological issues. But has this been truly useful to the people in the affected communities?

Robert Cowherd: After the tsunami, I met with the head of public works for the city of Banda Aceh. He said, "Oh my God, not another architect!" He had been inundated with architects showing up with their solutions to everybody's problems: a pre-fab aluminum panel, or a pre-fab concrete panel; a floating this, or a floating that. Crazy solutions. Fortunately, I introduced myself as a planner, I said, "I have no solutions. I'm coming empty-handed. I'm not being paid by anyone. I'm just here." He put his arm around me. He had had to set aside two sites for architects to build their sample houses, just to get them out of his hair. So this was an example of architects wanting to do the right thing, and the local response being, "Excuse me, but we know how to build houses, thank you very much. What we need is to figure out how to reorganize our society to work without women and children and old people. All we have left is a lot of bachelors."

The professionals had a specific role to play, but it wasn't one of stepping in and taking command. They really had to work in a more flexible, loose way. We had to come up with a scheme for redistributing land based on former ownership, while respecting the inheritors. There was no unclaimed land despite the loss of 85 percent of the population in many of these communities. If the Indonesians rebuilt their communities exactly as they had been, they'd end up with houses all over the landscape — a mosaic pattern of reconstruction, because of the smaller population.

San Francisco Earthquake Providence, Rhode Island Great Hurricane of '38 Boston, Cocoanut Grove fire

1906

193

1942







All of the actors — government, the profession, the people have an important role to play.

- Robert Cowherd

That also wouldn't work socially, because the people need to be surrounded by their neighbors and near their mosque.

When you are able to coordinate your efforts with others who are also trying to contribute, all of a sudden the enormity of the problem suggests that everyone who has anything to contribute should come. But as soon as you get the sense that things are out of control, that the process can't be managed, you start wanting to push people away. The more open and flexible and coordinated the culture of response is, the greater capacity to involve everyone who wants to contribute.

Elizabeth Padjen: And yet, at the time of a disaster, people seem to yearn for authority and control.

Robert Cowherd: All of the actors — government, the profession, the people — have an important role to play. And each, in varying degrees, has an instinct for top-down command-control of the situation: no one else is going to do it right so I have to take control. That can often interfere with effective recovery. There are some things that absolutely have to be controlled from the top; they won't happen otherwise. But there is a vast area of activity that cannot be effectively accomplished from the top-down.

That was the big lesson I gained from the experience in Sumatra. The scale of the situation was so vast that the Indonesian military was overwhelmed. The United Nations was overwhelmed. There was no single entity that could possibly entertain the fantasy that they could command and control the whole situation. So what quickly evolved was an open-source, flexible system, where things would be coordinated at different levels. Things that lent themselves to top-down control, like the rebuilding of roads, were handled by the military. But when you had to reach 500,000 people, you had to distribute control.

Elizabeth Padjen: We tend to think in terms of recruiting teams of specialists: someone is the water expert, someone is the infrastructure expert. But the notion of breaking down these distinctions perhaps something akin to the Sumatran open-source experience strikes me as a very different way of coordinating responses. It resonates with something written by Don Dusenberry, a principal at the engineering firm Simpson Gumpertz & Heger. He wrote about building design after 9/11, suggesting the same idea at a different scale: "Our pre-9/11 assumption that fire protection, sprinkler, and egress systems would function when needed is now challenged. If it did not occur to us before, we now know that protection of occupants in buildings in multi-hazard events that couple threats such as structural damage, blast, fire, earthquake, cannot be considered on a system-by-system basis. Perhaps the biggest challenge in this new era is to provide coordinated and redundant building systems that are robust enough to survive previously unimaginable trauma." That notion of coordinated and redundant systems strikes me as a way of resolving some of these issues. People in management positions think along those lines. Is that paradigm finding a place in the world of emergency preparedness?

Arnold Howitt: It's beginning to, although not always effectively. The redundancy issue is complicated because, on the one hand, you want to have something that's survivable and, on the other hand, you don't want to spend a lot of money on things that will never be needed.

The questions are hard: How do you figure out what the core emergency response resources ought to be in every community? How do you persuade communities they don't need to do too much beyond that? How do you think through the question of where to place additional resources — regionally? statewide? Are there certain kinds of very specialized resources that should be provided only at the federal level? And if so, then what is the tradeoff in terms of response time?

We're only at the early stages of thinking that through for individual states, and we haven't really done a very good job of thinking through at the federal level what those resources are, where they ought to be, and how to allocate them geographically, so they can be ready when emergencies strike.

Robert Cowherd: The question of specialization also needs to be part of that process. My sense is that specialization holds us back

DISASTER OVER TIME | Mount St. Helens eruption | Chernobyl explosion | Hurricane Andrew | 1980 | 1986 | 1992

after a certain moment. All of these disaster preparedness plans are absolutely essential, and there are very smart people trying to predict and prepare for certain events. But as 9/11 pointed out, there are some combinations that you simply can't completely predict and provide for.

And that's where the lesson of flexibility comes in. At its simplest, it's the flexibility to cross a jurisdictional boundary, to respond to something that might be a next-door-neighbor's problem. Specialization, at a certain point, places a serious limitation on how to respond effectively. Flexibility of roles is an essential component. You need a community of flexible responders who are not crippled by thinking, well, I'm not the expert in turning off the gas in my house. In an earthquake, everyone should be an expert in turning off the gas in any house.

One of the great things that happened in response to the tsunami was that the United Nations High Commission for Refugees set up a tent with two laptops, and it became an information exchange for anyone who showed up. They had reports, plans, and guidelines collected from the Internet and from experts all over the world. You could download anything onto a flashdrive, and they'd encourage you to add in your own photographs and reports. And they had weekly coordinating meetings for every sector of the recovery process, not to control what was happening but explicitly to prevent anyone from indulging the instinct to control everything that was happening. Everyone was sharing resources.

Arnold Howitt: The US has recently adopted another paradigm, a model called the Incident Management System, which is based on experiences in wildland firefighting over the last 35 years. It addressed the problem that, if you have a big fire, lots of people show up who have never worked together before. So it features a management system that essentially defines the roles that would be played and trains people both in executing these functions and also in relating to each other; so that now, when people show up, they have a methodology. And it works because even though people are taking on responsibilities that might be different from their day jobs, they have been trained in them and practiced them in real life over and over again. The system that previously existed at the state and local levels was a bit in conflict with the way the federal government responds, and those conflicts have not been completely worked out. And in Hurricane Katrina, it of course failed miserably.

Elizabeth Padjen: Let's return to the problem of recovery and rebuilding. How do you get community consensus when everyone is so traumatized? How do you move beyond "let's build it just as it was" because that's what the emotional need is at that moment?

Robert Cowherd: It's actually a related topic. We need to shift from the power of our expertise and our professional tendency to control things to what Jürgen Habermas referred to as "emancipatory knowledge" — offering our knowledge to people in a way that empowers them to work through things and develop consensus.

William Barry: And yet you need leadership to get beyond the disaster into recovery. Even if you have an excellent emergencypreparedness plan in place, if you don't have true leadership at the moment you need it, it's not going to succeed. Someone must be willing to stand up and say, "We want to restore your sense of place, your sense of community. The actual buildings may have to be a little different."

Charles Harper: You do that through the local people grabbing control of the process very quickly after the disaster. They must be involved in everything. It's a political issue — the cities that recover most quickly are the ones where government allows that kind of empowerment.

Arnold Howitt: Leadership in these circumstances is quite complex. In one important dimension, it means people who are brave enough to say things that might be contrary to the instinct of reassurance, even contrary to the notion that you need big ideas about what should be done. The other dimension, which is not necessarily contradictory, is that leadership can also be about engineering consent — finding viable compromises among alternative visions of what the community was, is, and could become.

Robert Cowherd: We should clarify the term "engineering consent." A lot of people look for consent with the "right" answer already in mind, and engineering in that sense is doomed. People aren't dumb. The only successful way to effect big changes is to lay it all out with an open-ended question: What must we do? What can we do?

Hurricane Katrina

Danvers, Massachusetts industrial explosion

New Orleans tornado

2006

2007







Charles Harper: We also need to remember that a lot of good things can come out of a disaster. But the process needs to allow them to surface. And then you need to continually revisit and revise your process based on what you learn in each case. For example, at one time, the Corps of Engineers handled all the significant disaster recoveries. Its approach to recovery was to bring in bulldozers — until a tornado destroyed a large Olmsted park in downtown Louisville. The Corps was ready to clear the whole thing until the local architects literally threw themselves in front of the bulldozers. That got us thinking about developing a process that was more humane; coincidentally, a number of people and organizations had come to a similar conclusion. And so we — I say "we" because I testified in Washington for this on behalf of the AIA - proposed a new entity, which became FEMA [the Federal Emergency Management Agency]. The first time it was used, by the way, was in Wichita Falls. The idea was that FEMA would support the local people and communities; its great weakness is that Congress saw fit to make its director a political appointment.

Elizabeth Padjen: I suspect that most people don't think in terms of designing a process for recovery when they think about preparedness.

Arnold Howitt: The psychology of preparedness is very complex. Max Bazerman and Michael Watkins, from the Harvard Business School, wrote a book called *Predictable Surprises*. It's based on the

premise that most organizations already know all the potential disasters that might affect them — they can easily make a list. Yet somehow they don't seem to prepare for the things on that list, which at the moment of disaster, become predictable surprises. The authors develop a set of psychological, organizational, and political explanations for that and try to get people focused on how to overcome it.

Robert Cowherd: We should also mention Jared Diamond's book *Collapse*, which looks back in time at predictable surprises, where highly advanced civilizations saw the end coming with great clarity, yet did nothing. It's a chilling book and relates directly to our own situation with rising sea levels and global climate change. The sense I get from reading his book is that we are doomed. So it's reassuring to have the Dutch to look at.

In the eighth century, a significant portion of the Dutch population was killed by a flood, and they developed a polder mentality, that is, a culture of dealing with the landscape. It's a design culture and a political culture. When they build flood protection, it's not for a category three storm. When they built the floodgates in the Port of Rotterdam, they predicted the biggest sea event in the next 10,000 years and built for that. We don't even build for a 100-year storm. So there are choices that can be made. Some would say it's a question of leadership, some would say it's culture, but leadership and culture go together.

William Barry: The Dutch visited New Orleans years ago when they were making a major step in some of their protection systems. They





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In talking about the Dutch, we've returned to the question of what you can do by way of prevention and mitigation before an event. I'd be curious to hear more thoughts about the role of the design professions in prevention and mitigation activities in the United States.

We're all taught in architecture school how to plan. I'm not sure that very many other professionals have that kind of education. We understand the charrette process — how to work quickly, with limited time and under stress, to evaluate conditions and synthesize ideas, come up with solutions, and present them to a public audience. We know how to work with people and communities. That's why nobody can exceed the architect's ability to lead that planning effort or to lead a community through these kinds of processes. I've often said that nobody is better equipped to be the mayor of a city than an architect — which I can say as someone who has served as a mayor.

William Barry The experience of New Orleans shows that an important subset of the design community in these scenarios is the preservation community. The people who focus on that type of work have been invaluable down there, especially in terms of

evaluating damaged structures. But even before a disaster, their role in surveying historic structures — often with regard to properties that might be historically significant and on the National Register — is also extremely valuable. That work allows you to inventory what you have and to take advantage of GPS and GIS technology, so that if nature wipes the slate clean, as it did on the Gulf Coast where even the streets disappeared, you have a way to get your bearings and assess your next steps.

The biggest ally that we have in pre-planning in any city is always the preservation community. They come in very early and stay longer than anybody else does.

Mallan And because they are organized and have their on-the-ground networks in place, they are in a better position to request aid and know how to apply it. We should also mention the Heritage Emergency National Task Force, which has been in place for quite a while.

They do a terrific job — they're trying to get every state to catalogue local historic places. They try to come in very quickly after a disaster and assist in evaluating conditions. They were a great help after Hurricane Hugo in St. Croix in the Virgin Islands, when the Corps of Engineers came in to "fix" all the damage in St. Croix with their bulldozers, by razing all the old Dutch-style buildings with beat-up roofs and blown-out windows,



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which of course could have been fixed up. We got the razing halted thanks to the Task Force, so that they'd have a chance to mark the buildings that actually needed to be torn down and the ones that didn't. They saved the heritage of the island of St. Croix.

Elizabeth Padjen: Which presumably eventually contributed to the economic recovery as well.

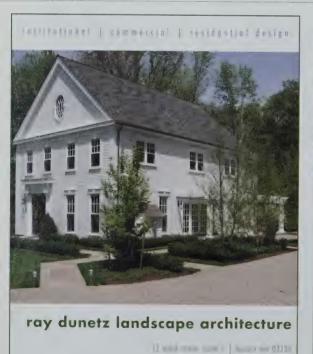
Robert Cowherd: I often look at what worked in Indonesia after the tsunami and realize that the village structure and the social structure centering on the mosque allowed so many things to happen that never would have been possible if the only social structures occurred at the town, the state, and the national levels. They provide very fine-grain levels of hierarchy, down to the neighborhood and the block, and those associations are actually extremely important in the daily lives of the local people. Here in the United States, perhaps one of the reasons why the heritage groups have been so effective is that they are able to act on a local level in a way that municipalities do not. We might benefit from more capacity-building at that small social scale, above the family but below the municipality.

William Barry: Neighborhoods are central to the real character of New Orleans, and the neighborhood scale associations have been central to recovery. Where community was strong in an area before the disaster, you see greater success in recovery.

Elizabeth Padjen: One way to build that capacity in this region is to develop a network of design professionals - architects, planners, engineers, and builders — who are interested in preparedness and recovery issues. The BSA and the design community have been extraordinarily generous in their response to disasters, making substantial cash donations. And there are many individuals who have responded with donations of their time, labor, and expertise. But we don't yet have a coordinated effort in place to address disasters here and elsewhere to the degree to which we are capable.

Charles Harper: Let me say how important it is to raise the awareness of the architectural and planning community in this region about a disaster that may or may not happen in your lifetime—although it's frequently helpful to remind people that every state in this country has experienced a tornado in every month of the year, with the exception of the state of Maine, which hasn't had one in January. But let me also warn: be prepared for failure. It happens more than success does. An initiative gets started and goes great guns for a while, but then the energy can run out. You must be prepared for failure, but not give up. Keep after it, and you'll be better off in the long run. Later on, eventually, people will be grateful that you did.

Editor's note: New England design professionals and allies interested in the Boston Society of Architects' efforts to build a disaster preparedness and recovery network are invited to e-mail BSA director Richard Fitzgerald at rfitzgerald@architects.org.



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Unintended Consequences

A catalogue of catastrophes by Hubert Murray AIA, RIBA

rom Prometheus to Faust, and from the cathedrals of the Middle Ages to London's Millennium Dome, Western culture is replete with the myth and the reality of striving beyond the norm, wagering all against the risk of simple failure or abject disaster. As many architects know, success and failure are both the children of ambition, each an education, sweet or bitter. Working up the scale from the mildest of unintended outcomes to the most egregious catastrophe, a taxonomy of disaster quickly emerges.

First there are the **magisterial misconceptions**, those projects ably executed but wrongly conceived. Some are misconceived within their own terms — France's new *Bibliothèque Nationale* comes to mind with its stacks in the air and reading rooms in the basement. Then there are those that fail for having been overtaken by events in the changing world about them. As Emily Thompson points out in her brilliant *Soundscape of Modernity*, Radio City Music Hall in Rockefeller Center was the finest technological realization of electro-acoustic auditorium design of its time. When it opened in 1932, however, it was ignored by audiences and critics alike as being "thoroughly characteristic of the pre-1929 age of elephantiasis and vulgarity" and the "most expensive white elephant in the world."

Public embarrassments refer mainly to bureaucratic blunders, usually concerning budget and schedule, but without fatality. Examples abound: the Sydney Opera House and the Channel Tunnel were each wildly over budget and behind schedule. Bearing in mind that these large projects are often deliberately low-balled so as not to frighten off investors or taxpayers, the short-term anxieties of time and money quickly vanish in the mists of time if the completed project serves its purpose well. Indeed it is the low-cost and quickly executed projects for which we repent at leisure.

The **lethal error** is the type of disaster caused primarily by a technical mistake leading to actual or potential loss of life. A recent example is the 2004 collapse of the roof at the Charles de Gaulle airport (causing four deaths and three injuries), due to technical error and organizational failure. "Near misses" in this category include London's Millennium Bridge, which started swaying when

crowds walked on it; and New York's Citicorp Center, whose initial structural vulnerability to strong winds was described in Joe Morgenstern's now-classic 1995 *New Yorker* story, "The Fifty-Nine Story Crisis." Both have been fixed without loss of life, and for his candor, Citicorp engineer William LeMessurier is now considered a model of professional ethical behavior.

Beyond the physical failure of individual structures there are the **social disasters** enshrined in the urban clearances of the 1950s and '60s, the single-minded social engineering that was visited upon the urban poor across the world. In Europe, the devastation of wartime bombing was both catalyst and opportunity for urban renewal on this vast and alienating scale. In the United States, it was the migration into the big cities for the postwar industrial boom that offered both the impetus and the occasion for providing housing in such massive quantities. Modernism carried with it the mission for social cleansing by eradicating the slums and relocating entire communities either to heroic new projects within the city or to the suburbs.

At the top of the heap is disaster on the grandest scale, the **environmental catastrophe** that promises death and destruction at a regional or continental scale. The Aral Sea of northern Uzbekistan was sucked dry by the Soviet regime that used it as a reservoir for irrigating the vast hinterland for cotton. Africa's Lake Nyanza (Lake Victoria) is a sump of social, economic, and ecological pestilence following the introduction of the omnivorous Nile perch. Southwest Utah and vast swathes of Nevada are irreversibly damaged by radiation from nuclear testing and dumping.

The lexicon of disaster conveys variations of degree and of kind reflecting at once consequence and intent. While the former is more or less quantifiable in terms of the number of fatalities or the scope of ruination, the latter is beyond measure except in units of arrogance, hubris, greed, ignorance, and incompetence—the coin of the great tragedians. In a fragile biosphere, the distance between misconception and catastrophe has grown alarmingly short.

Hubert Murray AIA, RIBA is the principal of Hubert Murray Architect + Planner in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and is the president of the Boston Society of Architects.

Magisterial Misconception







France's new **Bibliothèque Nationale** (above left), located in La Défense, at the east end of Paris, opened in 1996. The four book-like, L-shaped towers accommodate the stacks of 10 million volumes, exposing the books to direct sunlight. The reading rooms surround an inaccessible courtyard garden below grade. W.G. Sebald, in his novel *Austerlitz*, delivers a scathing attack on the library for its fundamental programmatic flaw — the erasure of memory.

The Cutty Sark (above right), the finest and fastest clipper ship of its day, designed to sail between England and China, was launched on November 23, 1869 — six days after Ferdinand de Lesseps opened the Suez Canal to the relatively shallow-draft steamships that gained an instant advantage over sail.

The Anglo-French Concorde supersonic jet (left), conceived in 1962 and launched into service in 1976, arrived at the dawn of the environmental movement, which severely limited its operations because of noise, damage to historic structures, and destruction of the ozone layer. The jet's wings were effectively clipped, restricting it to limo service for the transatlantic überklasse.

Public Embarrassment





In 1957, Jørn Utzon's design for the **Sydney Opera House** (top) was projected to cost AU\$7.2 million and to be completed in 1963. It actually cost AU\$102 million and was completed in 1973. A World Architecture magazine survey in 2007 reported the Sydney Opera House as the architectural profession's "favorite building."

The Millennium Dome in London (bottom), an engineering marvel (the entire structure weighs less than the air it encloses), was a politician's fantasy, designed to recapture the glory of the Festival of Britain of 1951. The crown of "Cool Britannia" was finished on time and more or less on budget but was a case of a building all dressed up with nowhere to go: only half of the projected number of visitors showed up.

Lethal Error

On May 23, 2004, part of the new roof of the **Charles de Gaulle** airport in Paris (above right) collapsed, killing four people and injuring three. A subsequent report indicated a failure of support struts, a fracture in the shell's edge beam, and the inherent weakness of the long-span shell. Technical issues apart, a critical failure was in the monolithic design build organization in which the owner, designer, and construction manager were all part of the same team, with no third-party review of design or construction protocols.

The **Hyatt Regency Hotel** in Kansas City, Missouri (middle right) was designed with an atrium penetrated by four suspended walkways. On July 17, 1981, in the middle of some festivities, the second- and fourth-floor walkways collapsed, leaving 114 dead and over 200 injured. The ensuing enquiry revealed that the design of the hanger rods had been changed by the fabricator without checking or formal approval by the engineer. It also revealed that even the original design had been inadequate.

The collapse of the **Tay Bridge** in Scotland (below) on December 28, 1879 resulted in a passenger train falling into the estuary below with a loss of 90 lives. An official enquiry concluded that the recently completed bridge had been constructed with substandard materials and had not been braced for wind. Today, the tragedy is noted for a contemporary poem on the subject by William McGonagall, memorable chiefly for the concluding lines of advice: "For the stronger we our houses do build, / The less chance we have of being killed."







Social Disaster

Thamesmead (right) is a "new city" nine miles from Central London. Designed for 50,000 residents by the Greater London Council and started in the late 1960s, it soon became such a by-word for social morbidity that Stanley Kubrick chose it as the set for his study in nihilism, A Clockwork Orange. Impediments to success included garages in lieu of ground-floor units and the pervasive and unremitting use of concrete. Moreover, the population had been evacuated wholesale from various locations in Central London without any serious attempt by the authorities to maintain the residents' old social ties or to create new ones. Privatized under Thatcher, Thamesmead is now a bedroom suburb in (partial) recovery.

The Pruitt-Igoe housing complex (below) in St. Louis, Missouri was completed in 1954 and demolished in 1972. The complex consisted of 33 buildings of 11 stories each, containing 2,870 apartments that were originally planned as segregated housing — African-Americans in Pruitt and whites in Igoe. The 1954 Supreme Court verdict in Brown v. The Board of Education deemed segregation unconstitutional, so Pruitt-Igoe opened as an integrated project. Within two years, nearly all the white residents had left. Bedeviled by the poverty of the remaining residents and the dangers and inconvenience of its skip-stop elevators, the complex was largely abandoned by the mid-'60s.





Environmental Catastrophe





The US military controls 4 million acres of land and 70 percent of the airspace in **Nevada and southwest Utah** (above), and has been using this part of the country as bombing target and ammunition dump for over 40 years. The devastated landscape, heavily irradiated with human and animal casualties, is the subject of the grim photographic portfolios of Richard Misrach (*Desert Cantos*, above) and members of the Atomic Photographers Guild.

The Aral Sea (left) used to be the world's fourth largest lake. From the 1950s through the late 1980s, the Soviet Union drained the lake to irrigate cotton fields in Uzbekistan and southern Russia. What was once a lake is now desert. As a result, temperatures have become more extreme, and windblown salt is devastating both the cotton crops and what towns and cities remain.



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Cassandra Calling

A Prognosticator's **Progress** By Rachel Levitt

he word fiasco is like Justice Potter Stewart's definition of hard-core pornography: most people know it when they see it. Even so, they can't quite put their finger on what differentiates it from a good oldfashioned cataclysm. The problem here is that English is dynamic, unlike French, which has an entire academy dedicated to ensuring people use the language correctly. To figure out how to distinguish fiasco from its many synonyms, it's best to turn first to etymology.

The fun never stops when conjecturing how one obscure word in a foreign tongue joins our evolving lexicon. Fiasco has great roots according to the Oxford English Dictionary, it was originally Italian for "flask." The dictionary tells us that in the mid-19th century, people of the theater referred to a breakdown in a dramatic performance as a fiasco. What's the relationship between messing up on stage and a flask? Several online references cite Italian

glassmakers' terminology — far fiasco, to make a bottle, would be your fall-back if you made a mess of a difficult project. Sounds like one of those spurious Internet stories to me. Perhaps the inadvertent drama was the result of an actor doing his job while in his cups, a libation that no doubt came from a flask. This is my conjecture, but yours is just as valid.

The etymology offers an important distinction: while disasters happen for myriad reasons, fiascos occur as the result of human ineptitude. While mankind may or may not have caused Katrina, for example, the storm provides us with fiascos of the protracted and immediate variety, including decades of levee negligence, evacuation failure, emergency-response failure, and the ensuing reconstruction mess.

With human error at the heart of every fiasco, humans should be able to stop them. The insurance industry makes a valiant effort to discourage fiascos by putting value on risk — making it too expensive to do something really stupid (e.g., if you build one foot above sea level on Nantucket, you will pay a king's ransom to insure your property). But even the insurance industry can be thwarted by those who are determined to ignore the evidence. One of my favorite actuarial anecdotes involves Henry Ford II, Lee Iacocca, Richard Nixon, and those pesky hidden tape recorders. Writer Gareth G. Cook describes the secret Oval Office meeting in 1970 in which the heads of Chrysler and Ford told Nixon to call off a new federal passive-restraint requirement (Washington Monthly, March 1995): "Iacocca was determined to convince the president that the real national interest lay elsewhere. 'You can see,' declared Jacocca. 'that safety has really killed all our business...what safety is doing to us is gonna make inflation.' Nixon was also deeply suspicious of the consumer-safety 'Naderites,' as he called them. 'They're a group of people who aren't one really damn bit interested in safety,' sputtered Nixon. 'What they're interested in is destroying the system." The rule was suspended, and thousands of deaths ensued.

The passive-restraint example introduces an attendant fiasco phenomenon: the modern version of Cassandra, the mythological figure whose punishment for rebuffing Apollo's advances was a powerful precognitive ability that none would heed. In this case, it was Ralph Nader, whose book *Unsafe At Any Speed*, published in 1965, warned Americans of auto safety issues that were consistently ignored by manufacturers for economic reasons. Cassandras, including renegade government officials and freak seismologists, have been popping up like bunnies at Easter lately—people like Mark Fischetti, the science writer who wrote "Drowning New Orleans" in *Scientific American* (October 2001), correctly predicting the Katrina debacle, and former FBI deputy director John O'Neill, whose warnings about al-Qaida only led to a forced retirement and a new job as security chief of the World Trade Center, just in time to die when the towers went down.

The truth is that warding off fiascos requires more than just financial penalties and predictive abilities. Getting people to act responsibly requires a serious investment of time and resources. And sometimes, faced with the worst-case scenario, we just can't figure out how to prevent them. The US government plans to bury huge quantities of radioactive waste in Yucca Mountain — nasty stuff that will remain so for tens of thousands of years. How to communicate to unknown cultures from a distant future that this

While disasters happen for myriad reasons, fiascos occur as the result of human ineptitude.

place is mighty dangerous? Enter the US Department of Energy's Office of Civilian Radioactive Waste Management and the "Yucca Mountain Project," whose charge is to create permanent warning markers on the mountain that will deter intentional or inadvertent human intrusion. But what do "universal warning graphics" look like? Architects, designers, and artists have found endless amusement working for that elusive, impecunious client that is future mankind. Their solutions involve sharp, thorn-like monuments, or variations of the triangular "radioactive" symbol originally designed for the specious fallout shelters of World War II. When I was a kid, I had no idea what this ubiquitous sign was supposed to communicate; I'm probably not alone. All these solutions leave me trembling for future mankind; the futility of it all makes me wonder if ignorance really is bliss.

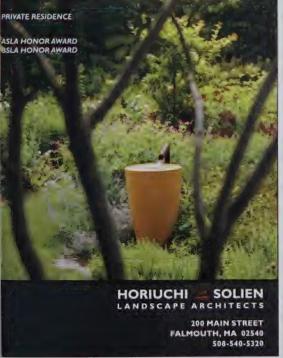
One alternative to a constant state of anxiety is to embrace fiasco and all its chaotic possibilities. Enter the elegantly named chaos theory, which posits that all apparently random systems have an underlying order when studied from the correct perspective. This theory has serious implications in physics, weather, biology, and the inconstant rate of Google hits on Paris Hilton (the single most Googled news topic of 2006). One architect who uses fiasco via chaos theory is Frank Gehry. He folds, cuts, crinkles, throws, and rips his way through design. The resulting edifice is a celebration of an incalculable number of small, irreversible transformations. Greg Lynn and Mark Goulthorpe, both paperless architects, use digital error and random operations to explore what Lynn calls "spatial conceptions," three-dimensional blobs generated by neither human nor computer, but a brave, new hybrid.

The entertainment industry also thrives on fiasco — Britney's latest meltdown, including stunted visits to rehab and a shaved head, enthralls us, if only temporarily. Elvis Presley sabotaged his guitar strings before a show so that they would break "unexpectedly" in the middle of his set, causing the audience to gasp in astonishment. And how popular do you think NASCAR would be without the possibility of a fantastic crash? Doesn't the thought of witnessing a big, fat flop fuel American Idol?

I'd like to give humans the benefit of doubt, but I have to admit, I am concerned about at least one thing, given the present discussion. The pre-9/11 denial of warnings and the subsequent effort to figure out what to do on the World Trade Center site has been a series of nasty fiascos. So remind me: why are we so eager to rebuild the Twin Towers, more aptly named "terrorist teasers"? Isn't an ounce of prevention worth a pound of cure? Let's get a little more proactive about fiasco prevention, and give our Cassandras a little more credit. Maybe then we'll get to enjoy our fiascos in a movie theater with a bag of popcorn instead of in our front yard.

Rachel Levitt is a designer and writer. She is on the faculty in the English department at Northeastern University.







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Can you hear me now?

By Ava J. Abramowitz, Esq., Hon. AIA

When I was invited to write this article, the editor suggested that I focus on why projects fail. "Been there done that," said I. "Wouldn't you rather focus on why projects succeed?" And so we quibbled, but I, being a teacher of negotiation, facing a smack-dab-up-against-the-wall editor with a deadline looming, prevailed. This article is about project success.

It wasn't much of a quibble though, as most projects succeed. When you consider how much construction is done each year in our 50 states, the number of projects that fail doesn't even register on the construction Richter scale. In fact, when a project does fail, especially if it fails big, it is so surprising that newspapers publicize it, forensic architects analyze it, and some insurance company somewhere threatens to raise everyone's premium a tad because of it. Project failure is *that* uncommon.

Further, it was easy for the editor to cave because the primary reason projects fail is the primary reason projects succeed — communication. The higher the quality of the communication is between and among the owner, the architect, the engineers, the other design consultants, the contractor, the subcontractors, and the suppliers, the higher the chance of project success. The inverse is also true. Show me a project where the design and construction teams are no longer civil, and I'll lay you ten to one we are looking at a claim just itching to happen.

Think about it. In order to prevail against you, the Other has to prove that you owed a duty to them, that you breached that duty, and that, because of that breach, they were hurt and you owe them damages. Five things. Now the costs of a lawsuit in this day and age are nothing to scoff at — they can easily approach seven figures. To balance those costs and get a return on that investment, the damages have to be pretty high and the Other has to be committed for the duration which in some courts could last two years, if not more. What engenders that extensive a commitment? What sustains it over the months of delay and the ka-ching, ka-ching of lawyer's bills? Usually anger. And where does that anger come from? Usually the dearly held belief that you never listened to the Other, for if you had, the injury of which they complain never would have happened, or had it happened, the blow would have been softer, or you would have cared more, or at least you would have done something to make it all better. And that, dear reader, is what is known in the trade as a failure of communication.

Don't write a letter to the editor yet. That failure of communication is not your fault, if only because, if you paid close attention in your five or six years at architecture school, and especially if you did well, you were taught the importance of *presenting* to a client. You were never taught the importance of *listening to* a client, if you ever met a client at all. And the putative clients you did chance upon were probably met at jury time when you stood up in front of a crowd of non-listeners and tried to parry their questions while looking as intelligent and knowledgeable as you possibly could. It's not your professors' fault either. They were taught the same way.

Lawyers are taught no differently. Communication, we are assured, is a matter of transmitting information clearly, cogently, and persuasively, so that your side can win. Even a search of the Internet tells us that. I invite you to Google "communication" and see. Most of the definitions focus on giving information to the Other. Yet research shows that nothing is farther from the truth. Effective communication is not about the speaker transmitting information; it is all about the listener receiving information, as anyone who has a cell phone in a non-reception area knows. Like the tree in the forest, if a word falls and there is no one to hear, there is no sound.

Uh, oh. You're rebelling. You do listen to your client. Indeed, that is the primary interaction you have with your client all during programming, schematics, and even design development — they talk, you listen. Maybe, but are they talking about the same things

you are listening for? And are you hearing what they are really saying? And before you say "yes," answer this question: how do you know for sure?

Traditionally, design professionals have been taught to listen for information that can be used in design and, more often than not, to listen for that reason primarily, if not only. To many an architect, that also means you have pre-determined the information you need and believe you have formed the right assumptions and accordingly are asking the right questions. Other professionals have been taught no differently: lawyers go through the same

In your five or six years at architecture school, you were never taught the importance of listening to a client, if you ever met a client at all.

process and then listen for litigation facts; doctors, in turn, listen for diagnostic data. But clients are more than their immediate issue. They have long-term goals and objectives. They have competing demands and inconsistent motivations. And they have come to you, not just for the design, but for a design that, when implemented, will give them that *je ne sais quoi* that will fulfill for them the return on their investment that necessitated their calling you in the first place.

How can you assure yourself that you are listening well, at least well enough to challenge your assumptions and still keep the project on track? Research into communication behaviors gives us the answer. Master these three — *Initiating, Reacting, Clarifying* — and use them all and you will be well on your way to a successful project.

Let's take them one by one. *Initiating*—the putting forward of ideas—is the one that design professionals are most fully trained to do. It involves laying an idea on the table: "I have a proposal to make." Interestingly enough, initiating also involves building on the idea of another, and the best listeners use that behavior a lot. They actively listen for that kernel in the Other's idea that they can tap into and run with: "You said you want a high-tech feel for your employees. We can take that feel and make it attractive to your customers, too."

Reacting is the other communication behavior most professionals have down pat: "Good idea." "I could not disagree more." We are trained to support those ideas that we consider valid and to reject those we do not. We call it "critical thinking" and we are quick to show we are good at it. Which of the two do the best communicators use most often? Supporting the ideas of others.

Again, the best communicators look to build consensus by seeking out that part of someone else's notion to support.

It is *Clarifying* behaviors that most professionals could strengthen. One we all are pros at—giving information. But the best communicators rely on three other clarifying behaviors instead. They use seeking information, summarizing, and testing for understanding, for it is these three behaviors that persuade others that they are valued, their needs are respected, and their opinions heard.

How do these three behaviors play out? Have you ever been in a meeting where nothing was accomplished? Think back. Wasn't the problem that one of these three behaviors — *Initiating*, Reacting, Clarifying - was missing? People were initiating and reacting right and left, but no one was talking about the same thing. Clarifying behaviors were missing and, had they been used, a creative breakthrough may have been possible. Or, people were reacting and clarifying but no one was initiating at all. Boring! The meeting participants went nowhere as there was nowhere for them to go. Had *Initiating* behaviors been used, especially brainstorming (a form of proposing) and building on the ideas of another, can you imagine what new heights could have been scaled? And a meeting is no better when initiating and clarifying behaviors take root, but no one risks Reacting. What a waste of

time! Had Reacting behaviors bubbled through, ideas could have been evaluated and decisions made, and no one would be at risk of sliding downhill toward the unbuilt building — the owners' socially acceptable means of walking away from a project they no longer support.

What does this mean to you? Take a tip from the best communicators. Next time you are involved in a project that is going nowhere, step back and observe the communication behaviors. Figure out which one of the three is missing and take it upon yourself to fill that communication vacuum. If it is Clarifying, step up to bat and test for understanding: "Hold it a second. All of us are talking about 'quality,' but we seem to be defining it differently. When you use that term, do you mean return on investment?" If it is Initiating, try to find a glint in somebody's proposal to shine light on. And so on. Filling the communications vacuum is the quiet exercise of leadership and a necessary one for project success.







Success through Failure

Failure is sometimes a better teacher than success

Henry Petroski talks with Jeff Stein AIA

Jeff Stein: Your writing has humanized engineering for a broad audience. As a result, whether you like it or not, the name Henry Petroski is associated with failure.

Henry Petroski: I suppose that's unavoidable, since several of my books focus on that rather explicitly. When I set out to write my first book [To Engineer Is Human: The Role of Failure in Successful Design], my working title was What is Engineering? I was literally asking myself the question as well as posing it for the readers I was hoping to address. I had been teaching engineering. I was a registered



With a lot of engineering, we typically don't have the full understanding of the system we're trying to design. – Henry Petroski

professional engineer; I still am. In the course of writing that book, I came to believe that engineering is all about avoiding failure. In fact, that could be a definition of engineering: designing something that will not fail.

Jeff Stein: It's avoiding failure rather than copying success?

Henry Petroski: Right. If we copy success, the eventual result is going to be failure. We don't often understand fully why successful designs work. And they often mask potential failures. No matter how closely we follow successful models, designing something new involves new conditions that require changes in the design. However slight these changes might be, they can lead to failure. This has been true throughout the ages, and it still is true today.

Jeff Stein: As one of your books points out, writing about failure has a deep history, too, starting perhaps with Vitruvius, the Roman author of what is commonly considered the first book on architecture and engineering, written in the first century BC.

Henry Petroski: Yes. Even back then, Vitruvius was implicitly making clear that there's a value in understanding why failures occur. And of course, Galileo, in the Renaissance, wrote about engineering failures rather explicitly.

There are two ways to react to failure. One is to say, I'm glad that didn't happen to me, I'll put it out of my mind. But from an engineering point of view, the correct approach is, I'd better figure out why this happened, because I don't want to make a similar mistake.

Jeff Stein: Engineers have a lengthy code of ethics in which they vow to give the utmost of performance and participate in none but honest enterprise. It ends with these words: "In humility and with need for divine guidance, I make this pledge." Pretty serious stuff. I'm guessing you don't believe that most engineering failures result from misdeeds.

Henry Petroski: No. They're generally unintentional. No engineer in his or her right mind wishes a failure, although there have been some engineers who have gone so far as to say that if no failures occurred, we may not be living up to our responsibility to try to optimize designs. One of the ways of reducing risk in bridges, for example, is to over-design them to the point where nothing could bring them down. Such bridges would take resources that might be spent elsewhere.

Jeff Stein: You mention in one of your books that, at one point, British engineers believed that there should be a safety factor of between four and seven in the engineering of bridges.

Henry Petroski: Right. But if you design within a certain safety factor range and no failures occur, there's a lot of pressure from society and from the profession itself to lower the factor of safety, because it's considered to be overly conservative. And of course, the more you lower the factor of safety, the closer you get to the edge. Eventually, something usually gives.

Jeff Stein: That's pretty much what happens over a long period of time, too. You point out that there is a 30-year cycle of bridge failures, a kind of sine wave of success and failure, in which there is a period in which some things are very conservatively developed and perform really well, followed by a period when things are made more and more efficient until suddenly something fails; then the pendulum swings back to another conservative period, followed by another spectacular failure 30 years later.

Henry Petroski: Yes. That was first observed by a graduate student at the University of London, Paul Sibley.

Jeff Stein: Would you say that virtually all design is conducted in a state of relative ignorance? Your writing points out how much we don't know

Henry Petroski: With a lot of engineering, especially the cutting-edge stuff that is the most exciting but also the riskiest, we typically don't have a full understanding of the system we're trying to design. A lot of significant technological advances have been made without a firm grounding in science. The steam engine is a perfect example. It existed well before there was a science of thermodynamics to explain what was happening from a theoretical point of view. The Wright Brothers designed a plane before there was a theory of aerodynamics.

Jeff Stein: And bridges are another example, many of which performed in various windy conditions without an understanding of aerodynamics.

Henry Petroski: In the early 1800s, a number of suspension bridges were actually destroyed or at least damaged by the wind. The British reacted to those failures by saying, Now that we're building modern bridges that have to carry railroad trains, we'd better not use suspension bridges, because they don't seem reliable enough. So the British went off and designed entirely different bridge types, very conservatively.

But John Roebling, the Germanborn American engineer, looked at those failures, trying to distill the common factor. He concluded that it was the wind that destroyed them, and that if he wanted to design a bridge that could carry railroad trains safely, he would have to address that potential failure mode. And he did; he laid out a recipe. He said that if you want to design a suspension bridge to resist the wind, you have to make it heavy so it has a lot of inertia, so that wind gusts can't push it like a swing. And if in fact the wind is strong enough to push it, it should be tied down — "cable-stayed." He also said that it would need a truss or some stiffening device so that it wouldn't go into sine-wave type vibration. Roebling wrote about this in the 1840s, and in the 1850s successfully built the world's first suspension bridge to carry railroad trains. Then, of course, he went on to build the







Tacoma Narrows Bridge collapses, Washington, 1940.

Brooklyn Bridge, an icon of engineering and architecture.

Jeff Stein: And were those three things what gave the Brooklyn Bridge and others that followed their staying power?

Henry Petroski: Yes. A lot of engineers took it as their model for how to build a successful bridge. But over the next several decades, they systematically hacked away at Roebling's recipe. First of all, the stay cables are unique to the Brooklyn Bridge because subsequent engineers left them off. Then in the '30s, engineers went a step further and designed bridges without deep trusses. The George Washington Bridge was completed in 1931 without the second roadway that it has today. This removed that truss requirement. It looked enormously slender when it was first built because it was only about eight or ten feet deep over a span of 3,500 feet. But it was steady in the wind and it worked because it had massive wind-tolerance because of its width, which translated into weight. In the late 1930s, suspension bridges were being built in progressively more remote places, so they didn't need as many traffic lanes and therefore weren't as wide. That meant that the weight was further reduced. So, here we have the final dismissal of Roebling's dictum of stays, weight, and trusses being necessary to resist the effects of the wind. All three of those factors had been eliminated by the late '30s, and a number of suspension bridges began to exhibit undulations in the wind.

The Tacoma Narrows Bridge in Washington State was the culmination of all this. Its

principal engineer explicitly wanted the structure to look as slender as possible, an aesthetic goal that meant he couldn't use a truss. So he followed the George Washington bridge model and designed the Tacoma Narrows with a very shallow deck, but he also made it very narrow because there were to be only two lanes of traffic. The film of that bridge being destroyed in the wind is famous. [www.youtube.com/watch?v= HxTZ446tbzE| This is a long story, but it shows how pecking away at successful models ultimately leads to failure.

Jeff Stein: You have quoted the engineer Lev Zetlin, who said that engineers should be slightly paranoid during the design stage; they should imagine that the impossible could happen.

Henry Petroski: He's not the only engineer who has said that. There were engineers back in the 19th century who talked about waking up at night in a cold sweat, worrying they had missed something. It's part of the personality of engineers today.

Jeff Stein: So judgment is fundamental, even in the era of computer calculations.

Henry Petroski: That's right, because computers are based on models that are designs of their own, so they can be flawed. In other words, even if the designer of the Tacoma Narrows Bridge had had access to computers, the computer model wouldn't have incorporated aerodynamic effects, and the computer would not have uncovered that oversight. The state of the art back then did

not consider aerodynamics to be relevant for bridge design, and the judgment of any number of experts would have concluded that an aerodynamic module in that computer model wouldn't be necessary. We're in the same position today—we don't know what we don't know.

Jeff Stein: An article recently appeared on the Web, in which the writer summarized "Petroski's Maxims of Engineering Failure." One of them is "systems that require errorfree performance are doomed to failure."

Henry Petroski: That refers to human factors: if you try to design a very complicated system, and part of it involves the interaction of human beings with that system in order for it to work perfectly, then the human beings can never be allowed to make a mistake. That's a tall order.

Jeff Stein: You also talk about scale as one basis for structural failure — something that works at one scale won't necessarily work at a larger or even a smaller scale.

Henry Petroski: That's a very important idea. Vitruvius wrote about it, as did Galileo. Before Galileo, design was pretty much geometric: if you wanted to design a classical structure, you followed classical proportions. And that thinking carried over to engineering. If you wanted to build a ship that was twice as large as a ship that had successfully sailed the Mediterranean for decades, then you would scale up every piece of it exactly twice. If there was a twoby-four in the smaller ship, you'd make it a

The Titanic might have crossed without hitting an iceberg. What would have been the consequence of that for design? - Henry Petroski

four-by-eight in the bigger ship. It seemed to make perfect sense at the time.

But when some of these larger ships were launched, they broke up when they hit the water. So something was amiss. The builders really didn't understand what made these structures work --- or not work. Galileo's the one who introduced the famous example of the two bones, a small bone and a large bone respectively from a small animal and a large animal. Both thigh bones were from corresponding functional positions, and one was exactly three times as long as the other. But Galileo pointed out that the smaller bone was also disproportionately much thinner. In other words, he demonstrated that Nature had taken into account something in addition to geometry in designing her structures.

Galileo hypothesized that the strength of the material also had to be taken into

account. It wasn't just geometry that made things work, but it was geometry in concert with the strength of the material being employed. He understood that as you scale something up, the weight grows much faster than the strength. What worked in the small doesn't necessarily work in the large.

Jeff Stein: The observation that Galileo made with ships still applied centuries later with, say, the Thresher submarine or even the Titanic.

Henry Petroski: The Titanic's an interesting example. It was hailed as unsinkable when it was launched. In my latest book [Success Through Failure: The Paradox of Design], I suggest that we think about what would have happened if the Titanic had not hit the iceberg. After all, it was just that accident that led to the failure. Conceivably a luckier

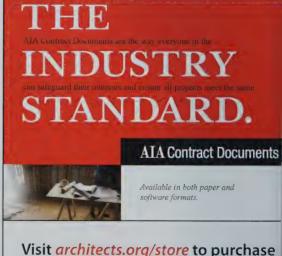
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Titanic might have crossed the ocean many. many times without hitting an iceberg. What would have been the consequence of that for design? Well, the successful crossings would have been taken as proof that the design was sound.

Jeff Stein: And then we would have had even bigger ships.

Henry Petroski: Yes. Rival steamship lines would have wanted to compete with the Titanic, so they would have made their ships bigger and better, or so they would have thought. Then they would also have wanted to make them cheaper, so they'd probably have started using thinner and thinner steel. And eventually there probably — no, definitely - would have been a colossal failure. So the fact that the Titanic failed offers much more information about how to





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build successful ships than if it had succeeded. And that includes not just the strength of the structure that was involved, but also the lessons of having enough lifeboats to save all the lives on board and of paying attention and keeping your radio on throughout the night so that if some ship is in distress, you can get to her more quickly. All those system issues were revealed by the failure of the Titanic.

Jeff Stein: So the absence of failure isn't the same thing as good design.

Henry Petroski: Right.

Jeff Stein: Are there places in structures where you ought to look for failure?

Henry Petroski: From an engineering point of view, an engineer should be looking for failure before the structure is designed. That's how the engineer designs the structure, by imagining where it could fail. What would be a weak link? I have told engineering students and engineers that virtually every engineering calculation is a

failure calculation, because you can do all the calculations of stresses and strains that you want, but they're meaningless in themselves. They're just numbers, unless they're compared to some limit, some failure criterion.

Jeff Stein: Failure is, after all, what generates most of our building codes.

Henry Petroski: But then there is the other pressure on building codes. If there are no failures, if there are just strings of successes, people will very often say, well, those building codes are too strict; we should relax them a bit. That's the societal tension that's going on, because if you want to build something, you want to build it as economically as possible. You curse the building code that requires you to put in such a deep beam, for example, if you don't believe it is necessary.

Jeff Stein: And building as economically as possible is really what engineering is about. It's design optimization.

Henry Petroski: That's right. Of course, you

do take other things into account. Sometimes you want to build a monument, and price is not the main object. But certainly for most workaday structures, price is pretty important.

Jeff Stein: How would you consider the World Trade Center towers in the context of failure? Ultimately they failed in the face of something they weren't designed to withstand. What are some of the lessons of that disaster?

Henry Petroski: When the World Trade Center towers were being designed back in the '60s, there was a question of whether they could withstand the impact of being struck by a plane, because that had actually happened to the Empire State Building in the '40s. So the idea was not itself incredible.

Jeff Stein: And, in fact, they did withstand the impact.

Henry Petroski: Exactly. But when the design engineers were trying to figure out whether



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A misuse, or change in use, of a structure can lead to failure. I probably wouldn't say that that was a failure of design. - Henry Petroski

one of the towers would withstand such an impact, they didn't take fire into account. It's important to observe that the towers did withstand the impact of the planes. But the subsequent fire and the softening of the steel is what ultimately brought them down. And subsequently in New York there has been talk about revising the building codes, especially the fire codes, to make buildings better able to withstand the high temperatures of fire.

Jeff Stein: When most people talk about the failure of a structure, they think that the structure itself failed. But what really happens is human failure in the design process.

Henry Petroski: Yes, that's frequently the case. But there's also misuse. If you design a bridge, implicit in that process is the assumption that the traffic won't be heavier than a certain level. Or, in the case of a build-

ing, maybe there's an understanding that the users are not going to stack compact book shelving on a floor that was designed for a few office desks. A misuse, or change in use, of a structure can lead to failure. I probably wouldn't say that that was a failure of design. But it is another kind of human failure

Jeff Stein: More than a professor of engineering, you really are a philosopher of engineering. Your work has brought the concept of the pathology of engineering to a public audience, but it also seems to suggest a different, broader way of thinking about failures.

Henry Petroski: I would credit prior thinkers. Likening the study of engineering failures to the medical study of pathologies has been discussed explicitly for quite a while. I was asked recently to talk to some people in

the medical field because doctors are still wrestling with many of the same issues. It's not easy to eliminate all mistakes and failures. The doctors are hoping to get ideas by analogy to try to deal with these issues.

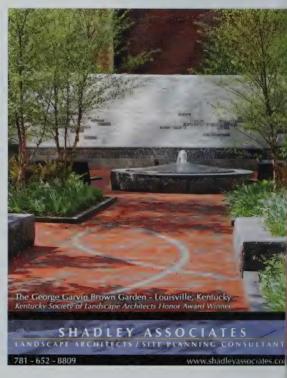
Jeff Stein: You have also applied this kind of thinking to observations on everyday objects, such as Aleve bottles and Band-Aids, And in fact, you wrote a bestseller on one of the most prosaic of everyday objects, the pencil.

Henry Petroski: The idea was to use the pencil as a jumping-off point for exploring the relationship between engineering and the broader culture we live in. My next book will be a similar exploration. The title is The Toothpick, but of course, it's not only about toothpicks.

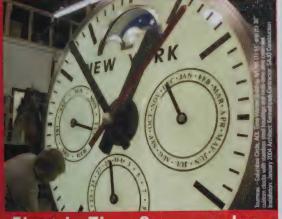
Jeff Stein: Right. It never is, is it?



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Covering the Issues

They call it real estate porn... "What's Your House Really Worth? How Zillow is Turning Online Voyeurism into a Real Estate Revolution" writes Jeffrey M. O'Brien in Fortune (February 19, 2007). Zillow is a national online database for residential real estate. According to O'Brien, the founders claim that they're in it to take over advertising, not to do away with brokers or agents. We'll see. Zillow has "zestimated" 57 percent of the US housing stock so far, and includes features like "Make Me Move," the e-mail version of slipping that unsolicited offer under the front door. Curious to know what your house is worth? Or your neighbor's? Or your client's? Nothing wrong with looking, right?

Welcome, neighbor... The Boston Globe has jumped into the shelter-mag world with Design New England, launched late last year. Oh no! Is this an ArchitectureBoston competitor? Not really. It's more like Metropolitan Home with a local focus, or a dressed-up version of one of the Globe's occasional design inserts. The January/ February 2007 issue offers the usual fare take one nice house, add a few interviews. some over-the-top interiors (home movie theater, anyone?), a fancy kitchen, and stir. But the thing is, it's so tasteful. Elegant, even. And it's a welcome addition to the local design scene.

Boston exports... Shanghai has doubled its housing stock in the past 20 years as it aims to become a world financial capital. In "Shanghai Rising," (Business Week, February 19, 2007), Frederick Balfour outlines the city's dramatic redevelopment and raises larger questions about how cities address growth, grapple with antiquated building stock, and create forward-looking identities. Does all new construction need to be towering highrises á la KPF, SOM, or

John Portman? Enter Boston's own Ben Wood, who has been spreading the gospel of Quincy Market-type renovation in lieu of West End-style clearance. Balfour discusses a range of current Shanghai projects, giving clear preference to Wood's way of saving old, narrow streets, gutting interiors while preserving historic façades, showing how a city's past can be part of its future. (The story and a slideshow are online at; www.businessweek.com/ magazine/content/07_08/b4022055.htm)

Green is good business... Fast Company has published its latest "Fast 50," the magazine's 6th annual "Report from the Future" (March 2007). Surprise, surprise - sustainability runs throughout. There's the regular list of interesting stuff in the works - the world's first sustainable dance club is in design in Rotterdam, while Scotland's Invisible Heating Systems proposes adding solar cells to asphalt, inspired by sheep who warm themselves on the highway. Cool as that is, the editors' larger message is the more thought-provoking one: business will lead sustainability from the fringe to the mainstream. Forget the federal government and the grassroot groups. Business players such as Home Depot's former CEO, Republican governor Arnold Schwarzenegger (Fast Company's cover boy), and anonymous investors trading eco-credits across continents are the ones to watch; chances are, they'll provide not only the legislation requiring that next photovoltaic array, but also the financial incentives to make it happen.

Get creative... The Spring 2007 Executive Edition of Harvard Business Review focuses on "The Creative Company: How to Grow and Harvest Great Ideas," compiling articles from business, management, and



economic thinkers. In "Managing for Creativity," Richard Florida and Jim Goodnight discuss intellectual stimulation at the workplace and making clients part of the process — strategies to generate better employee retention and repeat business. In "Storytelling that Moves People," Hollywood screenwriting coach Robert McKee argues that even professionals must engage the emotions, demonstrating that how we deliver the message affects how it's received, and providing useful tips for those who make presentations. Think you're more creative when on a tight deadline? Think again. In "Creativity Under the Gun," writers Teresa Amabile, Constance Hadley, and Steven Kramer explain that your actual performance may not be as brilliant as you might believe. Some architects may need convincing.

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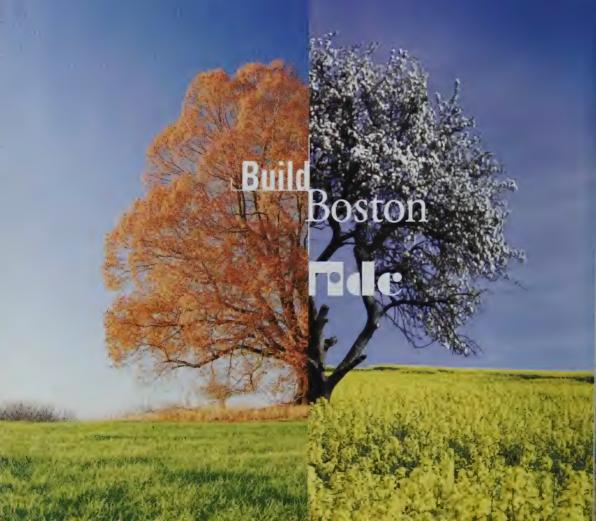
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REBUILDING URBAN PLACES AFTER DISASTER: **LESSONS FROM HURRICANE KATRINA**

Edited by Eugenie L. Birch

and Susan M. Wachter

The devastating effects of Hurricane Katrina and the difficulty of rebuilding cities are clearly illuminated in this important book based on a conference convened in February 2006 by the University of Pennsylvania. Rebuilding Urban Places After Disaster: Lessons from Hurricane Katrina, a compendium of clearly written essays by 34 authors, follows on the heels of On Risk and Disaster: Lessons from Hurricane Katrina, an earlier Penn conference and publication; together they represent an impressive effort to learn from Katrina's devastation.

The book organizes the essays into four major sections that give strong overviews of how to make affected places less vulnerable, how to return them to economic viability, how to respond to the needs of displaced people, and how to recreate a sense of place. The authors, representing an impressive range of disciplines and experience, include familiar names such as Jonathan Barnett, Gary Hack, Dell Upton, Lawrence Vale, and Robert Yaro.

In their examination of the Katrina disaster, many of the authors also draw upon lessons of other recent and historical catastrophes. One essay is devoted to

Sri Lanka's experience in the 2004 tsunami, indicating that one of the poorest nations in the world mounted a much more successful response to its disaster than did the United States to Katrina. But the essay also demonstrates how subjective such reports can be: The authors write that "all the emergency camps had been dismantled eight months after the tsunami"; this may be correct, but, as a member of a response team in Sri Lanka, I saw thousands of people still living in emergency camps five months after the disaster and a great shortage of permanent housing, with new construction proceeding very slowly.

Indeed, as many essays point out, housing - both temporary and replacement — lies at the heart of such disasters. The Sri Lankan minister of housing told our team that she appreciated what nongovernment agencies (NGOs) were doing to help, but that her real need was for replacement housing that was sympathetic to the culture of the Sri Lankan people. Appropriate design is one issue; another is the matter of siting. Simply replicating a city in its original location is an invitation for a similar future disaster.

Rebuilding Urban Places presents the difficulties of preserving and reconstructing New Orleans, describing the fateful determination by early engineers that channeling the Mississippi was the best way to protect this city. Its most important lessons focus on how to make the right decisions to rebuild a city that can become a better place. Most of all, it attempts to illustrate, through the knowledge and experience of many people, how to select the best route for collective action in rebuilding a city. It does not pretend to answer questions, but it does offer choices.

Terrance J. Brown FAIA is the chair of the national AIA Disaster Assistance Committee and has lectured internationally on disaster assistance. He is a senior architect with ASCG in Albuquerque, New Mexico.



DESIGN LIKE YOU GIVE A DAMN: ARCHITECTURAL RESPONSES TO HUMANITARIAN CRISES

Edited by Architecture for Humanity

What if Bernard Rudofsky, Buckminster Fuller, and Mother Teresa got together to solve the world's problems? An appreciation for the formal advantages of indigenous anonymity, endless inventiveness, and deep compassion would likely result. But would it be enough when, according to the book jacket of Design Like You Give a Damn,"one in seven people on Planet Earth currently lives in slums or refugee camps, and more than three billion people - nearly half the world's population — do not have access to clean water or adequate sanitation"? Architecture for Humanity is an organization dedicated to making a difference, and this survey of "architectural responses to humanitarian crises" presents the difficulties, lays out the alternatives, and challenges the reader to take up the cause.

The book presents the current state of architectural interventions in crisis situations, providing a valuable tool for evaluating and improving these responses. Like the Whole Earth Catalogue, it showcases a smorgasbord of options for shelter and instant community. Unlike the Whole Earth Catalogue, it confronts the depth and extent of the problems of displaced and illhoused people. The overall impact is one of awe at the extent and complexity of the problem, combined with hope that the creativity and determination of those

involved in relief efforts will gain new energy from this volume as the frequency of catastrophic events inevitably increases.

New York architect Cameron Sinclair, a co-founder of Architecture for Humanity, is our guide on a tour that takes us around the world, from Bangladesh to Brazil, the Bronx to Baninanjar. Along the way, we are exposed to a diverse selection of innovative architectural practices and organizations, relief agencies, and academic programs. By assembling and illustrating the solutions developed by these groups, Sinclair and his colleagues depict the extent of the need, the variety of potential solutions and, most importantly, the possibilities yet to be explored by a fuller deployment of architectural resources. It may be the most effective approach that a nonprofit organization concerned with the full range of architectural interventions in crisis situations can take. Sinclair's introduction describes the difficulties his fledgling effort confronted in its early years, despite the enthusiastic

contributions of numerous volunteers. Relief agencies are not set up to accommodate charrettes and competitions, and architects are not ready to drop everything and mobilize resources in remote locations at the drop of the hat. But a book that communicates state-of-the-art emergency architecture can be used to enhance future response and recovery efforts by disseminating and building upon the lessons of the past.

The book is handsomely assembled and well-illustrated, organized into coherent sections that make a density of information seem accessible and inviting. As resource, chronicle, and challenge, Design Like You Give a Damn reminds us of a critical aspect of architecture's power and potential in a world that is rapidly evolving into a state of constant crisis

A. Vernon Woodworth AIA is a consultant with R.W. Sullivan Engineering in Boston, chair of the BSA Codes Committee, and an instructor at the Boston Architectural College.



THE LOGIC OF FAILURE: RECOGNIZING AND AVOIDING **ERROR IN COMPLEX SITUATIONS**

by Dietrich Dörner Perseus, 1997

Human beings are really good at making mistakes — we've had plenty of practice. Occasionally, simple mistakes, each



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relatively benign, will cascade into spectacular failure. Sometimes our best efforts at fixing things only make the situation worse - much worse. Indeed, anyone engaged in the design and construction industry knows first hand about the Law of Unintended Consequences. As the old saying goes, "when you're up to your elbows in alligators, remember that your original objective was to drain the swamp."

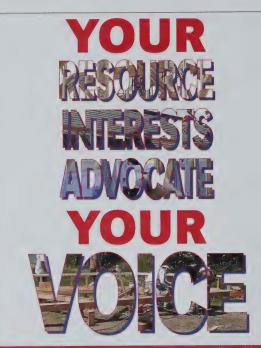
The Logic of Failure is an attempt to analyze how and why mistakes get made, starting with the premise that "mistakes are essential to cognition." We can learn a great deal from failure if we choose to do so. This is a book filled with stories of stupidity that both enlighten and amuse. Replete with graphs and charts, computer simulations, and "failure games," it illustrates how easy it is for good intentions to go awry. While logical in its approach (of course!), the book also points out how powerful emotions can be when people struggle to solve problems.

Dietrich Dörner's primary thesis is that "people fail in predictable ways," but that there are techniques that we can learn to cope with our collective propensity to screw things up. The two most common pitfalls are overly excessive or overly simplistic analysis — we tend to either think in too much detail or generalize far too much. Most problems have innumerable interrelated variables, which can interact in unexpected ways. Hence, as situations unfold, the reality of what's pertinent and what's not can change. If we don't pay attention to shifting circumstances, or recognize the implications of emerging information, we risk solving a problem that no longer exists or becoming blind to a new one that's staring us right in the face.

To counteract these tendencies, Dörner recommends that people should ask questions about "why" rather than "what," that they set clear goals and stay focused on the issues at hand rather than leaping from one possible solution to the next, that they resist trying too hard ("oversteering"), and that they exercise a healthy skepticism of overconfidence, as groupthink is often extraordinarily dangerous. It also helps to plan in reverse, thinking backward from the desired solution to the prevailing situation.

Surprisingly, Dörner contends that there's no particular correlation between IQ and problemsolving ability—it isn't necessarily the smartest person in the room who will come up with the best solution. Depending upon how you look at it, this could be good news or bad news. In the final analysis, mistakes are inevitable. The only real failure is the failure to learn from our mistakes.

Scott Simpson FAIA is a senior principal of KlingStubbins in Cambridge, Massachusetts.



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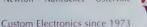
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John Hancock Tower

It all started when I received a call from an old friend who owned a trucking company and several warehouses. He began the conversation by asking if I was a glass expert. After a moment, I replied, Yes: if you hit it with a hammer, it will break. This seemed to satisfy him, and he invited me to a meeting.

At the meeting, he introduced me to two other gentlemen. One was a salvage dealer and the other was the construction debris removal contractor for the Hancock tower, then in the news because of the spectacular failure of its glass curtainwall. Our charge: how to dispose of the tower's thousands of square feet of glass while keeping the source of the glass confidential. After some discussion of organization and economics, the Glass Consortium was formed and so began Phase I of our operation.

The original glass panels were big: each was approximately 11'-6" high and 3'-6" wide and weighed over 300 pounds, consisting of two sheets of glass with a soft metal seal. How to handle these monsters was solved by our trucking partner, who devised a system of A-frames generously padded with foam. Soon, we had several warehouses filled with glass panels. Breakage occurred if a panel hit anything, whereupon it would explode into a pile of shards. Major breakage occurred when hundreds of glass panels stacked against each other ruptured the soft metal seals, and we ended up with mounds of shattered glass. It didn't matter --- we had more glass than we could handle.

Phase II was how to dispose of the glass. Ads were inserted in *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, and trade publications, carefully noting that this was used glass but not mentioning its source. The ads stimulated calls from as far away as Saudi Arabia and the Emirates. Our largest order came from a glazing contractor who ordered a substantial amount to sheathe an office building in North Carolina; it



took three shipments to complete the order since the first shipment arrived with only 50 percent of the glass intact.

Meanwhile, our salvage partner successfully promoted the idea of selling the glass through Building 19. Unfortunately, what was a hush-hush operation turned out badly for the Glass Consortium. In his advertising of the glass, Jerry Ellis, the owner of Building 19, said he could not mention the source of the glass but signed his name with a recognizable imitation of John Hancock's well-known signature.

Needless to say, the Hancock people were not pleased. This led to the cancellation of our efforts to obtain the thousands of square feet of black-painted plywood used to infill the areas where the glass had been removed. Our plan to become the Plywood Consortium was shattered. But Building 19 sold quite a few panels to people who wanted them as wind screens around their swimming pools; unfortunately, a number of panels never made it out of the parking lot.

One day, I was approached by a young man who requested access to the piles of broken glass. It turned out that he was a glass blower who was exhibiting his work

at the DeCordova Museum. I agreed to his request with the proviso that we obtain samples of his work. A few weeks later, he appeared with several samples, all beautifully done. Subtly etched on the bottom of these hand-wrought goblets was the notation that the glass came from the John Hancock tower windows.

In a gush of excitement over the potential of mass-producing souvenirs out of our piles of broken glass, one of our partners had the bright idea of sending off a sample to the John Hancock CEO. Which we did. After carefully packing a sample goblet, we enclosed a note suggesting that these goblets would make a nice souvenir for their friends, co-workers, and top brass.

A week or so later, the package was returned with a carefully worded and wonderfully restrained letter indicating that this type of souvenir was not considered appropriate. And so ended our entrepreneurial venture into the souvenir field.

I still have a few of those goblets and have considered establishing a small shrine for those inclined to worship them.

Rudolph Bedar AlA is an architect in

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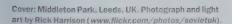
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Night Moves

ook closely at the photographs of elegantly minimal Modern houses and you'll uncover a blind spot shared by many designers: many of these houses have no draperies.

Well, of course, you might be snickering. They're Modern. They're not supposed to have frou-frou add-ons that have gone the way of the antimacassar. But what many designers fail to appreciate is that each house has a life beyond the architectural pursuit of transparency that may have influenced its design. Each house has a night life. When the sun goes down, the views are gone and, with them, a sense of the world beyond, Instead, the occupants are surrounded by walls that might as well have been constructed of black onvx.

Growing up in a Modern house in the woods — one that did have floor-to-ceiling drapery — I became acutely aware of the sun's passage, through the seasons and through the day. It was a passive solar design, with deep overhangs, so glare was not an issue. But at twilight each evening, we closed the draperies — all 14 sets of them. It was habit, not a chore, because the alternative was hard, black reflective glass walls and the uneasy sense that someone could be watching. With the draperies pulled and lights on, the house was instead transformed into a soft, warm enclosure — in every sense, a shelter.

This is not a paean to what is sometimes called the "window treatment" industry. But it is a call to consider more deeply the ways we experience the nocturnal world, both as a distinct design condition and as a place that harbors some of the deepest needs and fears in the human psyche.

We perceive the night world differently, relying on senses and intuitions that we suppress during the day. When light is dim and color is lost, we rely more on peripheral vision, understanding that the oblique view sometimes yields more information than the direct. We listen harder, we breathe in scents more deeply, we use tactile clues to feel our way through the dark and to guard against a heightened sense of vulnerability. And when we are in a populated, well-lit place, we rely on social skills, experience, and instinct to interpret body language and to judge who and what is safe. The night gives license to some behaviors; it is not a coincidence that we refer to antisocial, hurtful, or abusive personality traits as someone's "dark side."

But the nocturnal domain is not only where the monster-underthe-bed lives. These same senses and intuitions can also create a heightened appreciation of the vastness of the natural world, the spectacle of the built world, and the primacy of human connection. The night is when we are most ourselves.

Boston lighting designer Daina Yurkus has commented, "Night light makes you realize how modern we are." She is right; the availability of artificial lighting is certainly one of the factors that most distinguish our lives today from those of our ancestors. A number of experts are exploring the implications of night light, including chronobiologists examining the physiology of light and dark, such as effects on nightworkers and associations with breast cancer; scotobiologists studying effects on animal and plant life; historians studying the premodern phenomenon of segmented sleep patterns broken by middle-of-the-night wakefulness; and scientists and astronomers who worry about light pollution.

Surprisingly, there are few equivalent experts in the architecture field (Dietrich Neumann, the subject of this issue's interview, is a notable exception); after all, the built environment is at the center of these investigations. New materials and lighting technologies have

This is a call to consider more deeply the ways we experience the nocturnal world, both as a distinct design condition and as a place that harbors some of the deepest needs and fears in the human psyche.

the potential to change the character of our buildings and cities and the ways we use them. Sensitivity to the simple need for darkness can create more healthful environments and preserve a natural balance that we don't yet fully understand. And creating appealing night environments — whether in the family home, a restaurant, a theater, or a city street — can foster the social ligatures that bind us together and nourish our lives after hours. Our buildings have a night life too, and we have yet to realize its full potential.

Elizabeth S. Padjen FAIA Editor



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Letters Letters Letters

I read the article "Prepared Response" [May/June 2007] and was pleasantly surprised to see this type of discussion in a professional journal. I am an architect (and currently city councilor) in Cannon Beach, Oregon, who has been involved in these issues since 1993, when the State of Oregon changed its building code in the realization that large earthquakes were possible in the state. Learning about the Cascadia subduction zone earthquake and tsunami was a defining event for me. I have since participated in a range of activities from teaching builders and homeowners about seismic upgrades, to being a member of our city's emergency preparedness committee, to lobbying the legislature to implement post-disaster and recovery planning.

We have started this process of "resiliency" in Cannon Beach through a collaboration with a number of organizations and agencies. This approach encourages thinking about these issues before a disaster. Readers who are interested in our community's efforts to date may view our preliminary report at: www.oregonshowcase.org/index.cfm?mode= projects&page=recovery.

> Iav Raskin AIA Cannon Beach, Oregon

I applaud you for tackling the difficult topic of "Fiascos" in the May/June issue. One understands the power of learning from failures by recalling that in the millennia before modern engineering and building science, we progressed in design and construction purely through observations of what we built. We need only note the astounding advances achieved by the builders of the Gothic cathedrals in just over a few hundred years. The flying buttress, for example, is believed to be a direct result of observed mortar cracking in the walls of Notre-Dame de Paris.

Part of our firm's practice involves studying performance problems with buildings and other structures and using the lessons learned to improve design

practice. In 1984, I worked with colleagues to form what is today the American Society of Civil Engineers Technical Council on Forensic Engineering, whose goal is to help our profession learn from failures by disseminating case histories of problems with constructed works. In 1987, we started the ASCE Journal of Performance of Constructed Facilities for this purpose. We would welcome more participation from our architectural

George Santayana's admonition applies: "Those who cannot learn from history are bound to repeat it." Good for you for talking taboo!

> Glenn R. Bell PE, CEO Simpson Gumpertz & Heger Waltham, Massachusetts

Thank you for the insightful interview with Henry Petroski on the importance of learning from failures [May/June 2007]. In engineering, failures are scrutinized, debated, and made public so that the profession can avoid them in the future. Sadly, the field of architecture does not promote such healthy debate about building performance. In a public lecture at MIT last year, Pritzker Prize winner Thom Mayne said, "After my buildings are completed, I lose interest in them." What a shame! The actual performance of a building — especially a component that does not work — is an important learning opportunity to improve future designs. As governments around the world demand improved building performance to lower their greenhouse gas emissions, architects have much to learn from the twin failures of high fossil fuel consumption and poor occupant health in many 20th-century buildings. The "Fiasco" issue of ArchitectureBoston should become an annual event.

> John Ochsendorf Assistant Professor of Architecture Massachusetts Institute of Technology

I was fascinated to read "Prepared Response" and "Unintended Consequences" [May/ June 2007]. To the catalogue of catastrophes, I submit the 1937 Texas School Explosion. Unfortunately, the same type of decisionmaking that caused that disaster is still common in the design and operation of schools today.

On March 18, 1937, a gas explosion killed 319 students, teachers, and visitors while in the supposed safe haven of a public school in New London, Texas. Following the explosion, the official inquiry discovered a litany of unnecessary economies and shortcuts in the design, installation, and maintenance of the heating system. School officials had decided to switch from steam to gas heat, ignoring the architects' warnings that the school was not designed to vent gas fumes. To save money, the school board hooked up to a free residue gas line while oil company and school officials agreed to look the other way. Despite these problems, the investigation found no one responsible. It concluded that "school officials were just average individuals, ignorant or indifferent to the need for precautionary measures, where they cannot, in their lack of knowledge, visualize a danger or a hazard."

Out of this tragedy came some positive changes. Two months later, the new Texas Engineering Practice Act set professional standards for public buildings to "safeguard life, health, and property and protect the public welfare." Laws were passed requiring an odor be added to natural gas. However, other recommendations have yet to be implemented in most 21st-century schools: to hire technically trained administrators for modern school systems, to conduct more rigid inspections and more widespread public education, and to adopt a comprehensive national

There is a website (www.nlse.org) and a museum dedicated to teaching future generations about the tragedy and its lessons. The story serves as a cautionary tale about the failure to prioritize safety. It also illustrates how painful it is to live with such

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devastating losses when opportunities to prevent them were overlooked or ignored.

Ellie Goldberg MEd Newton, Massachusetts

Of the many interesting articles presented in your recent "Home Economics" issue [March/April 2007], some housing policy makers might take comfort in reading Anthony Flint's article stating that the high cost of housing is indeed a global phenomenon and not just one that is relegated to Massachusetts. But I'm not one of them.

Mr. Flint's story illustrates to me the relevance of the phrase "Think globally, act locally." By doing that, and by enacting policies to ensure that we don't make the same planning and building mistakes that we see in other parts of the country, if not the world, we will strengthen our economic and competitive edge and make Massachusetts the very best it can be.

Governor Patrick has made housing a top priority, viewing it as both an economic necessity and a moral imperative. By building new housing in and around transit and town centers and other appropriate locations, we can keep our best and brightest, revitalize our cities, retain young professionals, and make the Commonwealth a much more affordable, attractive, and prosperous state for all.

Tina Brooks
Undersecretary for Housing and
Community Development
Commonwealth of Massachusetts

I was surprised to see Deck House given the credit for stimulating the spread of "modernist" prefabs starting in the late 1950s ["Not Your Grandfather's Prefab," March/April 2007]. As someone who has lived for most of the last half-century in the same Techbuilt, I missed a mention of architect Carl Koch's contributions.

If you drive around Boston's western suburbs, you are more likely to see Techbuilt houses of earlier vintage than the Deck House. King's Grant in Weston was all Techbuilts; here in Lincoln half a dozen are visible from the road; even in Lanesville on Cape Ann, there is a small community of Techbuilts.

When wewere living in Philadelphia in the 1950s, I sent for the Techbuilt portfolio out of sheer admiration for their style and concept. We thought of building one in Germantown but ended up moving back here and were lucky enough to find a Techbuilt for sale in Lincoln. This house was too small for our growing family, and we twice had plans drawn for an addition, but ended up living into old age in the same small but efficient Techbuilt. Our house was built in 1956 by Bob Brownell, who later started Deck House, a fancier version of the post-and-beam Techbuilt (which itself evolved out of Koch's Conantum Village houses in Concord).

So it all started with Techbuilt, which Acorn Structures inherited, and I think Carl Koch's firm should get some credit.

> Adeline Naiman Lincoln, Massachusetts

Please accept my praises on your September/ October 2006 issue. It was a splendid overview of the changes taking place both structurally and socially in East Boston.

On a related note, the East Boston Chamber of Commerce over the last several months has created an initiative known as "One East Boston." This campaign is a collaborative effort among business associations, elected officials, and the police department, reaching out to the previously marginalized business owners (primarily Latino) in the community. The goals are to discover the concerns most important to the business owners, and in the process create relationships and a level of trust and openness between the "newcomers" and the "established community" - something that has, on the whole, never been attempted before. Our efforts have been extremely successful and well-publicized to date.

John Dudley
East Boston Chamber of Commerce
East Boston, Massachusetts

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Central commercial district, Harare, Zimbabwe

African Cities: A Photographic Survey

Harvard Graduate School of Design April 2, 2007-May 23, 2007

David Adjaye is a 40-something, hugely talented, progressive-thinking, Londonbased African-born architect with a portfolio of published work, now teaching at Harvard. With the man comes an exhibition, African Cities: A Photographic Survey.

Adjave takes us on a tour of 10 African cities: Accra, Abidjan, Bamako, Dakar, Ouagadougou, Addis Ababa, Asmara, Nairobi, Harare, Pretoria. Take out your atlases to see where these places are, for on this level, Adjaye does a great service in introducing these cities to an audience typically indifferent to this part of the world, presenting images completely at odds with the PBS view of the continent as an endless safari. Here, often through the windshield (literally), we see what these cities and their buildings look like.

The exhibit left me feeling dissatisfied, short-changed by poor photographs, little substance, and a certain remoteness, with not much help from the accompanying text or data. There was no sense of Ouagadougou and Bamako being the cultural capitals of cinema and music; no sense of the persistent scarification of apartheid planning in the "settler" cities of Nairobi, Harare, and Pretoria; no sense of the journey to and from work that defines life in many of these cities (especially in the rain), for very few of the photographs feature actual people.

Adjaye is deservedly celebrated for his considerable talent. It is unfortunate that Dar-es-Salaam, his place of birth, was omitted from the portfolio since that might have allowed him to give us a more personal insight. As for his visits to cities in other parts of the continent, he seems to be a tourist like the rest of us. Africa deserves better.

From 1975–1982, he taught at the University

Sir John Soane: An English Architect, **An American Legacy**

Directed by Murray Grigor

DVD: 62 minutes (available from Checkerboard Films; www.checkerboardfilms.org)

The American architects claiming the legacy of Sir John Soane (1753-1837) represent a generation that had to become reacquainted with the study of architectural history as a source of inspiration and invention: Graves, Johnson, Meier, Stern, Cobb, Scott Brown, Venturi. The lessons these architects took from the study of Soane and applied to their own work share the spotlight with what is a sympathetic portrait rather than a critical interpretation of Soane's life and work. That tone shapes an exploration of how Soane's complex spatial layering, innovative use of natural light, and his use of history are reinterpreted in such projects as the Getty Center, the Portland Museum, and Philip

house, Discontinuity and instances of personal grandstanding are offset in this video by its luscious cinematography; its hour-long format offers a tantalizing glimpse of a complex subject, one that would benefit from a more critical approach and treatment in greater depth.



Linda R. Weld AIA is currently a student in the history, theory, and criticism of art and architecture program at MIT.

Emerging Practices

Conversations on Architecture The Boston Society of Architects March 28, 2007

This is my generation: unassuming, forthright, taking on the world through doing, Hansy Better Barraza and Anthony Piermarini AIA are architects for tomorrow, They are devoted academics who pursue social projects with enviable fervor through their firm, Studio Luz. Maybe they have yet to make a dime on their work, but that's not the point. At a recent Conversation, they presented three projects: a collaborative installation at a boys' school in Rhode Island, an urban development in Somerville, and a campus plan for a school on Haiti. the poorest island in this hemisphere. All are built or will be built; all are recyclable or in some way inherently sustainable; all require working with complex organizations, strange countries, or classic bureaucracy. These guys are realistic. Their

ideas happen. They see real life as just another part of the program.

I'm glowing. And then Michael Meredith and Hilary Sample present the work of their firm, mos-office. They have modest clients with low, low budgets who don't know the first thing about design and Meredith and Sample don't care! One of their clients found them when he dialed the wrong number. They jump in and design the heck out of the vernacular. The simple gabled house will never be the same. Nor will the houseboat. How about 500 square feet of vacation home? No problem —huge panels on the outside close it up neat and tidy when you're away. Meredith and Sample were finalists in the coveted PS 1 competition, with what looked like simple genius to me—their temporary installation was an enormous inflatable silver canopy. It could have worked, and it would have been great. No matter - they got the cover of Architectural Record.

On to Elizabeth Whittaker, Assoc. AIA, who has her lovely minimalist hand in everything not covered above. She has

sophisticated, impecunious clients who want the coolest nightclubs, the hippest bakeries, the hottest nail salons (200 by the end of the year), the sweetest condo lofts. Whittaker's work is so good you don't want her clients to get rich. Look at the amazing things she can do with nothing!

My generation doesn't couch its work in fancy language that doesn't add up. That's not to say that we're not articulate, we just say what we mean. We are the product of another generation's hopes and dreams—one that wanted the world to change for the better. Our predecessors gave us the tools and the pragmatism (or cynicism?) to just do it. So we did it.

I hope you'll join my generation in our crusade to make great design accessible to everyone. I hope exclusivity is a thing of the past — more than ever before, this damaged world cries out for the brilliance of pragmatic designers, like those I met that night at the BSA.

Rachel Levitt is the home design editor for Boston Magazine and editor of Boston Home.



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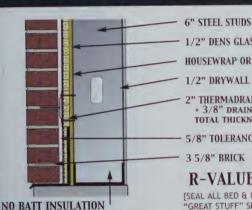
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The View from the Bus

The city: New Orleans. A gentle, sunny afternoon in the French Quarter, Tourists stroll up and down the Rue Royale. A smiling artist in a black bustier, jeans, and a newsboy cap chats with a couple who've stopped to admire her paintings of jazz musicians. A man emerges from a café, looking annoyed. His wife, waiting outside, asks, "Too crowded?" "No," he says. "Just horrible service as usual.

Nearby, a group of architects, in town for a meeting of a professional association, is boarding a bus to tour the damage done by Hurricane Katrina a year and a half before. One of the group went to school with Cliff James, a black architect, planner, and general contractor who has practiced in New Orleans for nearly 40 years, and who will be conducting



12:53 Back on the bus, driving toward Lakeview, an upscale area hit hard by flooding. A thin wavery mustard-colored stain, about six feet off the ground, runs along the concrete sound barriers beside the highway, marking where the water settled in this part of town after an even higher initial surge.

1:05 Lakeview. An eclectic neighborhood of brick, wood, and stucco houses. Two new modular houses, painted in gentle optimistic pastels. "FOR SALE" signs. Across the road is an empty green esplanade, more than a mile long and 400 feet

wide. Cliff says that this is where the rubble was brought after the storm — a scrap heap that eventually rose five stories high.

1.09 All the houses are stained with the watermark. Nearly all are deserted. At first glance, it looks like a summer community during the winter — but it's much more blown out than that. Broken windows and doors. Ravaged gardens. Ripped-up tree stumps. Signs: "HOUSE DEMOLITION." "DUMPSTER SERVICES.""CRIME STOPPERS: REPORT LOOTING." No people in sight. Here and there a FEMA trailer. A few parked cars.

Cliff: "After the storm, people thought they could get a lot for intact houses and were putting them on the market for twice what they would have sold for before. But buyers thought it was outrageous - they'd rather build or move somewhere else."

1:15 The bus crawls along the streets. The houses are nothing more than wrecked flimsy shells, dark and gutted inside. "FOR SALE." "FOR SALE." A few of the signs are logoed with the names of realtors, but most are homemade.



"FOR SALE BY OWNER." An unbroken window with "FOR SALE" scrawled on the glass in white paint, along with a phone number.

1:19 More signs, tacked to telephone poles: "HOME RENOVATIONS—WE DO IT ALL!" And "HOME WRECKERS."

1:20 A house whose fake leaded-glass front door was once an elaborate web of beveled panes and curlicues. Punched-out baroque shapes of darkness where the glass is missing.

1:24 At house after house, signs say "NO TRESPASSING," "POSTED: NO TRESPASSING," on what used to be lawns, or inside what used to be windows.

Cliff: "It's hard for people to move back, because you don't know who else is moving back. People don't want to come and find they're the only family on the block. Also, a lot of these people were professionals. Doctors couldn't wait around to rebuild. They had patients who needed services, so they left and got their practices started up again in nearby cities like Slidell and Mandeville. They're not about to disrupt everything a second time to move back here now."

1:30 Back on the highway, near Xavier University. Signs: "WE TEAR DOWN HOUSES." And "THIS AND THAT SALVAGE COMPANY"

1:45 The Lower Ninth Ward, the area hit hardest by the storm; the entire neighborhood was under water for two weeks and flooded again during Hurricane Rita less than a month later. Despite all the clean-up, it's still devastated. Smashed gas pumps. Smashed little houses. Big X's spray-painted on the house-fronts in red or green or orange. In the top quadrant of each X, the date on which the house was reached by rescuers. On the left side, the initials of the agency. On the right, an indication of whether rescuers did or did not enter the house. And in the bottom quadrant, the number of dead found inside.

1:49 A small square house tilted violently forward on its foundation, so that the cube of it is balancing on a single corner. An emphatic sign posted in front: "DO NOT DEMOLISH."

1:55 Wasteland, Blocks and blocks of nothing. Dead wires hanging down from telephone poles. Pipes that aren't connected to anything. Driveways without houses. Houses still lying under the dead trees that crushed them. "BAGHDAD" spray-painted on the side of what's left of a house. Black holes where windows were. A ravaged, faded vard umbrella. A rusted hose rack still mounted on the shell of a house, from when there were gardens here that needed watering. A toilet bowl lying on its side in weeds. Mangled chainlink fences interlaced with dead vines. A bashed-up brick church with a faded sign listing the order of services. A few trees killed by the saltwater but still standing; they look like gigantic pieces of driftwood, bare and twisted and bleached silver by a year and a half of sun. Silence. No birds. No people.

2:10 On the way out of the Ninth Ward, the bus passes a small gray-and-maroon building that seems remarkably intact.

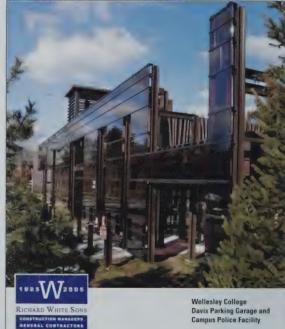
Cliff: "That was a child development center. The first building I ever designed, in 1970."

2:14 Fats Domino's old neighborhood. Holes knocked in roofs. A couple of FEMA trailers parked near houses. "That means people have decided to rebuild," Cliff says. A man is standing on a front porch, nailing new house numbers next to his front door. A sign: "WE BUY HOUSES AND LAND. CASH MONEY!"

Cliff mentions that houses originally built on piers, as many of the city's smaller houses were, are relatively easy and cheap to rebuild. "It's the big slab-ongrade houses that cost a lot more in the first place that are harder to rebuild now."

2:25 Back on the highway. A billboard: "GOT MOLD? CALL TODAY FOR A FREE ESTIMATE." A church with a banner hanging out front: "WE ARE BACK. PRAISE THE LORD." Another sign on a building: "ADULT VIDEO — NOW OPEN."





Architect: Mack Scoon Merrill Elam Archite

A CENTURY OF CONSTRUCTION EXCELLENCE

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2:29 Driving by the site of Desire, a grim public housing project from the 1950s that was torn down in 2001. "It used to look like Stalag 17," Cliff remembers. Construction of new affordable housing on the same site started a couple of years ago; following Katrina, the new units sat under 10 feet of water for two weeks and were destroyed.

When asked what's happening now with affordable housing, Cliff says, "Nothing, Inaction, Infighting, People wanting to block a deal if they're not involved." Post-Katrina, he had proposed using the city's many deserted public schools for temporary affordable housing, but the city wasn't interested.

2:35 East New Orleans. Along the highway, ghosts of shopping centers. Huge empty parking lots where buildings have been razed. A ruined medical complex. A big white building on whose front the shadows of missing letters spell out "WAL-MART," Down the road, a jagged piece of lettering, all that remains of another sign: "YS'R'US."

2:40 More upended trees. But bigger houses, more FEMA trailers, more rebuilding going on. A sign: "ASBESTOS AND LEAD ABATEMENT." A basketball court, filled with kids. Across the highway, tattered empty apartment complexes. Cliff speaks again of his frustration: "It's just amazing to me what's not happening. We could have done a lot more for people by taking advantage of temporary housing. That's what you would do if you really wanted people to come back." He pauses. "But now who do they think is going to provide the services in hotels, restaurants? And who's going to maintain the city's character and history? Those things are strongly embedded in black culture here."

Part of the problem, he says, is the well-publicized influx of planners and architects. "There are too many planners and too many plans. They've been arrogant. They're telling people what to do, not soliciting their involvement." Cliff himself is concentrating on building affordable housing in surrounding

communities, "so that people can at least live close to the place they love. In terms of building, once you get outside the city, there are fewer obstacles. And when the city is ready, whenever that happens, we'll be here."

2:44 A sign in the middle of nowhere: "COME BUILD WITH US!"

2:50 Back in the French Quarter. The architects shake Cliff's hand and thank him as they get off the bus. Jazz is coming from somewhere — street musicians a couple of blocks away, or a CD playing through the open windows of a bar. Four young white men, all of them in flip-flops and sunglasses, one wearing a thick white terrycloth hotel bathrobe, stroll down the street, holding plastic cups of beer and snapping their fingers to the music.



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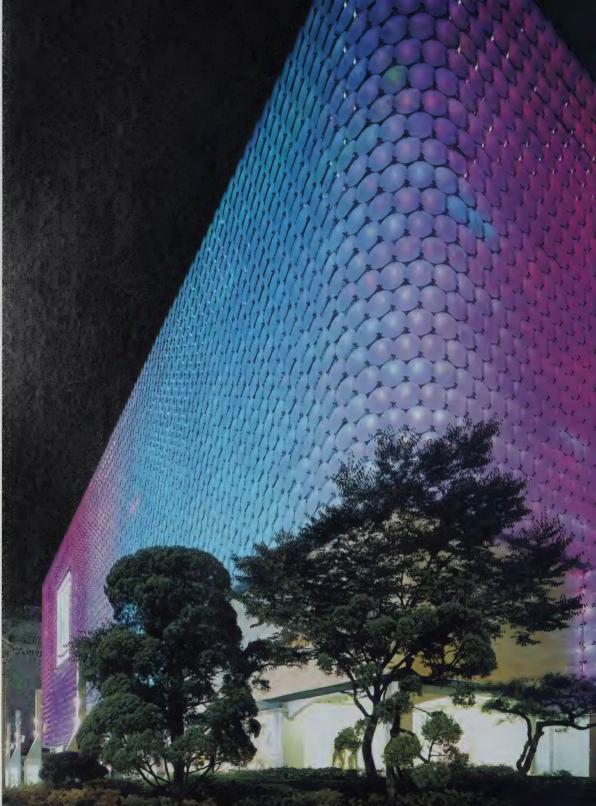
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ILLUMINATING **IDEAS**

LIGHTING AND THE NOCTURNAL LIFE OF BUILDINGS DIETRICH NEUMANN TALKS WITH SUSANNE SCHINDLER



Dietrich Neumann is a professor of architectural and currently Vincent Scully Visiting Professor at Yale. He is the author of Architecture of the

Night (Prestel, 2002) and editor of Luminous Buildings (Hatje Cantz Publishers, 2006), the catalogue accompanying the exhibition Luminous Buildings, which opened at the Kunstmuseum Stuttgart in 2006 and traveled to Netherlands Architecture Architecture: Set Design from Metropolis to Blade Runner (Prestel, 1996). He was previously interviewed in the "Theater" issue of ArchitectureBoston (Winter 2001).



Susanne Schindler is a designer at Utile, Inc. Zurich, and Berlin, where she was an editor of archplus. She writes

frequently for architectural publications and is currently working on a book, Growing Urban Habitats, with Bill Morrish

Galleria Hall West, Seoul. Architect: UNStudio

Susanne Schindler: You have written extensively in recent years about the architecture of the night — the confluence of building, lighting, urbanity, and culture - and recently curated an exhibition on the subject that was on view in Stuttgart and Rotterdam. Your focus is architecture, but it's also the historical development of lighting as a form in architecture. Designers first started to think of lighting in those terms in the 1920s. What makes it still interesting to you?

Dietrich Neumann: We're now in a very exciting phase in this long history. A shift has occurred over the last few years as a result of new technological developments and technicians, lighting designers, and architects have rediscovered the possibilities that electric light offers. It's much easier now to provide colored lights, to change colors in light, and to plan for artificial light as an architectural element. Now, when we see plans for new building projects, we are regularly given nocturnal perspectives showing what the building will look like after dark. That is a fairly new development: while light has been discussed as a great opportunity, it had not previously reached the architectural mainstream as much as it has today.

Susanne Schindler: What do you think is driving that motivation to think of light as a central element in design?

Dietrich Neumann: Even long before the development of the electric light, light always had the power to attract people at night. Now it has been rediscovered as an essential element in making cities more interesting, more lively, more photogenic. It has been used, especially in the United States, to enhance the visual attraction of cities and draw people back into urban centers. That's part of a very healthy trend, because attractive urban centers will help to rein in urban sprawl and all the economic and environmental problems that go with it.

Susanne Schindler: With this rediscovery, do you see any changes in the way cities are thinking about lighting?

Dietrich Neumann: Many cities in Europe and the United States have developed lighting plans to coordinate the way the city looks at night, by setting aside funds to illuminate public buildings, encouraging business owners to light their buildings, and getting architects and lighting designers to collaborate in considering the skyline as a cohesive luminous image. Municipal leaders have realized that light has become an important factor in bringing life back into the cities.

Susanne Schindler: So the increased consideration of the city's nocturnal appearance is frequently rooted in economic development.





Above: Times Square, New York City. Below: Shinjuku, Tokyo.

Dietrich Neumann: Yes. But it's also a strategy that has been enabled by technological developments that make spectacular lighting much more affordable. The new lighting devices are cheaper to purchase and cheaper to run - LED lights in particular are now much more affordable and use much less energy than the old neon and flood lights. And of course LEDs are now so sophisticated that you can program them to change colors and show moving images. We are seeing applications that were not feasible, or even imaginable, just a few years ago. Examples include the new gigantic media screens. In a way, these screens play the role of cinema in an outdoor environment, drawing people into public spaces and engaging them in a shared experience. Interestingly, the concept of such devices was discussed long before they became technically feasible.

Susanne Schindler: Times Square comes to mind as one example of such a public space — it must be one of the largest installations of media screens in the world.

Dietrich Neumann: Yes, that is correct. But Times Square is actually not such a great example of the potential of these devices, simply because there are so many media screens there. In Times Square, advertising billboards and screens became mandatory as part of the campaign to revive the area in the early 1990s. Now it has so many media screens and moving images that their messages are probably not very effective any more. It's just a moving, colorful environment without any specificity.

But I've seen a square in Tokyo with only one big media screen, where people stood and watched the short films that ran on it. Media screens are now so bright that they work during the day, so the architecture of the night that originally fascinated me is actually morphing into something else — an ephemeral, moving, media-generated architecture of the day.

Susanne Schindler: What effect does that have on new buildings? A media screen can be free-standing or applied to a building — which perhaps renders the building behind it less important. How do these technologies then allow designers to generate new architecture?

Dietrich Neumann: That is an astonishingly old question that is still right at the heart of the matter. The integration of advertising and architecture and the problems it poses have been talked about since at least the 1920s, if not before. There were heated debates at that time about the scaffolding that held those big advertising images in Times Square, which was, during the day, a rather unsightly addition to the buildings. Today, especially in Times Square, we have many cases where the media screens were attached to a facade after the fact and therefore obscure the building, as well as darken the rooms behind them. The great task for architecture now is to come up with an interesting integration of architecture and advertising, especially in the form of these media screens. Sometimes that happens in very intelligent ways.

WE ARE SEEING LIGHTING APPLICATIONS THAT WERE NOT FEASIBLE, OR EVEN IMAGINABLE, JUST A FEW YEARS AGO.

- DIFTRICH NEUMANN

Susanne Schindler: Can you give an example?

Dietrich Neumann: Peter Marino did a wonderful store for Chanel in Tokyo's Ginza district, where the façade, or rather the "anti-façade," is a gigantic media screen. They commission artists to produce films that run during the night. During the day, however, this media screen is translucent; so the offices behind it get daylight. One can also look at the Lehman Brothers building just up from Times Square, which integrates the media screens into the façades, on the spandrels between the horizontal windows, so that they are perceived as part of one unified image. There are many other possibilities, and that's where interesting options for architecture lie.

One could argue that these kinds of devices are fulfilling the 1920s' vision of Modern architecture, that eventually it would be entirely dissolved into light and air. This ephemeral quality of modernity that Baudelaire had already famously referred to is something that seems close at hand in these examples.

Susanne Schindler: Many of the current applications of lighting, media façades and images seem to contrast with what Modern architecture stood for, which included an honest display of structure and material, and an honest expression of function. Accordingly, old debates in architecture have been reactivated about the use of color, for instance. For years, Modern architecture was perceived and created in black and white, which was largely due to the nature of photography. Now, color is back. One example is Jean Nouvel's Agbar tower in Barcelona, for which the lighting artist Yann Kersal designed a colored LED system that reinforces Nouvel's colored aluminum

panels. On the other hand, in your writings, you point to the fact that in the 1920s, light was used to soften, or perhaps make more palatable, the harshness of Modern architecture. It returned elements of surprise, of magic and playfulness to it.

Dietrich Neumann: Yes. Nocturnal illumination was sometimes seen as a corrective to the stern radicalism of Modern architecture. And you are right about color in Modern buildings, although there were of course some uses of it at the Bauhaus and in the work of LeCorbusier. Interestingly, European architects and lighting designers at the time considered the use of color in the illumination of buildings in the United

States to be rather kitschy. Buildings in Berlin, for example, might have white or beige light, but not the rainbow range that American designers favored. When Europeans visited the US, they were often completely perplexed by the use of colored terra cotta or colorful floodlighting on the top of skyscrapers in New York and Chicago. One of them, the German modernist Wassilij Luckhardt, went as far as critiquing this approach as too feminine, as too concerned with superficial beauty and thus emasculating the skyscraper.

Susanne Schindler: What's your sense of the key differences between European, Asian, and American approaches today?

Dietrich Neumann: It's an interesting question because there are so many new developments on a global scale today. Since the 1920s, the idea of nocturnal advertising that was born in Times Square has been exported all over the world. But of course it has been adopted in different ways. Tokyo's central business district Shinjuku looks far different from Times Square at night. It is much more language- and sign-oriented, and seems more ordered and regulated. There is strong use of color, which is very well integrated into the architecture, there is very little imagery and very few media screens. That's very much in tune with prevailing Japanese design preferences. In contrast, if you look at new developments

LIGHT BOSTON

A band of Boston community activists throws some light on the subject

By James McCown

Light Boston promotes the nighttime illumination of Boston landmarks and envisions a "Diamond Necklace" as a nocturnal complement to Frederick Law Olmsted's beloved Emerald Necklace.

It might seem like an inauspicious time for such an organization. In an age of energy conservation, isn't the lighting of buildings a self-evidently wasteful and decadent act? Not necessarily, say advocates of Light Boston, who point to the economic, security, and spiritual benefits of beautifully lit urban buildings, and say their efforts mesh with concerns about light pollution.

"Half of what we're doing is lighting up buildings," said Boston architect Todd Lee FAIA, who co-founded Light Boston with Anne B.R. Witherby in 1996. "The other half is calling attention to bad lighting. Sometimes developers get into competition and you have this lighting arms race."

For a city whose history is so tied to light in buildings — One if by land, two if by sea! — the idea of architectural lighting came late to Boston. The gold-domed Massachusetts State House, while sporadically lit over the years, received professionally designed

lighting commensurate with its historic and architectural value only after a major renovation that began in the late 1990s.

Light Boston partners with corporations, foundations, and individuals to support the lighting of churches and other buildings owned by nonprofit organizations. The Light Boston website (http://lightboston.org) proudly points to success in lighting landmarks such as the Old State House, King's Chapel, the Cathedral Church of St. Paul (photo, right), and the Chinatown Gate. In addition to lighting monuments, the group works with developers and neighborhood organizations on street lighting and related issues.

"If you take the view that it's all about aesthetics, then it's hard to justify," said Frank McGuire AIA, who also serves on the board of Light Boston. "But we're seeing a relationship between lighting and security, as in Mission Hill where light needs to be adjusted for the elderly residents. There's a sense of insecurity that comes with darkness. We helped light up the Frog Pond on the Common, and now there's all this activity in a place that used to be foreboding."

Light Boston enjoys an informal role as advisor to the Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA). "When a developer gets a go-ahead on a project, we help direct linkage money toward the lighting of some adjacent building or spaces," McGuire said.

"It's a double-edged sword," said Prataap Patrose, deputy director of urban design at the BRA. "We encourage developers to light their buildings, but it has to be



done in an energy-conscious way. I think there's a lot of potential for the big lighting companies to develop technology that can power itself, such as with solar panels."

"Let there be darkness," comes the cry from the Dark Sky movement, which is concerned that the glare of urban light obscures the stars and the planets. But is viewing an exquisite human creation, lit up in all its nocturnal glory, any less thrilling than stargazing?

As anyone who has visited Paris in the last decade knows, the city, flush with nuclear energy, has embraced landmark lighting with a gusto. Its chief lighting engineer has a staff of 30, and the city spends more than \$260,000 per day on electricity to light its glorious architectural patrimony.

"Urban lighting is not just about being practical," McGuire said. "It's about human well-being, too."

James McCown is director of communications at Sasaki in Watertown, Massachusetts.



Asbar Tower, Barcelona, Architect: Ateliers Jean Nouvel

in, let's say, Shanghai or Beijing, you find a sort of visual and luminous exuberance that goes beyond anything that you might have seen in the United States. But as far as I can tell, the most sophisticated new approaches to lighting are happening in Europe at the moment. Despite excellent firms in the United States, such as Schuler Shook in Chicago, Howard Brandston and OVI in New York, Color Kinetics in Boston, and many others, I think European designers are more often progressive in their attempt to integrate light and architecture and move toward a new, more ephemeral, more successful Modern architecture. And that seems to occur at very early stages in design in collaborations between the lighting designer and the architect.

Susanne Schindler: What do you think is guiding that trend?

Dietrich Neumann: It's several strands that come together. One is certainly fashion, the wave of the moment. We've seen several of these waves come and go, in the '20s, '50s, and '60s. Then there was a big break because

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DIETRICH NEUMANN

of the energy crisis in 1973, when all the lights were literally extinguished. The Postmodern movement in the '80s revitalized interest in lighting as part of the nostalgia for the '20s and '30s. Now we have a general interest in urban environments that coincides with the rediscovery of these tools, together with the broad availability and much greater affordability of new lighting technologies. And the possibility of putting a building on the map - or into the skyline at night - through the use of lighting is of course very seductive. Lighting can make up for a design that isn't particularly remarkable during the day - after dark,







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the building can suddenly stand out in time and in place, and for very little money. All these trends are coming together to create this surge of creativity.

Susanne Schindler: Of course, there are several reasons not to encourage more lighting. The energy crisis of the '70s could very well happen again. I recently found a grim, if rather imprecise, statistic: between 100 million and one billion birds a year die from flying into buildings, many of them hitting illuminated buildings at night. Some cities are trying to mandate switch-off times to reduce those numbers.

Dietrich Neumann: You are absolutely right. The likelihood of another energy crisis coming soon is rather substantial. One thing to remember is that the new lighting uses much less energy than older technologies. Nocturnal illumination is actually only a small part of the total energy consumption of our buildings. Of course it is extremely important that architects consider what happens aesthetically to a building when those integrated media

screens are turned off one day.

The problem with migratory birds is something that has not been successfully solved; I wonder if there is something one can do in terms of switching lights on and off at certain times and regulating it very clearly. Another legitimate concern is the growing inability to see the nocturnal sky, which has been a particular concern to astronomers and growing numbers of citizens. An organization called the Dark Sky Association is leading an effort to decrease urban lighting to make it possible to see the night sky again. Here, too, the new technologies make it much easier to contain light very precisely to a façade or a sidewalk and not have it spill out into the night sky. But these kinds of concerns often lead to interesting new ideas and solutions, so it's good to face them head on.

I'm very excited about Renzo Piano's New York Times tower, which is almost complete. The façade was designed in collaboration with the lighting designer Enrique Peiniger and his firm OVI in New York. The facade has a screen of terra-cotta tubes in front of it, which will be illumi-





Blinkenlights, Berlin Designer: Chaos Computer Club





BIX installation, Kunsthaus, Graz, Austria. Designer: Realities:United Architect: Spacelab Cook-Fournier

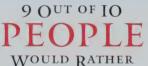
nated by floodlights. The placement of the horizontal tubes will allow office workers to have views out and yet be shaded from the sun, and at night, the building will turn into a different, ephemeral object, its brightness decreasing as you go up, its top fading into the night sky. And it also offers a potential solution to the problem of migratory birds — as they approach the façade, they can alight in the gaps between the terra-cotta elements and perhaps be

deterred from hitting the glass. It's an example of a very interesting architecture, a new form of luminous architecture, that addresses a number of these problems in an intelligent way.

Susanne Schindler: Will your work continue to explore the relationship between light and building?

Dietrich Neumann: Yes, I'm interested, for example, in individual lighting designers, such as Richard Kelly, who designed the lighting for the Seagram building and worked with Philip Johnson, Louis Kahn, and Richard Neutra, But I'm also interested in the integration of advertising and architecture and want to pursue that further. The new "urban screens" are a development worth watching, because they have enormous potential influence on the way we understand architecture, structure, and iconography. I wonder, for example, what the implications are for an architectural medium in which the language that is spoken and the images that are shown can change so quickly and can be programmed by those who rent the space and pay for minutes on screen. We're seeing a growing interest in these urban screens, with some proposals to require that a certain percentage of time be devoted to uses other than advertising, such as artists' projects — similar to the percent-for-art that we often require in public projects. I find that exciting imagine exhibitions of photography or short video clips on these big screens, bringing art and life to urban spaces.

Susanne Schindler: There's also the possibility for interaction by the public with the lighting of a building: in the project "Blinkenlights" by Chaos Computer Club in Berlin, people could use their cellphones to play Tetris and other games on the gridded facade of a 1950s building slated for major renovations [www. blinkenlights.de]. But then questions come up regarding the programming of the lighting. An interesting example is the Kunsthaus, the art museum in Graz, Austria, by Peter Cook and Colin Fournier, which has a long, double-curved, acrylic



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glass façade with a digital light installation — *BIX*, designed by Realities: United. Some museum people thought the display skin should be used to announce museum exhibits — they wanted to make it a big banner. Others, including the designers, insisted that it was for art, for more abstract applications and, so far, they have won out.

Dietrich Neumann: Obviously many of these developments in lighting are initially driven by commerce, but if we manage to get artists involved, then something fruitful can result. I'm a great fan of the work of Jan and Tim Edler, the founders of Realities: United, the Berlin firm you just mentioned. At the Kunsthaus, they decided to work with a simple media façade with very rough, large"pixels," so to speak, incorporating only black-and-white imagery, almost reminiscent of early silent film. It was a conscious decision to create something that didn't have the light, speed, and precision of the new media screens. Their installation makes you aware of the potential of this medium and the need to step back far

enough to see the larger context, to think about values of brightness and the nature of imagery. It's very thoughtful work.

Susanne Schindler: It's unique because it's so low-tech. Realities: United used standard fluorescent, round-tube lights — each one being one pixel. The project raises another basic question: who is driving what? At Graz, Realities: United came in late in the design process — but I would say that their light installation gave the building depth and made it whole. But how can designers use the technologies that are out there to generate new building form, not just to react to a form already created? Generally speaking, media screens are big, flat two-dimensional planes. BIX points to other options.

Dietrich Neumann: But dissemination of these ideas will lead to new architectural forms and experiences. Of course, it's technically possible to apply those tiny LED light bulbs to any surface or form and do whatever you like with them. At the Cultural and Sports Center, designed by Burckhardt + Partner for the Beijing Olympics, all four sides will consist entirely of gigantic media screens, so people can just stay outside and watch what is happening inside. I think that's where the greatest potential for new architectural development lies at the moment.

Susanne Schindler: Even greater than structural techniques or digital devices in architecture?

Dietrich Neumann: That is a question of interpretation. Frank Gehry's Disney Hall in Los Angeles and his proposed Vuitton Museum in Paris, for example, are very exciting and are possible only because of computer-based design and construction methods. Despite their innovative forms, those buildings represent the evolution of traditional architecture. But the new lighting technologies, the growing application and development of media screens, and the opportunity to meld images and messages with the built form suggest that we may be on the brink of an entirely new architecture.



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Elements For a Great Outdoors.

Shooting the Moon



The tradition and technology of night photography

by Lance Keimig

Photographers have long embraced the literary and artistic tradition of the night as both theme and subject in their work. The romantic notions and sense of mystery associated with the night, as well as the transformation from the mundane world to the unknown, provide ample material for exploration. Tim Baskerville, founder of the night-photography organization the Nocturnes, has said, "Surrealism, the mystery of place, solitude, and a heightened sense of the nature of things — night photography seems a worthy vehicle, a ritual to express these themes."

Night had been established as a theme in art long before the advent of photography. Artists as far back as the 15th-century Flemish painter Hieronymus Bosch played off the instinctive fear of darkness and the night, as in Bosch's rendition of hell in his masterpiece, The Garden of Earthly Delights. The 16th-century Dutch engraver and painter Lucas Van Leyden and the German printmaker Albrecht Dürer repeatedly explored the night in their work. Rembrandt famously relied on dark tones and deep shadows to evoke powerful emotions in his work. James McNeill Whistler painted a series of night and twilight scenes entitled *Nocturnes*.



Case Study House 22, 1960, Julius Schulman.

Night photography became technically possible in the mid-19th century as photographic materials became increasingly lightsensitive. When the daguerreotype process was introduced in 1839, exposure times of 10 minutes or more were required to take a photograph in bright sunlight. While exposures were reduced to 5-10 seconds within a few years, photographing at night in the weak artificial light of the time or by moonlight was impossible. The wet-plate collodion process was a tremendous technical advance over the daguerreotype, but because collodion plates had to be exposed before the emulsion dried on the plate, the lengthy exposures required at night made nocturnal photography exceedingly difficult. It was the introduction of the dry gelatin plate in the late 1880s that once and for all opened the doors of the creative potential of night-time imagery to photographers.

Many photographers experimented with night photography

Night transforms our experience of the world from one of routine certainty to one of mysterious unknowing. The interplay of light and shadow and extremes of contrast heighten this transformation.

and, throughout the 19th century, photographs were often manipulated to appear as though they were taken at night. It wasn't until William Fraser and Alfred Stieglitz in New York, and Paul Martin in London began to photograph at night in the last decade of the 19th century that anyone produced a significant body of night images. Stieglitz would go on to inspire his colleagues at the New York Camera Club to venture out into the night with their cameras. Edward Steichen, Alvin Langdon Coburn, Karl Struss, and Paul Haviland all created significant numbers of night photographs between 1900 and 1910.

As Mary Woods has noted in her essay, "Photography of the Night: Skyscraper Nocturne and Skyscraper Noir," this work was produced at the exact moment when the pictorialist sensibilities of romantic Impressionism gave way to the more hard-edged and sharply defined aesthetic of Modernism. The shift from soft-focus pictorialist images to crisply focused Modernist photographs is evident in the work of each of these photographers, and it seemed an appropriate response to advances in technology and changes in attitude that came with the new century.

As night photography continued to evolve throughout the 20th century, night photographers were increasingly drawn to the built environment for subject matter, which remains a source of fascination for many contemporary night photographers. Night transforms our experience of the world from one of routine certainty to one of mysterious unknowing. The interplay of light and shadow and extremes of contrast on the buildings and structures of the urban environment serve to heighten this transformation.

Brassai's photographs of the seedy underbelly of Paris nightlife in the '30s, Bill Brandt's night photographs of London in the '30s and '40s, and O. Winston Link's famous images of the last operating steam railroad in America in the mid-'50s all mark time and place in a distinctly human world. Berenice Abbott's aerial view, New York at Night, ca. 1935 conveys the dynamic vitality of the growing city at night. Other notable examples of the night photographer's attraction to architectural subjects include Julius Schulman's iconic image, Case Study House 22 (1960) which shows architect Pierre Koenig's futuristic house seemingly hovering over Los Angeles, and George Tice's Petit's Mobile Station (1974), in which the dark hulking structure of a water tower lurks menacingly in the shadows behind a gas station.

Unquestionably, the most significant night photographer of the second half of the 20th century is Michael Kenna. Early in his career, Kenna retraced the footsteps of Bill Brandt, who documented the industrial cities and mill towns of northern England in the 1940s. Kenna became more widely known after the publication of his photographs of Ratcliffe Power Station in Nottinghamshire, also in the industrial north of England. Later, Kenna would go on to photograph extensively in France and Japan, often at the intersection of the manmade and natural worlds. In an interview with Tim Baskerville in his monograph, Nightwork, Kenna says, "The underlying subject matter is the relationship, confrontation, and/or juxtaposition, between the landscape...and the human fingerprint, the traces that we leave, the structures, buildings and stories. Sometimes the emphasis in the image will be the landscape, the human influence will be slight, but it is always there. At other times, the urban scenery or industry will be more dominant and the landscape will be barely visible, shown only by a passing cloud, moving water, or a veil of mist."

Time is another element that is central to night photography. Due to the lower light levels at night, longer exposures are required to produce an image. Many night photographers have spoken about the camera's ability to record what cannot be seen with the eye. Time accumulates on film (or nowadays on a digital sensor) in such a way that it is presented as a single image. All that has transpired during the exposure is recorded in the photograph. The movement of clouds, the moon, the earth, people, and vehicles passing through an image are frozen in time. Unlike the instantaneous daytime exposure that extracts an instant from the continuum of time, long-exposure night photographs record movement in surreal ways that we cannot perceive with our own senses.

Los Angeles-based industrial and architectural photographer Tom Paiva says, "My work rarely shows people. Five-minute to hour-long exposures do not record fleeting shapes moving through the image. I like to think that night photography can somehow stop time: inanimate objects are sharp, but people, moving grasses, and cars slip through the frame smoothly." Like many architectural photographers, Paiva often photographs at twilight for commercial assignments, during the brief window when ambient natural light is balanced with the artificial lights in the scene he's photographing. This popular technique can yield spectacular results, but it is different from true night photography in that these images often compromise the sense of mystery and time of a night photograph for the technical perfection of an exact exposure, as required by a commercial assignment. Christian Waeber, a Boston-based architectural photographer who is best known for his night photographs of the Big Dig, wrote in an October, 2004 article for View Camera magazine, "When photographing at night, I am trying to find the way that I used to perceive objects in the dark as a child: the most harmless objects become monsters, the sense of space and proportion is altered." Waeber's night-time Big Dig photographs seem to do just that: the hulking forms of the freeway structure become a surreal

playground of light, color, shape, and form where anything is possible.

With the proliferation and advancement of digital photography, night photographs have become increasingly common. The instant feedback afforded by digital cameras makes determining exposures at night much easier, something that has always been one of the greatest technical challenges of night photography. Digital sensors do not suffer from reciprocity failure as film does, allowing considerably shorter exposure times. While these advances certainly make night photography more accessible, they do not necessarily make it better. With some exceptions, night photographs taken with digital cameras lack many of the qualities that make nocturnal images so appealing. Each

Bill Brandt's Snicket, Halifax, Yorkshire, England, 1986, Michael Kenna.





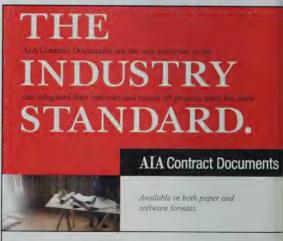
Anthew Holden's Shadow, 1979, Steve Harper,

Night photography is essentially a solitary experience that allows the photographer to disconnect from the frenetic pace of modern life and to reconnect with the physical world.

individual film reacts differently to time exposures and has its own unique personality or signature. Digital sensors behave with relative consistency regardless of exposure length and, as a result, digital night photographs often lack the sense of time that is so important in night photographs. They have more to do with substance and subject than impression and inference. The digital night photograph is more about *place* than *sense* of place.

A quick search of the online photo-sharing site Flickr (www.flickr.com) reveals that literally hundreds of people have embraced this new technology and that night photography is no longer an obscure and rarefied curiosity enjoyed by a few pensive





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night owls. It is now possible to take college-level courses in night photography, something pioneered by photographer Steve Harper at the Academy of Art College in San Francisco in the 1980s. Tim Baskerville of the Nocturnes, an alumnus of Steve Harper's classes, now offers night-photography classes and workshops in California, and the New England School of Photography in Boston offers classes on the subject. With the increased awareness of night photography as a theme, with more people creating nocturnal imagery, and with ever-increasing numbers of night-time images appearing in popular media and culture, photographers continue to expand the boundaries and potential of photography after dark. Despite all of this, night photography is still essentially a solitary experience that allows the photographer to slow down and disconnect from the frenetic pace of modern life, and to reconnect with the physical world and all of its wonders.

Lance Keimig is a photographer based in Pombrone Massachusetts (www.them.antsine.com), He has tour! photography at the School of the Museum et Fine Arts in Energy and the New England School of Photography, and leads were not in California, Massachusetts, Ireland, and Sarland



North End. 2003, Lance Keimig.

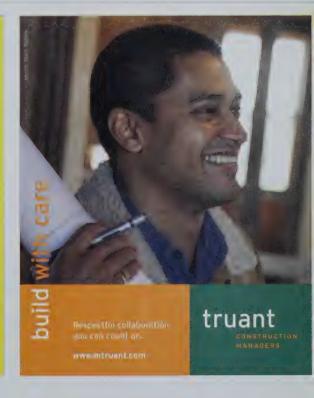


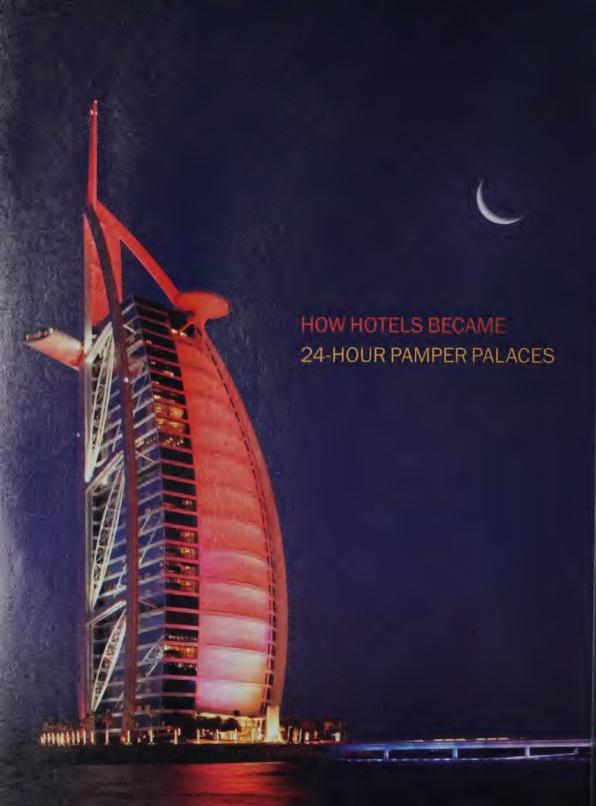
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ROOM FOR THE MISSING HISTORY FOR THE HI

By Williston Dye AIA

rom the very beginning, hotels have successfully provided enticements to travelers, new features to satisfy our desires and whims — often whether we knew we had them or not. And while the history of the hotel has had many defining evolutionary moments, the single best idea hotel operators ever had, bar none, was when they simply threw out the clock — in other words, when they decided hotels should become 24-hour pamper palaces.

OK, so it didn't happen in one single *aha!* night. It was a slow, gradual process that took thousands of years. And it went something like this:

The earliest hotel operators owned modest accommodations that provided ancient travelers-by-day a safe shelter to sleep at night. The very first guests were traders plying the ancient trade routes, but as the inevitable military incursions put lots of people on roads across the Middle East and Asia, post houses and caravansaries, as they were called, sprang up. (These travelers were true road warriors.) Located every 25 to 40 miles along major routes, these post houses, both simple and palatial, became important anchors for the development of villages and towns. For the first time, the location of

Burj Al Arab Hotel, Dubai.
Architect: W.S. Atkins & Partners

THE PERSON NAMED IN COLUMN

accommodations influenced community settlement and placemaking. During the years of Roman rule and into the Dark Ages accommodations were minimal, efficient, and sparse. Monasteries also often served as shelter; the religious motives of medieval pilgrimages required only the most spartan of resting places.

Social change and broader formal education brought about the next evolution: the cozy wayside inn and tavern of Chaucer's Canterbury and Glastonbury. Well-furnished guest rooms (even if they were often shared with strangers), libations, sustenance, and celebration were quickly associated with the sturdy, welldetailed, and easily identifiable buildings that proliferated across the countryside. The inn became the social hub of the town. Minus the cockfighting, it was the progenitor of today's hotels.

Although the first "hotel" in this country, the City Hotel on Broadway in New York, was built in 1794, the beginnings of the boom in hotels as we know them occurred in the 1820s, corresponding with economic growth and, especially, better roads and conveyances. Travel had become a much more enjoyable, comfortable experience, and as a logical evolution of the inn, the urban hotel — built for longer stays and to accommodate larger numbers of guests — became a base for visitors to explore the city and conduct business. In contrast to the old post houses, the attractions of the place now established the need for accommodations. In New Hotels for Global Nomads, Donald Albrecht notes

Hotels began to offer something new in the fabric of the city: a social center that was accessible to the public — and that offered a new kind of urban nightlife.

that Boston's Tremont House, which opened in 1829, became the model for the modern urban hotel. It certainly set the precedent for offering new technologies and new services to attract guests: it introduced locks on guest-room doors, in-room washbowls, complimentary soaps, and an á la carte menu. But other hoteliers were no slouches: the City Hotel in Baltimore was the first to use gas light, and Holt's Hotel in New York later was the first to offer a service elevator.

It was also during the 1820s that real-estate developers, especially in New York, began to see the hotel as an attractive investment and economic stimulus. The City Hotel had sparked a hotel boom along Broadway, part of a decades-long transition from fashionable residences to "trade." (The New York Public Library documents this transition in its online exhibition, Moving Uptown.) But it was John Jacob Astor's luxury Astor House that really generated excitement when it opened in 1836, with its indoor carpeting, walnut interiors. and excellent cuisine. The outrageous two-dollar-a-night room

tariff conveyed a very clear message to the public: You can't afford it! The hotel became one of the first exclusive hot-spots for the wealthy and the elite: businessmen, politicians, artists, actors, and celebrities. Thanks to the paparazzi of the day—the hyperactive New York City press — the public's fascination with hotels was ignited.

By now, hotels had begun to offer something new in the fabric of the city: a social center that was accessible to the public — and that offered a new kind of urban nightlife. Social functions found a place outside the domain of the private home or club and, in the process,



High-school girls gather for a dance at a hotel, circa 1950s.

became a form of public spectacle. Soon, the hotel-as-communitycenter would cater to weddings, charity events, political gatherings, business meetings and, of course, games of chance. As hotel operators realized that dining could be an attraction in itself, they competed to offer the finest cuisine, attracting city dwellers as well as hotel guests.

The development of the railroad system only accelerated the hotel boom. Between 1850 and 1854, 19 new hotels were built on Broadway. Elsewhere, railroads contributed to the rise of the destination resort hotel, often located in remote, naturally beautiful locations. But it was the luxury city hotel that brought a new dynamic of sophistication, style, and pride to the city. As the Industrial Revolution brought increased personal wealth toward the end of the century, the emerging hotel industry responded with new levels of service, comfort, and hospitality. Hoteliers and restaurateurs such as César Ritz, Eduard Sacher, and George Auguste Escoffier themselves became celebrities. The years

between 1890 and 1910 saw the construction of an astonishing number of extraordinary luxury hotels, many still among the most successful hotels in the world, such as the Paris Ritz (1898), the Savoy in London (1889), the Copley Plaza in Boston (1912), the Waldorf-Astoria in New York (1893, rebuilt 1931), and the Willard in Washington, DC (1904).

In the 20th century, three specific factors revolutionized what was to become known as the hospitality industry: the Three M's—

Resorts in the Caribbean and Hawaii were suddenly economically feasible. Howard Johnson and Holiday Inn responded to postwar highway construction with chains of motels, which offered standardized, familiar comfort. J.W. Marriott opened the first "motor hotel" next to the airport in Washington, DC, containing all the amenities of a full-service hotel with the appeal of the motel's street-level access to rooms.

The third M came courtesy of the Marketing department. The 1980s — a period of prosperous economic circumstances —



Exterior of Manhattan's Astor Hotel and the lounge at Dusseldorf's Hof Hotel, circa 1950s.

Money (1920s), Mass Transportation (1950s), and Marketing (1980s). In Boston, the economic prosperity of the '20s brought the Ritz Carlton in Boston (now the Taj Boston) and the Statler (now the Park Plaza). As the industry matured, it also became more professional. The Cornell Hotel School was established in 1922. Hotel owners hired specialty architects, as the component functions and management of hotels were by now numerous, complex, and costly. Among the best known was the firm Schultze and Weaver, a partnership formed by an architect and a socially-connected real-estate developer, whose work included the Waldorf-Astoria, the Pierre, the Park-Lane, and the Sherry-Netherland in New York; the Breakers in Palm Beach; and the Biltmore hotels in Los Angeles and Miami.

The second M, Mass Transportation, meant the automobile and the airplane, which now provided easy, quick access anywhere around the world. As had the railroads a century before, the highways and the airplanes created new demand for lodging.

created the evolution, strategic refinement, and invention of over 40 hotel typologies — new business models such as the extended-stay hotel, the business hotel, and time-share ownership. The ease and affordability of business travel and the relative wealth of baby boomers (and their parents) with the desire to see the world created a windfall for hotel chains and developers alike. Hyatt reintroduced the grand hotel atrium in many cities around the United States, fulfilling a desire for spectacular visual experiences. Marriott International separated what was now known as the hotel "product" into market tiers: luxury, full service, and limited or "select" service, thus maintaining control of the market while also controlling business factors such as locations, quality, design, and management. Marketing departments introduced guest surveys and focus groups to determine functional needs and amenities.

The '80s also saw new proponents of hotels: city planners, urban designers, and politicians who saw hotels as cornerstones

of urban economic development and an opportunity to build on the momentum of the back-to-the-city trend that had begun in the '70s with projects such as Boston's Quincy Market and the Baltimore Inner Harbor. Hotels were key to the increasing emphasis on tourism as a "clean industry," which also spawned the rise in convention and conference centers. Hotels lured both out-of-towners with money to spend and elusive suburbanites drawn by excellent restaurants as well as cultural and social events. Hotels brought prestige and economic activity, and served as the underpinning of the 24-hour (or at least 18-hour) city that increasingly was seen as the measure of urban vitality. As had the post houses of the ancient trade routes, hotels once again were seen as catalysts for place-making.

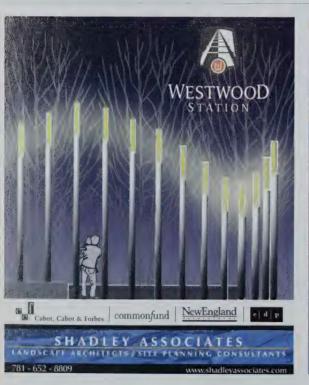
But with the rising influence of marketing, the selling of formula-driven consistency and value dramatically standardized the hotel industry. Design quality and contextualism, as well as the regionalism that had previously influenced everything from architecture to hotel menus, was rendered almost extinct. A predictable backlash occurred in the following decade, a renaissance of historic inns and classic urban hotels as well as new developments such as boutique hotels and eco-hotels.

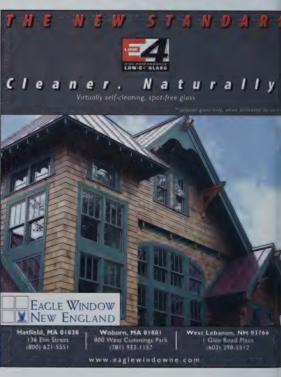
Significantly, hoteliers also learned to distinguish their products from the competition with ever-increasing levels of luxe. The pamper palace was born. The minibar, in-room rental movies, and complimentary shampoo were no longer enough.

Internet access for today's road warriors, exercise rooms, pools, and full-service spas — many available to the public — have become *de rigeur*. Hotel restaurants featuring celebrity chefs are promoted energetically. Thread-count, luxe bathrooms, and even accommodations for the equally pampered pooch are part of the package. And significantly, hotels have pursued mixed-use strategies, either through adjacent uses such as movie theaters and shopping, or through ownership structures, such as the condo-hotel and jointly developed condominiums with full access to hotel services such as housekeeping and room service (in Boston, the Heritage on the Common, Millennium tower, and the upcoming Mandarin Oriental).

The forces that led to the development of hotels over the centuries are still at play today — economics, culture, transportation, politics, and pleasure-seeking — and those forces are more powerful than ever. Over 1,000 hotels of all types opened around the world just last year. As the world changes, so too will the hospitality industry. For now, it seems that the future of hotel development is in the hands of the 24-hour pleasure-seeker — and there is at least a little of that person in all of us.

Williston Dye AIA is the principal in charge of the KlingStubbins Las Vegas office. He is the former director of architecture at Walt Disney Imagineering and former director of design management at Marriott International. He is also the author of *Five Potatoes: Things are as Clear as Vichyssoise*.







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The invisible world of nightworkers Text and photographs by Peter Vanderwarker

The important thing to remember about night work is not that it happens, but how messed up everything gets if the work goes wrong. We all want T dispatchers, pressmen, telephone linemen, and baseball pitchers to do it right so that tomorrow we can take the train to work, read the papers, and talk on the phone about how the Sox won again.

The world of nightworkers is mostly invisible to the rest of us not only because we are preoccupied with our own lives away from work, but also because so much nocturnal work space is literally locked away, under the watchful eye of security cameras. These people are often responsible for the infrastructure of our lives as well as our cities. They keep things running, and we happily, obliviously, leave them to it.

The glamorous night jobs—the ones that keep us entertained are often the toughest. The chefs at the very best restaurants must do precision work in a hot and crowded environment, while waiters howl for that osso-buco order. Our \$50 million pitcher Daisuke Matsuzaka got shelled for five runs in the first inning of a very long game against Seattle on May 3 — you may think that's glam work, but one look at his face proved that a bad night at work is the same as a bad day at work.

Late-night work can be desperately lonely when your personal time-zone is at odds with the world of friends and family, when your work socialization is limited to a skeleton staff of co-workers. A glance out the window doesn't connect you to the buzz of the

daytime work world. Without the movement of the sun to subliminally mark the passing hours, a night work shift has an oddly timeless quality to it that can heighten the sense of isolation.

Even the physical world of nighttime workspaces is different. Some workers are always outside, in workplaces that are always changing—construction workers who move from site to site; Verizon repair people whose trucks are rolling workshops that are a model of efficiency. For those who work inside, physical isolation becomes more apparent. Windows are rare in the operation centers and equipment rooms that are the focus of many nocturnal workplaces, and when they do exist, they only reflect your own image. It's a world of artificial light, often disconnected from weather and the environment. Nightworkers don't spend their breaks grabbing a few minutes on a park bench to eat a sandwich. For many denizens of the night shift, work life is spent tending to the equipment that keeps our world running: old-fashioned equipment like pumps, engines, boilers, presses; and the devices of the digital age like servers, computers, and controls.

By the time you read this, we will all know how well Dice K is doing at his night job. Even if other night workers do their jobs perfectly, we will probably never notice.

Peter Vanderwarker is an architectural photographer in Newton, Massachusetts.





bove: Can an entire transit system be handled by a couple of guys on the ight shift? In this fantastic, information intensive but comfortable operation enter for the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority, the answer eems to be yes. (Architects: Leers Weinzapfel Associates)

Below: Midnight, March 17. Even though it's a Friday, and the weather predictions call for warm temperatures, the plows must rumble across Boston. You just never know....





Above: During the evening rush at Rialto, chefs Erin Bevan, Patrick Gilmartin, Adam Gendreau, and Danielle Troiano never once looked up from their work. Below: The Pathology Lab at Boston Medical Center runs around the clock. Workers carefully slice, stain, and inspect dozens of tissue samples so good diagnoses can be made. This is the end of the night shift, at 5am.

Right: Al Disken and his foreman spent dozens of nights in 2004 digging a geothermal well in order to provide heating and cooling for Trinity Church A conventional HVAC system would have required bulky heat exchangers on the roof of H.H. Richardson's masterpiece. (Restoration architect: Goody, Clancy)







Above: The game is still going on at Fenway, and Ralph DiMatteo toils away in a well designed track. His partner is underground directly beneath him, splicing wires for new phone lines.

Below: Here is Dice K during a long night on May 3rd. Those fellows in gray shirts are Seattle Mariners who have loaded the bases off Dice K. Matsuzak settled down and two huge shots by Manny saved the day: the Sox won, 7–6





Above: These guys are supposed to read the Globe at work. Steve Sferrazza runs The Boston Globe pressroom and his men must look for proper color registration and inking on every edition. They also print The New York Times and the New York Post. Sometimes what looks like goofing off is really work. Below: Yes. these guys are working. Perhaps they are inventing the Next Big Industry to drive the Massachusetts economy. Scientists swap theories (or play foosball) in the conservatory at MIT's Picower Center for Brain and Cognitive Sciences. (Architects: Charles Correa Associates and Goody, Clancy)

The world is a different place ar

Twilight BY JOHN POWELL



We are privileged to experience twilight twice each day: once, when our side of the world emerges from the shadow of night, and the other, when we enter it. Both are times filled with speculation, dislocation -and decision.

Despite its frequency, I feel I have really seen twilight just twice, both times in northern brick cities, Boston and Copenhagen. The Boston experience occurred in the early '80s. I woke up before dawn one morning to go out to Peddocks Island, one of the Boston Harbor islands just off the town of Hull. Back then, to get to the island, you had to rent a skiff with an outboard from a pier in Hull. It cost \$15 for the day and came with a can of gas. I promptly got the painter (the piece of rope attached to the front of the boat) wrapped around the prop shaft (and got it clear

before anyone noticed). When I was finally out on the water, my shadow and the shadow of the mist that surrounded me and the boat ended in the water with a spectral haze that seemed independent of the skiff and me. As the dawn brightened, the deepening shadow and the glow of the sun gradually took over and revealed the water, boat, and island. I felt as if I had come out of nowhere. Now I sail the harbor often, often passing through the Hull gut, but I've never experienced a similar feeling of dislocation.

In Copenhagen, I was walking along the water's edge (easy to do because the water is everywhere) one evening in late winter. It was misty, and the sun had been down for an hour or two, but there was still a bluish glow to the air. The small sodium streetlights, which were suspended over the

middle of the street rather than mounted on poles, hadn't quite taken over from the sky yet. I almost walked into an enormous black cast-iron bollard — a real one, put there for a purpose, to moor a barge or a ship. This one even had a hawser around it, at least 10 inches in circumference, evidence that it had been put to use. Gradually, as if my eyes were learning to see in the twilight, I noticed the prow of a 19th-century Danish trading schooner. Nothing particularly unusual in that, except the ship was still in the last of the twilight from the sky, and the bollard and I were in the street light. Nothing particularly unusual in that either, and in this context, nothing even particularly romantic about it. But I stopped. The 19th-century object, the ship, was in sky-made twilight. The 20th-century bollard and I were in 20thcentury streetlight-made twilight. They balanced each other for a while, then the sky faded and the ship became a bland orange silhouette.

Twilight is an essential aspect of the experience of the night, its in-between condition marking the passage of light. On the one hand, light acts like a palpable material; on the other hand, light reveals itself as the designator of space and time. Where we sit in this world of perception and physical phenomena is the perpetual twilight and morning of thinking and seeing and understanding.

recognized light artist in Boston (www.lighttimeinspace.com).

The Place of Elephants BY ROBERT COWHERD PHD, ASSOC. AIA

Like all visions worthy of changing the course of a life, this one began with a story. It was the story of a place so far away that it mattered not if you flew east or west, and so sophisticated yet utterly unfamiliar as to resemble speculation on what intelligent life on another planet might be like. And there was a photo of an enormous gate at the end of a narrow street. I never learned whether elephants had ever actually been kept in the shady courtyard visible through the open doorway or if the name Gajahan (place of elephants) was just a poetic reference to its enormity. Five years and a research grant later, a bicycle taxi driver pedaled softly down the lane and delivered me under the sheltering eaves of the Gajahan gate.

Neglect of the former royal mansion had been rewarded with a towering canopy of tropical foliage emitting a cacophony of exotic birdcalls. At unpredictable intervals, seedpods crashed onto corrugated steel covering cracks in the teak shingle roofs too expensive to repair, given expectations of imminent redevelopment. In this place, the equatorial sun drops below the horizon with the suddenness of a light switch, dividing the world into precisely 12 hours each of blinding glare and total darkness. The birds give way to bats and a nocturnal cat-like creature that no one seems to have ever seen.

Most long-term visitors vividly recall their first night in Java with some combination of disparagement and romance directed at the call to prayer. It starts long after midnight and way before dawn as a distant cry reaching out over the rooftops, soon joined by another at a different pitch and motif somewhere closer. Within minutes the transparent layering of insistently autonomous microphone-wielding muezzin builds to a wall of Ivesian caterwauling. Then the biggest and closest megaphone of all displaces all competitors audible now only in the pauses between phrases. It

trails off and ends as it began, one by one as if offering a measure of the city.

Precisely nine years later, I am back in Gajahan for the last all-night shadow puppet play before the new owner takes possession of the complex. This time, my baby boy lies sleeping on the cool polished concrete floor. For centuries, the Javanese shadow play has enjoyed the popularity and magic akin to movies in the West, but imbued with an unmatched spiritual power and cultural significance. In recent decades, the shadow side of the screen has been abandoned in favor of the color, flash, and intrigues between the puppeteer, flirtatious singers, and a general buffoonery of the orchestra and audience. The drama plays out in parallel realms on and off the screen. The juxtaposition of the metaphysical and the scatological disturbs our romantic projections even as it exposes the Javanese matter-of-fact confluence of high-low, good-evil, life-death, lightdark. On the shadow side of the screen, the full magic of the story unfolds as floating figures swell, dart, pulse, sway,

and quiver in simple shadow and light. The interplay of shimmering tones of the gamelan orchestra, the disembodied singers, the whine of the bowed fiddle, the late hour, and a toxic brew of rice wine all contribute to a meditative dream-state.

Rousing me, my wife indicates that it's time to gather our baby and seek out our bed. As our bicycle taxi passes through the giant doors of the elephant gate, an explosion of hammered bronze, crashing cymbals, and drums behind us signals a mortal battle has just erupted on screen. As the war cries recede down the narrow lane, the first distant sound of the call to prayer reaches out to us over the low rooftops. •

Robert Cowherd PhD, Associated and Sam associate professor of architecture at Wentworth Institute of Technology. He lived and worked in Indonesia for five years. Audio files of a puppet play and call to prayer are available at: www. architectureboston.com/puppetshow



The Park BY PAMELA DE OLIVEIRA-SMITH

There's fur at the edge of any park at night, a palpable extra atmospheric film for a visitor to walk through before daring to push on. Sometimes parks are illuminated at night, but mainly for sports events that invite the great searing intrusion of field lights over one surgically precise spot against a city's low horizon. And sometimes packs of people invade parks at night, insistent in a contrived togetherness that emboldens their spirits and bolsters their courage to confront the dark. Sometimes there are candlelit celebrations of the solstice. Halloween, or some whimsical civic event. And when angry citizens protesting an insurgence of violence against women band together, they meet after

dark carrying candles and flashlights, chanting, "take back the night."

As if we ever could.

In Boston's Franklin Park, Forest Hills Cemetery, and Arnold Arboretum, it isn't so much that we fear lions and tigers and bears, or even ghosties and ghoulies and long-legged beasties, although there is a bit of that. It is more the fear of coyotes, raccoons, and muggers. And the unknown. Especially the unknown.

How can we not fear it? Who knows what goes on at night behind those highly manicured topiaries or what wickedness muscles through the thistled paths that lead to deserted picnic tables, empty athletic fields, or rhododendron groves? We can only imagine that if

humans are on the prowl through the woods, they are up to something unwholesome. We do not imagine that the footsteps rustling through the undergrowth are Cub Scouts on a campout, amateur astronomers yearning for a glimpse of Mars, or even the benign homeless settling in for the night.

Why do we fear the shadows? When we do brave the night, if there are moments when we can immerse ourselves in darkness without the Greek chorus called Anxiety draining all of our attention, there's something magical to discover. The world as we know it and all its elements are there, but our visual senses are gobstopped. It's a world of blacks, indigoblues, and grays. Murderers and rapists

aside, maybe it is our strange initial inability to interpret the familiar yet sudden otherworldliness of our surroundings after dark that causes gooseflesh, at least until our eyes adjust fully to the dark.

Do landscape designers dream of the moonlit midnight urban world of their wild or precisely groomed lawns and gardens? What would happen if planners took more tips from the builders of astronomical phenomena like Stonehenge or Chaco Canyon and gave meaning to what we see and how we see it — during both day and night? Perhaps our collective urban experience of what it means to be outside at night would grow to encompass the park systems both nocturnally and diurnally.

The more people wander out together, the safer we are, and the more we experience our world in its grand entirety, the richer we make our souls.

Pamela de Oliveira-Smith is the managing editor of *ArchitectureBoston* and director of communications and marketing for the BSA.



Combat Zone, Boston, circa 1969 BY JONATHAN TUDAN AIA



Dusk drops a vell over the scene, making the lights of the marquees burn that much brighter. I feel a charge of excitement as I step onto Washington Street and blend into the flow. The sidewalks are brimming with men of all shapes and colors eager to tap into the sexual fantasia that pours from the strip clubs as easily as the liquor and the beer inside. Many travel in packs of threes and fours; a few are in uniform; the majority are your average, loud-mouth, boozing, adolescent rednecks, office creeps, and college boys. They all share one common fascination: female subjugation. Local scammers, pimps, and drug dealers troll the gutters, feeding on innocence, pleasure, and greed. Black musicians - romantics and entrepreneurs — walk the street with an air of confidence and superiority, affecting an attitude that is suave, urbane, and debonair. Affecting no attitude at all, except maybe boredom, are the bartenders, bouncers, and capitalists living off the local entertainment. And then there are the girls...

You can clearly discern the various patterns of female life in the Combat Zone. Three classes distinguish the ladies. The first group — the Entertainers — make up the majority. They include strippers, dancers, and cocktail waitresses. The second is the Girlfriends. They consist of women who are along for the ride with the men in their life; the men are definitely behind the wheel. And finally there are the Hookers. They are further distinguished by two subclasses: the Winners and the Losers. The Winners are semi-successful, work out of their apartments, and service a steady customer base. At the bottom of this sexual swamp are the Losers, the ones who hang out in the street, often alone. But don't under-estimate their power. They can be the most dangerous, mostly because they've got nothing left to lose. One in 30 people out tonight is a woman, and 100 percent of the women fall into one of these

three categories.

At the entrance to the Normandy Lounge, a middle-aged man in a white shirt and tie and neatly combed hair is standing on the edge of the sidewalk reading from a Bible. The guy reminds me of my high-school vice-principal. He's preaching repentance and salvation to a world that has ignored his existence.

"Jesus loves you!" the vice-principal shouts into the face of a wino shuffling by clutching a paper bag. The top of a green bottle pops out from the bag like the head of a turtle.

"Whiskey loves you!" the wino shoots back, raising his turtle in the air.

Ionathan Tudan AIA is associate campus from which this essay is adapted, Lovers, Muggers, and Thieves: A Boston Memoir.

The Sea BY RICH WILSON

At night, far from land, people, and the infrastructure that humans have developed to control their environment, the sea is a place of constant change that tests sailors' physical and mental endurance. The cold, the dark, and the damp are frequently what you might imagine. What you might not imagine is how often the loneliness of the nocturnal sea is broken by natural spectacle and the pervasiveness of human presence.

Since 1990, I have sailed on two voyages with Bill Biewenga and one with Rich DuMoulin, challenging and breaking three clippership sailing records set in the 19th century. With deliveries and two Atlantic roundtrips added in, we have sailed 80,000 nautical miles over 340 days at sea. Put another way, we have sailed 40,000 miles in the dark of night.

In 1993, after rounding Cape Horn en route from San Francisco to Boston, we headed north past the Falkland Islands. The cold night necessitated stocking caps. neck warmers, and ski gloves, to go with normal foul-weather gear. Aboard our trimaran Great American II, we were making 12 knots. On the horizon ahead appeared a small, odd, white glow, not the normal pinpoint light of a ship. Then another appeared, then another. Rocketing closer, we seemingly sailed toward a dozen Fenway Parks, lit brilliantly against the blackness. What were they?

I steered for the edge of the first glow. A ship slowly defined itself. Bow to stern, banks of lights were mounted over the side, aimed downward, with continuous reels of fishing wires dipping into and out of the water. The lights attracted squid, and the reels of fish wire pulled them in.

Cutting close behind the stern of one ship, I ran to the windward pontoon, waving both arms high overhead in greeting. A dozen fishermen ran to their stern, waving and wondering in return what apparition we were, as we loomed, then disappeared into the night.

Like the clipper Mandarin 150 years earlier en route from New York, we had made landfall at Cape Otway, south of Melbourne. Another 24 hours and we'd finish. A large cloud swept overhead, dropping light rain. When it retreated, a white rainbow suddenly appeared from the light of the moon in the dark of night -a "moonbow."

Sailing in the South Atlantic just after midnight, I thought I saw a faint light loom over the horizon. On a chance, I called on the radio, "Is anybody there?" A hail came back, a fishing vessel bound for St. Helena Island, where Napoleon was exiled. It was a New Zealand captain, with crew of Namibians, Taiwanese, Hong Kong Chinese, Singaporeans, and Australians. We had an hour's friendly conversation with a mini-UN just a few miles away.

Deep in the southern Indian Ocean. I trimmed sails in a moonless, cloudless night. Gradually, a low arc of bluish white light appeared, spanning 150 degrees of horizon and reaching 30 degrees of altitude — the Aurora Australis! Without the shooting color and shimmering backdrop of the Aurora Borealis — its Northern hemisphere counterpart it was steady and bright, so bright that I could have easily read a newspaper in the cockpit.

Peering forward in the dark, my headlight dimly lit the jib. I ground the winch slowly, refining the sail's set. Suddenly,



Porches BY ROBERT CAMPBELL FAIA

whump! - something hit me hard in the chest, like a thrown baseball, I recoiled, thinking a block or line had broken. I heard a flap, flap, flap at my feet. Looking down, I found a flying fish, about a foot long, with a 10-inch wingspan. They leap out of the water to escape predators (or boats) and can glide for 100 yards. I picked him up gently by his tail and tossed him back in, wondering who was the more surprised.

The sea is populated with disembodied sailors - voices over the radio, the phantom presence of those who have gone before. The enormous Pacific feels like a neighborhood inhabited by the great captain James Cook, Captain Bligh, the mutinous Fletcher Christian, Charles Darwin, Ferdinand Magellan, and Captain Freeman Hatch, whose clipper Northern Light, bound with Gold Rush cargo for Boston, set a record in 1853. It was the clippership captains whose presence was always with us as we raced them across time. En route from Hong Kong to New York, in the Indian Ocean, we had finally caught the logbook position of the legendary clipper Sea Witch, Captain Robert "Bully" Waterman in command. Her 1849 voyage had led ours by three days, and we had sailed like madmen to overtake her. Sea Witch had then poured on the speed with a nine-day average of over 11 knots. We couldn't maintain that pace. On the night that Sea Witch passed us, I glanced over my shoulder and could swear that in the billowing clouds in front of a brilliant moon, I saw that huge clipper billowing her own white clouds of sail as she charged past, with the keeneyed Captain Waterman overseeing his world from her windward rail.

Rich Wilson is president of sitesALIVE! in Gloucester, Massachusetts (www. sitesalive.com). He is currently preparing for the 2008 Vendée Globe, a single handed, nonstop, 'round-the-world race.

The spaces I have always loved best are the ones that are neither indoors nor outdoors, but which hover between those poles. They never feel quite as bright as day nor quite as black as night, but seem magically, motionlessly suspended between those extremes.

When I was growing up, my family spent summers in my grandparents' house on the shore of Lake Erie, not far from Buffalo, my home town. It was a house with three screened porches, none of which ever felt quite inside or quite outside. The least interesting was the back porch, but even there, I could spend a long summer afternoon, lying on my back reading on the gently swaying swing-sofa. The kitchen was on one side of the porch and the outdoors on the other, a perfect pairing for a boy.

Perhaps it was least interesting because I rarely used it at night. Sounds and smells are especially strong at night, when there is less to see. And they seem more intense on a screened porch, maybe because you're not expecting to meet them in a place that is semi-indoors. Our second porch was a sleeping porch, perched high up on the rear of the house. I can still distinctly recall the smell of the crushed stone of the driveway below (stronger when it was wet) and the smell of the day's sunshine stored in the thickness of the blankets on the beds. You heard the soft rustle of wind moving among the trees, or maybe the beginning patter of rain, or the barely perceptible ghost sound of a radio in the living room downstairs. Radios were bigger and brighter then. In the night air on the darkening porch you imagined the adults gathered around as if at a campfire.

The best porch was the front porch. It remains, for me, the most important room in the world. Its screens, like those of the other two porches, did not come down to the floor but only to sill height. For me that's an essential detail. Screens that come to the floor make a space feel undefined. It fails to contain you. Our porch was almost the full width of the house, maybe 30 feet, room enough for both a Monopoly game



on the floor at the kids' end and the clink of highballs at the grownups' end. The porch's inner wall was the outer stucco wall of the house, declaring the fact, most palpable at night, that you were not inside. Wicker chairs creaked pleasantly as people settled into them, and another swing-sofa squeaked rustily.

What made the room so great was its place in a layered series of spaces. Behind it was the living room, wood-paneled, cavelike, with a stone fireplace; then came the porch with its indoor-outdoor light; then the front yard, with acorns that stung your bare feet; then the wide sandy beach: then Lake Erie, flecked with the sailboats of a nearby Lightning club; and finally, when the weather was clear, the low gray line of the American shore, with maybe the silhouette of a freighter moving against it. As a kid, I would race from the living room to the lake, and the stages I passed through were like the growth of a person from womb to world, each stage bigger, brighter, and more public than the last.

Robert Campbell FAIA is the architecture

Covering the Issues

High life on the High Line... In New York magazine's cover story (May 7, 2007), Adam Sternbergh tells the story of this new park in the sky. The High Line was an elevated railroad serving warehouses on Manhattan's Lower West Side. Abandoned in 1980 and left (literally) to go to seed, this potentially bucolic landscape-in-the-sky has been the stuff of many dreams, but Joshua David (a journalist) and Robert Hammond (an artist) actually managed to sell the city on their vision. An international design competition was held, and construction is underway. Speculators have followed, with 10 new buildings under construction and 15 more planned. Sternbergh outlines the alignment of powerful architects, planners, politicians, and celebrities who conspired to support the project and speculates on why the idea caught on. Makes you think about Boston's former Central Artery and new Greenway.

No, not that Glass House... Paul Goldberger previews The Glass House in The New Yorker (April 30, 2007), an upcoming play about the Farnsworth House - Mies Van der Rohe's masterpiece in Plano, Illinois."It is a play about architecture only in the sense that A Streetcar Named Desire is a play about public transit," writes Goldberger. The story explores the relationship between the great architect and Dr. Edith Farnsworth, his client — a tale of ambition, seduction, and the struggle over whether a client may select her own furnishings.

In the same issue, Goldberger gives a glowing review of what promises to become a contemporary masterpiece, Steven Holl's luminous new addition to the Nelson Atkins Museum of Art in Kansas City a decidedly 21st-century glass addition on the front lawn of a supposedly sacrosanct Beaux-Arts temple of a building. Maybe there's hope for Boston City Hall after all.

Good news... "Good is for people who give a damn" announces this new magazine. And with Natalie Jeremijenko as cover girl —the artist/environmental activist who created Mass MoCA's upside down trees -I had to take a look (Issue 004, May/June 2007). In the midst of frustratingly brief articles, Josh Jackson offers substance in "Decongestion," a look at successful transportation innovations. Among the less familiar: In Copenhagen, bike lanes are placed between parked cars and the curb. In Amsterdam, ample parking for all types of personal vehicles (bikes, cars) means that intermodal systems are used more often. Most radical are the "naked streets" in the Netherlands, where traffic lights, curbs, and signs have been stripped, resulting in 50 percent slower traffic speeds. Jackson provides a primer of innovative street design.

Hey buddy, want to buy a bridge?...

In a Business Week cover story (May 7, 2007), Emily Thornton writes about the appetite that banks and private investment firms have recently acquired for buying public infrastructure. The Indiana Toll Road and the Chicago Skyway have already been sold, while the Tappan Zee Bridge, Pennsylvania Turnpike, and Midway Airport are under consideration. Could the Mass Pike be next? Private investors like these projects for their "rich cash flows and the monopolistic advantages," while chronically strapped-for-cash public agencies and authorities find the deals too good to pass up. But with for-profit firms in charge, Thornton worries about problems like potentially huge toll hikes, as well as the larger societal question of whether private companies should control public needs. Then there are the big issues she doesn't name: is this a return to the 19th-century pattern of privately owned



infrastructure, such as the Boston and New York City subways once were? And if transportation (and ease or lack of access to it) drives development, how might this affect smart-growth planning and the future face of our cities?

Earth Day, Every Day... Outside magazine jumps into the sustainability fray with "179 Solutions for a Hot Planet" and Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger on the cover (April 2007). Newsweek's Earth Day issue (April 16, 2007) offers the same cover governor and a report by Anne Underwood on efforts by 435 US mayors to pledge their cities to meet their own climate agreement — the Kyoto Protocol adapted for cities. Vanity Fair jumps in with its "Second Annual Green Issue" (May 2007) — the most substantive, outspoken, and critical of this green trifecta. Better still, no cover governor.

Gretchen Schneider, Assoc. AIA, is a designer with a practice in Boston.

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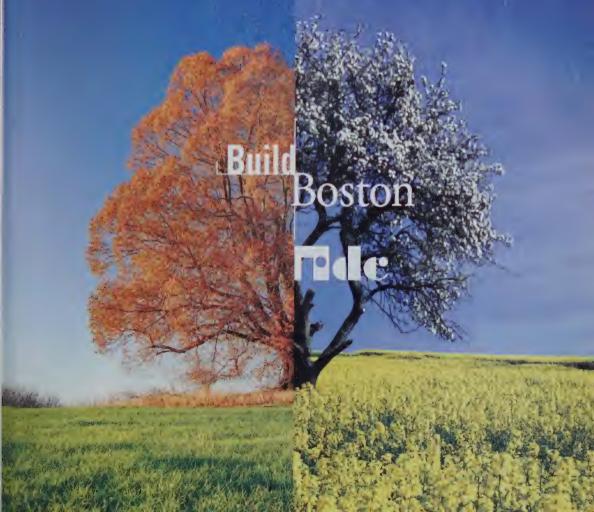
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NEW YORK NIGHT: THE MYSTIQUE AND ITS HISTORY Scribner, 2005

Every afternoon, as the sun lowers slowly to the horizon, New Yorkers make a choice: work, pleasure, or rest? This book completely ignores the last. Instead, Mark Caldwell details the waking lives of New Yorkers after dark. His history of Manhattan's nighttime activities begins in Peter Geraerdy's tavern in 1643, and ends with the author's visit to one of the few remaining strip clubs in Times Square in 2004, covering much ground between the two.

Starting at the base of Broadway, Caldwell works his way northward as New Amsterdam grows into a major metropolis, following its dwellers and transients after the sun goes down. Examining Manhattan nightlife over the course of 362 years, the Fordham University English professor studies an urban fabric constantly in flux in a city that is always reinventing itself. On an island with limited space, current residents will recognize the addresses and the attitudes of 1800s entertainment, but buildings burn down, fall out of fashion, or transform to follow the next trend, so few physical reminders are visible today.

There are even fewer remnants of the earliest nights passed in the Dutch colony, but the drinking, sex, and scandal are familiar enough to today's readers. Theater, food service, and class tension came later, as Broadway pushed north. While the "Lights of Broadway" are best known and still visible in Times Square, P.T. Barnum first cast the street in the bluish glow of a Drummond lamp — now known as a limelight - just outside his American Museum and visible a full mile away. Horse-drawn omnibuses dropped revelers at the corner of Ann Street and Broadway, now only a block from Ground Zero's white spotlights.

Caldwell lingers on the nightlife of a pre-Revolutionary War colony for somewhat longer than he has stories to tell about it. There is a distinct shift in pace once he has first-hand accounts from newspapers and diaries, and the book moves briskly through riots, theater openings, murders, and jazz singers until its ending point, shortly after the raid on the Stonewall Inn in June 1969.

In his final pages, Caldwell retreats down Broadway, retracing the densely packed history and finding office towers and chain stores where grand homes and theaters once stood. As he walks, he notes, but does not mourn, the absence of nightlife on this storied street, which had played host to so many influential characters in the history of New York City.

But as Caldwell demonstrates, the city's nightlife is a moveable feast, and today it has moved far beyond the bounds of Broadway. Every night, New Yorkers venture out to find Indian food in Jackson Heights, work a latenight delivery shift in Hunts Point, or attend a gallery opening in Williamsburg. They will all agree with Caldwell's sentiment that our tiny urban apartments are just "quiet corners in one's real home, the city."

Raheli Millman is an editorial assistant at



PARIS AFTER DARK

Containing a Description of the Fast Women, Their Haunts, Habits, Etc., to Which Is Added a Faithful Description of the Night Amusements and Other Resorts, Also All Particulars Relating to the Working of the Social Evil in the French Metropolis, the Only **Genuine Correct Guide for Gentlemen** Printed by Jules Bover, 1877

"Prostitutes are often under-appreciated as the nocturnal counterpoint to the architecture of a great city seen in daylight." This sounds like the opening of a poorly conceived undergraduate thesis that looks for the literal dark side of Paris, but how does one begin a review of a night-time Baedeker like this? A lingering sense of selfrespect, substantially damaged though it is by being considered the right sort to review a book like this, precludes many approaches. "When did you stop beating your wife?" rivals "was the advice on harlots accurate, the reviews well done?"—at least when one appears in print.

In Victorian fashion, an Aristotelian taxonomy of "nymphs of the pavement" is first presented by our anonymous 19thcentury author. Bad enough to have the French insulting your accent, let alone your choice of vocabulary.

At the apex, we find lorettes, named after Notre-Dame-Des-Lorettes, more than a little ironically a Marianist church near rue Pigalle. A woman reaches this status by

serving apprenticeship as a crevette, we are reassured, the guild ladder implying craftsmanship of a sort. Grisettes, the poor shopgirls socializing in the Latin Quarter and acting in Bohemian fashion by dancing, are seen as the inexorable starting point of a young woman's professional march.

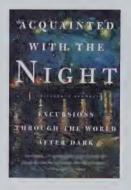
We hear the tale of poor Hortense. "One day her mother sent her on an errand, and Hortense never returned. She heard the music as she passed the gate of the Closerie [-des-Lilas] and attracted by it and the gaiety of the scene, was constrained to enter."

While dance is the path to doom for a young woman, what the hell, that means dancing-saloons are a great place to look for your "inamorata." And so follows a rather substantial list of dancing halls scattered across the city, with short commentary akin to an AAA travel guide, highlighting recommended establishments, as well as the tricks they will play upon their new acquaintance in further separating him

from his money. It takes a sense of shame for these tricks to be effective, and so most would strike a modern reader as being sadly ineffective. The locations of these pleasure domes cluster, not surprisingly, around rue Pigalle and throughout the Latin Ouarter. showing the persistence and consistency of the tourist's impulse over time.

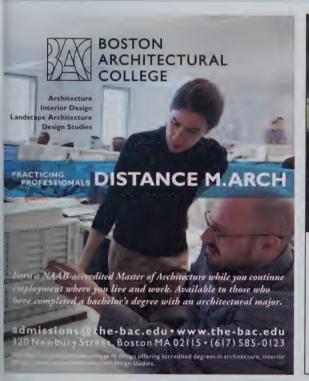
Still, one piece of urban planning wisdom escapes at the end. The author notes that a walk at evening in Paris compares favorably with one taken in London, the former accepting and regulating all manner of activities ostensibly suppressed in the latter: "Such comparison offers the best argument in favor of the continental system." Just in case the reader disagrees with this assessment, the same publisher offers a companion guide to London.

Mark Stater is the president of the Bay Village Neignborhood Association



ACQUAINTED WITH THE NIGHT: **EXCURSIONS THROUGH THE** WORLD AFTER DARK

Insomniacs: relief is at hand! Christopher Dewdney, a writer based in Ontario, has





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written a real snorer on the subject of night. The enticing premise — 12 chapters based on the 12 hours of a proverbial equinox evening through which to explore different themes of the night — could have been a great book. The method, too, is promising: through storytelling, science, mythology, and personal anecdotes he expounds on terminology, scary movies, and night insects — in short, anything to do with the dark.

While artistes may toil through the wee hours to capture night's disquieting essence ("Acquainted with the Night," for example, is the title of a poem by Robert Frost published in 1928), Dewdney has a real knack for explaining the obvious in the most banal way, an achievement few writers can pull off in today's market. "If you could travel back in time a billion years," he writes, "the earth would appear very different." Let's hope so. Elsewhere he writes, "If travelers from another planet had arrived at earth's night side five thousand years ago they would have seen no lights..." The notable fact that he's setting up is the obvious observation that there were no electric lights a few millennia ago, so again, start skimming.

Dewdney touches on a healthy variety of topics including a history of street lighting and its relationship to crime, how night pollution affects our diurnal rhythms, the stages of sleep, and the physics of sunset, but only lightly, and with distractingly florid subjectivity. Billed as a poet, he produces prose that is intended to be the book's greatest strength, yet at the precise moment when he should soar, he goes down in flames. "A sensational sunset — and we have all probably seen at least one — is a visual extravaganza," he writes, inadvertently leading his readers to question their own sunset experiences. "It is monumental, almost grandiose ... Some evenings the sky resembled a vast surrealist hallucination drenched with pigment..." Such poetics permeate every chapter. You could skim these multiple page prose-poetry passages, but at the risk of missing those interesting facts that you bought the book for in the first place. On the other hand, it is doubtful that any sentient person will glean something new from between these covers.

If you get through the first hundred pages and are still awake, you will encounter a chapter written just for you: insomnia. It is here that he is most perceptive: "To sleep at night is a natural thing, something most of us can count on every night," he writes. "In fact, many of us have trouble keeping awake when we're tired." Or, I might add, when reading this book.

Rachel Levitt is the home design editor for *Boston Magazine* and editor of *Boston Home*.

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If you're up all night, you might need food, coffee, aspirin, gas. Heck, you might want to go bowling! This Google "mash-up" lists all-night sources for all those things and more, with a handy clickable map.

SUNRISE, SUNSET CALENDAR

An easy-to-use astronomical almanac in calendar form. Use the custom function to select your town and display sunrise and sunset times — as well as moon phases and twilight times.

LUCI ASSOCIATION

www.luciassociation.org

Lighting Urban Community International is creating "an international network of cities of light" and encouraging cities everywhere to make better use of light in urban environments. The site's photo gallery features images from some of the 60 member cities, which are mostly in Europe and Asia. The only US member city? Philadelphia.

INTERNATIONAL DARK-SKY ASSOCIATION

Astronomers may have been the first to raise the alarm about light pollution, but the dark-sky movement has grown to include ecologists, environmentalists, lighting professionals, urban planners, and community activists. The IDA website includes a directory of "darksky friendly" lighting fixtures, a model lighting ordinance, even a Dark Sky Finder to locate good spots for stargazing. Don't miss the Ratings page to view and rate photos of outdoor lighting applications.

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE - NATURAL LIGHTSCAPES

The protection of starry night skies and natural darkness is now part of the mission of the National Park Service, which monitors night-sky conditions in many parks in the West. Go to the Monitoring and Data page for data and images. It may not surprise you to learn that the lights of Las Vegas can be seen from the Mojave Desert, 100 miles away.

EDWARD HOPPER'S NIGHTHAWKS

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nighthawks

Maybe you're a Wikipedia skeptic, but you can't beat it for its pop-culture-references lists. Explore the myriad imitations and parodies of Hopper's most famous work. Better yet, see the real thing: The iconic painting is on display through August 19 at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts as the centerpiece of a major Hopper exhibition.

We're always looking for intriguing websites — however opaque the connection to architecture. Send your candidates to:

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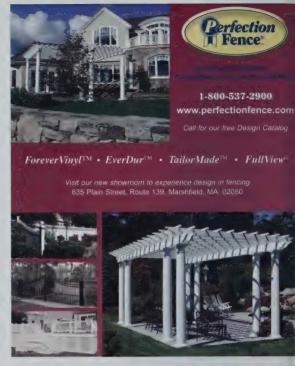


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The Dessert Café

It was not much to look at from the outside: a mid-block building with tired aluminum siding and two medium-size windows. But for four years, this raspberry-walled café served as one of those "third places" hailed by Ray Oldenburg in his book The Great Good Place. Neighbors gathered at Dessert, as it was called, for candlelit conversation and board games while savoring French pressed coffee and the best sweet treats in Philadelphia.

The food wasn't even the point when my best friend Greg and I decided to open Dessert. We just wanted to fill a void in our mixed-use gentrifying neighborhood, a square half-mile bracketed by the ragtag Italian Market, with its red-gravy eateries and produce stands, and funky South Street, 10 blocks of bars and tattoo shops. We designed the place we wanted from scratch, hanging five-panel doors sideways to create wainscoting, crafting brass sconces from a disassembled chandelier, and hunting all over for three-legged table bases — the only kind that don't wobble.

We wanted a place where the bleats of Miles Davis segued into the murmurings of Frank Sinatra. A place for adults, with real china, and table service, and no floppy sofas. Where it was assumed everything was "to stay," not "to go."

The idea of a late-night public place in urban America is, I think, primarily relegated to the bar or the nightclub. I'm not much of a fan of either. But I've always loved to wander about in the evening in search of dessert, either because I've eaten in and gotten restless around 9:30, or because I've dined out and am having too good a time to go home and sit in front of the television.

It turned out that not as many souls are as simpatico with this notion as I thought. Our evenings-only, dessert-only café confused the neighbors, who asked why we were "always closed" when they strolled past on their way to work. We were confused, in



turn, whenever someone opened the door, took a look around our empty room and asked, "Are you guys still open?" Still? It was only 7:30 at night.

The folks who did get it came late and stayed late. They came for soufflé and bread pudding and real strawberry shortcake. They came to talk to one another: no one ever opened a laptop. That was for the daytime, half-decafskim latte-chai-moccachino set.

This set liked classic games. I discovered that many people had a long-neglected fondness for the card game Mille Bornes and that some were really, really bad at Trivial Pursuit. I watched as a young man with hanging ropes of dreads played his first-ever chess game, then his second and his third. He soon sadly retired, defeated by his late start in life.

We got to know the backstories of these regulars. On our final night, I asked some of our best customers to sign a journal. A couple, whose life arc we'd closely followed, noted "we've consulted with you on wedding plans, honeymoon destinations, real estate, and baby names." (I still think they should have gone with Sebastian over Luca.)

The most memorable customers, though, were the soloists. These folks returned again and again, gradually creeping closer and closer to "our" table to chat more comfortably. "Adventure Dave" traveled for months into the wilds of South America, then dropped by with photos and stories. "Tall Dan" hunched his lanky frame over a pot of vanilla tea and bemoaned his expensive home renovations. "Sue Dogwalker" shared her love of chocolate, books, and Buddy the St. Bernard.

Our first regular, a rumpled older gent who rode more than an hour each way by bus to say hi and knock out the hardest puzzles in The Atlantic Monthly, never received a nickname. But even long after he'd moved, we referred to "Steve's table." I may never see him again, but the ones who live in the neighborhood are flaneurs like me. The types who love to be alone in a crowd. I know we'll encounter each other one evening soon, at a free concert in Rittenhouse Square, at a bookstore reading...or maybe just enjoying a late-night espresso at the next "great good place."

JoAnn Greco is a freelance journalist in Philadelphia. Her favorite dessert is key lime pie.



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Read more about Boston City Hall at www.architectureboston.com/cityhall

Cover: Media-tize It (an LED pixel net with live video feed of the sky), from "City Hall Version 2.0: An Open Menu for Public Interfaces" by Höweler + Yoon Architecture (see page 28).

This page: Boston Globe/John Hurley/Landov.



Government Center Commission Chairman Robert Morgan (second from right) with City Hall architects (from left)
Gerhard Kallmann, Michael McKinnell, and Edward Knowles.

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Tough Love

he irony is that it was designed as a response to what architect Michael McKinnell FAIA calls the "thin, disposable Kleenex architecture" of the 1950s. He and Gerhard Kallmann FAIA, the designers of Boston City Hall, probably never imagined that their brick-and-concrete masterpiece might itself be considered disposable.

Of course, back in the '50s, people still knew how to darn socks, a skill long lost in today's tear-down, throw-away culture. Mayor Thomas Menino's proposal to sell Boston City Hall and use the proceeds to build a new city hall on the waterfront makes perfect Orwellian sense in a society that views repair and reuse as a wasteful endeavor. Why waste your time darning when it's easier to pick up a new pair of socks at the CVS?

The sad fact is that City Hall is the victim of decades of withheld repairs and neglect — a broadly accepted practice of disinvestment in public structures. In a recent Boston Globe op-ed (July 31, 2007), David Westerling and Steve Poftak described the malignant effects of neglect and lack of maintenance — which some states are beginning to address, recognizing that the practice constitutes an abuse of public trust and imprudent stewardship of public funds. The principle is obvious to anyone ever reprimanded by the parental chestnut, "If you can't take care of the one you have, you don't get another one."

But Boston doesn't need to build a new city hall in order to have a new city hall. The problems of the building are obvious but not insurmountable. The greater problem is the lack of vision and will. The mayor is undoubtedly, understandably, worn out by a legacy of false starts and failed attempts to fix City Hall Plaza, which has been conflated with City Hall in the public mind as a hopeless cause. Bostonians have a weird and fierce attraction to hopeless causes and the masochistic opportunities they present — who can deny that something was lost with the Red Sox World Series victory? Our last best hope for self-flagellation is Boston City Hall.

But City Hall — this City Hall — which once launched "the New Boston," has the vigor and inherent rigor to reinvent itself as a symbol of an even newer Boston, an internationally recognized center of technical excellence, innovation, and creativity. Among the strongest proponents of the building are the young — teenagers, college students, and recent graduates who instinctively recognize the proto-Bilbao quality of the structure, and the next generation of designers who understand the building as the armature for civic activity and change that

its designers intended. A reinvented, re-imagined City Hall can represent their future — a symbolic hand-off by one generation to the next that honors the aspirations of the young. By re-imagining City Hall, we can offer a fresh response to the challenges of sustainability by building upon the common goals of the green movement and the preservation community. We can re-examine the relationship between government and the people in the context of new information technologies. We can reconsider our expectations for this building within an urban context that has changed substantially over four decades. The building can once again engender the excitement and pride felt by Bostonians, Mayor White, and city workers in the years after its opening.

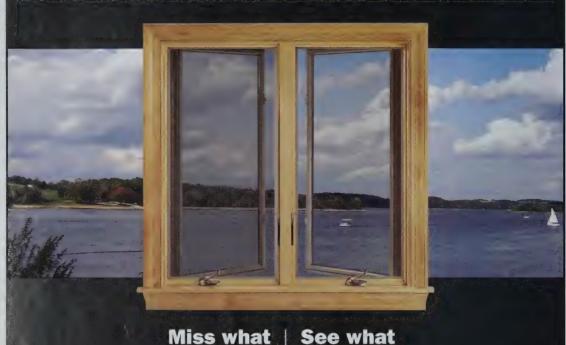
One of the forgotten successes of City Hall Plaza is that it established a "common ground" — one of the precious few places in the city where everyone feels equally comfortable, equally entitled. The construction of City Hall and the Plaza recognized the significance of a civic center — an idea much more powerful than suggested by the bland "Government Center." Bostonians responded to that idea, and the city has evolved in the following decades to reinforce its implications, with the "Walk to the Sea," the redevelopment of Faneuil Hall and Quincy Market, the new vitality of both Cambridge Street

Boston doesn't need to build a new city hall in order to have a new city hall.

and Congress Street, which was a back-street buffer from the derelict marketplace back in the '60s. The value of this place as the symbolic center of the city must not be ignored. Indeed, this country has a long history of wrestling over the location of government seats, a sensitivity that dates back to the complaints enumerated in the Declaration of Independence ("He has called together legislative bodies at places unusual, uncomfortable, and distant from the depository of their public records, for the sole purpose of fatiguing them into compliance with his measures").

ArchitectureBoston devoted its May/June 2005 issue to Boston City Hall, examining the historical context of its design and its subsequent significance to the city. With this issue, we are looking at the building's future. The mayor's proposal has its advocates (including at least one member of our own editorial board). Visit City Hall. Re-imagine it. You don't know what you've got 'til it's gone.

Elizabeth S. Padjen FAIA Editor



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Letters Letters Letters

Boston was never really a "night" city or, more specifically, an "all-night" city, mainly because public transportation shut down so early. But your "Night" issue [July/ August 2007] made me nostalgic for a time when at least some parts of the city were open all night. I was an actor in the mid-'60s, and after a rehearsal or performance, my colleagues and I wanted to restore our energy and unwind over a bite to eat. The choices weren't many, but there were a few hangouts of seductive appeal. There was Ken's on Boylston Street in Copley Square for a steak or pretty good deli; or the great Mondo's, popping up in various new places near the waterfront, where a generous breakfast or a heaping vinegary Mondo's salad were offered at any hour; or, for coffee and a Danish, and glaring overhead lights, the seedy Hayes Bickford in Harvard Square (at one point "the Bick" started to close at 4 AM so that derelicts wouldn't spend the entire night). This also meant that the surroundings were also peopled and lit. And alive. Like going to a museum at night, there was a special nighttime atmosphere. Theatrical. Artificial. Energized. A little risky, but (in those days) unthreatening. I'm glad the Museum of Fine Arts has evening hours. I'm grateful for the Citgo sign and the illuminated Bunker Hill Monument and Zakim Bridge. But I miss the allure and knowing camaraderie of the all-night bistro and the cheap glamour of the lights spilling out into the street right outside.

> Lloyd Schwartz Classical music editor The Boston Phoenix

It's about time we had a discussion about light and the nocturnal life of buildings. Never have innovations in the urban landscape had more impact on our lives than during the last century's electrification of our cities and towns. And now it is our responsibility to engage both the effect of light and its performance in ways that nest the many complex material,

environmental, and social agendas that architects face today... and tonight. The subject is especially potent to our future here in Massachusetts, Our Commonwealth is a hotbed of academic institutions, manufacturers, and designers, all capable of taking new illumination technologies to the next level.

Driving along the new Rose Kennedy Greenway, I noticed hundreds of newly installed "acorn fixtures," the nostalgic lampposts that have become Boston's "Sherman Tank" standard for street lighting. What a missed opportunity. What could have been a laboratory for new lighting technologies becomes a reliquary for a lack of will to innovate.

The task at hand is a creative one that will require collaboration among architects, lighting designers, engineers, artists, fabricators, and governmental agencies. Our new administration is showing interest in supporting the Massachusetts Creative Economy, so what better forum to bring these disciplines together than to engage in developing new ways to deliver light not only to our local communities but also to the global market so we may respond to the more than two billion people who continue to live without electricity.

> Frano Violich AIA Kennedy & Violich Architecture BSA Design Commissioner

Announced in March, the Boston Redevelopment Authority's proposal to enliven the city's evening venues with lighted billboards has rightfully provoked skepticism. Some expect that this initiative will become a social and economic catalyst for the city's night spots. However, the success of these catalysts is inherently linked to implementing a significant density of ground-level programming that can use those graphics as active backdrops.

Shanghai's Huang Pu waterfront sets the Bund, a strolling promenade throbbing with activity, against the glitz of Pudong's signage and building lights. The spectacle,

lit from dusk until late evening, provides entertainment between the dinner and clubbing hours in a city whose identity is tethered to its rebellious nightlife. Times Square's billboards are juxtaposed against massive volumes of commercial space which are open almost all night, crystallizing New York City's 24/7 urbanism. It would be embarrassing if Boston pursued what can be no more than a superficial, Band-Aid urbanism, if these catalysts were inhibited by future timid planning schemes. For urban pulse points to throb, they need more than just signage; they need the infrastructure and planning to support and attract large night-crowds. Dense, downtown housing blocks, programmed, lit, public spaces, like winter gardens and night-markets, and public transportation that operates after last-call, must become priorities for the city.

Let's push for further planning initiatives that create the human and commercial density requisite for making such installations more than cheap symbols of surrendering urban design to commercialism. We must ensure these night venues have the programmatic and infrastructural resolution to support vitality in our night spots. Otherwise, Boston may be embarrassed to stand among cities like Shanghai, New York, and Hong Kong, gloating over its proverbial cufflinks, when it hasn't any pants.

> Lisa Ann Pasquale Boston

I was pleased to see James McCown's recent article regarding Light Boston [sidebar to "Illuminating Ideas," July/ August 2007]. As a powerful advocate for Boston's night-time illuminated environment, Light Boston takes an active stance to acquire funding and designers for properly illuminating Boston landmarks. But all too often, this only goes as far as the design and implementation phase. It seems that in many cases the most pervasive problem, either with existing exterior

lighting or renovated lighting, is maintenance. Any electrical device, especially outdoors, is inevitably going to fail. A wellilluminated urban environment actually rests in the hands not of advocacy groups like Light Boston, but of those tasked with maintaining the fixtures: in many cases, local municipalities and often private individuals or companies as well. More than likely, money exists within the budgets of these entities for upkeep and maintenance, yet one can still see burnedout lamps and broken or mis-aimed fixtures throughout Boston, giving the appearance of a sloppily illuminated city. Let's take pride in our unique civic life and encourage - nay, demand - that our night-time environment be pleasing, wonderful, energy efficient, without glare, and seen in the way it was designed to be with the lights on that are meant to be, and

> Dan Weissman Lam Partners Cambridge, Massachusetts

As director of the night photography group The Nocturnes, it was with great interest that I settled down to read the "Night" issue [July/August 2007] of your publication.

the lights off that aren't.

Over the years, I have observed that night photographers seem to have more than a keen interest in architecture and architectural artifacts as subject matter, so it's great to see a reciprocal study and appreciation of night photography, night illumination, and the night life of buildings in such a prestigious publication as yours. The connection between the study of architecture and night photography, I believe, is partly due to the many constraints placed upon the night photographer (long time exposures, use of a tripod, weather, extremely high contrast/low light levels, and the inherent danger associated with the night). Now, what have emerged in this discipline are basically two camps of subject matter - landscape and architecture (more accurately, structures of all sorts). This is to the exclusion of people/ portraits, "macro" work of flowers or other small objects in the night, and "action (stop action) photography" -- mostly what we in trade call "day photography."

The links in your "Site Work" section provide a valuable resource for readers who wish to pursue the study of the nocturne and its magic, although I would have hoped for a few night photography sites. A list of such sites is available online, at www.

the nocturnes com/resources/links html

Tim Baskerville The Nocturnes Night Photography Group Mare Island, California

I was surprised at the comment in "Prepared Response" [May/June 2007] asking, "How useful, really, are some of the efforts?" referring to the outpouring of goodwill after Katrina, and particularly the question "... has this been truly useful to the people in the affected communities?" referring to design schools sending students.

MIT has sent several student teams to repair and rebuild and, yes, even to design a housing prototype for rebuilding after the hurricanes in the bayous of Louisiana. Our innovative "lift house" prototype [which can be seen at http://www.trac4la. com/lifthouse.php?contentNAME= recover home&color=006600&areafont =areawhite&navfont=navwhite&areaTIT LE=Recover] is almost completed and soon to be occupied, and student designs for affordable hurricane-proof shutters are now being locally built. Oxfam is now distributing the design for wider use. But equally important is what one bayou resident noted: "The most important thing is that you are here, knowing that the people throughout the country care about us."

Educational value and real contributions are not strangers.

Dr. Reinhard Goethert Massachusetts Institute of Technology Department of Architecture

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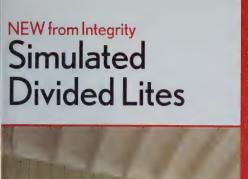
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Design for the Other 90%

Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum, New York City May 4–September 23, 2007

Design for the Other 90%, consisting of pavilions reminiscent of a Third-World village, stands in stark contrast to its setting in the lush Arthur Ross Terrace and Garden behind the Cooper-Hewitt in New York's wealthy Upper East Side. Its location is fitting, however, as it underscores the show's premise: most designers focus their efforts on products only the wealthiest 10 percent of the world's population can afford, while the other 90 percent struggle to achieve a minimal quality of life — many focused on satisfying their basic needs for survival.

Fortunately, several designers are exploring low-cost solutions to address these needs. This exhibition highlights their efforts, featuring designs that provide shelter. The Mad Housers Hut, a prefab unit for Atlanta's homeless, was developed by Georgia Tech architecture students. The Seventh Ward Shade Pavilion, designed for Katrina survivors by a team from the University of Kansas School of Architecture and Urban Design, provides

a gathering space for citizens while more permanent homes are constructed. Also part of the relief effort, the Katrina Furniture Project, by the University of Texas and Art Center College of Design, creates neighborhood workshops that build church pews as well as tables and stools from Hurricane Katrina debris.

Aside from university programs, other groups are finding cost-effective solutions to providing shelter, such as Public Architecture's Day Labor Station, a mobile unit that can be built by the laborers themselves. The Global Village Shelter, a low-cost emergency shelter that can last up to 18 months, was designed by Architecture for Humanity with Ferrara Design. While it's easy to view design as an exercise for the wealthy, Design for the Other 90% demonstrates that it also has another purpose: improving lives in meaningful ways.

Murrye Bernard, Assoc. AIA, is a designer with TEK Architects in New York City and a contributing editor for *eOculus*.

Charles River Skatepark

www.charlesriverskatepark.org

Hyperactive youth and on-ramp undersides: two of Boston's most underestimated resources mesh perfectly in the Charles River Conservancy's skatepark plans.

On Sunday, May 20 at the Boston Public Library, CRC president Renata von Tscharner and skatepark supporters revealed the latest plans to nestle one of the nation's largest, most innovative skateparks beneath the Zakim Bunker Hill Bridge. The T-accessible, 24-hour, 40,000-square-foot park will accommodate all levels of skateboarders, inline skaters, BMX bikers, and spectators, too: the aim is to encourage young athletes and build community between the city and its youth.

Landscape architecture firm and skatepark pioneer Wormhoudt, Inc. leads the remarkably democratic community-based design, involving over 400 amateur and professional skaters; many were among the meeting's 70-plus attendees. Both the designer Zachary Wormhoudt and State Senator Jarrett Barrios spoke. The CRC needs 100 new donors by September 30 to meet a challenge grant. Show your support: visit the online store (do boarders wear silk ties?) or make a donation.



Conor MacDonald is the office manager at the BSA.

The Institute for Human Centered Design

Adaptive Environments
200 Portland Street, Boston

www.adaptiveenvironments.org

At first glance, there's little to distinguish this cool-looking shop from any number of high-end, high-design specialty shops in Boston — and that may be the point. It's only when a visitor notices the numbers of people in wheelchairs buzzing around the Institute's three levels, or the big, friendly working dogs that amble out to see who has come in off the street, that the place begins to seem unique.

Adaptive Environments is a 28-year-old international nonprofit organization based in Boston that focuses on innovation and legislation in the field of universal design. It recently opened a new education, training, and research center, the Institute for Human Centered Design, And the new digs look terrific.

A big presence in the neighborhood, the storefront, designed by Coco Raynes Associates, features 100 running feet of glass that draws in the passers-by with its smoky, cool look — just translucent enough to show a hint of what's inside. The Institute's interior was designed pro-bono by TRO Jung | Brannen Associates with a keen eye toward sustainability as well as accessibility.

Inside this converted 9,000-square-foot office building is a small retail center displaying contemporary domestic products that are designed with both aesthetics and ergonomic ease in mind. Across the floor from the retail products are samples of specialty wheelchairs, cleverly designed closets, chairs, telephones, and bicycles, many from Japanese manufacturers who lead the way in the advancement of universal design.

In addition to the product showcase, the Institute is set up with universally accessible meeting space, a kitchen, its own offices, and the latest digital and print media relative to the field. There's also a large library of materials chronicling the



A Photo courtesy, Coco Raynes Associates.

history of accessibility (donated by the estate of architect Paul Grayson AIA), which has recently been recognized as part of the Boston Public Library system.

Just steps from the waterfront, North Station, TD Banknorth Garden, the North End, the Financial District, Downtown Crossing and Faneuil Hall, the Institute's presence in the Hub's hub of activity is an appropriate metaphor for universal access and a welcome opportunity to introduce the public to the concept of universal design.

Pamela de Oliveira-Smith is the managing editor of *ArchitectureBoston*.



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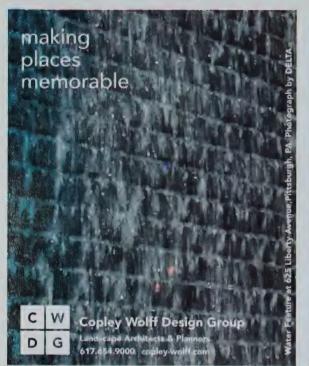


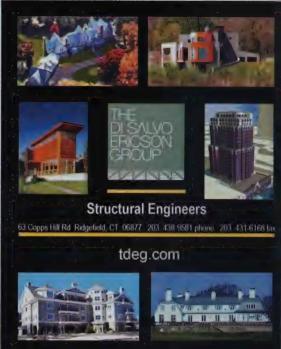
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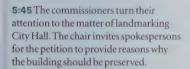




How To Reprieve a Building in 83 Minutes

The place: Boston City Hall. A second-floor meeting room whose concrete walls, for some meaningful but obscure civic reason, are decorated with photos of Venezuela. A Venezuelan flag is slung, hammock-like, in a corner. The overhead fluorescent lighting is blindingly bad. A wall of windows faces out across a dark courtyard toward another part of the building; unlike other spaces in City Hall, which have views of the city or the harbor, this is a room from which the building looks out upon itself.

The event: A hearing of the Boston Landmarks Commission. The agenda item: a petition filed by a group of architects and preservationists asking that City Hall be considered for landmark status. The petition is a strategic response to Mayor Thomas Menino's proposal that the building be sold to fund construction of a new city hall in South Boston. Sitting in folding chairs are about 40 people who have come to listen to the proceedings or to speak in favor of the petition. The commissioners are seated at a long table, engaged in a discussion of other buildings, which is hard to hear over the grinding roar of the ventilation system.



5:50 A man walks to the front of the room and identifies himself as "the author of the standard history of our fair city." He says emphatically, "If Boston City Hall isn't a landmark, I don't know what is." He points out that the building is young. "Nobody, including me, is in a position to make the choice to tear it down." He talks for several more minutes, then wraps it up: "From the point of view of a leading historian, it's a no-brainer. Masterpiece or not — and I think it is — there is no question about its historical importance." He walks out of the room.

5:57 A representative of an international group devoted to preserving modern architecture gives a slide lecture about the history of the building. "A lot has happened

here. Protests. Concerts. And the building is a major tourist destination, with two stars in the Michelin guide to New England." He quotes from an architecture magazine: ""... the best public building of our time."

6:10 The chair gives the "owner's representative" a chance to respond. The director of the city's environment department gets up and speaks briefly, telling the commissioners that if they vote to accept the petition, he hopes no further action will be taken, "so that the staff can move forward with those things that do have a sense of urgency."

6:12 The chair reads out the names of people and organizations, local and national, who sent letters in support of the petition. The list is huge.

6:17 The chair asks for a show of hands from the audience: "How many people wish to speak?" Almost everybody. "OK, so I'll ask that you keep it short. Why don't we just start with the first row."



A Photo by Joan Wickersham.

6:18 A man stands and says he's an accountant who works downtown. "I love what the building looks like and what it feels like to walk by. I love the sun and shadows on the façade. I want to be able to continue to experience it."

6:20 The director of a Boston preservation organization. "The commission is not charged with deciding the building's fate. It is charged with the question of: Does City Hall merit further study as a potential landmark? The answer is: Yes."

6:28 A professor of planning from Boston University. "I came to Boston from Europe largely *because* of City Hall. I'd heard about the famous competition and traveled here to look at the results. Then I went back to Europe and I won a competition, influenced by what I'd seen here. This building influenced a whole generation of international architecture students."

6:32 A preservationist. "The building came at a time when Boston had lost its status as a mover and shaker. It's an icon of Boston's reinvention of itself as a world-class city."

6:34 Several more preservationists. One says the way the building has been cared for is disappointing. "It needs to be remodeled and reinvigorated." Before sitting down, he adds, "Old City Hall was saved. I spent 10 years working in that building as a lawyer — and I'm grateful to the people who decided to save it."

6:37 Like jazz musicians, the speakers are beginning to riff on the themes that have been established: iconography, stewardship, improving the building's functionality. "We have a treasure, a jewel. It can be husbanded. It stands for 20th-century Boston."

6:39 Another professor. "I'm shocked that it isn't already a landmark. That's a gross error. During the past 40 years, whenever I've included Boston City Hall in a lecture, the class is always hushed. In Europe, they break out into applause. Not for me, for the building."

6:42 Another architect, originally from England. "I first came here as an affair of

the heart, after the lady who has now been my wife for 38 years. The bonus was seeing City Hall. Everyone in England was jealous." He is holding a recent issue of *The Architectural Review*, devoted to the topic of preserving Modern buildings. "What we need is a study of how to make the building work better."

6:45 A representative of a historical society points out that Boston City Hall was built as a result of urban renewal — which had "a huge impact on human lives." The decision not to landmark the building, he adds, with a sly mix of philosophic precision and irony, would "repeat the same mistakes — it would be undemocratic."

6:46 An architect and historian reiterates the need to initiate studies. "The building is deserving of change. Let's look at what can be done to make working here a happier prospect."

6:50 Another BU professor. "Boston has not lost a building that represents its civic

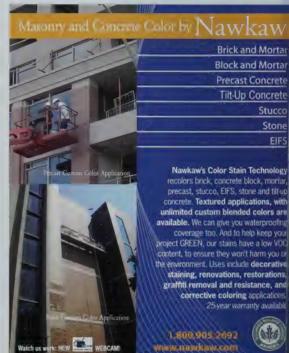
identity since 1712, when the Town House burned down."

6:52 Yet another BU professor (emerita). "I have an almost missionary feeling about this building. Students don't always get why it is wonderful — I always felt it was my job to show them."

6:53 An architect praises the "urban design statement" made by the building in its setting. "So let's study it. How can we make it sustainable? How could we use sustainability as an issue to adapt it into a beautiful statement for both the 20th and the 21st centuries?"

6:55 A brief silence. It seems as if the testimony is over. But then a man in the second row asks if he can say something. He is Henry Wood, retired from the firm of Kallmann McKinnell & Wood. He tells a story: "When the winning competition design was unveiled, John Collins, who was mayor at that time, said something to the guy pushing his wheelchair. Nobody could





hear what he said. So when the ceremony was over, we went up to the guy who'd been pushing the wheelchair, and we asked. 'What did the mayor say?' And the guy answered, 'The mayor looked at the model and he said, 'What the fuck is that?""

"It's controversial." a commissioner says.

"Everyone has an opinion. We shouldn't shrink from controversy."

Wood goes on to cite the importance of the building's location. "I don't want to see a development here." Closing in the central courtyard to make an atrium, he says, could make the building work better.

He finishes by recalling his own tenure on the landmarks commission. "I was on it for years. We used to debate whether to preserve Modern buildings." A rueful smile. "And we'd decide we didn't need to.

because they weren't threatened."

7:01 The chair thanks everyone for participating."This has helped give me perspective on the building."

7:02 "It's controversial," a commissioner says. "Everyone has an opinion. We shouldn't shrink from controversy." And then adds: "I don't have an opinion, but would look forward to a study."

7:03 Another commissioner. "I came here in the '70s and there was a palpable sense of excitement about the building. It had potential, but it was never lived up to. I favor the petition."

7:04 More commissioners in favor of the petition.

"The building has significance beyond the local. We've heard a lot tonight about its international importance."

"I came here in the early '60s fully intending to move to Chicago, but then I watched the planning and the competition, and I thought, This city is really with it."

"Why does everyone love to hate this building? It's fallen off the radar. In order for people to value it, they have to love it. We need to create a new public awareness of the value of the building."

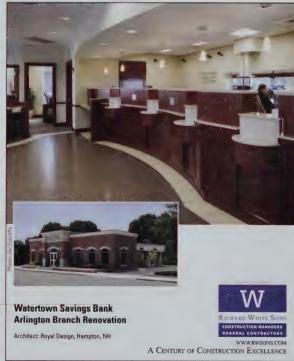
7:06 A lone dissenter. "It's too early. We're all very close to it. I'm concerned it's too soon to decide it's a landmark. I have to come down on the side of the people who are not in love with the building."

7:07 The chair. "Do I hear a motion?" There is one, to accept the petition. The vote is eight to one. There is not, and cannot be, any overt acknowledgment that tonight's speakers have given the commissioners the ammunition they needed to reprieve the building. But it is there, implicitly, in the speed of the vote.

7:08 And in the warmth of the applause.

Joan Wickersham's latest book, a memoir, will be published by Harcourt in 2008.







Something's gotta give

When the

Meets the

PARTICIPANTS

David Fixler AIA is the principal in charge of historic preservation at Einhorn Yaffee Prescott in Boston and president of the New England chapter of DOCOMOMO (an international organization promoting the documentation and conservation of Modern Movement buildings and sites).

Tom Keane writes a regular column for *The Boston Globe Magazine* and a bi-weekly humor column for the *Globe's* op-ed page. He served as a Boston city councilor from 1994–1999.

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and sciences at MIT, where he also directs the Media Lab's Smart Cities research group. He was formerly dean of the MIT School of Architecture and is the author of a number of books, including most recently *Placing Words: Symbols, Space, and the City* (MIT Press, 2005).

Henry Moss AIA is a principal at Bruner/Cott & Associates in Cambridge, Massachusetts and co-chair of the Historic Resources Committee of the BSA.

Susan Myers RA is the principal of Susan Myers Architect in Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts. She was formerly the chief architect of the City of Boston.

Elizabeth Padjen FAIA is the editor of ArchitectureBoston.

Gary Wolf AIA is the principal of Gary Wolf Architects in Boston.

Vice president of DOCOMOMO/New England, he was also the author of the recent petition to landmark Boston City Hall.

< Photo by Ezra Stoller © Esto.

Elizabeth Padjen: Boston seems to be witnessing an example of the famous paradox: What happens when an unstoppable force meets the immovable object? The force is Mayor Thomas Menino, surely one of the most powerful mayors this city has seen. The object is Boston City Hall, an extraordinary structure that, even if its physical demolition could somehow be managed, could never be removed from our collective memory. They have collided over the last few months with the mayor's plan to sell City Hall and build a new structure elsewhere. The mayor, by all accounts, has extraordinary political instincts. This plan brings up questions about what he perceives in the political landscape, beyond the legacy issues that many people assume to be his motivation. At the same time, we have a building that throughout its existence has been one of the most polarizing structures in the city.

Tom Keane: I see this simply as the latest iteration of a longstanding effort by the mayor to do something, anything, with City Hall. When Menino was a city councilor back in the '80s, he couldn't stand City Hall. He hated working there. When he became mayor, one of the first things he said was that he wanted to do something with the building, because he was so unhappy with it. He then launched into what turned into at least a decade-long effort to try to come up with some type of scheme to improve it. Despite all the design competitions and task forces and citizen advisory panels, nothing came of it. He took a breather for a couple of years and then came back with this latest idea, prompted perhaps by his frustration at whether a fix of City Hall is even possible. I have to agree with him. I don't think a fix is possible with City Hall. He's also looking at two other issues: climbing commercial real estate values in the downtown area and a desire to jump-start development in other parts of the city.

Alex Krieger: While I agree that the mayor has had it in for City Hall for a while, I'd modify your account of the history. Most of the efforts in the '90s did not address City Hall — they addressed City Hall Plaza. Had any of them gone forward, the current focus on City Hall itself would be diminished, because the Plaza is still the principal problem. Unfortunately, many of those proposals were dismissed as some sort of attack by the development community on the Plaza, as opposed to an attempt to overcome some of the extraordinary difficulties of the site. But I believe the mayor has several agendas now. One, of course, is the inarguable fact that he doesn't like City Hall. The second is his desire to finally invigorate Dudley Square; my sense, at the time of this conversation, is that there is less focus on the original notion of jump-starting the South Boston waterfront with a new city hall at that location. But the idea that the functions of municipal government could be disaggregated in some fashion and relocated to support the revitalization of Dudley Square in Roxbury seems to have appeal. That, of course, still leaves the question about what happens to the present building.

Susan Myers: In all the discussions about the building, no one has ever focused on the obvious question: what is it about that building that drives everybody so crazy?

In all the discussions about the building, no one has ever focused on the obvious question: what is it about that building that drives everybody so crazy?

Susan Myers

The fundamental problem is that it was built as an innovative building, both in its materials and in its functional layout. The open plan proved almost immediately to be a problem for the city. Much of city government is about privacy, and the big spaces impeded one-on-one conversations. Solving that problem then led to a series of other problems. For example, there's never been enough air circulation in the building because the system was designed for an open plan; the city has reworked all the duct chases to accommodate offices, but the air is still stale. Another problem is the lighting; there's never quite enough light for anybody. During the 11 years that I worked for the city, two different iterations of the electrical company tried to figure out energy-efficient ways to get more light into the building. While it's better, it's still inadequate.

Add to these the concrete that apparently flings itself off the building, which started during construction. The concrete has been a problem for a couple of reasons. One is attributable to a bad contractor: some of the rebar is only a half-inch behind the face of the concrete. Another is that at the time of construction, technical standards for the amount of concrete coverage required in a salt environment were much less than they are now. This problem is not solvable. Inside, the concrete itself absorbs grease. The city has tried to clean it, but it never really gets clean.

If you add to this the way that money is spent in city government, then you begin to see why coping with City Hall is such a difficult problem. The city gets money from two sources: the capital budget and the operating budget. The operating budget pays for salaries and maintenance. The capital budget pays for the renovation of buildings. In the operating budget, the order of priorities is this: salaries are first, and first among those are public safety personnel — firefighters' and police-officers' salaries. The second priority is constituent services, a great big bubble that includes the schools, public works, the libraries, the local health centers. The third is administrative staff. Way down on the bottom of this list are the people who oversee the buildings. A similar pecking order exists in the capital plan. So you can see that City Hall is at the end of the line for funding.

I happen to like the building, and I happen to think that everything should be done to try to keep that building. But l'm also very sympathetic to the problem that it presents to the city.

David Luberoff: It seems that the mayor is trying to solve his deep frustration with all those problems by linking a new building to some other larger agenda — if it's not jump-starting the Seaport district development, then perhaps it's jump-starting Dudley Square. Which is smart. It also suggests that the problems of City Hall could be linked to other agendas as well. For example, the mayor is trying to embrace the whole green-city issue. There's an interesting competition going on now among several big-city mayors about who's going to be the greenest mayor: Bloomberg in New York? Daley in Chicago? Menino in Boston?

David Fixler: Moving and then demolishing the building would certainly be a very un-green strategy. The amount of embodied energy in City Hall — energy that has already been expended to build it — is already enormous, let alone the huge amount of energy that would be required to demolish it and build another structure, however green the new building might be. But if the mayor decided to make the investment to turn Boston City Hall into a state-of-the-art 21st-century green facility, he would win a tremendous feather in his cap politically.

Tom Keane: We're still missing one of the underlying problems of City Hall, which I think is also behind the mayor's proposal. And that is the question, What is the building saying? To me, what the building says about government is not a welcome message today.

v Photo by George Cserna, courtesy of Kallmann McKinnell & Wood Architects.



The building tends to stand alone, moat-like. It is an authoritarian presentation of faceless bureaucrats. The building, and especially the concrete, signals that government is not a grand thing, but an ordinary thing. The problem is that a lot of people, and Tom Menino is one, think those are the wrong themes for today. We don't want government to be removed from people. We want it to be accessible to people. We don't want to think of government as something that's anonymous and bureaucratic but as something that's very human-scaled. And at the same time we want government to communicate a sense of aspiration rather than mere obligation.

To keep a building alive, you have to continually rethink and transform it. A building is like a garden in that sense you have to keep husbanding it and adapting it.

William J. Mitchell

Gary Wolf: I think that is about as profound a misinterpretation of this building as is possible. I see a building here that — if it didn't have a metal detector at every door, if it didn't have doors and staircases blocked off — in fact is about as open a building to the city as any government building could be. All the everyday activities that one might be engaged in — taking care of parking tickets, paying taxes, getting married — are on the first floor, as an extension of the city. Then there is a monumental structure housing the workings of government with special spaces like the mayor's office and the city council chambers articulated on the outside. And that's really no different from the historic idea of a dome as an architectural expression of the House and the Senate. The concrete can be seen as a crude material now, but it's a bold modern material and the precast concrete on the upper levels actually has a fine finish. This is intended to be a monumental building in the good sense of the term, suggesting that government represents the aspiration of the people, and that the building belongs to the people, who can come and go and participate in government as well as in special activities and events.

It in fact worked that way for a number of years. In a letter to the Landmarks Commission, Herb Gleason, who was corporation counsel for the city for 11 years, described the excitement and pride that Mayor White and the staff felt in moving into the new City Hall. The building was filled with civic events, including dances and concerts; Queen Elizabeth came to a lunch there. As Gleason says, the problems of the building are not about the nature of the building itself, but the lack of care and maintenance.

Alex Krieger: I agree with you, but at the same time we can't deny that most people respond to the building the way Tom does. It's a central problem of architecture — the way architects conceive of symbolism doesn't always match the way society as a whole interprets it. You'll never persuade everyone that the symbolism that Kallmann and McKinnell chose to express was about civic aspiration.

William J. Mitchell: Any symbolism, especially in something like a city hall, is a crystallization of the cultural attitudes prevailing at the moment when it was conceived. History is a very slippery, complex thing; we like some parts of our history and not others. But it's a very dangerous business, and culturally inappropriate, to go back and edit your past. And by eliminating symbolism from the past that you don't happen to agree with or that you interpret differently, you lose your history. It's like eliminating books from the past: you just don't do it. As an example, some of the most progressive city governments in Europe right now are operating out of Fascist-era city halls. There's a reminder of the history, but there's also an understanding that the function of government has been transformed, and the symbolism works in a different way.

Elizabeth Padjen: One of the great opportunities for this building comes from the notion that was expressed in Gary's wonderfully written petition for landmarking, that the building does not need to be preserved precisely as it was when it opened, but that it should in fact evolve and change - change being one of the essential aspects of the architects' original intention.

David Fixler: One thing we are learning as we are now beginning to rehabilitate more and more buildings from the Modern Movement is that, as much as we need to change them in order to make them applicable to our needs today, the first step is often simply to understand what the original intentions were. Because people didn't understand these innovative buildings and were so used to making conventional changes in conventional structures. they often made modifications that had a crippling effect, for example, blocking air, light, or views. Once you understand the essence of the building, you can use it to make the necessary changes without compromising its basic integrity.

Henry Moss: There are certainly many good examples of that, though the process you describe affects earlier buildings, too. The 19th-century Furness library at the University of Pennsylvania, for example, had a suspended ceiling that cut across the great volume of the reading room before it was restored. In fairness, I'm sure that was installed by people with the same level of frustration that Susan described within City Hall. But the recent renovation of Kahn's Yale Art Gallery is a good example of an architect, in that case Polshek, understanding the essence of the building and transforming it in some fundamental but sympathetic ways. A lot of concrete is still there. People haven't flinched.

William J. Mitchell: All buildings outlive their original functional intentions, and it doesn't take long. I work in a building at MIT that was built about 20 years ago, and there's not a single space in the building, except for the washrooms, being used for its originally programmed purpose. To keep a building alive, you have to continually rethink and transform it. A building is like a garden in that sense — you have to keep husbanding it and adapting it. That hasn't happened to City Hall.

Elizabeth Padjen: Kallmann and McKinnell have said consistently that they considered the building to be an armature for change over time. That concept of "armature" is perhaps the essence that David was talking about. As they said recently, if that means opening up the Congress Street level, they would welcome that. If that means clearing out and opening up the plaza-level floor, they would welcome that. They talk in terms of pulling the city overtly into the building through other uses or combined uses, such as shops or a rathskeller.

Susan Myers: It's one thing to talk about transforming the building, but how does the city pay for it? If it's the difference between a handicap ramp in an East Boston library and fixing something in City Hall, that handicap ramp will always win. I have fantasies about there being a "Friends of City Hall" organization that will bring money in.

Tom Keane: It's certainly possible to raise money for public buildings. That was done with the Boston Public Library, for example. But does anyone truly think that you can find major donors out there to throw money into City Hall?

William J. Mitchell: You can't lead with an abstract premise; that will never generate support. You have to develop a compelling vision and lead with that. You engage the issue of what you do with the buildings of this era, which is a fundamental issue faced by every city. You engage the issue of how to green an existing fabric rather than the very different problem of trying to create something new that's green. There's a compelling agenda here, and there are compelling architectural solutions.

Henry Moss: I know the financial models are different, but I think there is a possible comparison to Fenway Park, in that it was also written off as an unusable, irredeemable artifact. There were tremendous differences of opinion about what its future could be, and most people were against retaining it, despite the Red Sox fans who loved it because of its association with the team. Yet the team's architect, Janet Marie Smith, has managed to save it through incremental changes within the larger vision that it's worth preserving.

David Luberoff: But notice that every one of those improvements also turns out to be something that generates more revenue for the Red Sox — which is why it's been brilliant. Can I ask a slightly different question? Is it critical that City Hall remain City Hall, or

v Photo by Steve Rosenthal.





is it critical only that the building remain? And if the building is not City Hall, does it still have to have some public use? If its meaning is completely linked with being City Hall, you're in one set of financing options, whereas with another scenario, the options are very different.

William J. Mitchell: I believe the central, iconic seat of municipal government needs to be in the center of the city, on this site, and I believe it needs to be that building.

Susan Myers: Perhaps only part of it needs to be City Hall.

Elizabeth Padjen: The State Transportation Building might be a model—it combines retail uses and public space on the street level with government offices above.

Alex Krieger: I'd like to suggest a strategy that may enable fundraising. Nobody is going to give the first dollar for a building that's being bastardized and threatened with demolition.

But let's say that the mayor's strategy has merit. Let's say that it is true that the operations of city government are very different from what they were 40 years ago, and that some of those functions no longer need to be housed in the same building. In fact, the whole lower portion of the building is no longer central to the functioning of government, because you can access all those services online and they can be more appropriately located in the neighborhoods. The piece that the mayor originally proposed moving to the waterfront was simply the iconic representation of government.

So let's combine the two. Let's remove all the functions that don't need to be in City Hall. Let's find a way to keep the mayor's office, the city council, and some of the central functions there, in the upper portions of the building. Then let's convert the lower levels of the building to something else—retail could be part of it. There's a group that's been trying to establish a museum of the city of Boston for years without much success in finding a site—that could be part of it.

David Luberoff: Isn't this the original model of public buildings in Boston — buildings like Faneuil Hall and the Old State House?

Gary Wolf: It's the medieval town hall with a market down below.

Alex Krieger: So the mayor can build his new green building in Dudley Square. He can disaggregate the bureaucracy and find a suitable set of spaces for it. And America still has that iconic government building right opposite Faneuil Hall; not even the mayor can say this is not an iconic building. Then there's a couple of hundred thousand square feet of office space which, if one is creative enough, could attract both some private investment as well as some philanthropy. The point is, we should try it, or at least try some innovative ideas, as opposed to this binary mindset "it stays or it goes."

William J. Mitchell: There's an interesting lesson to be learned from the financial institutions in lower Manhattan that find it necessary to preserve a symbolic presence there. Most of their operations are located elsewhere and are connected electronically.

So you combine an iconic, central City Hall with an electronically connected network of workspaces, out on the Web and in the neighborhoods, right where people need the services. It becomes the 21st-century version of what Kallmann and McKinnell had in mind — an accessible, permeable thing. It is very feasible at this point.

Alex Krieger: We need to recognize that appearances matter a lot. It is the combination of this building and the Plaza, which is perhaps even more unloved, that makes people react negatively. I believe the perception of ugliness would diminish substantially by redeveloping the Plaza for a much wider variety of uses and a finer scale of open space.

David Luberoff: One of the things that really strikes me about City Hall is that the places people would generally think the most appealing and intriguing are the places you can't get to any more. I was involved in planning an event that was held in the atrium last year. I took the organizers there and said, "Stand here for a minute. Just suspend judgment and wait, because once you stand here for a while you're going to discover what an amazing space this is." I was struck that it is the most extraordinarily underutilized space, along with the courtyard and the balconies. I worked in City Hall years ago. You could never go out on the balconies; but every once in a while, a door would be open and everybody would run out there, because they knew it was wonderful. These are exactly the spaces where you begin to discover the building's great beauty. I'm not as convinced that you've got to change the building's appearance as much as you've got to figure out which aspects of it are really amazing, and then make them accessible and highlight them.

Gary Wolf: While we seem to live in an era when monumentality isn't desirable, we have to accept that there's a place, even a need, for monumentality. St. Peter's is a grandiose structure analogous to City Hall in many ways, and we respect it for its very

monumentality. And though I think the building should be made more porous, say, by opening up the lower Congress Street brick façade and making the interior more accessible, I don't think we should lose the monumentality that is also part of its essence. This building may not be something that we have to like, but we can respect it for the very strong stance that it takes.

William J. Mitchell: These things are cyclical. And the big danger with cultural heritage is that the moment when things are at the bottom of their cycle in the popular imagination is precisely when you can lose them. It's very important to take the long view, to understand that if something is considered important by a significant number of people at some point in history, then it needs to be respected. Responsible cultural stewardship isn't a matter of personal taste. When a building is culturally significant, architects and political leaders have a duty to preserve it, whether they personally like it or not. The mayor is entitled to his obvious dislike of City Hall, but this simply shouldn't be a factor in determining its future.

David Fixler: I would add that these cycles seem to be getting shorter—especially in the way people view Modern architecture. I'm intrigued that people of my son's generation seem to have an appreciation for Modern architecture that was lost in the '80s and '90s. They think City Hall is cool.

Elizabeth Padjen: One of the great obstacles the building faces is the problem of the collective sigh — the reaction that I think everyone has with the notion of trying yet again to solve the problem of City Hall and the Plaza. Which brings us back to Tom's original point.

Tom Keane: There are too many competing values out there. It's almost impossible to fix it, because one person's fix is another person's nightmare. That's the history of the Plaza. There is someone to object to every proposal — oftentimes for good reasons — and so every proposal dies. That will always be the problem.

Henry Moss: So are you recommending the demolition of City Hall?

Tom Keane: Yes. I'd get rid of it. Both the Plaza and City Hall, both in conception and execution, are wretched. We should tear both down and completely rethink the entire area. At the same time, we should rethink city government. Virtually no department within the city needs to be in a city hall. The only things that really need to be in a city hall are the classic political arms of government: the mayor, the city council, the hearing rooms. And that could be housed in a significantly smaller, somewhat iconic building. Everything else should be in other buildings elsewhere in the city. In addition, we should rethink how city government interacts with people, perhaps going back to a Little City Hall model where people could conduct their business with government in local branch offices without having to leave their neighborhoods.

David Luberoff: At some level, Tom is right — people just want to conduct their business in the most efficient way possible. But in

THE RABBLE, ROUSED

Excerpts from letters to the Boston Landmarks Commission

The most endangered buildings are always those of the previous generation.

Herbert Gleason, Boston

City Hall is in danger of becoming Boston's Penn Station.

Daniel M. Abramson

Associate Professor, Tufts University

Buildings are not historic only because they are old. Some tell a new story. If we destroy our new buildings, then our historic landscape will forever be frozen in past centuries and future generations will know nothing of our present built environment.

Frances Duffly, Boston

Should we tear down the last generation's answer to the questions we still struggle with today because their proposal was something short of perfect — with the arrogant assumption that we, unlike them, can finally create the perfect image of a modern American metropolis? I suggest that we shouldn't. Another new City Hall will offer its own imperfect solutions, and another round of adulation followed by condemnation, because buildings represent the realities of flawed societies as well as the dreams of their ambitious builders. ... [Boston City Hall] was hailed upon its completion for accomplishing exactly what Mayor Menino asks the city hall of his dreams to do. How can memories be so short?

David Eisen

Architect. Architecture Critic

What strikes me as odd is that there should be any substantial controversy over this case at all given the immense architectural and urbanistic significance of the building in question. I am well aware that the building has long run counter to some people's personal taste, but taste is not, and never has been a criterion in any landmarks programs of which I am aware — local, state, or national.

Richard Longstreth

Professor and Director, Graduate Program in Historic Preservation, The George Washington University

To remove [Boston City Hall] from its rightful place in the city ... would be an act of high vandalism not just to the building, but to the history of the city and the decades of public and private investment in city form for which it has served as civic anchor.

Donlyn Lyndon FAIA

Professor, Emeritus, University of California, Berkeley; Editor, PLACES: Forum of Design for the Public Realm Let me simply say that this building changed the way we viewed architecture in the 20th century. It was a reaction against the skyscraper as sleek glass box. It demanded that we consider architecture as force and sculpture. ... Can you name a more important 20th-century Boston building?

Timothy Orwig

Preservation Chair, New England Chapter Society of Architectural Historians

The Modern Movement left its imprint throughout New England and is now an important piece of Boston's unique history. ... *This* modernism, representing and symbolizing universal concerns for democracy and hope in a non-hierarchical world, is articulated in Boston City Hall's poured concrete structure. It particularly stands in contrast to the boastful marble facades and interiors that were later built during the excesses of the 1980s and 1990s. These Modern values are rightly suited to Boston's democratic heritage and Boston City Hall justly symbolizes this era.

Dana Robbat

President, The Friends of Modern Architecture Lincoln

[The supporters of this petition] recognize that the building was the "Bilbao" of its time, a daring architectural design that was all the more surprising because it was built in the central core of America's most venerable city.

Ann Scheid

Life Member, Society of Architectural Historians

Whenever I walk from One International Place north along Congress Street and approach City Hall, perched as it is above old Faneuil Hall and the Quincy Market and around the corner from the Old State House, I find the experience of being at the historic vital center of the public life of our city exhilarating. How lucky we are as a city! ... What a contrast to all the many other cities in America where the centrifugal forces of modern economic problems and deteriorating civic identity have spun vital public activities out toward the marginal edges of the city and diluted and dissipated the city's unique identity. In too many cities, the historic geographic center of the city's public life is now utterly dead, not alive and flourishing. Let us not follow the dismal path of those cities.

William A. Truslow, Esq., Boston

It is inconceivable to me that [demolishing City Hall] is necessary, and it is incomprehensible that it cannot be modified in a way that will please all who do business there. ... A building that innovative and dramatic should not be torn down because some people do not like it.

Elizabeth W. Vorenberg, Cambridge

With all my effort I object to [Boston City Hall] as an historic landmark. It is a Babylonian pile of concrete.

Lenahan O'Connell, Boston

many ways, City Hall was a very optimistic building: a grand space for the public. I think the public is a bit more cynical about government right now, so it doesn't respond well to this grand space. Interestingly, we don't have that attitude about the State House, not just because it's old, but also because it's fun to walk around and see cool artifacts and displays. We've lost that piece of City Hall—it ought to be engaging, if not entertaining.

Susan Myers: But you can't ignore the problems of the building's work environments. You risk that the city will yet again dismiss any vision for what the building might be. Proponents of the building need to understand the unhappiness and try to address it.

David Luberoff: Without question, the concerns of people who work in City Hall are critical. But so is the experience of the average person who visits City Hall, starting with the fact that when you walk in from the Plaza, you're on the third floor.

Elizabeth Padjen: I went to City Hall this morning to pay a parking ticket — I wanted the experience. As I started to get in line, I saw the little handwritten sign saying you need to pay by check. I began to rummage around in my bag for my checkbook, but I couldn't see. So I looked up. There was not a single light on in that whole area. Not a single one. I don't know if they were turned off or burned out. Later I went through the building, bottom to top, floor to floor, climbing stairs, taking the elevators. The upper floors, the office floors, are in fact brightly lit. Most of the corridors have daylighting and look onto the outdoor courtyard balconies that David mentioned — there are few corporate offices with that sort of amenity. But they also have warm-white fluorescent tubes, and the walls have vinyl wallcovering on them, not expensive by any stretch, but not concrete. The environment was immediately brighter and cheerier on those levels. And I thought, is this deliberate? Is the city trying to create the most unpleasant experience possible for the people coming in off the street?

Tom Keane: I always regarded that experience as the intentional experience of that building, that it is so insulting to the public.

Henry Moss: I wouldn't say it's the intention of the building. It's the intention of the government that operates the building. I always find it absolutely demeaning to have to use the Congress Street entrance after hours. Remember, that entrance was designed pre-Quincy Market and was never intended as a main entrance. But anyone whose primary experience of the building is after-hour meetings knows the feeling of being forced through that narrow little corridor. In terms of symbolism, the city doesn't really care how I feel about the building.

Elizabeth Padjen: As I was looking up at the lights in the public concourse, I started to look around and really began to understand the space. It's extraordinary. At some level, everybody, *anybody*, has to feel the power of these spaces. But what percentage of the population in fact goes in and uses City Hall? I would guess it's a tiny number. People walk around it. They drive by it. They don't explore it.

David Luberoff: The people who run City Hall have to see themselves as stewards of a treasure. And they don't. They, understandably, see themselves as the inheritors of a giant problem. The State House works in part because we decided that it was a treasure.

William J. Mitchell: One of City Hall's biggest problems is that public access has been thwarted by security needs. It's a fundamental conflict that's developed across the country between the traditional idea of open, public spaces and restrictive security controls. One of the most important things to do is to work incredibly hard at finding the right resolution of those contradictions.

Alex Krieger: If the building remains a city hall for all those nine floors, security will trump any new vision for the building. But if there's some way to release the lower public levels from traditional city hall functions, then I think the security issues can be resolved, because they can be isolated to the upper levels. And then the building could return to its intended openness.

Henry Moss: There is certainly precedent. Many people don't realize just how brilliant the GSA [General Services Administration] has been in terms of bringing its '60s- and '70s-era buildings into this century and dealing with these issues. It deserves tremendous credit because it's demonstrating how to work with buildings, not by writing them off, but by amplifying and enriching the parts that were successful and then modifying the elements that didn't work.

Alex Krieger: One of the greatest problems at the moment centers around the fear, or assumption, that the building is going to be demolished soon. For example, for seven years, the MBTA has been pressured to redo the Government Center station. As a result, it developed a rather fabulous design, which the T is now rethinking because of budgetary concerns. The T managers recently decided to proceed with some of the underground improvements, but not to do very much with the above-grade structure. And the city, which should have and could have objected, instead said, "Fine, we don't care, because this area will all be changed." So we are now in the midst of a self-perpetuating problem, which I think is despicable.

Tom Keane: I think you describe it accurately. At this point, people have given up on it. And as a consequence of having given up on it, they no longer care.

Alex Krieger: Reversing that sense of resignation is the real challenge, and it will take more than the architectural community extolling the virtues of the building to turn

William J. Mitchell: It must be more than simply extolling the virtues. The fundamental challenge is to provide cogent visions of an alternative future, to present the opportunities. You can build support around opportunity.



PAST FUTURES

Proposals to fix City Hall and its Plaza





- 3. CITY HALL PLAZA: CHAN KRIEGER SIENIEWICZ (WITH HARGREAVES ASSOCIATES AND PRELLWITZ & CHILINSKI), 1994–2003. Based on a fundamental rethinking of the Plaza, this series of proposals, projected to cost up to \$250 million, included: a Congress Street pedestrian bridge to Faneuil Hall; new planting, paving, street furniture, and public art; a new T station pavilion, including new Blue Line connections; the reintroduction of Hanover Street to reconnect Beacon Hill to the North End; an arcade along Cambridge Street; and a new hotel at the northern edge to provide 24-hour activity and financial support for the Plaza.
- 4. CITY HALL PLAZA: HENRY WOOD FAIA IN ASSOCIATION WITH PRESSLEY ASSOCIATES, 2004. This proposal responds to criticisms of the Plaza but holds costs down by retaining and adapting many elements of the existing plaza. The concept features a "green bracelet" of trees around the central forecourt (retained for special events and rallies) and moving water, including a cascade down the JFK steps, which are modified for seating, trees, and grass. The amount of grass, trees, water, and seating is greater than in Post Office Square.

- 1. CITY HALL ENTRANCE STUDY: SCHWARTZ/SILVER
 ARCHITECTS, 2005. Focusing on the main entrance, this
 proposal, commissioned by the city, addressed maintenance
 problems and security requirements as well as the dark and
 confusing entry sequence. The proposal featured a lighted
 glass canopy, which continued into the lobby to bring luminosity
 to the ceiling, new entry steps and doors, and an expanded
 lobby all encouraging greater public use of the building for
 exhibits, special events, and functions.
- 2. GREEN CITY HALL: HENRY MACLEAN AIA (WITH FACULTY AND STUDENTS FROM WENTWORTH INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY), 1997. This proposal, which featured the reclamation of 100,000 square feet of space (including the open courtyard) as well as energy savings (in 1997 dollars) of \$1 million per year, projected a seven-year payback. In addition to green strategies, the proposal included a rooftop restaurant and conference facility and a retail arcade along Congress Street. (www.timearch.com/ProjCHReview.html)







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Too Opaque Entries (even the ones that aren't locked) are hard to find. The Congress Street façade is fortress-like. The interior life of the building is screened from passers-by.

Too Big Monumental interior spaces lack activity and purpose. The size of the Plaza is suited only for the occasional festival, demonstration, or sports celebration.

roo Mute The building is confusing because wayfinding is not intuitive and signage is lacking or ineffective. Possible opportunities to heighten communication between government and citizens have been missed or ignored.

Too Ugly Concrete is a tough material, made more grim by years of grime, and the heavy massing of the building can make it seem foreboding and intimidating. The monumental scale is not balanced by human-scale materials, details, or amenities.

Too Dark Entries are underlit and unwelcoming. Spaces most often used by the public, such as the parking office concourse and gallery, have little daylight and inadequate artificial light due to broken fixtures or burned-out bulbs. Work spaces on lower levels lack daylight.

Ion Empty Spaces such as the courtyard terraces and atrium that are seemingly intended for public activity are locked off or underprogrammed. There is little reason to visit the building other than official business.

Too Costly HVAC systems are inefficient and expensive to run. Problems of obsolete or aging systems and materials are aggravated by deferred maintenance and lack of maintenance budget.

Too Aloof Connections to city pedestrian networks are lacking or, at least, daunting because of steep stairs and the isolation of the plaza. Security checkpoints are unwelcoming and badly integrated. Lack of accessibility, especially for wheelchair users, creates barriers for some citizens and workers.

Six young design teams show that the sins of City Hall need not be mortal.

Imagine That!

The sins of City Hall are widely known. What is less widely known — or less widely accepted - is that many of those sins can be fixed.

The real problem is that the supposed unfixability of City Hall has become its own urban legend. Most people haven't seen the proposals that have been submitted over the years and can't imagine anything but the grim experience that defines the building today. But what if City Hall could be made new again?

ArchitectureBoston asked six teams of young designers to consider the building's sins and to imagine ways in which City Hall could be modified, both to correct its failures and to address the changes in its social, political, and physical context. Their proposals follow, and include ideas ranging from changes in functions to changes in the building and the way it connects to the surrounding city. Together, they all serve two purposes: they offer fresh visions of what City Hall might be, and they help to identify the essential elements of the building the powerful presence that has drawn legions of supporters to its defense.

The team members reflect the new face of Boston. They are young: All but two were born after City Hall opened; and all but one of their firms were founded in the new millennium. They represent the new globalism: These born in other countries include all of the principals in two firms; half the principals in three firms; and three out of four principals in one firm. Only one firm is led entirely by principals who were born in the US. Only one participant is originally from Boston. (Interestingly, three designers were born in Colombia, but practice in different firms, and three were born in Seoul, but practice in different firms.) In this respect, they resemble the building's original design team, which shared similar attributes of relative youth and international roots.

On a personal note, I would like to thank all the participants for the spirit of generosity and collaboration that infused this project from its beginning, as the teams shared resources and information while working under nearly impossible time constraints. It is clear that the energy, creativity, and intellect that they brought to this effort will continue to benefit the city in the years to come.

Elizabeth Padlen FAIA









Menu of Upgrades

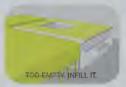












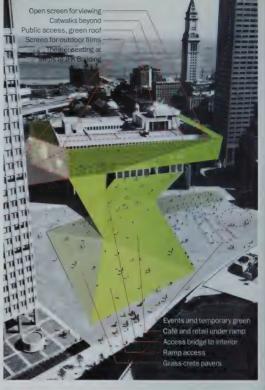




Combo 1: Wrap



Wrap proposes a new ground plane that rises up to mask the existing structure; this second skin accommodates new programs on the plaza and creates public access along a landscape ramp and around the existing structure via circulating catwalk elements.







PROJECT TEAM: J. Meejin Yoon, Eric Höweler, Meredith Miller, Carl Solander, Teddy Huyck

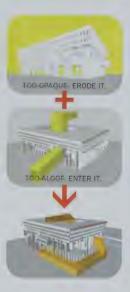
Höweler + Yoon Architecture

Originally designed to be porous and accessible to the public, Boston City Hall today stands monumental and impenetrable, its multiple entrances sealed. Focused on issues of public space and accessibility, our open menu of design proposals includes strategies that outfit City Hall with public interfaces at a range of scales. Taken a few at a time or in combination, these strategies recast the existing City Hall by intertwining its structure with the city. Extending the original vision of City Hall as a robust scaffold for urban life, two possible combinations — Sleeve and Wrap — seek to upgrade the structure to engage contemporary public life.





Combo 2: Sleeve



Sleeve plugs the existing "hood" and courtyard openings with a linear public path that weaves through the existing structure, provides a more transparent frontage along Congress Street, and culminates in a viewing gallery overlooking Faneuil Hall.

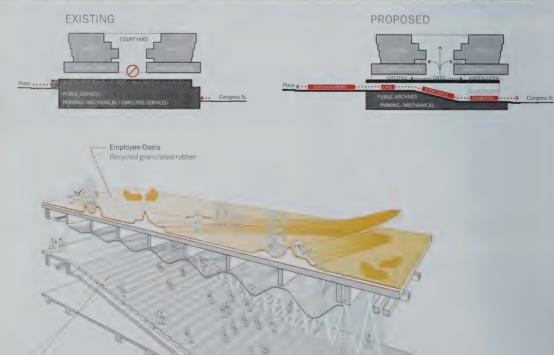


Public plaza entry
Public concourse and city offices
Public concourse and government transactions
Public gallery

Harbor view
Mayor's office
Storefronts along Congress Street:
Commercial (cafés, shops) and
City (permits, licenses, tickets, taxes)







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City Hall's main problems are not only its introversion but also the lack of functional relationships to its outdoor spaces. Our intentions are to redress this shortfall while considering the current context of an electronically bound and politically disengaged society. These new exigencies require a radical redefinition of City Hall's civic role and demand an intensive physical forum that engages the city as public space.

We propose to remove the existing masonry plinth, and introduce in its place two surfaces: one, an extension of the Plaza to Congress Street as a public living room with an auditorium that serves as a physical and functional link; and the other an inner oasis for the employees of City Hall that integrates a cafeteria and a daycare center with a shared courtyard. Our scheme clarifies the initial ambitions for the site, opening the building to the city and offering a public ground for both civic and leisure activities.

SITE PLAN



- flexible event space
- exhibition
- security check
- meeting
- info/automated
- service stations gift store
- ticket booth
- service counter
- kitchen
- urban living room 13. farmers' market
- 14. forest

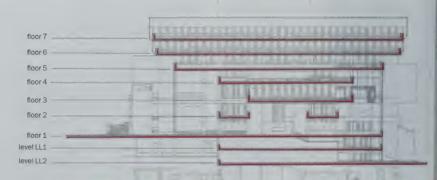
 - outdoor amphitheater





Married Hamilton Hamilton Hamilton



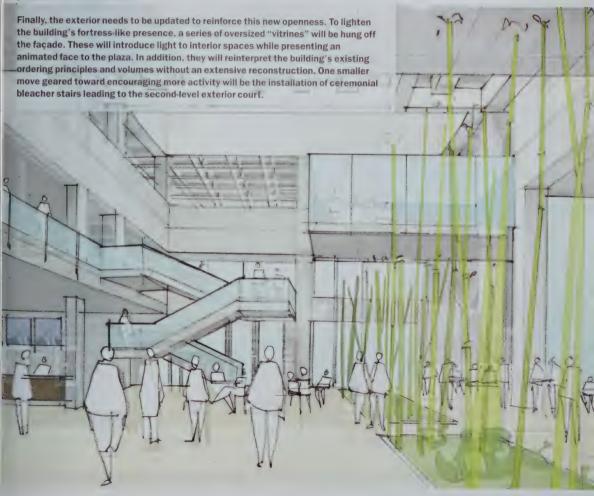


Moskow Architects

Many of the long-standing complaints associated with City Hall stem from its stand-offish relationship with the public. With that in mind, we concentrated our creative efforts on creating the perception of a kinder, gentler building.

One easy way to make the building more user-friendly is to pick a first floor! The City Hall Plaza level will be designated as the first floor. The floors above will be relabeled 2 through 7 and the floors below will be relabeled Lower Level 1 (LL1) and Lower Level 2 (LL2).

The second idea is to improve the existing entry hall and orient it outward toward the Plaza and the public. The space will be simplified by relocating security to elevator cores and removing the monumental interior stair. This, in conjunction with new up-lighting and a new color palette for the walls, will create a much more vibrant, useable space. Its focus will be a new information center for both the building and events throughout the city. There will also be space allotted to vendors, kiosks, tables, and chairs. A roof-mounted hydroponic greenhouse will grow produce for atrium vendors.





PROJECT TEAM: Chris Grimley (principal in charge), Roberto de Oliveira Castro, Rami el Samahy, Mark Pasnik, Kelly Hutzell, Kyle Jonasen, Kelly Smith

over, under

We believe City Hall's monumental framework can be resuscitated by providing vibrant counterpoints of light and liveliness. We have proposed a series of tactical modifications to the building's lowest and most public levels: clarifying way-finding; improving views, light, and sustainability; occupying abandoned spaces; and increasing the building's openness.

In order to reshape the arrival sequence, we have introduced a new open-air canopy. This lightweight and playful structure replaces the subterranean Congress Street entry, serving as a legible entrance to City Hall from the south, east, and west. Pedestrians would ascend the existing steps, new escalators, or a set of elevators from street level to the Plaza, making the Plaza universally accessible. Visitors would enter the building through a new security hall between the canopy and the south lobby.

Inside, docents could greet visitors and help them find their destinations or learn more about Boston's government. Deeper in the lobby, we envision removing the amphitheater-like steps to give the brooding hall greater access to natural light and views of Quincy Market. We suggest replacing the dark floor with terrazzo to increase the space's luminosity. The reconfiguration provides room for a café and a large model of Boston. It also leads visitors more naturally to the public-services concourse.

To the north, we propose enclosing the abandoned courtyard (a concept studied by several designers before us) to improve the building's sustainable performance. Passive heating and cooling would decrease energy consumption. Solar devices could reflect light into the atrium and adjacent offices when desirable. This enclosure above also permits us to remove the unused courtyfloor, exposing the concrete trusses of the public-services concourse below. Daylight from the atrium would stream downward into what is presently a dark hall. Light globes, colorful wall panels, and illuminated information screens would create an animated atmosphere.

Lastly, we recommend modifying City Hall programmatically to engage the retail environment of Quincy Market. The drop-off entrance on Congress Street could be enclosed and converted into a spectacular restaurant or gallery. The brick façades farther north could be re-skinned with transparent walls that open offices to views and light. At street level, the internal parking could be converted into retail space that would enliven the street with active entrances and services.









SINGLE speed DESIGN

Boston City Hall and its Plaza occupy one of the best pieces of land in Boston. They sit at the energetic center of the city's cultural and commercial life: halfway between the waterfront and the Common, at the intersection of three T lines, and across the street from Faneuil Hall and the Financial District. Instead of adding something new to the Plaza, we propose using the site as an urban connector and activating the latent potential of the cultural and infrastructural resources that surround it.

As Boston grows in prosperity and size over the next three decades, the importance of the newly connected City Hall Plaza will evolve as well. Density around the Plaza's perimeter will give the space greater definition and provide a more appropriate backdrop to the heroic scale of City Hall. In this context, the open space of the Plaza, once under-appreciated, will become a precious resource and a monument to Boston's 20th-century history. By activating the potential of its surroundings and preserving its history, City Hall Plaza can become a welcoming and exciting civic space, among the best in the country.



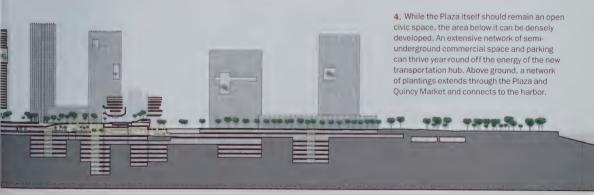
1. To the west of the Plaza lies the Common. the first link in the Emerald Necklace. To the east is the new Greenway (and the Harborwalk). Through the simple move of connecting the two parks across the Plaza, a single continuous park system that encircles all of Boston can be formed.



2. The historical buildings of City Hall Plaza should be appropriately commemorated and linked with Boston's other monuments. The Sears Crescent, JFK Building, City Hall, and the Holocaust Memorial combine to tell a story as important and inspiring as that of Revolutionary Boston. These monuments can form a parallel path to, or extension of, the Freedom Trail.



3. Connecting the Orange, Green, and Blue T lines in a sunken garden under the Plaza will create a transportation hub and commercial center for the growing density of the area.





On the Congress Street side, an "eroded" brick base allows new uses and creates a bustling street with small cafés, shops, and galleries. A new hotel on the upper levels would be separated from government functions for obvious security reasons, but become intertwined through new glass walls, allowing visibility, light, and sharing of some functions. The roof expansion allows the central courtyard to become a winter garden and meeting space.

> The water itself can offer active recreation: a wading pool/splash park in the summer and ice skating in the winter. By creating an activity magnet, the space will become energetic and vibrant, Equally important, the shallow pool could be easily drained for large gatherings such as rallies, festivals, and concerts.



STUDIO LUZ PROJECT TEAM: Harrey Bottor, Anthony Piermarini AIA (principals): Nick Creft, Angelina Dallago, Jenny Kwen, Glorian Rodriguez

c2 PROJECT TEAM: Scott Garman, Jane Chol ASLA (principals);

www.studioluz.net

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Jae Yoon Lee, Radhika Garg

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A new enclosed Garden Link connects the Government Center T station to the existing building, also serving as a gallery for local art and events. With the regrading of the Plaza, new elevators serving Congress Street, and clear pathways for those using wheelchairs and strollers, both City Hall and its Plaza can become universally accessible.

sky rooms

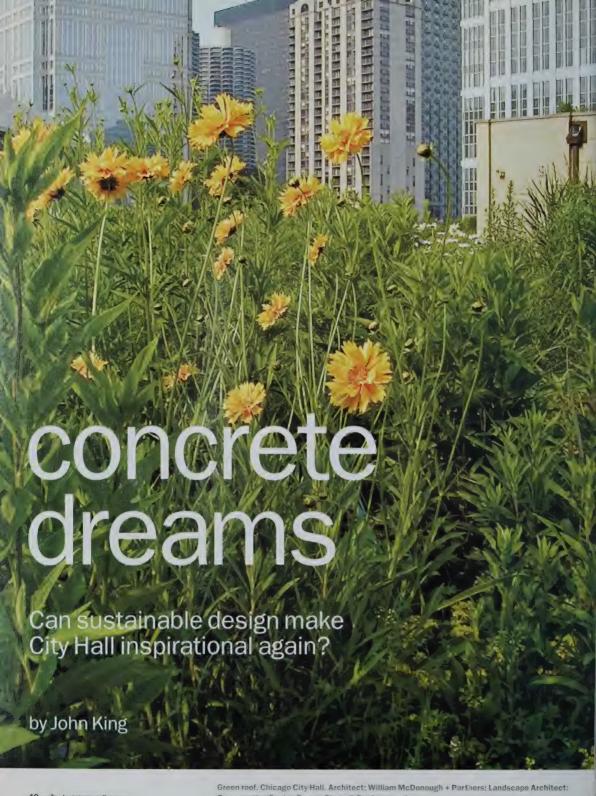
public circulation +

entry to City Hall

spiral circulation

rnment offices 4

public spaces



When it opened in 1968, Boston City Hall symbolized the New Boston — an aged metropolis reinventing itself in forceful and unapologetic ways.

Now there's a chance to make the structure the symbol of a cultural shift equally profound. It can symbolize another new Boston, a green Boston — becoming a showcase unlike any in the world. A re-imagined City Hall can pay tribute to the city's resilient ingenuity while showing how architectural icons of the past can benefit from today's emphasis on ecological concerns and sustainable design.

To be sure, the sculptural drama of the design by Gerhard Kallmann and Michael McKinnell has worked against Boston City Hall over time. It represents assertive Modern architecture and sweeping urban renewal in the heart of a historic city, conceived and constructed even as those concepts lost favor. Structurally, meanwhile, the thick concrete walls and puzzle-like floorplates have an intricacy that thwarts the building's ability to evolve and change in the way that old masonry warehouses can be reinvented with relative ease.

Yet City Hall's very presence is part of its power; the building rises from the landscape with sculptural force, every bit as commanding as Notre-Dame on the Ile de la Cité. The functions inside underscore this: they are the stuff of democracy and dissent, crass politics and aspirational ideals — high stakes that transcend retail fads or the short-term real estate market.

That fusion of architectural power and civic stature is what makes the potential so vast.

"It would be fabulous if the ultimate lesson in green design could be City Hall," says Jean Carroon, a preservation architect at the Boston firm Goody Clancy and a former member of Mayor Menino's Green Task Force. "It could be such a visible case study for a really creative approach to showing how a building can make less of an impact."

At the very least, Boston City Hall could be a laboratory where the public learns how existing structures can be transformed, re-imagined, by green practices. This isn't a new idea: architect Henry MacLean has been touting it since 1997, when he led a studio at the Wentworth Institute of Technology where faculty and staff found that City Hall — which has suffered from deferred maintenance since the early 1970s — at the time consumed more than twice the energy, on a per-square-foot basis, than would a conventional office tower.

"The building was so avant-garde for its time, and it has such a central location, that we saw the potential for showing how it can play a role in solving the climate crisis," said MacLean. Since then, he has applied for further grants and met with city officials — all to no avail, though at least twice in the past decade there have been announcements of plans to create task forces to "green" City Hall.

Clearly, there's room for exponential improvement. A smart, sustainable upgrade would boost the building's energy efficiency, create a more healthful environment, and conserve resources. Every bit of progress could be measured, charted, and studied as part of an ongoing public demonstration project; new technologies could be incorporated later as they become available. Standard steps to improve air quality could be taken, such as use of low-VOC (volatile organic compounds) carpeting and paints.

The iconographic strength of the building calls out for more: adventurous experimentation, a holistic and even triumphant approach to the concept of sustainability that in the process reimagines what Boston City Hall can be.

There could be more distinctive gestures as well, such as placing a skylight atop the central atrium as part of a larger retooling of the building's air circulation system. The building could also go the increasingly popular "green roof" route, with a water-conserving landscape.

"The way all the buildings and skyscrapers come around it, City Hall would be such an ideal place to have an extraordinary green roof," says Karen Weber, a green-design consultant whose firm Earth Our Only Home has proposed making City Hall the subject of an international sustainable-design competition.

Another way to create a sustainable roof would be to use it as a solar-energy farm, covering it with solar panels or photovoltaic systems and then sending the energy into Boston's power grid. Even if a solar roof wasn't practical because of the Washington Street towers to the south, photovoltaic panels could be applied to portions of the east and west building façades — surfaces that are flooded with sunlight on clear days, because of Government Center's low-slung urban design.



Mills College Natural Science Building, Oakland, California. Architects: EHDD Architecture in collaboration with Karen Fiene Architects. Sculpture in collaboration with artists Archie Held and Dorothy Lenehan. Image courtesy, EHDD Architecture.

But the way to make City Hall a green showcase isn't just to bring the interior systems and materials into the 21st century, or just to apply variations of solar panels and green roofs that can be found elsewhere in the city. The iconographic strength of the building calls out for more: adventurous experimentation,

If people saw wind turbines spinning on the roof, or glimpsed a green roof from above, or watched water spill through an atrium retooled to serve as an ecological showcase, they'd be engaged by the building in a way that now seems inconceivable.

a holistic and even triumphant approach to the concept of sustainability that in the process re-imagines what Boston City Hall can be.

Imagine, for instance, piping all the water running off the roof and terraces back into use within the building (in fact, some consultants suggest that collecting as much water as possible would have more of an ecological benefit than would a green roof). Now imagine displaying the water's movement and storage. There could be a water tank on the atrium floor; there could be a series of containers attached to atrium walls. More provocatively, the water could travel from roof to tank through clear pipes with artistic detours along the way — so that during rainstorms or as winter snow melts, that journey is on view for all to see.

Outlandish? Not at all. At Mills College in Oakland, California, the architectural firm EHDD has designed a rainwater reuse system for a new laboratory building that captures water in a head box at the parapet and then sends it tumbling down a sculptural wall of small bronze orbs into the water tank. The runoff is filtered in the tank and put to use for toilets and other functions; the architects estimate this should reduce the building's water use by 30 to 40 percent.

City Hall's stocky heft also could support a procession of wind turbines along the edge of the roof. Not the windmill-like contraptions with swirling blades that are lethal to birds, but new-generation turbines featuring corkscrew-like rotors. The technology exists, and prototypes developed by one manufacturer, Aerotecture, have performed well atop buildings in Chicago. Here they could turn ocean winds into energy for a historic seaport; they'd be architectural accents as well, capping City Hall's profile with a line of motion that would catch the eyes of the tourist masses at Faneuil Hall Marketplace.

Architectural purists might argue that this sort of greentinged retrofit would demean the unadorned Brutalism and emphatic grandeur of Boston City Hall. In a narrow aesthetic sense they might even be right. But if that grandeur is part of the iconic appeal, it's also a reason why so many people loathe the real-world outcome of the 1962 design competition won by Kallmann and McKinnell. They see an imposition that is cold and detached, a structure with no consideration for the workers inside or the historical context nearby. In their eyes, Boston City Hall is foreign and aloof - and therefore unloved.

But a City Hall imbued with the sensibilities of sustainable design could play a different role in the city. It would be an icon softened by today's urgent realization that the global ecology is tied to how our cities live and grow - and that each building plays a constructive or destructive part in how our environment fares in the decades to come. If people saw wind turbines spinning on the roof, or glimpsed a green roof from above, or watched water spill through an atrium retooled to serve as an ecological learning center, they'd be engaged by the building in a way that now seems inconceivable.

There's another green argument for keeping City Hall: the devastation that would come from tearing it down. The energy embodied in the original construction is immense: "My hackneyed rule is, if a building is made out of three-foot-thick concrete, leave it alone," says architect Carl Elefante, co-chair of the Technical Committee on Sustainable Preservation of the Association of Preservation Technology. "So much energy already has been expended to construct it — and knocking that building down would have to consume so much more energy" that all the LEED-sanctioned techniques that might be incorporated into a replacement (such as reusing some of the concrete in the foundation of a new tower on the site) couldn't begin to right the environmental balance sheet.

Ultimately, Boston City Hall won't be saved by guilt trips and legal strategies. We need to turn back the clock to 1962 — when the visceral modernity of this still-startling building showed that Boston was determined to push past decades of decline. The challenges are different now — the threat of global warming has replaced the threat of terminal decay — but the urgency is every bit as strong. In this context, City Hall is uniquely suited for a new role, offering a vision of a future that recasts the city we know in creative, sustainable ways.

Boston City Hall was an inspiration once. It can be an inspiration once again.

John King writes on architecture and urban design for The San Francisco Chronicle. He spent much of the 1980s inside City Hall as a reporter for several newspapers, including The Boston Globe.



Rooftop Aeroturbines, Chicago, Illinois, created by Aerotecture International. Photo by Kurt Holtz, Lucid Dream Productions.

On the Boards: GREEN PRESERVATION

By Thomas C. Jester AIA

Two major renewal projects that are currently in the planning and design stages demonstrate the sustainable design potential for Modern buildings. In Washington, DC, the headquarters of the American Institute of Architects, designed by The Architects
Collaborative (TAC) and completed in 1973, has been the subject of an extensive renewal and greening study prepared by Quinn Evans I Architects. In Manhattan, a consortium of architects under the preservation leadership of Einhorn Yaffee Prescott (EYP) has undertaken the comprehensive rehabilitation of the United Nations headquarters, designed in 1947 under the direction of Wallace Harrison by a "board of design" including Le Corbusier and Oscar Niemeyer. Both projects are applying historic-preservation best practices to ensure that the upgrades to the buildings will not result in a loss of historic character while reducing their carbon footprints.

At the UN complex, now well into design development, broad efforts are being made to integrate sustainable design into the 2.3 million-square-foot complex. While reduced energy consumption was part of the early planning for the renovation, more advanced sustainability options are now also being explored for the site and building envelope, with support from the new Secretary General.

The recently completed renewal study for the AIA headquarters addressed the AIA's commitment to a 50-percent reduction in fossil-fuel consumption by 2010 and leadership in sustainability. The design team's recommendations, based partially on a threeday "greening charrette," also address a comprehensive renewal of the building that will also preserve its historic character; create a healthier, more collaborative work environment; and provide more efficient use of the space. A key finding of the study was that no single element dominates the energy consumption; a host of modifications will be required to meet the energy-reduction targets. This includes lowering task and ambient lighting to .75 watts per square foot, installation of daylighting sensor controls, lowering plug loads with Energy Star replacements, upgrades to a variety of mechanical systems and controls, introduction of solar hot water, and insertion of photovoltaic arrays and vegetation on the roof. The lobby's structural glazing system was determined to be architecturally significant and will be preserved, but recommendations include replacing the upper-level glazing with a high-performance window system and considering additional sun control with sunscreens or light shelves. Other recommendations include upgrades to the building envelope and a rainwater-harvesting program.

The profession is still learning about the challenges and opportunities in making buildings from this period more livable, affordable, and, ultimately, sustainable. We can be certain, however, that design rigor is as essential as engineering in developing successful sustainable rehabilitation strategies.

Thomas C. Jester AIA is an architect at Quinn Evans I Architects in Washington, DC, and is co-chair of the Association for Preservation Technology's Technical Committee on Modern Heritage.





MENDING

Teaching an old dog new tricks might be the most sophisticated strategy for aging Modernist landmarks.

by John Allan



Mended Barbican Arts Centre. Original: Chamberlin, Powell and Bon, 1982. Renovation: Allford Hall Monaghan Morris, 2006. Photos by Tim Soar.

In December 2006, the British magazine *The Architectural Review* and the preservation organization English Heritage hosted a conference in London. I've taken part in many conferences on the preservation (or "conservation," as we call it in the UK) of Modern architecture, but the title of this one, "Mending Modernism," seemed to suggest something rather less rarified, rather more pragmatic. It felt more congenial to a practitioner such as myself. Some will associate the concept of "mending" with making do, a second-best approach: getting by, not really doing it properly. But there may be another interpretation of "mending" — a positive one that is also contemporary, possibly even progressive.

The dictionary definition of "mending," I was gratified to find, is "to repair, to improve or to reform and make better." In fact, the three components within that definition correspond exactly with the three key themes which have run through virtually every project in which I have been involved over the last 20 years, which can be summarized as:

Repair: seeking to reinstate or shore up the original fabric of something in such a way as to retrieve or prolong its authenticity Improve: enhancing the performance of something that has become deficient or unserviceable

Reform: adapting or modifying something in order to make it more suitable for new requirements

This pattern repeats consistently and I have come to see the architect's role as one of trying to bring these factors into a valid and viable *point of balance*. This is both more elusive and more controversial than it might seem — partly because that point of balance will vary with the circumstances of each case, and partly because the parties normally involved in any given project usually have different priorities. Preservation authorities are interested in a building's authenticity and so are predisposed towards preservation of original fabric; property owners are interested in their building as an asset and so are likely to be more interested in its

MODERNISM

exchange value and cost in use; and users are interested in whether a building is good to work or live in, and so are inclined to focus on its arrangements and functionality.

Of course this is a generalization and sometimes the stakeholders have more than one interest at heart or may be one and the same person. But the pattern is sufficiently consistent — in my experience — to suggest that unless a sufficiently strong balance is struck between these differing priorities, you will not achieve the most important objective of any project: a sustainable outcome. To put it another way, a successful project has to overcome three kinds of skepticism: the skepticism of the preservation lobby that it is possible to change something without destroying it; the skepticism of building owners, that decrepit buildings designed to out-of-date standards and inhibited by landmark and historic district regulations are capable of being upgraded to compete with new construction; and the skepticism of users that they can operate satisfactorily if the building's capacity to change is limited by inflexible design or preservation constraints.

The task of the architect, it seems to me, is therefore to achieve (at least) three things. First, the architect must understand what is significant in the building or built environment to be mended and be able to persuade skeptics to honor it; this is a duty involving historical insight, desk and field study, and architectural advocacy. Second, the architect must seek ways of making the building work better in terms of performance. This requires technical experience and increasingly specialist knowledge of building physics and how to apply the available upgrade toolbox. Finally, the architect is likely to have to devise interventions in the building that will accommodate new lifestyles (whether residential,

commercial, or cultural) that are exerting pressure on the existing design to change. This will involve creativity, design judgment, and imagination.

There are many ways in which mending Modern buildings might differ from mending historic ones, for example, the obvious differences in building technology in current construction requiring a different repair toolbox. This is linked to the issue of aging. Unlike many historic buildings, Modern architecture generally needs to look new in order to look good. Then there is the "close fit" of much Modern design, which can lead to earlier obsolescence than is common with historic buildings and increased difficulty in adaptive reuse. Yet paradoxically, precisely because of pressure for change, this often leads to buildings being altered — for better or worse, though usually worse — before architects become involved. (I cannot recall a single example over 20 years where a property we have been commissioned to "mend" was still in its original form and had just got older. They always change.)

This contradicts the assumption of many armchair preservationists — that the historic environment is in some prelapsarian

Significant Modern buildings are never simply discovered intact and authentic like Tutankamen's tomb; they have long since become something else.





Mended Brunswick Centre. Original: Patrick Hodgkinson, 1965–1972. Renovation: Levitt Bernstein Associates and Patrick Hodgkinson, 2006. Photos courtesy, Levitt Bernstein Associates. state of senile grace. In my experience, significant Modern buildings are never simply discovered intact and authentic like Tutankamen's tomb; they have long since become something else. And in this connection, it is worth remembering that in case of landmarked buildings what is landmarked is not what was built originally but what exists at the moment of landmarking — i.e. the "something else."

Then there is the experimental nature of much Modern design and material specification, leading to failure in service and the doubtful value of authentically repairing something that was technically flawed from the outset. This tends to contradict the "like-for-like" protocol associated with traditional preservation practices. There are also production issues arising from the volume and repetitive nature of much postwar development, especially housing: what is worthy of special attention when so many comparable examples still exist?

Another difference concerns components and materials that have been mass-produced and that are not inherently valuable. Thus in large rehabilitation projects, for example, the cost of access may make it economically nonsensical not to replace all windows in a façade, rather than only those that need immediate attention.

With sufficient care and creativity, it is possible to improve buildings to make them more suitable for today's needs while at the same time enhancing their authenticity.

Then there is the philosophical teaser whereby it is suggested that preservation (in any traditional sense) of an architecture supposedly dedicated to functionality—to providing instruments rather than monuments - is inherently contradictory and dishonors the ethic of Modernism itself, or alternatively, justifies any interventions that circumstances might require. That logic would dictate that something conceived only as a tool should simply be discarded when it has outlived its purpose. Although this tends to be a debating point amongst academics, it interlocks with the culture of skepticism that Modern architecture, especially some of the more controversial postwar examples, is even worth mending, let alone deserving of landmarking or historic consideration. Much of it is in the public sector and managed by maintenance departments and facilities directors who want answers, not history, and who will approach upgrade projects as an opportunity to get rid of troublesome design details or change the image of a failing building in order to dissociate it from its unpopular past.

Contractors likewise do not generally approach Modern buildings with the same mindset as they would be inclined to in the case of obviously historic ones. This ties in with the question of a different preservation ethic, whereby it is suggested that the value, or "significance" of Modern architecture may reside not so much in its materiality as in its intellectual achievement, and that it



Mended Isokon apartment building. Original: Wells Coates, 1934. Renovation: Avanti Architects, 2005. Photo by Nicholas Kane.

is "essence" rather than "substance" that should underpin any consideration of its future at times of change. And so on.

We can argue about whether these are deep differences or superficial ones, but they really only come into focus in the context of an actual project — when one is forced to ask, and answer, the key questions: What is significant? What are we trying to mend and what might have to change? What else might we need to achieve to get a sustainable result? And finally, who do we mean by "we"?

The invocation of history alone is an insufficient justification for mending Modernism. This is why I find the phrase "mending Modernism" rather congenial: it suggests that economics, sustainability, embodied energy, social continuity, and avoidance of dislocation can also play a crucial part.

I have sometimes described the high-profile preservation projects as battles for custody — that is, a struggle between those who actually own buildings (and pay for them) and those who assert cultural ownership (the preservationists). Yet if I had to distill my experience into a single message, it would be this: that it need not be assumed that these differing standpoints are irreconcilable. My whole thesis rests on the proposition paradoxical as it may sound - that with sufficient care and creativity, it is possible to improve buildings to make them more suitable for today's needs while at the same time enhancing their authenticity. The challenge is to balance priorities, to decide what is important. This may not always be easy, but it is nonetheless necessary. As Arthur Drexler noted, "The problem of deciding what is important is a function of human intelligence, and to suppose that its difficulties can be avoided, is to advocate that we make ourselves stupid."

John Allan is a director of Avanti Architects in London (www.avantiarchitects.co.uk).

This essay was adapted from the March 2007 issue of *The Architectural Review* (see page 49) and is based on a presentation at the conference "Mending Modernism." The full presentation has been published in *The Journal of Architectural Conservation* (July 2007), available from Donhead Publishing (www.donhead.com).



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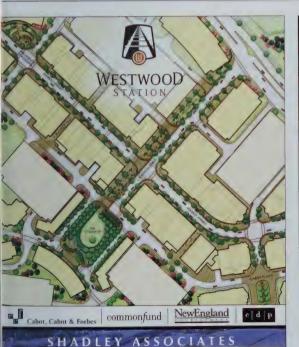
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THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW **VOLUME CCXXI, NUMBER 1321 MARCH 2007: "MENDING MODERNISM"**

It's the magazine that everyone's talking about: the March issue of Architectural Review tackles the problem of "Mending Modernism."

AR's featured examples, mostly from the UK, wrestle with familiar challenges: vast, vacant open spaces; "unfriendly" concrete; inwardly focused buildings that ignore their surroundings; massive structures that are a confusing maze to walk through. The city of Plymouth (theirs, not ours) is even considering a plan to move its City Council from its grand 1950s "Civic Center" out to a new development area.

With Boston's current debate in mind, I came to this magazine looking for drama and—to my surprise—didn't find it. Whether that's because AR omitted those parts of these redevelopment stories, or because the British have a less tortured relationship than we do with their midcentury structures, is unclear. As contributor Jeremy Gould reminds readers, post-WWII rebuilding needs in European cities fueled a broader acceptance of Modern architecture. Of course, this was true in the US, too, but here, the urban destruction was of our own (well-intentioned) making. And so it's no surprise that Boston — still uncertain about the decision to demolish Scollay Square in the first place—has a hard time rationally discussing how to mend City Hall.

AR presents a handful of recent projects that renovate and rework major midcentury buildings. The featured designs are remarkably nuanced. No redevelopment completely abandons its original; this is about honestly assessing and addressing the problems and updating these structures for current technologies, economics, neighborhoods, and audiences. The underlying message is that buildings can be changed, leaving their original spirit strengthened.

There also seems to be general empathy for these relics of Modern ambitions. As Modernism's true significance is as a progressive social movement, not as an applied style; Modernism is still alive and we still have a lot to learn from it. Kenneth Powell tells the tale of the Barbican Centre, a 2,000-unit residential neighborhood and arts center, newly energized through "forceful surgery." Clare Meluish writes about the recent renovation of the Brunswick Centre, an "unloved colossus" of housing and retail that deteriorated over three decades. Now Starbucks has landed. The Brunswick tale is complex, with lessons about market realities, tenant expectations, and the role of retail uses. Architect John Allan draws on his experience with many of these aging structures to offer a pragmatic analysis (see page 44). Overseas examples include Polshek's recent renovation of Louis Kahn's Yale Art Gallery and the French church begun by Le Corbusier and finished last year by José Oubrerie.

None of the featured projects quite bears the civic symbolism and monumentality of Boston City Hall. Even so, this collection provides ammunition for advocates of often-unloved Modern buildings such as City Hall — as well as comfort for those who fear that such structures can never be made better.



FLEXIBLE: ARCHITECTURE THAT **RESPONDS TO CHANGE**

Flexible delivers a series of glimpses into a deserving topic, a topic proven by this book to be as flexible as the designs it investigates. The title at various points denotes designs that change shape, that incorporate flexing materials, and that encourage interior reconfiguration.

Beyond the book's dazzlingly iridescent lenticular cover, Kronenburg begins with a series of essays, including a history of the ways in which the theme of flexibility and change relates to canonic Modernist homes (Robie, Villa Savoye, among others). The book's second half features contemporary projects catalogued by four connotations of flexibility: Adapt, Transform, Move, and Interact. The majority of examples, presented through several hundred color photographs and drawings, are drawn from the past two decades of work by well-known international architects (including Toyo Ito, Herzog & de Meuron, MVRDV), but the question of whether these projects succeed at being flexible — and how the author or reader will know if they do—is evaded.

Kronenburg is strongest in his attentive examination of semipermanent and mobile constructions, from tents to communications infrastructure. In practice before becoming chair of Liverpool's School of Architecture, Kronenburg designed and constructed temporary exhibition and

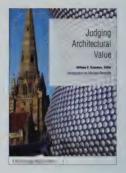
commercial facilities, and his analysis allows readers to compare physically flexible structures with permanent structures embodying the aesthetics of impermanence (such as the Centre Pompidou).

Of local note, Kronenburg praises MIT's Stata Center for its "informality," and the way in which Gehry "stimulates reaction and response by asserting an especially challenging architectural environment on the user." This is a characterization of forced adaptability quite different from a seminal volume in the study of adaptable architecture, Stewart Brand's 1994 book, How Buildings Learn. Brand's work and other investigations of how "ordinary" buildings are transformed are notably absent from Kronenburg's bibliography and his book generally.

Kronenburg's valuable insights demonstrate that temporary constructions deserve equal standing alongside "permanent" architecture: "Mobile, adaptable and flexible design is well-placed not only to solve a wide range of architectural problems, but to do it better than more

conventional responses." Although many of today's starchitects, some of whose projects are included here, often champion the value of flexibility, questions remain whether their designs, inevitably predestined for change, are true evidence of ingenuity with longevity, or will instead become relics of obsolete futures. Many projects featured here that incorporate inventive reuses of standard construction and manufactured elements, such as shipping containers, exemplify resiliency and flexibility in ways identified by both Kronenburg's and Brand's approaches. But Kronenburg presents evidence for considering flexibility even more broadly, with regard to many time frames designs that are transformed for a moment. for an event, or for a lifetime. In doing so, he makes an argument for architecture that is resilient enough to be valued by and transformed for future generations.

David M. Foxe is a designer at Einhorn



JUDGING ARCHITECTURAL VALUE (HARVARD DESIGN MAGAZINE READERS SERIES)

Passing its brooding presence on a winter night, I commented to a companion that the Boston City Hall was almost the equal of something by H. H. Richardson. My friend, a preservationist with nary a kind word for anything Modern, bowled me over by his unequivocal response: "No, the Boston City Hall is hetter than Richardson." Were the





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Salem, NH 603. 898. 2228 Brutalist monument by the Victorian master, its fate would not be in doubt.

Ironic, too, that recent landmarks are often misunderstood and are thus most endangered. How do we decide what buildings are treasured symbols of the zeitgeist or disposable white elephants? (Yale is restoring its Rudolph architecture school, while Rudolph's Blue Cross building in Boston is threatened; MIT lovingly rehabilitated its Aalto dormitory while Harvard callously altered its Aalto library.) As Michael Benedikt writes in the introduction to *Iudoino Architectural Values*, by what criteria "should honor be bestowed on buildings and their architects?" Whose judgments and values are the right ones? Who cares?

This baker's dozen of essays, originally published in Harvard Design Magazine, addresses these critically important issues, but with varied results. The book is pathetically illustrated with a few murky photographs; its production values have the appeal of a report on agricultural policy in Ruritania. (Why is a Harvard book published by Minnesota anyway?)

Many of the essays — by the usual gang of suspects — are as unappealing as the package. This is mostly an insider's book written for insiders, and some material seems recycled (Jencks' Evolutionary Tree is back, but now with Gehry as Gaudí's successor). Kenneth Frampton, while decrying an information sickness that has left architects too little time to read and reflect, is too busy to write an essay so he pontificates in an interview. The shortest essay ("... what I think without the full battery of arguments for thinking it"), by English philosopher and foxhunter Roger Scruton, rather listlessly argues for a return to the classical orders and awaits Prince Charles' accession to the throne.

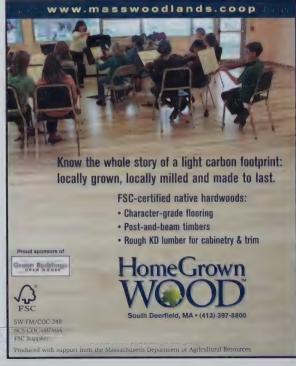
"Do ordinary people feel insecure," Benedikt asks, "about their right to complain about the mediocre and pretentious 'junkspace' that constitutes the bulk of our environment?" If so, they won't use the language of the canonic versus the iconic. They might, as editor Saunders argues, skip the "subjectivism" of Herbert Muschamp and digest the

"realism-without-relativism" of Michael Sorkin. This book sometimes putatively makes the case that elitist architectspeak has, in the words of Finnish architect Juhani Pallasmaa, "produced a kind of architectural autism." The most valuable — and readable — exposition is Pallasmaa's "Toward an Architecture of Humility."

The anthology highlights but obviously can't solve the enduring problem of judging architectural value that is perhaps no better exemplified than in the current debate over Boston City Hall. Perhaps that building's vigorous heroicism — its very lack of humility - makes it hard to love today. For me, the Boston City Hall, with its powerful columns and abstracted entablature, is a resonating echo of the great Greek Doric temples of Paestum in southern Italy, and not least of all, the ultimate civic monument, the Parthenon. As such, it deserves our reverence and protection.



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WHY MOVE CITY HALL

www.whymovecityhall.com

A documentary film project by Emerson students Krissie Jankowski and Oana Ghiocel. Check out the video of Mayor Menino's original announcement of his proposal to move City Hall.

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www.c20society.org.uk

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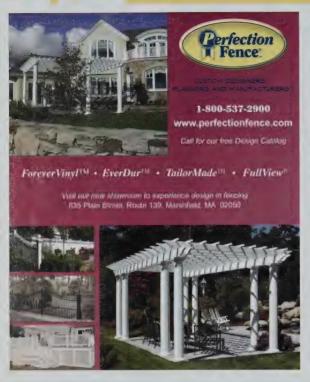


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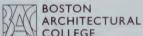
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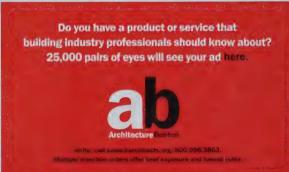
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Our City Hall

One morning in May, I stood at the edge of Boston Common in front of St. Gaudens' memorial to Robert Gould Shaw and his Negro regiment. I was on my way to City Hall, to have a look at the building for this magazine, but I wasn't in any hurry about it.

A man came up beside me, clutching a folded-up tourist map. He puzzled over the bronze relief awhile, then turned to a young man nearby and asked, in a British accent, "This has to do with your Civil War, then, not your War of Revolution?"

The young man was there to hustle trolley tours of the city. He wore a Red Sox cap and a wiseguy smirk. He moved in closer but didn't answer.

The Englishman gestured at the State House. "And this is where they signed your Declaration of Independence?"

The trolley-tour kid gave me the eye, as if he was about to steal something. "No, that was the *old* State House."

I wandered off, over Beacon Hill and up Cambridge Street. On the corner of Staniford Street, bundles of red bricks were stacked shoulder high. On each bundle was a sign: "The Original Boston City Hall Pavers / Manufactured By The Stiles & Hart Brick Co."

City Hall Plaza was as barren as ever, even on a sunny day. A few people hurried over it. They put their heads down and set off across the red bricks and didn't stop till they'd reached the other side.

But City Hall, from across the Plaza, has a different vibe. It makes you stop and look. It invites you to explore, first with your eyes, to root around in the crazy broken geometries of its façade. How do these rectangles fit together? What room is that? How does this strange building work?

Inside, the puzzle continues. Like an Escher drawing, City Hall is full of gloomy labyrinthine hallways and half-hidden staircases, bridges, ramps, nooks, dead ends. It is a shame that the entrances to the

v Photo by George Cserna, courtesy of Kallmann McKinnell & Wood Architects.

maze are mostly blocked. At street level, pedestrians see only flat brick walls or forests of cast-concrete columns. I walked down Congress Street along the back of City Hall, past tourism signs advertising "Boston: America's Walkable City"; it was like walking beside a walled fortress. Most of us experience City Hall only from the outside, as if it were a solid sculpture. It is a building more walked by than entered.

City Hall is iconic (it is featured on the uniform patch of Boston cops) but it is not pretty. It is not designed in the decorous language of our other "government centers," like the State House or the old City Hall: warm materials, traditional forms. That is the architectural language of how our government sees itself. City Hall is how we see our government: confusing, labyrinthine, chaotic, shadowy, intimidating. I suspect that is why Mayor Menino wants to be rid of it.

The poet Robert Lowell wrote that the Shaw memorial "sticks like a fishbone / in the city's throat." City Hall sticks in the city's throat, too. Boston politics — "City Hall" in the abstract — has always been a little "brutalist." The building sits atop a bulldozed neighborhood. And on those "Original Boston City Hall Pavers," Ted Landsmark was gored with a flagpole, our own Iwo Jima image. True Boston: complex, inaccessible, chilly, even fierce. Is it possible to love such a place, and such a building? To find them beautiful because they are difficult? I do. But then, I'm from Boston.

Welcome to town, pal. Looking for the place where the Declaration of Independence was signed? Try City Hall.

William Landay is the author of the novels *Mission Flats* (Delacorte, 2003) and *The Strangler* (Delacorte, 2007).

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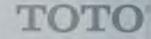




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It's (Not) All About You

magazine devoted to "clients" can quickly devolve to a dreary trade-journal exercise in marketing-speak. The problem with such discussions is fundamental: while ostensibly focusing on the client — the entity that the practitioner serves — they are really all about the practitioner: how to get more business, be more successful, make more money.

Far more substantive are the issues that shape any really meaningful discussion of clients, issues that are at the heart of the architecture profession: the nature of creativity and collaborative relationships; and the meaning of service to the client and to the public. Clients give architecture its purpose; without clients, it is fine art, inhabitable sculpture.

But who are these clients? A century ago, the answer was pretty simple: rich people — variously disguised as corporate titans, financiers, museum directors, college presidents, church elders, and the like, with a smattering of government entities. Frequently they were in search of structures that would enhance their various enterprises; sometimes they were looking for houses and estates that would reflect the success of that enterprise.

A century later, the answer is both the same and vastly different. Professional clients — those in the business of representing a client's interests in a building project, such as project managers, facilities directors, and owner's representatives - are now a fixture in most institutional and corporate building projects. Although a strong individual personality akin to the old notion of a patron can still be found in many architect-client relationships, a client meeting is apt to be a much more crowded place these days.

As professionals granted licenses by the state, architects have always been charged with a responsibility to the public. But our understanding of who or what constitutes "the public" has expanded exponentially, which in turn has broadened our understanding of who or what is "the client." Recognizing that the client is more than the name on the contract, we now also think in terms of "stakeholders"—the unnamed people who might occupy the building (its "users") as well as members of

the surrounding community. Stakeholders often don't have any legal standing in the making of a building, although their association with it may far outlive that of the people who actually commission it. A stakeholder in a library project might be a firstgrader checking out Curious George.

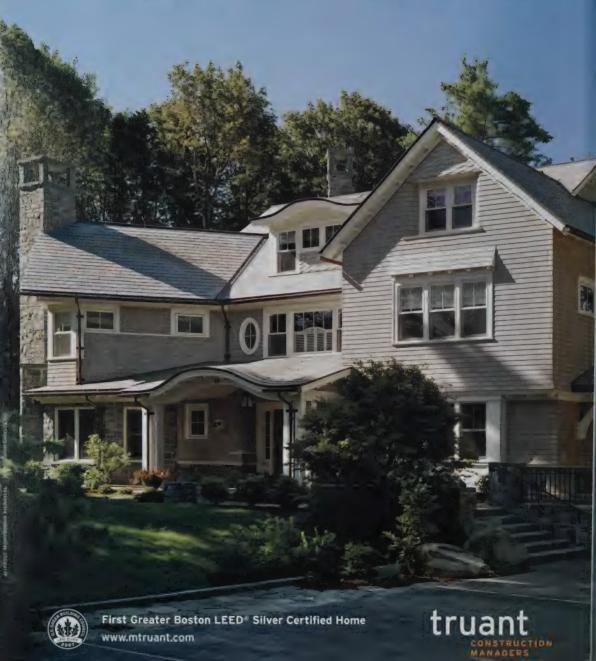
But perhaps the greatest change is that more architects today are finding clients outside the narrow tier of rich people. Some, influenced by the overt socio-political agenda of the early Modernists and the social activism of the 1960s and '70s, have deliberately directed their careers toward serving the less advantaged. Others have found satisfying careers working for the vast American middle class — homeowners as well as small businesses and organizations. And still others are finding that they can do good work — in the sense of work that is well designed and work that serves social purpose — by working with nonprofits, community design centers, and public agencies. These kinds of organizations are really surrogate clients, procuring architectural services for those who can't otherwise afford them. The enduring influence of Sam Mockbee's Rural Studio, the recent Cooper-Hewitt exhibition Design for the Other 90% (see Architecture Boston, September/October 2007, page 9) and the San Francisco nonprofit Public Architecture (this issue, page 54) suggest a welcome trend that may be gathering momentum.

Clients give architecture its purpose.

Architects find their clients in many ways — through published requests for proposals, professional referrals, social networks, even the chance encounter. Word of a new "client opportunity" can unleash an adrenaline-fueled reaction not unlike birders responding to a report of a snowy owl on Plum Island. But in fact, clients are all around us, as common as sparrows. Whatever their financial circumstances, they share similar architectural needs: buildings that support and improve their lives, that even offer a measure of beauty and delight. Focus on the clients, and good work — in all senses of the term will follow.

Elizabeth S. Padjen FAIA Editor

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Letters Letters Letters

I am sure this will be one of many congratulations you receive for the truly outstanding issue on Boston City Hall [September/October 2007]. The publication promises to inspire a new direction and way of thinking for the city. All of us who care about the future of the building owe you an enormous debt of gratitude. Thank you.

> Sarah D. Kelly Boston Preservation Alliance

Should City Hall be a designated landmark? Much of the controversy concerns the appearance of the building, frequently described as ugly. To describe City Hall as ugly is a value judgment - but our values and our judgments are notoriously mutable.

When I was a youngster growing up in Medford in the 1950s, ranch houses and split-levels were the new and exciting thing. Victorian architecture was dismissed as dowdy, fussy, and impractical; many homeowners knocked the gewgaws off their houses in the hope of making them appear more up-to-date. But a funny thing happened as the century wore on: where only recently we saw gewgaws, we now perceived exuberant ornament and the craftsmanship of a vanished age. Pioneering homeowners went to great lengths to restore rundown Victorian homes, and a century after the end of the Victorian era, they are again a fashionable form of housing. Meanwhile, Modernist houses, likewise gone out of style, are in peril - consider the recent demolition of the pioneering Rachel Raymond House, built in 1931.

Such cycles are ongoing in countless aspects of style and preference: plastic pastel jelly shoes have just returned, unchanged, after a mere two decades. Certain women's fashions are now "vintage" after 25 years. Cars acquire antique status at 30. And the aluminumand-Formica furniture of the '50s began to command preposterous prices at the half-century mark.

But the built environment — or rather

the public's perception of it — matures in a slower cycle. I would venture to say that any building - domestic, commercial, industrial, or civic — that survives for a century or more will thereafter become increasingly valuable as a window on a vanished past. And any structure regardless of architectural merit — that survives for 150 years will be a prime candidate for landmark status. After four decades, City Hall is at an awkward age where it lacks novelty, but hasn't yet accrued the veneration that comes with age.

City Hall is a powerful building - some would say an over-powering one. It's the most striking structure from the era of Boston's urban renewal; it speaks of grand aspirations and, like it or not, of the power of Big Government. Bostonians of the 2060s will draw their own inferences from Government Center: Did it jump-start a dying city? Or did urban renewal overreach? Knowing our history, and seeing it before their eyes, the Bostonians of the 2060s will be better equipped to make good choices for the Boston of the 2160s.

> Fenwick Smith New England Conservatory Boston

How about restoring City Hall back to its original look (Scollay Square) before the area was taken by eminent domain?

> Iim Campano The West Ender Newsletter Boston

"...[T]he ultimate lesson in green design could be City Hall." Jean Carroon's quotation in "Concrete Dreams" [September/October 2007] is at once incredible and the most realistic suggestion for the maintenance of City Hall's role at the center of 21st-century Boston. City Hall is a difficult building, made more so by decades of small-scale modification and piecemeal remodeling. As such, it has taken a place in Boston: loved or hated as a building, it is a place-holder in a city that continues to grow more dense. City Hall

and its Plaza were designed to create a forum for the intersection of people and government, not to effortlessly join two entities that are so often perceived to be at odds with one another. As people, politics, and architecture grow into their 21stcentury roles, aided by 21st-century technology, of foremost importance is recognizing the civic work involved in living in the modern world.

SINGLE speed DESIGN's proposal to employ City Hall Plaza as a link in Boston's "Emerald Necklace" struck me as the most compelling of those developed by the young teams. In one stroke, greenspace, Boston history, pedestrian circulation, and a diversified cityscape can be woven into the imposing fabric of Government Center. As far as City Hall is concerned, I think that tacking on this generation's glass boxes or amorphous shapes will only serve to further distance the building from its people and surroundings. City Hall doesn't need an aesthetic fix to enliven a bland facade, but rather a functional solution to resuscitate a complex organ of civic life.

City Hall is Boston's opportunity to recall the value of hard work, to unite the public, designers, and government, and to invite the world to engage with difficult architecture for the better.

> Nicholas Moore Brown University '07.5

Michael McKinnell (City Hall's key designer in my view) lectured to students just as the edifice was being completed when I was at Sheffield University School of Architecture in the UK. It was the height of the Brutalist period in England with new town mega-structures, bus terminals, and bank headquarters being generated on an unprecedented scale to rapturous professional applause and mostly public awe and concern.

As someone who was embarking on a career specializing in historic preservation, I did not take kindly at the time to gigantism, tartan grid patterns, hectares of board-marked concrete, streets-in-the-sky, and other Jetsons-cartoon fantasies being

But let us face the facts about Boston City Hall: its architectural potential, dayto-day welfare, improvement, and future enhancement have never truly been invested in by its management, and this has led to its current sorry state. Whether intentionally deterministic or not, its long-life-loose-fit potency has now been successfully unlocked by the innovative rehab schemes and ideas illustrated in your journal ["Imagine That!" September/ October 2007]. There are also technical means available to effectively repair and maintain the material fabric and enhance its operational use that challenge the teardown-to-rebuild advocates.

The real question is whether the political will exists to adapt the building in a sustainable way. And only time can answer that question.

John Fidler RIBA, FRICS, Intl. Assoc. AIA Simpson Gumpertz & Heger Los Angeles, California

City Hall and its proposed move was the focus of one of the liveliest events at this summer's Community + Architecture Festival organized by Common Boston. As the BSA's initiative for the AIA150 program, Common Boston brought together designers and citizens to discuss timely issues that affect our city and its built environment. The program included a forum on City Hall, during which two presenters, David Fixler AIA and Joan Goody FAIA, advocating the renovation of City Hall, stressed that a lack of badly needed maintenance together with ad-hoc additions have compromised the attractiveness, comfort, and openness of the original design.

Indeed, proper maintenance of our public spaces and buildings was a critical issue throughout Common Boston's tours, open buildings, and discussions. Maintenance isn't a sexy topic; however, we must take responsibility for upkeep if we are to retain our commitment to our

buildings and the communities they represent, and to demonstrate to non-designers that buildings of any era can age with grace. Upkeep may be a last priority for civic funding, but it is arguably a more significant sign of pride in our built environment than our new creations.

We're happy to see your feature "Imagine That!" begin a provocative exchange between architects and Bostonians on how we could re-create City Hall. However, visions of civic buildings should also consider maintenance as an essential element of design. As we continue the debate over how to mend City Hall, we should consider not only additions to the building, but also subtractions — of grime or clutter insensitive to the building's original design — in order to re-capture the image and integrity of City Hall.

Justin Crane, Assoc. AIA Common Boston

> Sarah Roszler Archventures

I was pleased to see your "Night" issue [July/August 2007], but disappointed at the failure to credit the lighting designers whose work was illustrated or mentioned. The projects and designers included, among others: the Diamond Necklace plan (Ripman Lighting and McGinley Hart); Massachusetts State House Exterior (Lam Partners); Old State House Exterior (Ripman Lighting); King's Chapel and the Cathedral Church of St. Paul (Berg/Howland); MBTA Operations Control Room (Berg/Howland); and MIT Center for Brain and Cognitive Sciences (Lam Partners).

Jeffrey T. Berg AIA, LC Berg Lighting Design Cambridge, Massachusetts

We want to hear from you. Letters may be e-mailed to epadjen@architects.org or sent to *ArchitectureBoston*, 52 Broad Street, Boston, MA 02109. Letters may be edited for clarity and length, and must include your name, address, and daytime telephone number. Length should not exceed 300 words.

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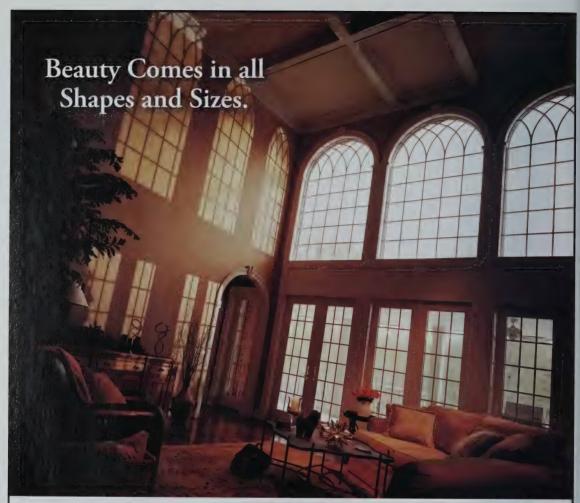
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Top: Casares, Spain, 1967. Photo by Bernard Rudofsky; Research Library, The Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles © The Bernard Rudofsky Estate. Bottom: Wheels. Fabric, Stimulus Collection, designed by Bernard Rudofsky for Schiffer Prints, 1949; Research Library, The Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles.

Lessons from Bernard Rudofsky

Canadian Centre for Architecture, Montreal July 4–September 30, 2007

Bemard Rudofsky (1905–1988) enjoyed considerable fame as the force behind Architecture Without Architects, the 1964 exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art that documented buildings constructed without the aid of architects — which is to say, almost everything ever built. Rudofsky also enjoyed some reputation as a fashion designer. Lessons from Bernard Rudofsky sketches the man's life and professional interests in six thematic sections: life and travels; the Mediterranean and Japan; views on housing and one unbuilt house design; two built houses; fashion; and vernacular architecture.

The visitor begins by entering a darkened room and confronting a slide-show of Rudofsky's travel photographs. Several publications lie tethered to a table by steel cables. The exhibition then continues through five more rooms, for the most part consisting of an eye-level ribbon of drawings, photographs, and the occasional text. Small TV screens and displays of notebooks, objects, and models serve as punctuation. In the final

room, numerous images of vernacular architecture hang from the ceiling at various neck-craning heights.

The significance of Rudofsky's intuition about the importance of vernacular architecture and his inspiring confidence in the dignity of humanity strike the visitor forcibly; the juxtaposition of housing, fashion, and vernacular architecture is intriguing. And yet, instead of clarifying the man and his work, the exhibition strangely serves to increase the distance between the subject and the visitor. Images are explained obliquely, when explained at all. Objects are either boxed or leashed. The final room, in which the photographs are suspended literally out of reach, captures the mood perfectly. More than anything, the exhibition feels like preliminary hagiography; it presents Rudofsky's work not to engage visitors with his ideas, but to insist (without argument) upon his genius.

Jonathan Powers is a PhD candidate in the history and theory of architecture at McGill University.

Defying Gravity

Directed by Amie Knox and Jocelyn Childs, 2006

DVD: 110 minutes (available from Amazon.com)

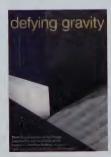
How does a faded municipal art museum

regain its curb appeal? In the 21st century, there is only one answer: starchitecture. The Denver Art Museum's process of recreating itself, which culminated in the construction of the Frederic C. Hamilton Building by Daniel Libeskind, is presented in an outstanding three-part documentary film, *Defying Gravity*.

A committee compiles a list of architects to be interviewed. Eliminations are made and finalists — Arata Isozaki, Thom Mayne, and Daniel Libeskind — are chosen. The committee members are baffled by Isozaki but agonize over the other two. They seem to know that Mayne is the obvious choice but are helpless to resist Libeskind. Entranced, they listen as he tells them that the new building will be "a line going for a walk." They glow with happiness to know that he was inspired by the Rocky Mountains — imagine!

The building has opened to significant criticism: its dramatic forms overwhelm the art; curators struggle to mount shows. Gosh, the walls are *sloping*.

Brigid Williams AIA is a principal of Hickox Williams Architects in Boston.



David Macaulay: The Art of Drawing Architecture

The National Building Museum, Washington, DC

June 23, 2007-January 21, 2008

David Macaulay's first book, Cathedral, left no stone unturned in 1973 as it visually dissected the iconic architectural form. Thirty years later, this architect-writerillustrator brought the same approach to Mosque. In between, he gathered several Caldecott prizes for children's literature, partnered with PBS on a television series, and won a MacArthur Fellowship. Now Macaulay, who also teaches illustration at the Rhode Island School of Design, has been honored with a museum exhibition.

David Macaulay: The Art of Drawing Architecture looks at the process of an artist whose work itself is about the examination of process. From his most famous book, The Way Things Work, to the architectural archetypes he's deconstructed in other books — castles, pyramids, bridges — Macaulay is intent on understanding who builds things, why, and how. It makes sense, then, to apply similar treatment to the artist himself.

The exhibition's first half follows the creation of *Mosque* via a cornucopia of sketchbooks, journals, videos, timelines, and drawings. By gaining an in-depth understanding of real mosques, the artist lays the groundwork for his own creation. After such "visual archaeology," Macaulay draws and then draws some more, crafting exploded views, perspectives, and elevations of his building's elements — in this case its hamams, domes, and prayer hall. Macaulay next applies color to photocopies of his finished drawings, fearful of any mishaps ruining the original meticulous creations.

The exhibit's second half explores other projects, loosely organized under the categories "Playing With Perspective," "Revealing Structure," and "Inspiring Imagination." The latter favors whimsy over artistry, but a Piranesi-like illustration of a vine-strewn Grand Central Station under

deluge, created at a time when cities were unappreciated and neglected, is indeed intriguing. Elsewhere, the exhibit demonstrates how Macaulay exhorts himself to "avoid predictable and dull chronology of history" by, say, presenting impossible perspectives. His fascination with scale—especially the wonder of building big—is evident throughout, as in his "imaginary international dome expedition," where the US Capitol, Pantheon, Hagia Sophia and others are squeezed into the largest dome of all, the Houston Astrodome.

For Macaulay, sketching is a problemsolving tool, and as such he's apparently never without pen in hand. Just take note of the inked-in urban scourges — pigeons and rats — that perch and scurry on the exhibit's walls. They come courtesy of Macaulay, too, and like the rest of the delights on view, attest to the power of the pen. Today's digital delineator can't possibly have this much fun.

JoAnn Greco is a freelance journalist in Philadelphia.



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A Project, in Pieces

The place: The Worcester Street Community Garden, one of 16 neighborhood gardens owned by the South End/Lower Roxbury Open Space Land Trust. Over a hundred gardeners have plots here, and the 10-by-10-foot squares are a patchwork of different horticultural styles and philosophies. Some beds are all perennials and shrubs: voluptuous peonies, lupines, iris, roses. Others are strictly utilitarian: soil covered in black plastic, inverted soda bottles nursing tomato plants that seem almost selfconsciously vigorous, vindicating the expert techniques used to grow them.

The project: A small louvered wooden pavilion — Modern in design but on the scale of a traditional English garden folly — to be erected this weekend by students from the Boston Architectural College, who've been working on it all semester in a design/build studio. The teachers, Brandon Prinzing and Mason Pritchett, have known each other since college and are currently intern architects in Boston firms. Through the Land Trust, they found a receptive client group in the Worcester Street gardeners. Three student designs were presented; the gardeners voted overwhelmingly in favor of this one. For several weeks, the students have been prefabricating the structure in the basement of the BAC. The pieces are now lying on the site.



8:30 Brandon and Mason are clearing the site. The Douglas-fir boards for the pavilion - cut, sanded, and stained in the BAC basement — have been resting on top of the concrete foundation the students poured a week ago, after hand-mixing 50 bags of concrete. The next task is to drill bolt holes in the concrete; but they can't plug in the drill yet because the neighbor in the adjoining house who offered the use of her power isn't expecting them until nine.

Three women are gardening.

9:02 The first student arrives. "Howdy." Mason asks him to rub off the rough gobs of dried stain from the edges of the boards. This student has had a little construction experience; the experience in the group of six students ranges from a lot to none. (A seventh student, who worked on the project all semester, will be absent today: he's getting married.)

9:14 The neighbor's son shows up and connects the power. Mason drills holes in the concrete while Brandon sweeps up the dust.

9:21 Two more students arrive, carrying the steel connection plates. The students have already cut the plates and drilled the bolt holes; then the plates were welded in a shop in Saugus belonging to a BAC graduate, and powder-coated at another shop in Charlestown. But when Mason and Brandon remove the white protective paper, they discover a glitch: the coding tags, which the group attached to the pieces after drilling them to make sure the bolt holes would align, have been removed by the coating shop.

9:22 No one cries, or even complains, over spilled milk. Two students set about matching up the holes in the plates.

The garden smells of chives and sunscreen.



A Photo by Joan Wickersham.

10:10 Carol, the garden coordinator, shows up carrying a local newspaper featuring a story on the project. "I'm so excited!" She admires the work that's gone on so far, counts the students so she can come back with cold drinks and pizza, and looks ahead to the dedication in two weeks. "We're going to hit up local restaurants for food."

10:29 The students, working in pairs, are sandwiching the steel plates between boards and bolting them together, and hammering Red Head anchor bolts into the concrete. The hammering strips the threads from one of the bolts; Brandon beheads it with a power saw.

10:50 The wood studs are all bolted in place. The students unscrew one to reverse it: the board labeled "INSIDE" is facing out.

Five garden plots are being worked on now, including one enclosed in waist-high railroad ties and allotted to a woman in a wheelchair. A small girl, holding a miniature shopping bag, a stuffed animal, a sippy cup, and a blue plastic purse, follows her father to fetch a communal hose and drag it back to their plot. As he waters, she crouches in the dirt, talking softly to a plastic monarch butterfly mounted on a wire stand.

The foundation as built is a little different from what was shown on the plan, and the board's slope needs to be adjusted so it won't seem too abrupt.

11:40 Two students continue to level and adjust the base plates while two others carry the pieces for the roof frame over to the site. The rest of the team bring over a jig they've constructed to support the roof after it's raised but before it's bolted in place. "Careful of the tomatoes." They're working in very close quarters; the pathways between plots are, in some places, only a foot wide.

12:00 Six people lift the framing up and rest it on the studs, while two others slip the jig into place beneath it.

At the utility shed in the rear of the garden, a flirty little conversation between two gardeners: "What do you want to write?" she asks. He is making a poster.

"I don't know," he says. "Something like, TAKE A PENNY, LEAVE A PENNY, only with seeds." "How about, TAKE A SEED, LEAVE A SEED?" she suggests.

They both laugh.

II. Saturday afternoon

4:25 The roof louvers are all loosely in place but have to be fastened. Brandon and one of the students are shortening the studs that will support a sloped board on a low sidewall that is one of the pavilion's most dramatic design elements. The foundation as built is a little different from what was shown on the plan, and the board's slope needs to be adjusted so it won't seem too abrupt.

4:40 Patiently and silently, one student continues to shorten the studs under Brandon's guidance, while another sands the newly exposed ends and brushes them with stain.

More people are gardening now. A man from the public-housing apartment building next door, smoking a pipe, sets in seedlings. Another man is watering, a woman is weeding. A young mother digs while her husband holds their intently watching baby, and their little boy stamps around in yellow rubber boots, holding a yellow shovel over his head.

III. Sunday morning

10:30 Two students look at the connections between the louvers and the roof structure, preparing to fasten them together with Simpson ties. Another works with Brandon to cut the sloping board down to the new length necessitated by yesterday's shortening of the supporting studs.

The morning is cool and cloudy. In the gardens, a husband and wife are putting down straw mulch, and a very young couple dig and mix soil in a wheelbarrow. Two men work together on a plot, one digging while the other carries in tomato, cucumber, and herb seedlings from a car parked on the street.



11:10 Two students are cutting gridded wire at the rear of the garden near the shed, creating gabion forms to contain the rocks that will fill some of the spaces between the pavilion's studs. Once the wire segments are cut, the students stretch them over a pair of sawhorses and whack them with a hammer to form them into edged enclosures for the rocks.

11:30 The student working on the sloping board measures, levels, and clamps it, and cuts another half-inch off the end. A group is bolting the steel bench supports to the studs.

An older, suntanned gardener comes over and squints at the structure. "My sailor's eve tells me it's plumb." He wanders over to the young couple with the wheelbarrow, curious about why they're digging; they are new this year, and like all plots allotted to new gardeners, theirs was recently roto-tilled to a depth of eight inches. They tell him they're digging to a depth of a foot and a half. "We don't want any weeds or roots."

"Oh," he says, "I thought maybe you were burying a dog."

IV. Sunday afternoon

4:00 Three women, friends of the students, have shown up to see the project. Suddenly, for the first time all weekend, there is small talk on the site. "How's the book group going?" one of the men asks. "What are you reading?"

"A Thousand Splendid Suns," a woman answers, pulling it out of her bag. "But we haven't really started it."

They go on to talk about books, contractors, bowling, and restaurants. ("It's mainly tequila and sushi. But their rum bar is pretty good.")

A woman asks, "So, are you going to have a big unveiling? Break a bottle of champagne against it?"

"Yeah," laughs one of the men, "and the whole thing falls down."

4:24 It's cold and overcast in the garden, about to storm. The wood structure is finished. The students will build the

gabion walls next weekend. They're cleaning up the site, quiet as ever now that the women have gone (leaving behind a couple of doggie bags from a restaurant lunch). What have the students learned from this project?

"Time management."

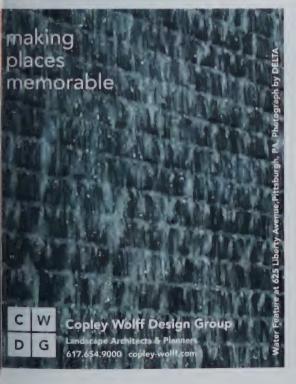
"How to make a cut."

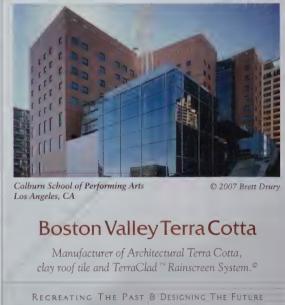
"I work in a big firm, and I always thought, 'Oh, the details will get figured out.' It's different when you're the one figuring them out. Now I realize the detail informs the design, rather than just the other way around."

"Even if you have construction experience, you don't always think about what you know when you're designing. This kind of project helps connect your construction experience with the design process."

"What you learn," says another student, "is all the stuff you can't learn by talking about."

Joan Wickersham's new book, The Suicide Index, will be published by Harcourt.





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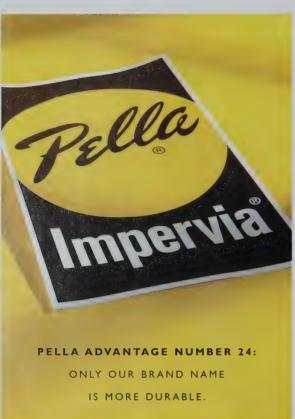
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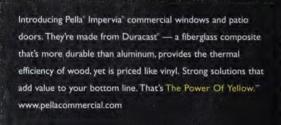
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John Messervy AIA is the director of capital and facility planning for Partners Healthcare, the umbrella organization of more than eight hospitals that in the Boston area includes Massachusetts General. Brigham and Women's, Newton-Wellesley, North Shore Medical Center, Faulkner, Spaulding, and McLean. He oversees more than a billion dollars' worth of projects currently in design and construction.

Elizabeth Padjen FAIA is the editor of ArchitectureBoston. Tim Pappas is CEO of Pappas Enterprises in Boston, a century-old firm that has developed six million square feet of space including, most recently, the Court Square Press Building and the Macallen Building.

Andrew St. John AIA is a principal of Smith + St. John in Essex, Massachusetts. which provides owner's representation and development management services. He previously served in client roles in corporate and real estate firms in Boston.



A Yawkey Center for Outpatient Care, Massachusetts General Hospital. Architects: Michael Fieldman Architects; Cambridge Seven; Ann Beha Architects; Perkins+Will; Steffian Bradley. Photo by Bruce T. Martin.

Elizabeth Padjen: All of you are what might be called serial clients — you're clients over and over again. And because you're professionals who are in the business of being a client, you bring a certain expertise to this discussion, more than the one-off client, such as most residential clients or even some institutions.

Most architects would like to have a better understanding of the culture of clients, something that you would probably agree a lot of architects don't necessarily get right. But both parties can probably benefit from a better understanding of how their relationship can ultimately lead to better work and greater innovation. Let's start by talking about the culture of clients. What do architects need to know?

Andrew St. John: It might sound trite, but it bears repeating: successful firms listen really well. They have expertise not only in the skills the project requires but also in people skills. They have learned to negotiate the often very difficult path of keeping their clients both satisfied and on track.

John Messervy: It's important to recognize that in many cases, the clients themselves don't know what they want. I think the ability of the architect to perform for the client is a function of how well the client performs as a client. The client must carry on a conversation with the architect throughout the duration of the project, so the final product represents a real collaboration.

And that can be a challenge when the client is a large organization. In a hospital, for example, there are often many diverse opinions about what the institution is trying to accomplish with any given project, especially in urban environments. The project must address not only the internal functional needs of the hospital, but also the urban design needs of the community. And the further you get away from the clinical-specific or research-specific functions that the architect is designing for, the less clear the clients often are about what they're trying to accomplish.

Tim Pappas: Starting off on the right foot or the wrong foot is a function of a decision the client makes at the very beginning, which is finding the firm that is right for the project — finding the right home for the project. But successful firms also bring certain skills — they've faced problems and come up with solutions and have a mechanism for working that makes the process successful for everyone. This implies good collaboration and responsiveness to the differences of opinion within a client organization about what the real goals of the project are.

Ron Kull: In some cases, the architect is doing a project with a client. In other cases, the architect is doing a project for a client. Listening is important, but it's also important to know when to lead the client. Sometimes clients really don't have the necessary expertise — and they may or may not recognize that. It boils down to understanding the variable nature of clients, and being able to produce information in a way that allows them to digest it and be able to make a decision. In the course of that process, you hope they will grow and become more sophisticated over time.

You can't set the process on cruise control and end up with a finished product that you're going to be happy with. You need to know what you want and you need to hire people who can see that vision through to a complete project.

Tim Pappas

John Messervy: And those of us who are managing or directing projects within client organizations face similar challenges in giving our own people the information they need and encouraging them to see the opportunities.

Ron Kull: That's quite true. I can think of the experience we had with an athletic director, whose initial response to our design program was, "Why do I want to spend my money on this?" We introduced him to the world of architecture, and by the end of the process he was a totally committed proponent of architecture and his building. Sometimes you see connections between people and ideas that you would never expect.

Elizabeth Padjen: Ron and Tim both have deliberately sought out architects who are known for pushing design in new, sometimes risky, directions. Although the buildings are different in function, scale, and context, I wonder if you shared similar motivations.

Ron Kull: At Cincinnati, the rationale was, first, to make a statement about transformation, and second, to match different designers to projects as a way to visually distinguish the approximately 16 different colleges within the decentralized system. Once architecture became a way to distinguish the college identities, it wasn't much of a leap for the colleges to also see it as a marketing element. Many of those colleges were able to take advantage of the design program for fund-raising purposes.

Tim Pappas: I'd say we definitely shared the desire to say something about transformation. We identified an underdeveloped area around the Broadway T Station in South



Tim Pappas.
Photo by Pat Greenhouse; © 2007
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Boston that had a lot of things going for it in terms of proximity to the city, public transportation, good view corridors, and good light. When you develop an edge condition and you want people to embrace it, you have to do something in order to make that trek worthwhile. For a buyer, it's obviously a riskier endeavor than spending money in the Back Bay or Beacon Hill. But there's enormous upside potential and terrific bang for the buck. We had a 10-year plan for creating a new subset of the South Boston community. It occurred to me early on that the only way to achieve that was to involve people who were visionaries, people who didn't mind working in edge conditions and who could embrace that concept and bring a lot of new thinking to the table.

At the end of the day, we are a for-profit venture, which means that we're driven toward differentiating ourselves from our competition in the marketplace, and being design-driven and using architects of note is an advantage. I suspect that's also similar to the Cincinnati experience. Boston is unlike New York and Chicago, where there's a lot of design one-upmanship. In Boston, the starchitects are conspicuously absent from all but the institutional projects.

Elizabeth Padjen: How did you find the kinds of designers you had in mind? Tim Pappas: For the Macallen

Building condos, we connected early on with Office dA. I was introduced through a friend who was a student of Office dA principal] Monica Ponce de Leon at Harvard. I met with Monica and Nader [Office dA principal Nader Tehranil just to sit down and talk about our respective philosophies on life and architecture and art and so on, and found that there was a lot of common ground. Because of the nature of our business, we don't do a competitive process per se. We don't have outside partners, so we don't have a fiduciary responsibility to maintain a formal competitive process. My responsibility is to find the best possible team for each project. Office dA led us to other designers for upcoming projects: Vincent James, from Minneapolis, and Burt Hill, where we are working with Tad Stahl and some designers who were previously at Office dA. Interestingly, while the design



John Messervy AIA.
Photo by Alex Budnitz.

The ability of the architect to perform for the client is a function of how well the client performs as a client. John Messervy AIA

teams change, we maintain the same list of consultants on every project—the structural engineer, mechanical engineer, civil engineer, environmental consultant, and the construction manager.

Elizabeth Padjen: It's easy to understand that universities and developers would embrace design as branding. At the other extreme, I would guess, are institutions like hospitals. I suspect few patients select a hospital based on its architectural branding.

John Messervy: That's an interesting question. I actually think there is an aspect of branding to what we do, but certainly not to the degree that a for-profit would pursue branding as a marketing strategy. Branding in a hospital environment more often manifests itself from the inside-out. How do we create spaces that are supportive of our patients? What do they say about our understanding of our patients? And how do those spaces and buildings adapt to rapidly changing technology? That's ultimately the hallmark of healthcare, certainly in the academic medical centers and acute-care hospitals. At Partners, we also recognize that we as institutions are residents of the city - Mass General has occupied the same block for 200 years, and Brigham and Women's for 150 years, and they'll sit there for another 200 and another 150 years. We recognize that we have responsibilities to the city. That's a change from the past, when hospitals turned their backs on the city and became fortresses. And so design is increasingly important to us, too, as a way of connecting back to our communities and making that message clear.

Elizabeth Padjen: How do you mesh the designer selection process with those goals?

John Messervy: Each project is a little different. With the Yawkey Center, the new 450,000-square-foot inpatient building that opened at MGH a couple of years ago, my feeling was that I wouldn't find within one healthcare firm the kind of urban design and city planning expertise that I needed to make that project successful. I eventually determined that there were five components to that project, and we selected architects that would be good matches to each piece. In the end, we hired one firm to do the urban design and shell and core, and other firms to do the interiors and the preservation work. It was a mess to manage, but it resulted, I think, in a successful building.

Tim Pappas: We employed a similar strategy at a smaller scale. We knew our buyers for Macallen would represent a broad demographic in terms of lifestyle and income. We hired Michael Blier of Landworks Studio to develop a landscape plan that would tie the project to the larger community and address the needs of the residents — storage, bike racks, stroller spaces, and outdoor space. He addressed that component and collaborated with Office dA on the architecture.

Andrew St. John: These are both examples of an increasingly common approach among "serial" clients: the client assembles the project team. The difference of course is that it used to be the architect who assembled the team — or most of it — a role that architects still have in many projects and for many other kinds of clients. But John and Tim are very sophisticated clients who have a lot of experience and know what they want. You need to know what to look for, where to look for it, and the kinds of questions to ask. It's not your common garden-variety client who goes out and assembles five different architects to build a building. And the common garden-variety client probably shouldn't even think of trying it.

Elizabeth Padien: Ron, in Cincinnati, did you assemble teams in that way? Did you also then pull in other consultants, or did each of the architects bring their own teams?

Ron Kull: I was responsible for team assembly and provided insight into which firms could probably handle the kinds of projects that we were undertaking. For example, when we were developing the campus center for this community of 30,000 students, we hired the landscape architect George Hargreaves to develop the master plan for what would be in effect a town center with a significant "sense of place." We brought in Thom Mayne, Charlie Gwathmey, and Buzz Yudell, knowing that their different design sensibilities would match the different character we wanted for each of the buildings. The architects each brought in their own team players in that scenario, and in many cases they were also working with people from the Cincinnati area, so there was some local understanding of the complexities that existed on campus, such as topographic, geotechnical, and infrastructure

issues. But the lead design firms had never worked together on a project of this nature — I felt like Charlton Heston riding the chariot, holding the reins of these horses together. But they themselves often said how much they enjoyed the experience. We all know all projects have their complexities, but in the end, you've got to have fun doing it. You have to build personal relationships with people and those relationships are what made the success of the project even more rewarding.

Andrew St. John: And that's the key to being a successful client. Your primary job is to put people together in teams appropriately, so that they mesh and they do the job right and do the job well. It's an art.

Ron Kull: It's an art that comes from experience. You make some mistakes early on, and suffer the consequences, and learn from them.

Elizabeth Padjen: What are some of the mistakes that you've made or that you've seen made?



Ron Kull FAIA (above right). Photo courtesy, GBBN Architects.

In some cases, the architect is doing a project with a client. In other cases, the architect is doing a project for a client. Listening is important, but it's also important to know when to lead the client. Ron Kull FAIA

Ron Kull: We once made the mistake of first hiring a nationally recognized architect and then seeking a relationship with a local architect. The local architect felt that the national architect was always

The key to being a successful client is to put people together in teams appropriately, so that they mesh and they do the job right and do the job well. *Andrew St. John AIA*



Andrew St. John AIA.
Photo by Alex Budnitz.

going to control the process while the local firm would be left holding the bag. It was a lot more like a shotgun marriage than a real dating process, and never produced a really workable bond.

After that first experience, we decided that maybe the best thing to do would be to start the other way around. We selected a local firm first through a conventional RFP process. Then we and the local firm each looked into three or four different types of partner firms that we thought would respond well to our particular program — a young firm, an established firm, one that was more traditional, one that was more contemporary. We compared our lists, together developed one short list, and then the local firm made all the contacts. We all visited the national firms so that there was an opportunity to test the chemistry of the relationship. When it came down to making decisions about who would come back for an interview, a good part of the discussion was based on the local firm's comfort with the various candidates. Placing the

responsibilities on the people who were going to be saddled with the partner made it very successful — they could really build relationships. Some of those relationships have extended beyond our projects, where the two firms have actually pursued projects in other locations because of the way the relationship clicked.

Tim Pappas: There aren't always limitless combinations of people who can work together, and it's difficult to create relationships under forced circumstances.

Elizabeth Padjen: Tim, you mentioned that you've been working with different architects but maintain the same consultant team from project to project. Do you ever see that forced-marriage syndrome between the architects and your consultants?

Tim Pappas: No, because the consultants and the architects that we're working with are all responsible for one another's being on the team. To some degree, we all came together through a network of referrals. And because they all knew each other, at least by reputation, and respected each other's work, once the architects came into the picture and met the engineers and other consultants, they said, "Obviously we don't want to change anything, because these are all great people." I think if we pulled in an architect from Europe or from somewhere completely out of this sphere of people, it could change. But for the time being, everyone seems to be pretty happy.

Part of the philosophy of maintaining the consultant team and pairing it with new designers is that the consultants are so important to a spec development project — everything must come in on time and on budget because the dollars and cents are really important and the margins are not what people expect that they are. There's a lot of performance and execution risk. So by not working with a new mechanical engineer on every single project, we learn together the things I like, the things that our customers like, the things that work for Boston.

John Messervy: Do you get the sense that the engineers are working for you rather than for the architects, since you're putting this team together?

Tim Pappas: Yes, I do. If we went to the architects for every new project and said, "Present us your team," there would be a higher likelihood that they would use their favorites, ones with whom they speak the same language, and those conversations might not always be in my presence. But I have this group of people who have been working together for me for six or seven years. I have a relationship with them now that transcends the business relationship, in a good way.

The things that kill you in the spec development world are the nuts-and-bolts things that the engineers are responsible for — the air-conditioning breaks down or the intercom system doesn't work or there's noise that transfers from floor to floor. The design obviously counts for a lot, and flexibility and innovation are very important. But the building has to work, people have to be comfortable, and they have to be happy with the finished product. So I feel that we're reducing our chances for problems by maintaining consistency.

John Messervy: Relationships with consultants can be awkward. Sometimes the architects feel that their relationship with the engineers has been undermined. Sometimes there's confusion about who is really working for whom. And at some point inside a large organization like a hospital, the facilities people who are actually going to run these buildings start telling the engineers what to do, which might not be what the architects are telling them to do.

Elizabeth Padjen: Do you also hire consultants separately?

John Messervy: Not usually. We more typically hire the architect and participate in the selection of the engineers.

Elizabeth Padjen: Who presumably are working directly for the

John Messervy: Right.

Tim Pappas: I think you have to structure it that way for liability and other reasons. You really want to have all these consultants underneath the architect. Even if you impose the team upon the architect, I think that's important.

Elizabeth Padjen: So how can you avoid ending up with a hornet's nest of confusion and conflict?

John Messervy: As a matter of course, at the end of each stage of design, there's an opportunity for our engineering folks and operations folks and maintenance folks to mark up the drawings; then we give them a presentation and review all their comments together. We've also conducted an external peer review on a couple of projects, where we have outside design firms and hospital planners come in for a two-day session. The design team makes a presentation about the project, usually at the middle-toend of schematic design, while there's still an opportunity to make changes. I'm a strong believer in peer review of everything that we do, because I think it adds tremendous value for the client. I've found the design architects to be remarkably amenable to the process, though not necessarily to all the comments. But we do it on all of our large projects.

Ron Kull: When you think about it, the design process should never really stop — it's a circular process. Each firm and each owner should have input from the people who are on the far end of the stick, so to speak — the people who will take care of the building. Maintenance people shouldn't feel afraid to say that a material or design didn't work and that next time it should be done another way. One of the great advantages of bringing them into the design process early is that they feel they have a stake in the project's future and that they have responsibility.

Andrew St. John: That's a really good point, because users, as consumers of architecture, are often confused with the client entity. And unless they are brought in during the design process, and are actually given a stake in some way, they will wind up as critics of things that were, if not inevitable, at least unavoidable. Unless they are part of the process and learn that architecture involves a series of compromises, they won't be your defender in the long run.

Ron Kull: In fact, they may sometimes work to make sure that the project doesn't succeed, just because they haven't been involved.

Elizabeth Padjen: It's easy to effect buy-in in a corporate environment where you can invite staff to participate. But in a hospital situation, the patients aren't necessarily buying in as stakeholders in the process, just as students aren't necessarily direct stakeholders in a university process. Are clients who are working in those sectors finding ways to enfranchise those user groups? Who represents them?



A Tangeman University Center, University of Cincinnati. Architects: Gwathmey Siegel & Associates; GBBN Architects. Photo by Brad Feinknopf.

John Messervy: We convene focus groups of patients around various sets of issues — I continue to find it remarkable that patients who are in the middle of treatment for some kind of devastating illness will volunteer to participate in a focus group about some aspect of it. They have an opinion, and know things can be better.

Elizabeth Padjen: And then you have clients like Tim, whose endusers are unknown buyers. It puts him in the position of a sort of surrogate user because he has to stand in for them and their interests as well as his own.

Tim Pappas: Everyone's stayed at a good hotel and a horrible hotel. Everyone has walked into a breathtaking condo and one they couldn't get out of fast enough. In some kinds of projects you can draw on your experience. But focus groups are important. Understanding the target audience is vital. Whenever I go to a new city I always pretend I'm a potential buyer and visit other projects. I see and learn things that I take back to discussions with our architects. It's part of the collaboration. You can't set the process on cruise control and end up with a finished product that you're going to be happy with. You need to know what you want and you need to hire people who can see that vision through to a complete project. Any one of you could have hired Office dA to do the Macallen project, but I don't think it would look the same. The building came out of our collaboration. All of the ideas that I imposed upon them and all of the ideas that they imposed upon me formed the finished product.

Andrew St. John: It's interesting to observe the differences among these client types. Tim, your users ostensibly spend a fair amount of time looking around and deciding on what they want, and you have to please them with amenities and good design.

John, your ultimate users often don't have a choice in what they're getting, because of their insurance, their proximity at the time of a medical emergency, or where their doctor works. And in universities, students frequently do make snap judgments based on architecture and the quality of the environment.

John Messervy: Patients are not going to choose the hospital based on the architecture, but certainly, if you or someone you're with is sick, your stress level can be high. Through good design, way-finding, and amenities, for example, we can relieve some of that stress. In that sense, there's a hospitality aspect to hospitals, which we're just beginning to explore.

Ron Kull: Students today are extremely knowledgeable shoppers; they grew up in the malls. They may not have had any money to spend, but by window-shopping they learned what they want in the way of amenities and lifestyle. Once they know that a campus has a particular academic program they're interested in, over 60 percent of prospective students make the go/no-go decision within the first 15 minutes after they've set foot on campus. It is primarily a gut reaction to scale, texture, even a smiling face.

Tim Pappas: Homebuyers in Boston used to be like that. A few years ago, our sales velocity was ridiculous. We were selling 15 or 20 units on a Sunday. People were making purchases just based on price and the sense that they'd lose out if they didn't move fast. Now there's all kinds of product on the market. And the buyers are not just kicking the tires. They're spending time experiencing the unit and doing their research. Design and quality are important.

Elizabeth Padjen: I am struck by the fact that in talking about the architects you hire, you have all focused on the nature of the relationships. You haven't said you look for the firms who are considered experts in your fields. It's especially interesting because we have recently seen the phenomenon of practitioners who pursue certification for their expertise in certain building types and then market that certification as a sort of seal of approval. Architects who follow the established model of the general practitioner counter this by arguing that they bring fresh thinking. How would you or your colleagues respond to that?

John Messervy: I don't pay any attention to the various letters after people's names, although I do know there's been a big push in the last few years for people who practice in healthcare architecture to go through a certification process. Some of the people I've worked with have gone through that certification; they presumably have the same set of experience and qualifications before and after. I don't think the certification process in itself is a teaching process—it establishes a benchmark of a basic level of knowledge. But that's not the way that I've ever selected my architects. I can't speak for my peers because I do know that that becomes a threshold issue for some clients.

Andrew St. John: There's no doubt that an architect who has done a certain amount of work in a given project type flattens the learning curve a bit, and there are times when that might be

helpful. But one of the wonderful things about an architectural education is that you learn how to deal with new ideas and information, and you are taught the process of how to work through something that you didn't know how to do before and through that process produce something that is successful. I suspect every one of us has hired an architect who had no experience in a particular building type and produced a gem. By the same token, I suspect we've all seen cases of designers with credentials a mile long in a given building type who simply produce the same boring buildings over and over again.

Tim Pappas: I also agree that a lot of the labels and letters after a name can be somewhat meaningless. The really important thing is to discover, when you look at a designer's portfolio, that they have done something that either intrigues you or leads you to believe that they understand a collaborative design process. I think it's really about understanding who you're working with.

v Campus Recreation Center, University of Cincinnati.
Architects: Morphosis; KZF Design. Photo by Andrew Higley/UC.



Dangerous Liaisons

tales from the trenches

by Peter Madsen FAIA

War stories are the stuff of cocktail-party chatter, but they also serve a purpose: most of us learn from bad experiences. You can rack up continuing-ed credits listening to management consultants drone on about "best practices," but chances are, you'll be more likely to remember the story behind a friend's disastrous lawsuit.

In an effort to understand what can go wrong in architect-client relationships, I recently polled a number of friends, offering anonymity in exchange for the stories that still loom largest in their experience. I anticipated some humor but was surprised to find that the topic almost universally prompts sullen if not mournful memories. Even years later, it seems that a lot of people still grieve for failed relationships and lost opportunities. These are their stories...

The most common response by far was some variation of the theme Great Expectations (or, Champagne Taste on a Beer Budget):

- One architect sold his client on a sexy glass stair tower that
 ultimately didn't fit the project budget. The sexy stair was
 eventually built partially funded by the architect and with
 a compromised design but the client felt ill-served.
- Another architect was hired to develop a high-quality design, then was fired and replaced by someone who rendered a cheap knock-off of the original architect's design.
- One client had sold a large house and wanted to reinvest his profit in a small house. When it became clear that he had no interest in the design of the new house and cared only about preserving his cost basis, the relationship took a dive. The client eventually hired another architect.

Another common theme was Bait and Switch:

- A delightful client team hired the architect. They then turned the project over to a project manager (a/k/a the hatchetman), who stripped all the quality out of the project.
- Another client had no intention of paying, but figured (correctly) that he could get a few months worth of work before being found out.
- And maybe the most familiar story: The client expanded the scope of the project without recognizing the need to adjust fees accordingly. The outcome in this case was more painful because the client's actions were upheld in mediation.

Then there was Right Person, Wrong Job:

- Many residential architects realize too late that a house commission is intended as a salve on a wounded marriage.
 One husband argued so much with the architect, contractor, and his wife that she fled to her parents, thus ending the project (and the marriage).
- Another client had designs on the architect but, as eventually became clear, no interest in his work.

Finally, perhaps the most common theme of all, **Failure to Communicate**:

- One architect left an interview thinking she had won the commission and started the project. She later learned that the client was just shopping and awarded the commission to someone else.
- Another relied on discussions with a client and the client responses to specific questions to develop a design, only to discover later that the "real" client was never in the room and that everything was subject to change.

Together, these stories underscore the importance of two keys to successful architect-client relationships. The first is to know one another: test the chemistry of the relationship. The other, even more important, is the value of clear communications, which often means asking the right questions. It's always more entertaining to hear a war story than to tell one.

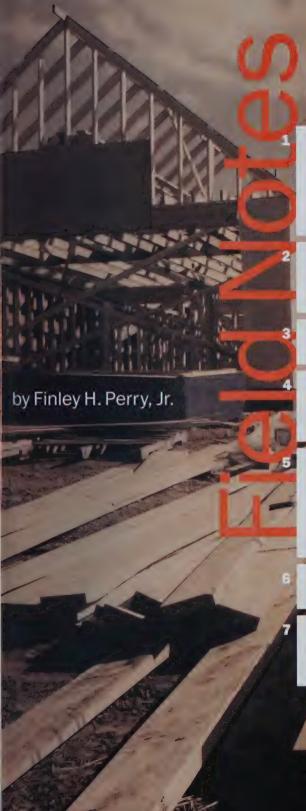
Peter Madsen FAIA is the managing director of Edo Essex Properties in Boston.

IF YOUR HOME IS YOUR CASTLE, SHOULDN'T IT HAVE A GRAND ENTRANCE?









OBSERVATIONS ON THE HABITAT AND BEHAVIOR OF RESIDENTIAL CLIENTS

Clients know what they know; they less often know what they don't know. They do know what they think they ought to know. All of this has architects and builders often being pushed in suboptimal directions. The architects and builders who get to build the best projects tend to be the best teachers, story-tellers, salespeople, and psychologists. The architect or builder without these skills is a less complete professional.

Clients who focus on cost too soon can hamstring design in favor of budget control before design is fully explored. Multiple design iterations are much cheaper than re-doing construction (or the disappointment of a poorly developed program).

Clients will often sacrifice design before cutting back on program — see 1 and 2.

The State of the S

Clients live in houses, so they often feel intuitively capable to work out all the design and construction issues encountered in residential work. They are often surprised at the complexities they find — see 1.

Clients can be slow to trust their own instincts. They can be influenced by the wrong forces:

- the opinions of friends
- fear of the unknown
- · discomfort with communicating directly
- inability to talk comfortably about money (especially when it's their own)

Architects and builders who understand 5 can be very helpful to both clients and themselves.

The best clients are self-assured, self-aware, know what they like, and like to explore new things to like. They know how to manage, and they respect what others can do better than they can.

Finley H. Perry, Jr. is the president of F.H. Perry, Builder in Hopkinton, Massachusetts.

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SHOWROOMS IN SOMERSET, SOUTHBORO, PEMBROKE, AND WOBURN, MA





The **Innovative** Client

The Peabody Trust

A chic glass-box housing complex, a carbon-neutral development, and a demountable, re-configurable, modular housing prototype for temporary workers: are these the imaginings of a hip, 20-something designer? Not quite. These projects are real and comprise the newest chapters of the Peabody Trust's development portfolio, a 150-year-old, nonprofit developer and community-building organization based in London. Founded in 1862 by Massachusetts native and philanthropist George Peabody, the Trust works to curb poverty and improve communities in greater London by developing housing and community programs.

One recent focus of the Trust is housing for "key workers"—such as teachers, healthcare workers, police, and firefighters—which will ensure that those who serve a community can afford to live there. The Trust has a knack for tackling projects on multiple fronts, balancing the social, technical, and environmental impacts of its projects and pushing for innovative design solutions that benefit both the tenants of its properties and the communities that contain them. In 2004, the Trust was recognized by the Royal Institute of British Architects with a "Client of the Year" award, which noted the organization's "pioneering work in off-site construction [and] the realization of truly sustainable housing," in reference to its Raines Court project.

The Trust's most internationally recognized project is BedZED, or Beddington Zero-Energy Development, in the Borough of Sutton. Completed in 2002, the 82-home, mixed-use site uses a range of technologies and environmental strategies to maintain its carbon-neutral footprint. Thermal-mass walls and passive solar orientation reduce or eliminate the need for mechanical heating and cooling. Tree-pruning waste helps to fuel a combined heat and power plant, which supplies the site with hot water and electricity.

One of the Trust's most interesting experiments in modular construction is Barons Place. Envisioned to house some of the city's temporary health workers, the project uses modular technology to achieve a demountable, reconfigurable housing development, which can be rapidly disassembled and redeployed with the ebb and flow of land values and employment economies. Barons Place is a compact apartment complex of one and three-bedroom rental units and was completed in just 14 weeks; the pre-finished, steel-frame boxes were placed in less than two days.

While the term "temporary worker housing" in the US suggests rural, migrant-worker housing, in the UK, it describes a program for housing key workers who are temporarily assigned to the city. Rarely has the concept of temporary, mobile housing been tested at the level of design requisite for making it successful in urban environments.

The Peabody Trust's work in modular development is serving as a benchmark for other housing associations (nonprofit developers) in London, says architect Andrew Matthews, whose firm, Proctor and Matthews Architects, designed Barons Place. As nonprofits seek new ways of reducing construction time and



costs without sacrificing the quality of the development, he notes, Trust projects have suggested new design approaches and methodologies.

The Trust is a sophisticated provider of homes that "foster social and economic regeneration" through its commitment to sustainability, innovation, and respect for the people it serves. With its ability to identify and solve social, technical, and environmental development issues, the Peabody Trust is raising standards for affordable housing throughout London.

Lisa Ann Pasquale is a graduate student at the Architectural Association School of Architecture in London.



David Clem, Lyme Properties

David Clem may have grown up in Texas, but Cambridge is where his heart is. He moved there in 1971 to attend MIT's urban studies and planning school, got interested in community development, was elected to the city council at age 24, and in later years became a key player in the transformation of vacant manufacturing sites, including One Kendall Square. When in 1998 his firm, Lyme Properties, purchased a contaminated, 10-acre set of parking lots that was formerly home to a coal-gas manufacturing plant on Third Street in Kendall Square, he felt strongly that the area deserved top-quality architecture and urban design.

The challenge was to take a place of chain-link fences and parking lots, at the foot of the Longfellow Bridge and across from the Red Line MBTA station, and make it lively, useful, and interesting, while at the same time accommodating 1.3 million square feet of new office, commercial, and life-sciences laboratory space. So Clem decided to hold a series of design competitions for the multiple buildings and landscape opportunities at the site, today known simply as Kendall Square and home to the famously green, platinum LEED-rated Genzyme headquarters. The competitions, similar to those used in the Canary Wharf

 $redevel opment\ in\ London, would\ stir\ creativity\ and\ innovation,$ Clembelieved.

"Our canvas was clean," Clem said of what might be described as the Cambridge version of Boston's Fan Pier. "And I was intent on doing something in Cambridge that was not red brick with punched windows."

The first step was convincing Cambridge officials to let Lyme apply its own design-review standards instead of the city's. Then Clem hired Ken Greenberg of Toronto-based Urban Strategies to do the master plan. With help from colleague Dan Winny AIA, the Lyme team winnowed firms to a handful of finalists for each building, and paid a modest stipend and travel expenses to have them make presentations.

Several things happened, Clem said. Firms came calling from around the world, and were surprised and grateful that a developer was interested in urban design. The winners outdid themselves because their peers were working on the next site over. "It was something like assembling an all-star team of players. They all wanted to do their best," Clem said. And some candidates flagged things the development team hadn't thought about.

"If we were working in a vacuum, we couldn't achieve this. The competition made us a better developer and made us understand our site."

Independent juries were selected for each building, though Lyme stayed active in the process. This was helpful when a jury selected Steven Ehrlich Architects, who had not designed a lab before, for 675 West Kendall Street, home to Vertex Pharmaceuticals. Ehrlich was matched with local firm Symmes, Maini & McKee. "We made sure it was a design team that meshed," Clem said.

The Lyme team chose Anshen + Allen (of San Francisco) for 650 East Kendall Street (now under construction) and Behnisch, Behnisch & Partner (Germany and LA) for 500 Kendall Street (the Genzyme headquarters). Other firms tapped were Childs Bertman Tseckares (Boston) for 100 Kendall Street (housing and a hotel), Architects Alliance (Toronto) for 450 Kendall Street (housing), and Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates (New York/Cambridge) for the landscape features, including a skating rink, plaza, and park that is home to concerts and a farmer's market, and gardens beside the Broad Canal. "I'm a convert to the design-competition approach. But the competition doesn't mean anything unless you implement it and build it," Clem said.

"I think great architecture requires a great client, someone who is willing to pay more for quality and stick with it." The rise of out-of-state real estate investment trusts and changes in development financing, he said, means that some prominent projects may not be as driven by a sense of civic responsibility. "I see that sensitivity being lost."

Clem won't be running a new competition anytime soon, however. Lyme Properties has completed and sold its Kendall Square properties, with the exception of 585 Kendall Street (the Constellation Center, Glenn KnicKrehm's performing-arts venue, designed by The Stubbins Associates [now KlingStubbins]). Clem himself is taking a break from the development business for the foreseeable future. "I'm just taking a breather," he said, "and contemplating the next step."

Anthony Flint is a Boston-based writer and director of public affairs at the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy, a think-tank in Cambridge, Massachusetts.



General Services Administration

The mantra that government can learn from the private sector is so pervasive that it almost seems shocking to realize that government can itself serve as a model of innovation. And yet the US General Services Administration (GSA) — the agency charged with building and operating federal facilities — has a recent history of doing just that.

In the early 1990s, the GSA took a hard look at the state of its buildings and initiated what has been arguably one of the most successful building programs in the history of the federal government. The Design Excellence program, which is operated under the aegis of the GSA's Public Buildings Service, was conceived and championed for many years by Chief Architect Ed Feiner FAIA and is now headed by Les Shepheard. This program has brought cutting-edge design by leading practitioners into all manner of government buildings, producing a portfolio that has yielded some of the finest work in the country of our time.

This mandate for quality has also instilled an ethos of innovation into the way in which the GSA, the nation's largest landlord, addresses the upkeep and renewal of its existing inventory. Within the Chief Architect's office, the Center for Historic Buildings has undertaken a program of research and public outreach that has produced a body of literature on the history and significance of its buildings. These volumes, which cover the inventory of government buildings from the birth of the republic through the formation of the GSA in 1949 down to the present, help to place these buildings in historical perspective and provide a useful reference when formulating strategies for their renewal.

In particular, the GSA has been an astute and innovative proponent of dealing sensitively with the legacy of mid-century Modernism. Recognizing that a substantial number of the many buildings erected between the late 1950s and early 1970s are in need not only of rehabilitation but also of aesthetic makeovers in order to be better appreciated by their users, the GSA has instituted a First Impressions program as part of Design Excellence. This initiative encourages designers to upgrade the landscapes, entrance areas, and general public appearance of these structures in a manner that carefully layers contemporary improvements over the usually spare but clean character of the originals, while providing discreet but essential security and environmental improvements. The Center for Historic Buildings has given this process and its design implications a great deal of thought, and has done considerable service to the design community in articulating a vision for the vast legacy of midcentury Modernism.

GSA projects are formulated, solicited, and administered through each of the agency's 11 regional offices, with each region having its own head architect and regional historical architect. GSA projects employ a peer-review system that both assists in the selection of architecture and engineering teams for Design Excellence projects and participates in the process of reviewing projects as they proceed through design and construction. This has become a healthy model, using the private sector to provide cooperative expertise in the service of improving a government product. By providing insights from leading design professionals from around the country, it has also enabled an increased focus on quality in both designer selection and ongoing design review processes.

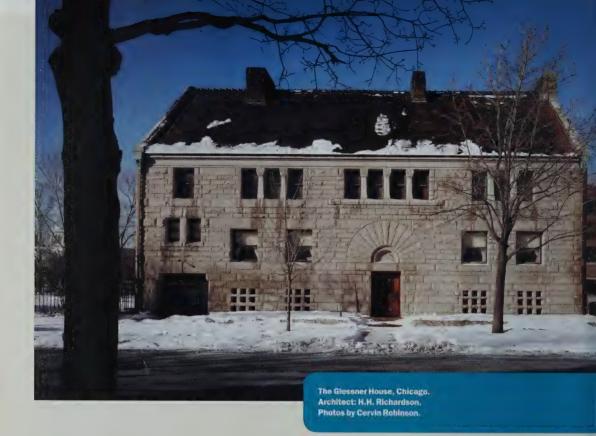
Government projects are usually long on process and politics, and interminable in gestation, and even the GSA is no exception in this area. It has, however, through its commitment to understand, conserve, and improve its properties, set an architectural standard that has enabled it to engage and make use of some of the best talent this country has to offer. Let us only hope that the GSA has built itself an edifice that can withstand the ever-shifting winds of politics, and that it will continue to uphold a high standard for federal architecture.

David N. Fixler AIA, LEED AP is a principal of Einhorn Yaffee Prescott in Boston and the president of DOCOMOMO-US/



ORIGINAL: Richard Bolling Federal Building, Kansas City, Missouri. Architects: Voskamp and Slezak; Radotinsky, Meyn and Deardorff; Everett and Keleti; HNTB. Completed: 1965. Photo courtesy, BNIM Architects.





The Glessners

H.H. Richardson's domestic clients ranged from the imposed upon to the defiant. John and Frances Glessner stand somewhere in-between. They were well informed, articulate in their wants, firm in their convictions, and they recognized the ability of their carefully chosen architect to give distinctive shape to their desires while they did not swallow whole all of his specifications. The result was a collaboration that produced the world-famous house at 18th Street and Prairie Avenue on Chicago's Southside, designed in 1885 and occupied in 1887.

John was an executive in a farm-implement company and eventually became a vice-president of International Harvester. He was a civic activist who served on the board of the Art Institute of Chicago and other cultural institutions. Frances, a cousin of the sculptor J.Q.A. Ward as well as an accomplished pianist and craftsperson, took an active part in the cultural life of the city as a member of the Society of Decorative Arts and other social and educational organizations.

Already sophisticated participants in the world of the visual arts, the Glessners, like many successful clients, did their homework. When the couple decided to move to Prairie Avenue, the most elite address in the city, they proceeded under the guidance of Isaac Scott (a local Aesthetic Movement architect and furniture designer who had worked for them), collected and read books by the latest tastemakers (including Viollet-le-Duc, Clarence Cook, Charles Eastlake, and John Ruskin), and, thus prepared, traveled to New York to interview leading architects (among them Stanford White, Robert Robertson, and William Potter). Potter produced unsatisfactory drawings for their house before the Glessners got up enough nerve to approach Richardson, then at the crest of his meteoric (and soon to be sadly truncated) career. Potter faded quickly as Richardson's "artistic" concept for an "ideal house" merged with that of the Glessners this despite the fact that neither John nor Frances, "plain and substantial" Midwesterners, found the architect's super-sized



bulk, flamboyant dress, or gustatory habits to their liking.

The site was at the northern end of a row of houses facing Prairie Avenue. The couple outlined their spatial needs but demanded that the architect provide the layout that resulted in a private area to the left of the Prairie Avenue entrance and, to the right, a flow of rooms around the corner that included the hall, library, parlor, and dining room served by pantry and kitchen. The Glessners were admirers of the English Arts and Crafts Movement; Richardson and his associates provided interiors based upon the architect's own proto-Arts and Crafts inclination. To shut out the city and bring warming sunlight into what was to be a winter residence (the Glessners summered in New Hampshire), Richardson proposed an L-shaped plan backed up against the intersection with a nearly windowless cliff of stone rising from the sidewalk to the north, and a courtyard overlooked by large windows facing south. The neighbors howled; the Glessners smiled: historians have cheered.

The Glessners visited the architect in his studio in Brookline. Massachusetts during the design process. There he — like Frank Lloyd Wright at Taliesin later — could work his magic within his own lair. They recognized a deep affinity between what they wanted and what Richardson had in his living arrangement. He showed them his work, he wined and dined them at The Country Club, and he sent them off with not one but two photographs of himself, the original American "starchitect." Yet, as appreciative as they were, they remained uncowered by his aura. We now know that after his death the Glessners themselves changed Richardson's specification of Georgia pink marble for the exterior walls to the present Massachusetts granite. In a sense, they made the house more Richardsonian.

James F. O'Gorman is the Grace Slack McNeil Professor Emeritus at Wellesley College. This essay is based upon the published scholarship of Mary Alice Molloy and Elaine Harrington.

Robert Kuehn

Every architect dreams of having a client like Bob Kuehn. When you did a job with Bob, you felt like you hit the sweet spot of client/designer relationships. How do I know this? I am not an architect. Nor was Bob ever my client. But I knew him for a very long time—back to the days of his first firm, Housing Economics, in the late '60s. And I knew him in many different roles—developer, president of the Citizens' Housing and Planning Association (CHAPA), passionate advocate for much of what is best about cities, innovator of public policy, and a man I was very proud to call my friend.

But mostly, I know he was a great client because of the buildings he created. From the intricate older buildings, such as the Baker Chocolate Factory, that were already wonderful structures before he gave them new life as housing; to the mundane structures that he turned into handsome and important parts of the city, such as the parking garage on Cambridge Street; to the marvelously contextual new structures he brought into being on a piece of forest land in Lincoln, Bob was a developer who truly collaborated with his architects. He cared deeply about the architecture of the homes he was creating. He cared about how the apartments would look and function for the people who would live in them, he cared about how the buildings would add to the street that they animated, and he even cared about how the architects would feel about the buildings they had designed.

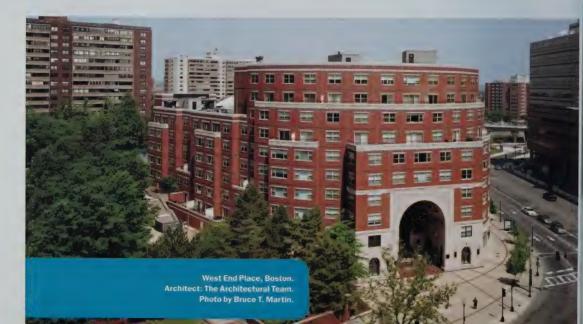
There are developers who take full control of the design of their buildings, allowing items like cost, profit, particular features, or political expediency to control appearance. There are developers who don't care about design at all — asking architects for nothing more than a set of drawings that will get a permit, or simply picking a design out of a book. Bob was neither of these. His eye for design was discerning, his ability to juggle the unwieldy elements of a successful development was legendary, and his

passion for historical preservation, affordable housing, and environmental issues led, I'm certain, to many long and involved discussions over some yellow trace and some marked-up preliminaries. But I feel confident they were the kinds of dialogues that every great architect loves to have. They were engagements: two professionals in pursuit of a project of excellence, each respecting the skill and special insights of the other, each willing to explore new options, each willing to truly listen, and each sharing that excitement of finding a new way to solve a tough problem that would ultimately please both — and create another rich element of the urban environment he loved so much.

Bob worked with many different architects. And all his buildings were different — for just the right reasons. Many of them grew out of buildings with long and interesting histories — like the Kennedy Biscuit Factory, home of the Fig Newton, or the Fenway Studios. Or West End Place, the last piece of the West End redevelopment, where Bob righted some of the wrongs of the '60s and took up residence himself. Bob selected the architects he thought could work with the idiosyncratic elements of each project and who would be fully engaged partners on the issues he knew would emerge. Each project was unique — a truism that every architect understands clearly, but many developers just don't get. Bob was, indeed, a very unusual client.

We lost one of our giants when Bob died in 2006, far too early. The good news is that he left us so many buildings as testimonies to what great collaborations between architects and their clients can produce.

James G. Stockard, Jr., is the curator of the Loeb Fellowship at the Harvard Graduate School of Design, where he also teaches courses in housing and neighborhood development.



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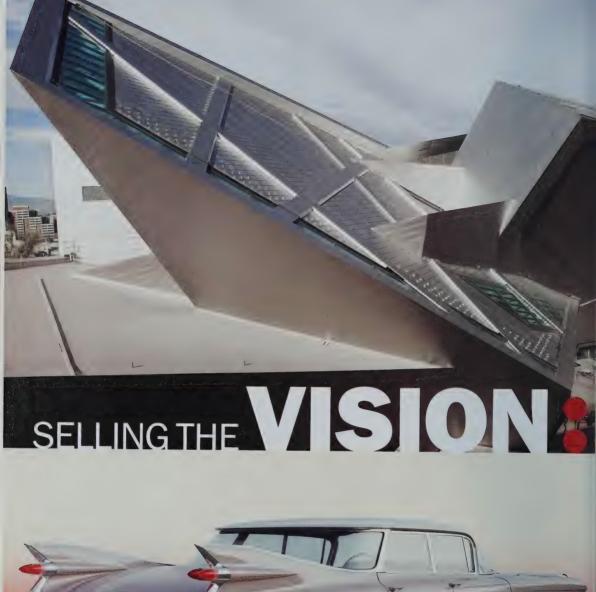
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by James Hadley AIA

< Above: Frederic C. Hamilton Building, Denver Art Museum.
Architect: Studio Daniel Libeskind with Davis Partnership Architects.
Photo by Kevin Hester © Denver Art Museum.
Below: 1959 Cadillac Series 62. Image by © Car Culture/Corbis.

When Clients Become Customers

What is going on in architecture lately? Like Texas chili chefs in the summertime, high-profile firms are whipping up new buildings, hoping to bring home the title of "hottest new design." Every new image obliterates the last. The press is salivating, the public is interested — are we a step away from one-, two- and three-alarm building ratings?

To see parallels with earlier examples of this kind of aggressive styling competition, look back at American automobiles from the late 1950s though the 1970s. Starting in 1957, when designer Virgil Exner restyled the Chrysler line (Suddenly it's 1960 was Chrysler's slogan that year), American industry indulged in what was said to be "the most outrageous automobile extravagance in history." New silhouette, chrome, fins: it's all there in Daniel Libeskind's Denver Art Museum just as it was in the "futuramic" American cars of the '50s, '60s and '70s — visionary styling, rising emotions and, in the case of the cars, plenty of sales. Could it be that building styling is doing the same? Are all the recent competing visions of the architectural future being used to sell design services?

When Philip Johnson said that the first principle of architecture is "get the job," he was being honest, and he was good at getting the job. He sensed early on that by being (or posing as, depending upon your view) a "visionary," by jumping into the

latest trend with enthusiasm, he would be where successful modern architects had always been — at the avant-garde. In a technologically evolving world, this is a strategy that has gained increasing currency.

Like Henry Ford, early Modernist architects claimed a moral vision: both were interested in meeting the demands of a growing and changing society with new machine-age techniques, thereby creating a better life for all members of society. Here is Dutch architect J.J.P. Oud in an early issue of *De Stijl*:

Complete reorganization of the building industry in the largest sense, through productive use of all the possibilities of modern techniques and industrial development, is urgently needed. Building, economically and fast, but not with less dignity, is the demand of our time.

Oud's sense of the new Europe was matched with visuals — the drawings of his contemporaries, Le Corbusier, Antonio Sant'Elia, Erich Mendelsohn and others, whose simple, elegant designs were expressed by machine-age lines and none of the accumulated debris of traditional European architecture. When Oud finally sold his vision of the future to municipal clients, he made good on

We are seeing the equivalent of the perfect storm that devastated the late 20th-century automobile giants now forming in the architectural world.

his promises by using glass, metal, plus lots of clean, white stucco walls. (Oud's designs connoted machine-made efficiency, although we know they were only slightly so.) De Stijl, and later Le Corbusier's magazine L'Esprit Nouveau, promoted an insiders' vision of the new machine-age Europe, all in service of selling that vision. Later CIAM (Congrès International d'Architecture Moderne) and Team Ten kept up the tradition by actively promoting futuristic imagery. In order to sell Modernism in the face of what was always thought to be an entrenched bourgeois traditionalism, it was necessary to make the new appealing, or at least inevitable. So Modernists have consistently positioned themselves as guardians of the vision, as seers. Among the early Modernists, at least, selling the vision was consistent with a sincere belief in the moral righteousness of their ideology.

An honest critic of the design professions will ask whether what is sold as visionary is always worthy of the term. At what point does the nobility of the effort to improve become subsumed by the imagery of improvement? When do we start fooling ourselves? In the American auto industry, the leaders discovered early on that "new" had some limits as a sales tool — that technological improvements are incremental, often invisible, and — in the case of, say, an improved brake pad - sometimes not enough to convey the romance of the new. Stylists were brought in to provide imagery that would say "new" to a prospective buyer. Eventually the stylists became the main engine for sales within the industry, bringing on the chrome and tailfin era of the '50s, '60s, and '70s, a period when the "look" (and horsepower) became the focus of the industry's efforts. Meanwhile, the public was moving in other directions. The customer was becoming more sophisticated. Ralph Nader published Unsafe at Any Speed in 1965; in 1973, the gasoline crisis forced a major rethinking of the entire notion of auto transportation. The Clean Air Act and increased consumer desire for utility (moving kids, commuting) finished the job. The Europeans and Japanese were quicker than the Americans to recognize the changes, and today Toyota is the world's largest seller of automobiles, replacing GM in that position in 2007.

Is contemporary architecture — at a time when style is selling buildings as never before — in the midst of a similarly radical transition? We need to know whether the competition for compelling visions has overwhelmed efforts at real improvement in function and in liveability. How are some of these "branded" buildings performing (as opposed to selling)? Not always so well, if you believe the reviews, especially of art museums. And of course costs and the amount of energy used to accomplish complicated and attention-grabbing designs are not concerns for visionaries.

More evidence that we could be in a time of transition comes from the architectural lingua franca. By tradition, architects refer to the people who pay them as "clients" — a term that connotes service, duty, obligation, and fiduciary responsibility. But in fact the language of architecture is now the language of commercepractitioners speak of buying services, marketing, branding,

selling. Predictably, the people who pay them now tend to view service as a commodity, and design as a product. At least one school of architecture includes a marketing course in the curriculum. Thus the client, despite the archaic name, has by now become the customer.

What happens when this customer/client has an epiphany similar to the car buyer's of the 1970s? My guess is that this will be brought on by economies directed at controlling global warming. When this happens, which architecture firms will qualify as the Toyotas of the profession?

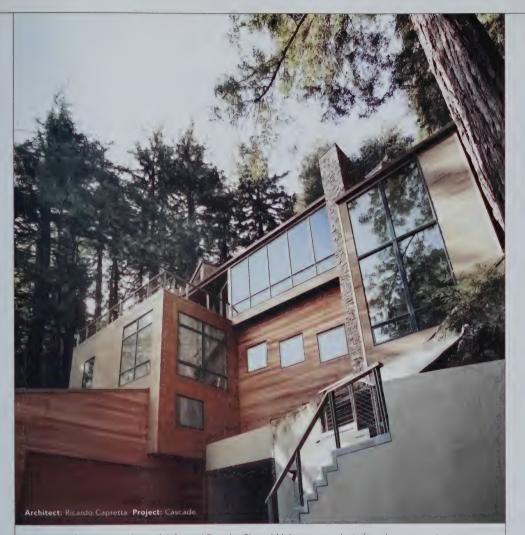
I look for firms where new buildings actually incorporate improvements, like the one founded and run by Lord Norman Foster. In works such as the Commerzbank in Frankfurt and St. Mary Axe ("the Gherkin") in London, the enhancement of the day-to-day lives of the building occupants is a main focus, and the design of the building form is an integral part of achieving the goal. The Commerzbank was finished way back in 1997, but includes most of the hallmarks of advanced green design. The reason that is often given for the emphasis on quality of life in this building and St. Mary Axe is that the firms that commissioned the works — i.e., the clients — are also the users of the building. Sound familiar? It makes perfect sense to me in the context of the history of auto design. I believe we are seeing the equivalent of the perfect storm that devastated the late 20th-century automobile giants now forming in the architectural world.

That sounds dire, but it actually isn't bad news. Many in the profession are waking to the changing attitudes in the world around them and starting to recognize that the people who hire them may want comfort and safety more than image, efficiency more than style. (That is, they still want to be treated as clients and users rather than purchasers and customers.) Forwardthinking professional groups have committees that meet regularly to discuss topics such as indoor air quality, building performance, and energy conservation — all subjects that address demands from clients ranging from homeowners to the most sophisticated developers.

How the story plays out should be fascinating. Buildings with titanium fins continue to emerge and to deny comfort to their occupants - enabled by customer/clients who have been taught to see buildings as branding opportunities. But now that architects (or at least the "starchitects") have morphed into something closer to car designers, producing objects that prioritize the aesthetic of progress, other professionals have the chance to step into the void and meet the real needs of real people. The novelist Milan Kundera, in his latest book of criticism, entitled The Curtain, speaks disparagingly of the culture of perpetual progress: "...today, the only modernism worthy of the name is antimodern modernism." Perhaps the future isn't all it's cracked up to be.

James Hadley AIA is a principal of Hadley Crow Studio in Orleans. Massachusetts.

For related reading, see: The Taylorized Beauty of the Mechanical by Mauro F. Guillen; Auto Opium: A Social History of American Automobile Design by David Gartman; and Privacy and Publicity: Modern Architecture as Mass Media by Beatriz Colomina.



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Buy time

Architects are typically good at crossing disciplines. Given the time (and the license) most architects could probably perform many of their consultants' tasks with reasonable competence. But time is a limiting factor, and consultants spend a lot of time thinking about their discipline. Not only are they likely to be knowledgeable

interviews with key personnel; an analysis of the firm's competitors; and a review of the firm's visual work. We ask fundamental questions such as where they are and where they want to go."

A less formal — but no less effective — approach to problem definition is that of Peter Vanderwarker, an architectural photographer. Vanderwarker often visits a

Turning the Tables: the Architect as Client

Owners aren't the only clients in the building process.

"I only want an idea."

It's the phrase, often uttered by clients, that makes an architect cringe (followed closely by "My daughter, the architecture student, suggested"). Clients, architects will quickly tell you, just don't understand.

But what is it like when the tables are turned? Few architects ponder their own role as client to the teams of creative professionals that they hire as consultants: landscape architects, engineers, interior designers, photographers, graphic designers, lighting designers. Is it a given that the architect is going to be the collaborative, supportive, respectful, informed, encouraging, and generous partner that he or she would want to have as a client? Or do architects find themselves uttering the same dreaded phrase?

A recent informal survey of creative professionals who have architects as clients yielded a perhaps unsurprising consensus: architects in fact are generally good clients. Interestingly, the consultants often also described their architect-clients as "good people," noting that they have a rigorous approach to problem-solving, are visually sophisticated, have high standards, work hard, have a broad-based knowledge of culture, and generally like collaboration (and they keep a lot of people in business!).

But even a good client can be a better client.

by Shauna Gillies-Smith ASLA

about technical and material advances in their field, but they regularly hone their craft and develop a facility with it. So one reason to engage a consultant is time: time that the architect doesn't need to put in, and time that the consultant has already invested.

Frame the problem

A fundamental charge of both the client and the consultant is the clear articulation of goals, parameters, and contexts of the consultant's task.

Timothy Downing of Design & Co., a graphic design/identity firm, likens the process to site analysis. "We start each project with a three-pronged approach:

site on his own, but he wants the architect to be present for the actual shoot. "We talk a lot," he says. "It works best when the architect is able to frame the problem in an interesting way." He described a recent successful shoot: "The architect talked in abstract terms about his design intent, how he pushed the building to respond, and where those ideas might be seen. What he didn't talk about was what picture to take — only what he was trying to do with the design."

Frame the process

For many projects, the architect is both the choreographer of the design process and the filter through which all things pass. A potential pitfall of the sub-consultant relationship is a restriction on direct access to the "end client" and the resulting loss of familiarity and understanding of the project that comes with full participation in discussions. Laura Solano, a landscape architect and principal of Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates, cites a project that involved many meetings, although none was specifically focused on the landscape. "After a while," she says, "it felt like we kept eating appetizers for dinner and never managed to get a full meal."

Although the architect is usually responsible for managing the process and coordinating the interface between the owner and other consultants, Solano believes that consultants should assume more of the burden of design leadership. "You have to invite yourself to the head table in the design stage and be involved in the messy process of speaking up early on." Too often consultants simply respond, instead of actively shaping the design process.

Don't draw

A delicate issue in the client/consultant relationship is the difference between direction and dictate. Lighting designer Daina Yurkus, a principal of Light This!, describes model clients as those who have "clear vision, strong ideas, who know what they like and don't like but can be open to ideas, are willing to be convinced, and are willing to modify the architecture."

Specific instructions such as "make it red" can stunt the design process. As one consultant observed, "You know it's a bad sign when the architect shows up to the first meeting with a sketch of what they want for your design." Of course, a sketch is not necessarily fatal to the relationship. It depends on whether the drawing is intended as a command or as a contribution to the dialogue - and how the consultant perceives that intention.

Get money

Consultants cost money and sometimes the architect doesn't know how much. What's the solution? Ask — and give the consultant sufficient time and information to answer correctly.

Architects may have a more complete understanding of a project's complexity than their consultants do; if so, they should consider Laura Solano's experience: "No one believes this, but I sometimes go back to my consultants to tell them they haven't put enough money in." It is much easier to ask for more money up-front, before the project gets too far down the road and a consultant's insufficient budget becomes a real problem for everyone.

Protect the investment

With the specter of value engineering hovering over many projects, the more seamlessly the consultants' contributions are integrated with the architecture, the better their chance of survival. If the work of the consultants is valued and seen as a contribution to the success of the project early on, it is less likely to be considered "extras" that are subject to budget cuts. A more integrated approach to the building's design can also create a more balanced, collaborative approach to any necessary cuts.

Switch hats

When the architect is both the consultant to the client and the client to the consultants, figuring out which hat to wear and when can be hard. The challenge is to don both hats with the right level of emphasis. Being a client is a particular job with its own set of skills, demands, and timelines. Among other things, it requires the ability to step back, cast aside the designer hat, and evaluate the whole project from a relatively unbiased viewpoint. In a world of tight deadlines and a pursuit of quality that is usually only stopped by a deadline, it is sometimes hard to clear the time and the mental space to take in the big picture.

Peter Vanderwarker offers an example: "For me the only problem that I have is when architects are so focused on their own work that they can't see the whole thing. The wrong finish on one of the window sashes won't be noticeable in a photograph, but the architect can't get beyond being upset about the finish and forces me away from what may be the best viewpoint."

Respect the blanks

Knowledge of and respect for the other discipline is often key to a successful working relationship. Unfortunately, a common complaint of consultants describing relationships with their

architect-client is that the architect doesn't understand the level of work involved. No matter which discipline one selects to fill in the blank, the same phrases are heard: some architects think that " is easy" design doesn't require the same rigor that making architecture does" or "when it comes to designing a_ design-build is good enough."

Making architecture is difficult, but it is partially made so by the expectations that the architect brings to it. That same high level of expectation is transferable (and should be) to the work of the architect's consultants.

Blur the boundaries (and draw them in the sand)

To be a successful client, the architect needs to recognize the value of and become adept at transferring responsibility or sharing authorship with consultants.

Authorship in the building fields is already a blurry line. The architect is usually a collective entity (a firm, not an individual) with ideas, priorities, and preferences involved in a creative process with a client — often a number of people with their own corresponding ideas, priorities, and preferences. Mix in a series of consultants, then add to that a tendency for everyone to step over disciplinary boundaries, and the lines get fuzzy fast. Negotiating the smudge is a skill.

Many architects value the input of their consultants. But the architects who understand their role as a client, mirroring all the best practices of the clients for whom they themselves work, are those who are able to reap the most from their consultants' talents. For both client and consultant, that intelligence involves working in one's sphere of specialty, stepping into another's realm with the dexterity to comprehend and influence, and then stepping back with the same talent and confidence. It is that dance stepping over and back, blurring the line and then redrawing it — that turns the relationship of client and consultant into true collaboration.

Shauna Gillies-Smith ASLA is a landscape Somerville, Massachusetts.



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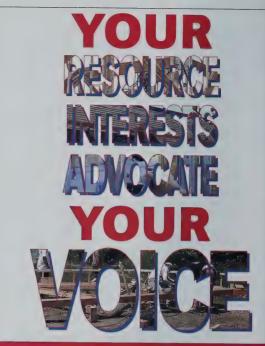
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THE PRO-BONO CLIENT

The San Francisco nonprofit **Public Architecture** makes the case that sometimes the most important client is the one you don't know.



by James McCown

They are the most unlikely group of architectural clients: men in their 20s and 30s, most from Mexico and Central America, and most without the legal right to work in the United States. They can be seen gathering on virtually any morning in Home Depot parking lots from coast to coast, hoping to be chosen by building contractors for a day of substandard wages. They need from a building the most rudimentary things: Shade from the sun. A place to sit down. Toilet facilities. Enter the Day Labor Station, designed by Public Architecture.

"Architects are trained to be problem solvers, not problem identifiers," said John Cary, Assoc. AIA, the executive director of Public Architecture, a nonprofit based in San Francisco that both designs needed facilities like the Day Labor Station and recruits firms from around the country to commit to doing pro-bono design work.

"Once we identified the need, we then began interviewing a lot of day workers, truly treating them as the clients," he said. He put his colleague Elizabeth Ogbu in charge of design, and she conceived a structure with a Solomonic simplicity—"boxes" on either side, one accommodating the bathroom and the other for food preparation and serving—akin to the roadside food stands that are social centers throughout Latin America. In the center are benches and an expandable shade awning. "We're getting interest in these from cities, large and small, around the country," said Cary.

These are good times for architects, and Cary wants to harness their natural idealism so needed buildings like the Day Labor Station don't remain just dreams on paper.

"Architects have been doing free work forever," he said. "We're just shining a

light on it, and coming up with a way to match pro-bono work with organizations that have real building needs. The legal profession has been taking the same approach for decades with great success." Cary has developed a Public Architecture program called the One Percent Solution, which encourages firms to contribute one percent of their total billable work to nonprofit organizations. A recruitment brochure asks provocatively: "You could have been anything. You chose to be an architect. Why?"

Large firms such as Perkins+Will have signed on to the One Percent Solution, both as participants and benefactors. Phil Harrison, president and CEO of Perkins+Will and based in Atlanta, cites both historical and regional inspirations for becoming involved.

"Our firm motto is 'Ideas and Buildings that Honor the Broader Goals of Society."

A LAXART. Client: LAXART. Architect: zellnerplus. Structural Engineer: Dale Christian SE. General Contractor: California Modern. Photo by Joshua White. B P-Patch Community Garden Shed. Client: Interbay P-Patch. Architect: CAST Architecture. Photo by Matt Hutchins. C 21st Century Community Learning Center. Client: Technology Access Foundation (TAF). Architect: The Miller I Hull Partnership. Associated architect: Public Architecture. D Affordable-Infill. Client: Philadelphia Neighborhood

Development
Collaborative and
Asociación
Puertorriqueños en
Marcha. Architects:
Interface Studio
Architects LLC, through
the Community Design

Collaborative; Jody Beck. E Faces of the Fallen (The Women's Memorial, Arlington National Cemetery). Client: Faces of the Fallen Advisory Board. Architect: CORE architecture + design.
Photo by Max Hirshfeld.
F Day Labor Station.
Client: Day Laborers.
Architect: Margot Lystra
and Phoebe Schenker
for Public Architecture.
G Prototype for green



and that goes back to our founding in the 1930s," he said, "Here in the South. we're also aware of the tremendous contribution of [architect] Sam Mockbee and the Rural Studio. The One Percent Solution allows us to have the most impact. I think we're better off wielding pencils than wielding hammers." At present, Perkins+Will is investigating using its One Percent time to design at least two homeless shelters in downtown Atlanta, Harrison said.

Smaller firms are also drawn to the One Percent program. Miller I Hull Partnership

in Seattle, winner of the 2003 AIA Firm Award, is currently designing a new learning facility in the city's diverse White Center district for the Technology Access Foundation, a local group that teaches computer and technology skills to minority children. The group enjoys the support of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

"The head of TAF wanted a real in-yourface approach," said Craig Curtis, one of four Miller I Hull partners. The firm is giving them just that: a daring cantilevered building that makes heavy use of recycled and discarded materials. Talk about a "win/win" situation: A design firm is given free rein to design an exciting structure; it's for an eminently worthy cause; and it's sustainable to boot. "We're literally designing the building with material that would otherwise end up in a landfill," Curtis said.

A running clock on the One Percent

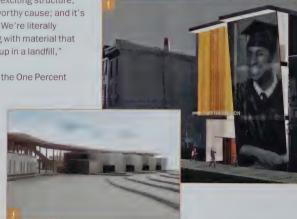
website (www.theonepercent.org) tallies the professional hours that have been pledged to the effort - 52,083 at this writing. A new initiative, "Version 2.0." promises to offer more legal and professional support, as well as match-making services. By redefining "client," the perennial problem of finding clients suddenly evaporates: Clients are all around us. .

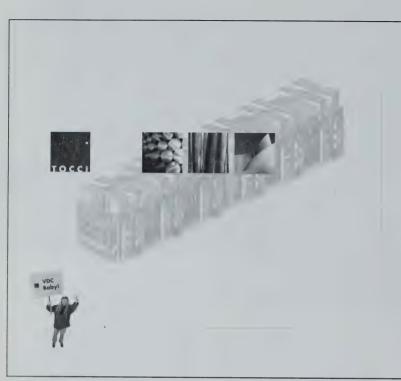
James McCown is the director of communications at Sasaki Associates in Watertown, Massachusetts.

residential design. Architect: EPoc Partnership. H Trilogy. Client: People's Emergency Center (PEC) and the Furman Family. Architect: CICADA Architecture/Planning,

through the Community Design Collaborative. Creating a Legacy for our Future Youth: The Byron Story Foundation. Client: The Byron Story Foundation. Architect: Becker Winston

Architects, through the Community Design Collaborative. J Campus D'Espoir (Campus of Hope). Client: Hope for the Children of Haiti. Architect: Studio Luz Architects.





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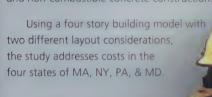
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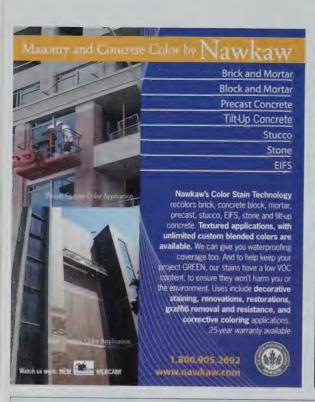


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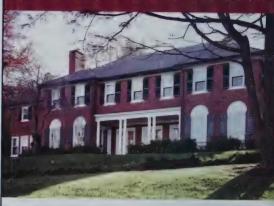
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Covering the Issues

Try. try again... MIT's doing it. Northeastern and Welleslev are doing it. So why isn't Harvard "hiring amazing architects to design amazing buildings?" It's not for lack of trying, argues Joan Wickersham in the cover story "Bricks and Politics" (Harvard Magazine, September-October 2007). Wickersham (a/k/a ArchitectureBoston's Lurker) explains the influence of politics on Harvard's design process: the politics of site, of urban context, and of branding. With resentment from 1960s-era decisions and recent Allston purchases still lingering, grassroots groups regularly stop this billion-dollar university from doing what it wants to on its own land. As Wickersham describes community processes run amok, she crafts an interesting discussion on the politics of "psychological" property ownership and how institutions (and architects) express identity through design. Another question entirely is whether we hold the design bar higher for Harvard because it is, well, Harvard.

Bridges to nowhere... We Bostonians like to think that we know about infrastructure. According to Sarah Williams Goldhagen, there are still big lessons to learn. In "American Collapse," (The New Republic, August 27, 2007), Goldhagen takes the moment of the Minneapolis bridge collapse and the New York City steam-pipe explosion to give a scathing review of the state of American infrastructure. As these recent calamities illustrate, our infrastructure - bridges, roads, water systems, schools, public buildings — has been neglected and is getting worse. Goldhagen takes cities to task for "adorning" themselves with showy, signature buildings; she argues that these stadiums, parks, and museums distract us "from the silent scourge afflicting this country's viscera"

while reducing architects to the equivalent of "glorified shoe designers." A significant problem, as she notes, is the disconnect between the way we currently live and experience infrastructure (in metropolitan regions) and the outdated way we govern, plan, and fund it (through municipalities and states), while the federal government has dropped the ball. Goldhagen laments the pervasive distrust of professional designers, a holdover perhaps from the "overly simplistic fable" pitting Jane Jacobs against Robert Moses. Goldhagen makes a clarion call to think about "our country's physical plant in terms not that different from our legal and regulatory systems in general — as a necessary foundation for the social and economic health and growth of this country." In 2008, who will be the

The power of one... One building can make a difference. Of course, it helps if that building is the size of 25 football fields. In "Thinking Big," Common Wealth's recent cover story on the redevelopment of the Wool Worsted Mill in Lawrence, Massachusetts (Summer 2007), Melissa Daponte Katz describes how developer Bob Ansin is transforming what was once the largest mill building in the world (and the site of the 1912 Bread and Roses strike) into 600 new "eco-luxury" condos. Community leaders hope the project will reintroduce a middle-class population to Lawrence, bringing opportunities for small-scale entrepreneurs with it. The issues are familiar to all of us in New England. We root for Lawrence's (and Ansin's) success.

The new China Trade... There's a lot riding on the Beijing Olympics. Aric Chen describes it as the grand coming-out party for China's new creative class. Forget the



traditional ribbon dancing; forget the image of China as solely a cheap production center, too. In a Fast Company cover story (June 2007) on "The Next Cultural Revolution," Chen discusses contemporary Chinese ambitions to become "a creative superpower" and spotlights a handful of artistic types — writers, furniture makers, actors, and architects, to name a few. Most significant may be this: For decades now, North American designers have exported their work to China. Though the numbers are still small, Chen shows that's becoming a two-way street.

Eco-huh?... Are you suffering from ecooverkill? Mark Peters presents a humorous lexicon for the ubiquitous prefix in the online eco-journal Grist (posted June 19, 2007). Or, as he subtitles it, "An eco-lexical eco-spasm for the modern eco-age." Overobsessive eco-vocabulary may be hard to define but, like Justice Potter Stewart, we know it when we see it.

Gretchen Schneider, Assoc. AIA, has a design practice in Boston.

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THE ARCHITECTURE OF HAPPINESS By Alain de Botton Pantheon, 2006

While architects may regard writings about architectural style as vain attempts to name the unnameable — to explain what they have already arrived at by design intuition — others find it useful to construct a narrative to explain the design that surrounds them. Most such writing is from what an economist would call the supply side: it's about how extraordinary architects or schools or clients have shaped style. It often seems over-thought and selfreferential, viewing architecture only as monumental self-expression, with no social obligations. This disturbs many others, and it seems there are no accepted principles for evaluating architectural quality. Maybe it's just the inherent limitation of using words to describe elusive things. Maybe it's our pluralistic society, where everyone has a piece of the truth.

British writer Alain de Botton, who has previously addressed subjects as diverse as Proust, the art of travel, and status anxiety, has now ventured into these tricky waters with The Architecture of Happiness. In the tradition of other outsiders from John Ruskin to Jane Jacobs, he explores buildings from the demand side: how they are experienced by others and how they reflect changing cultural needs. (He even has the temerity to ask what constitutes beauty in architecture.) The book is refreshing and insightful, yet perhaps not

completely gratifying - an elegant brunch rather than a sumptuous dinner.

De Botton frames the question by describing how Modernism emerged from the exhausted style-obsession of previous centuries. He contrasts Schinkel ("To turn something useful into something beautiful, that is architecture's duty") with Le Corbusier ("L'avion accuse" — the airplane betrays the absurdity of decoration). While Modernists espoused an architecture liberated from narrative, they wanted their buildings to speak too, just of different things: speed and technology and, above all, the future rather than the past.

Then he turns to his main subject: what qualities do we seek in buildings anyway? In de Botton's cosmology, we seek order, balance, elegance, coherence and, less obviously, self-knowledge. Buildings can impart meaning through association with personality traits, narratives, and events; are repositories of memory and identity; and can even be a form of propaganda. He ventures a theory of why ideals in architecture change as social needs evolve - how we seek "the correct dosage of our missing virtues," citing the example of the 19thcentury aestheticization of nature just as it receded from view during the Industrial Revolution. But the current obsession with originality of expression sometimes compromises coherence, and contemporary architecture suffers from a failure of empathy. It no longer seeks to create congenial environments and thus "mirrors our inability to find happiness in other areas of our lives."

The book's only real shortcoming stems from its greatest strength: intended to be lively and accessible, it treats a large subject breezily. So if the subject appeals to you, you'll enjoy this book, but you may find you're hungry again before dinnertime.

Matthew J. Kiefer is a land-use attorney at Goulston & Storrs in Boston. He teaches in the urban planning program at the Harvard Graduate School of Design.



PETER EISENMAN'S HOUSE VI: THE CLIENT'S RESPONSE

By Suzanne Frank Whitney Library of Design, 1994

It's almost a given that any book with Peter Eisenman's name attached to it is going to fascinate a minuscule percentage of the population, while either boring or perplexing the rest of humanity. I fall somewhere in between — however dense his writing, his exercises in "pure geometry" can be quite fascinating to a point. The architect's "House VI," completed in the mid-1970s, is considered one of the purest of these exercises. His goal was to begin with a few profound geometric and spatial ideas - the cruciform plan, the "essential nature" of a column or a wall - and then design a house completely around these ideas alone, comfort and practicality be damned. Imagine some kid at MIT spending day after day in his room twisting and contorting white cubes in infinite combinations — that's basically what Eisenman did at House VI, as his copious sketches, models, and written musings suggest. His clients were New York-based Dick and Suzanne Frank, respectively a photographer and architectural historian, who wanted a weekend home in Connecticut and ended up with a landmark known perversely for a column in the middle of the dining room and a slot dividing the master bedroom.

The title The Client's Response is both provocative and misleading. It's clear from the first pages that all has not gone well in the quarter-century relationship (the book dates to the mid-1990s) between architect and patron. The house is difficult to occupy and it leaks. But there's a cov silence throughout the book as to exactly what has transpired. Are they still friends? Was there a lawsuit? Are they sticking pins in voodoo dolls of each other? You won't find out in this book.

What you will read is an assemblage of essays — from the likes of Paul Goldberger and Kenneth Frampton — mostly dating from the late 1970s and early 1980s, a fertile time indeed for architectural thinkers. It's page 49 before we get to Ms. Frank's essay, and then it's a rather predictable chronicle of the house and all of the architectural celebrities who've visited — Philip Johnson! Edgar Kaufmann Ir.! — followed by a dull recitation of the construction mediation required to fix the many problems of a house designed — duh — with no thought of practicality.

Ms. Frank seems to use the essay more as a means to namedrop and settle scores — with the original contractor. for example — than to reflect on the experience. At no point does she step outside of her and her husband's rarefied Upper West Side-to-Litchfield County academic and social milieu and ask: Isn't there something vaguely discomfiting and fascist about an architect who insists on kitchen cabinets that are too high and counters that are too low, all in the name of geometric consistency? Could not the entire experience be a cautionary tale about prestige trumping common sense? Again, you won't read it here.

James McCown is the director of communications at Sasaki Associates in Watertown, Massachusetts.



LOUIS I. KAHN: BEYOND TIME AND STYLE: A LIFE IN ARCHITECTURE

By Carter Wiseman W.W. Norton & Company, 2007

The poet Robert Creeley once claimed that "every writer, in his heart, wants to be an artist." Writers, he explained, are condemned to wring their wits in a vain attempt to achieve by words alone that which is the foregone creation of any visual artist: an idea wrapped in a picture. So much the worse, then, for



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Carter Wiseman, who has devoted his able wordcraft to capturing the brick-andmortar art of architecture. An author would be hard-pressed to find a more daunting subject than the hero of his new biography, Louis Kahn. Grand-sounding words like "monumental" and "timeless" wither in the shadow of Kahn's buildings: volumes of criticism do nothing to convey how awfully good the structures are and how terribly hard everyone had to work to put them there in the first place. What's more, despite his tendency toward Delphic pronouncements, Kahn himself was never much of a reader — as far as he was concerned, text was confined to captions accompanying technical illustrations.

Instead of leading his readers on a wordy tour through Kahn's creations, Wiseman chose to put aside the brickmeets-arch romance ("What do you want, Brick?" Kahn asked, And the brick answered, "I like an arch.") in order to tell the story of the architect and his circle, or rather, the many discrete circles made up by clients, families (Kahn was a three-family

man), friends, and rivals, all of whom gave some part of themselves to his work. We are told that the aim of the book is to "bring the architect forward as an individual — deeply complex as a man, supremely talented as an artist and designer, mesmerizing as a teacher, and a monumental figure in the history of architecture." Kahn "the individual" is an elusive creature, however, who puts in cameo appearances just long enough to utter one of those Delphic pronouncements ("The weight of the brick makes it dance like a fairy above and groan below") before he slips away behind those regrettable habits that all geniuses seem to cultivate: a Charlie Chaplin shuffle, a bowtie twisted askew, a morbid inability to meet deadlines that lends itself to a second interpretation of the book's title, Beyond Time and Style, (and budget, and schedule). "How in God's name do you get a building done with this man?" one client asks another.

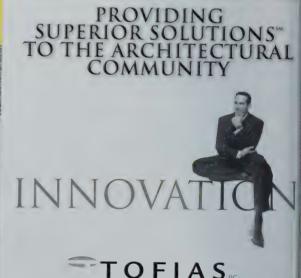
The answer arises from the well-drawn cast of Kahn's well-heeled clients, those

who recognized the genius in the man, kept faith in his vision, and fought off critics and creditors until that vision was made real. If Wiseman is overly generous to his subject, and he is, nevertheless he's in good company. Like the constellation of luminaries who engaged the architect in his lifetime. Wiseman honors Kahn for his ability to erect an eternal arch from a heap of bricks, to reveal the history embedded in last Tuesday, to draw order out of chaos. It's enough to make words wish they were bricks.

Creelea Henderson is a graduate student at Boston University and the former editor of Property Magazine in Moscow.

Editor's note: Carter Wiseman will speak in the Rabb Lecture Hall at the Boston Public Library at 6 pm on November 6. sponsored by the Boston Architectural College and the Loeb Fellowship of the Harvard Graduate School of Design. For more information: 617-495-9345 or syoung@gsd.harvard.edu.





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Studio Verticale www.studioverticale.com	28
Thoughtforms Corporation www.thoughtforms-corp.com b	ack cover
Tocci Building Corporation www.tocci.com	56
Tofias PC www.tofias.com	64
TOTO USA, Inc. www.totousa.com	2
Triumph Leasing Corporation www.triumphleasing.com	17
Voigt & Schweitzer www.hotdipgalvanizing.com	60
XL Insurance www.xlinsurance.com	63

WEBSITES OF NOTE | Site Work

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http://mitworld.mit.edu/video/218 (and /219)

A two-part video of the proceedings of a symposium held on the occasion of the 2004 opening of MIT's Stata Center. Part One includes presentations by Charles Vest, James Ackerman, and Kimberly Alexander. Part Two is a panel discussion moderated by William Mitchell, featuring Frank Gehry FAIA, Kyong Park, Robert Venturi FAIA, and John Curry.

IN SEARCH OF PERFECT CLIENT SERVICE

www.patrickilamb.com

WHAT ABOUT CLIENTS?

www.whataboutclients.com

Here's a cultural divide: lawyers like to blog about clients. Among discussions of six-minute billing cycles, you can find some useful observations. Check out WAC?'s "12 Rules of Client Service."

CLIENT OUOTES

www.tofslie.com/clientquotes.htm

Need to blow off steam about that impossible client? There's nothing like vicarious kvetching. Graphic and web designers reveal all. "More fonts! Use more fonts!"

BLOWFISH

www.gsd.harvard.edu/people/students/student forum/

Architecture students learn quickly that design jurors are their ultimate client. A Blowfish is the completion of the statement "When a critic hands you a negative criticism..."

GET A HUMAN

www.gethuman.com

"The gethuman project is a consumer movement to improve the quality of phone support in the US." Can't deal with the options when the menu has changed? This database tells you how to get a real person to help.

SENIOR WOMEN WEB HOUSE

www.house.seniorwomen.com

A thoughtful blog intended to follow the process of building a sustainable, accessible house that will allow its owners, older women, to age in place. Part of a website for older women founded by a former Time Magazine reporter.

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The Beach Cottage

"At a loss for words."

That description almost never applies to us: two people who earn our living by communicating, and by helping others do so. That's why it came as such a surprise that, almost as soon as we started the process of designing and building our new house, we became tongue-tied.

We'd love to blame this on our architect. And it is certainly true that he frequently lapsed into a language we didn't understand. (What's a roof truss, anyway?)

But the real problem was us. We simply don't have the vocabulary to communicate what we wanted. Professionally, we could be articulate on almost any topic, but when it came to talking about our house, we sounded downright idiotic. ("We're looking for a beachy style. Casual. You know, relaxed.")

We did our homework. We read trade publications such as *Fine Homebuilding*. But while they provided photos to refer to ("we're thinking of something like this"), we never mastered the lingo. It was like trying to learn French when you have no aptitude for language.

Because we had such difficulty getting our ideas across, we became the worst kind of clients — the kind who can't express their preferences and who end up saying, "No, that's not it. Something else. We'll know it when we see it."

In our meager defense, this was the first time we had ever attempted to build a house from scratch. There was nothing to go on — just an empty 72-by-104-foot lot and a clean sheet of paper. All that possibility can fragment your thoughts into so many pieces that they fly around like confetti. Just try to catch them, much less put them into words.

Adding to the pressure was the fact that this house was to be our dream home, the culmination of everything we worked so hard to achieve — not only in our careers,



but in our relationship. See, although we've known each other since college, we didn't get together until 20 years after we met — and, in the meantime, we married other people, had kids, and got divorced.

As a result, since we wed in 2000, because of work and children, we've found ourselves in a commuter marriage: Paul spends most of his time in Duxbury, Massachusetts, and Alison spends most of her time in Glen Rock, New Jersey. Every weekend or so, one of us makes the long drive (234 miles, but who's counting?) on Route 95.

So when we sought a place to escape the Northeast winters, it became important that this be our place—the one both of us loved. And we found it: Anna Maria, Florida, a quaint little town on an island off the Gulf Coast near Sarasota. But, since we couldn't find a house we liked at the right price, we decided to buy a little piece of land and build.

Did somebody try to warn us that this would be difficult? Probably. But we weren't listening, enraptured by the idea of creating a house just for the two of us—and for our four children (now aged 17 to 25), their current/future significant others, and (someday) our grandchildren.

In the meantime, there's the small matter of designing the darn thing. And that's where our handicap gets in the way.

When we first starting talking about what we wanted with our architect, Greg Huddy (of Allison Ramsey Architects in Beaufort, South Carolina), we told him we wanted a little beach cottage.

With four bedrooms. And three bathrooms. And two offices.

"But, you know, cozy. Cottage-y."

Luckily, Greg has both the patience of a saint as well as the ability to read minds, so he was able to pull it off.

Now that we've got final plans, Greg is probably too polite to talk about us behind our backs, but we could imagine how he would describe us.

"Nice folks," he would say. "A little intense, but you know how Northerners are. But they have real trouble expressing themselves. It's a shame, really, to go through life tongue-tied."

Alison Davis is a communication consultant and Paul B. Brown is a writer. Together, they are authors of the blog *Dream Home Diaries* (http://dreamhome.blogs.nytimes.com).

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