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THE YEAR OF THE PLAN

PART 1

FRAMEWORK

THE ONCE AND FUTURE CITY

BRING ON THE JOY

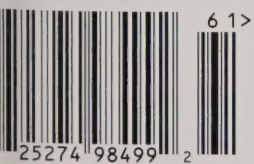
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FRAMEWORK

ABOVE

Detail of "Map of City Proper" marked with locations of photographs that were part of the documentation for "Perceptual Form of the City," a research project by urban planner Kevin Lynch that investigated the individual's perception of the urban landscape. The findings were published in 1960 in his seminal work, *The Image of the City*. From the Papers of Kevin Lynch, Institute Archives and Special Collections, MIT Libraries.

COVER

Boston's redevelopment got a jump-start with construction of the 52-story Prudential Tower, completed in 1965. 101 Huntington Avenue, part of the Prudential Center complex, is seen here from the 28th floor of the tower in a photo taken in 1969. Photo: Ed Fitzgerald/*The Boston Globe* via Getty Images



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NO SMALL PLANS

Back in June of 2013, the Boston Society of Architects hosted the first candidates' forum for the first open mayor's seat in Boston in 20 years. Nine candidates spent two hours answering questions about architecture, planning, and design. I was asking the questions, and I was struck by the level of antipathy the candidates expressed toward Boston's development process—from its outdated zoning code to the Boston Redevelopment Authority's insular culture to the uninspired design of some of the city's public buildings and shared spaces.

Martin Walsh, who went on to be elected Boston's 54th mayor, spoke of the "frustration" large-scale developers and average residents alike experienced trying to work through the city's opaque procedures. He promised a more rational and transparent system for managing Boston's growth. And last spring, Walsh announced *Imagine Boston 2030*, a comprehensive plan to bring vision, clarity, and logic to the city's development goals. The plan, Walsh said, would "allow us to think about Boston's future on a global and historic scale while focusing on concrete, reachable goals."

This is the focus of "Framework," the first in a yearlong series of *ArchitectureBoston* issues that will examine various aspects of city and regional planning.

A similar reform impulse drove city planners in the early 1960s, the last time Boston tried to jolt itself into progressive change with a masterplan for development. "There was a malaise in the city," recalled Tunney Lee AIA, former head of the Department of Urban Studies and Planning at MIT who was on the young team that developed the 1965 "General Plan" for Boston. Lee said Boston's reputation as a den of rogues was repelling private investors. "Predictability and a lack of corruption is what they wanted." (We explore the 1965 plan in the gallery, page 44.)

One stark difference, of course, is that in the 1960s, Boston was a faltering backwater. No building of any significance had been constructed since the 1930s. The Custom House tower was the tallest structure on what could barely be called

a "skyline." As Alex Krieger FAIA notes in his essay, "The once and future city," a paradox of Boston's recent history is that most of its boldest initiatives came in times of crisis or economic decline.

A challenge of the current plan is how to galvanize bold ideas when things are going relatively well.

What kind of city do we want to be? This is the essential, even existential, question that undergirds *Imagine Boston 2030*. For every bow Boston can take as a youthful, brainy, prosperous innovator, it must accept demerits for its costly housing, its enduring divisions by race and income, its declining population of young families displaced by millennials and empty nesters. A recent study by the Brookings Institution found that Boston has the biggest income gap of all major cities in the United States. And we're headed in the wrong direction: Four years ago, Boston had the fourth biggest divide.

A close cousin to equity is resilience: Boston's ability to prepare for the physical and social shocks that come with climate change. Boston needs to site its new development wisely and retrofit its existing infrastructure so it can function in a weather emergency. Rising sea levels are just the start of it.

Almost as important as the policy outcomes of *Imagine Boston 2030* are the quality and diversity of the civic engagement it promotes. Making Boston a more transparent and inclusive city means nothing short of a new model of municipal democracy. Not the 7 PM meeting in a church basement attended by the same 30 activists. Not a top-down masterplan imposed on the city by an all-powerful institution. Not an unregulated market where the deepest pockets dictate design. A city of informed, engaged, enthusiastic residents with a direct role in building their own beautiful, welcoming city—that's the future Boston we want to imagine. ■

Renée Loth
Editor



Photo: Bert Seager

PACE

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Above: 175-185 Wyman Street in Waltham, MA designed for Hobbs Brook Management by Margulies Perruzzi Architects

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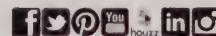
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ON “WELL” (WINTER 2015)

Sho-Ping Chin FAIA would have been humbled and proud to learn that the “Well” issue of *ArchitectureBoston* is dedicated in her memory. She was a passionate architect who cared deeply about these issues. She would also have appreciated the bold blasts of color in the issue, a visual signature of her spirit and wit!

KEVIN SULLIVAN FAIA
President, Payette
Boston

Robin Guenther FAIA's article (“Building health”) rightfully focuses on the healthcare industry's need to “clean up its act” when it comes to reducing its large environmental footprint. Guenther challenges those of us working in healthcare to lead the way in producing restorative environments for healing. More than 1,400 US hospitals and many state hospital associations have in the past four years joined the Healthier Hospitals Initiative and pledged to take action and report their progress in six challenge areas, including energy reduction, toxic chemical elimination, waste stream reduction, and serving healthy food.

Partners HealthCare in Boston was one of the seven founding systems of HHI, and I have the privilege to serve as its steering committee chairman. The initiative issues an annual report highlighting gains made and dollars saved by integrating sustainable practices into everyday operations. Its success led to the creation of the international Global Green and Healthy Hospital organization, which has 20,000 hospital and health-clinic members across the globe. It is heartening to know that many healthcare organizations are embracing the pledge to clean up their act.

But our work doesn't end there. To be truly transformative, we need to leverage the purchasing power of healthcare to move the markets to produce safe products utilizing safe manufacturing processes—from IV bags and medical devices to

furniture and building materials. While the concept of restorative design is rooted in healthcare, it is applicable to every place you make, every building you construct, every environment you take pride in showcasing. An array of accessible tools can help with this; I recommend the WELL Building Standard, the Pharos Project, and Perkins+Will's Precautionary List, all of which benefit from epidemiological research. Ridding our buildings of toxic chemicals is a challenge we have to take on if we are dedicated to creating healthy environments for living.

JOHN MESSERVY AIA
Corporate Director of Design and
Construction, Partners HealthCare
Boston

We can transform healthcare by building health both inside and outside the walls of the hospital. Robin Guenther FAIA's call for healthier healthcare environments is well complemented by Gary Hilderbrand FASLA's call for action to revitalize Boston's efforts to increase the city's urban forest (“Trees”). One need only visit Worcester neighborhoods decimated by the arrival of the Asian longhorned beetle to understand what it would feel like to live in a city without a network of street trees, and the negative impact on our psyches and physical bodies.

The walls of healthcare facilities must not only be constructed of nontoxic materials, they must also become less dense and less opaque—allowing for the landscape of our beautiful city to filter in and support the health and healing of patients and staff alike. Connections to nature, even one as modest as a view to a healthy street tree, promote and support this process.

Our firm is fortunate enough to be supporting Brigham and Women's Hospital, under the leadership of its president, Dr. Elizabeth Nabel, in achieving these goals of connecting the inside back to the outside—harkening back to a time when the direct connection to Olmsted's



Riverway supported the healing processes at the hospital. We're creating landscape spaces in every nook, cranny, and rooftop we can find. All of these landscape insertions strengthen the hospital's connection to nature and its supportive healing capacities but also integrate into the city's forest network. Let us once again think of our urban forest as a critical part of our urban spatial network as well as our city's healthcare network. A beautiful Boston will also be a healthier Boston.

KAKI MARTIN ASLA
Klopfer Martin Design Group
Boston

Creating healthier buildings depends on mindset, not cost, notes Robin Guenther FAIA. She suggests that we don't always follow best practices because we're not aware of the harmful effects of our decisions and because it's often easier to fall back on old ways of building.

This challenge of translating public awareness into action is similar to the problem faced by efforts to encourage environmentally sustainable behaviors, regular exercise, retirement savings, and other good-for-us actions. With our limited attentions, the micro-actions that build long-term future benefits are often drowned out by the noise of other everyday concerns. Psychologist Elke Weber advises that the most effective strategy to promote these kinds of behaviors is to “make it simple, and make it personal.”

Applied to healthy environments, “simple” might mean that the experts and advocates shoulder up front the heavy lifting of advocacy, community engagement,

and design to create systems that make health-promoting behaviors and opportunities—bike travel, affordable housing or nutrition—routine and easy to access. “Personal” might mean focusing on local issues to inspire action. Alyssa Haywoode (“Case study: Mattapan”) describes how residents there are galvanized more by a personal stake in a better neighborhood than by abstract data connecting environmental features to long-term health outcomes.

The “Well” issue of *ArchitectureBoston* seems timely. Along with the launch of the WELL Building Standard, administered by the US Green Building Council, I’m hopeful about the growing public appreciation of the important connections between health and design.

TYRONE YANG AIA

Yang Architects

Somerville, Massachusetts

Robin Guenther FAIA raises an excellent point that healthcare buildings and the neighborhoods in which they reside need to be healthier for the people who work there and for the patients who receive care in them. Indeed, building healthy facilities should be a baseline standard for any healthcare provider.

But hospitals face many demands in meeting their responsibility to the health and wellness of the communities they serve. Determinants of health include individual behavior, social environment, physical environment, genetics, and access to and quality of healthcare—and facilities are only one part of this. For people, communities, and entire populations to achieve health and well-being, hospitals need to work with all the private, public, and nongovernmental organizations that are working to improve population health.

At the same time, hospitals face difficult choices in capital allocation. How much of their scarce resources should they invest in facilities? In installing new information systems that will enable them to provide care more efficiently and reliably? In network development and sustainability?

Hospitals are a key part of the population health movement and must

continually operate with an eye toward positively impacting a wider population.

SARAH MARKOVITZ AIA

Co-chair, BSA Healthcare Design Committee

Principal, NBBJ

Boston

As co-chair of the BSA Access Committee,

I was glad to support Michael McHugh AIA (“Project recovery”) and countless others who came together in the weeks after the Boston Marathon bombings to initiate the Renovate for Recovery program. We all owe a debt of gratitude to the design community for providing technical and material support to those most affected by the bombings. Through the program’s endeavors, nearly 10 homes have been adapted by creating accessible bathrooms, stairs, entryways, kitchens, and more for residents with permanent mobility impairments.

Meanwhile, a 2014 study by the Joint Center for Housing Studies at Harvard reminds me what many of us already know: Our country faces a critical shortage of accessible housing. Due in part to our aging housing stock, just 12 percent of homes in the Northeast have three or more accessibility features like extra-wide hallways and doors, accessible electrical controls, or a no-step entry. According to the City of Boston’s 2010 *Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice*, the number of accessible units in the city would accommodate only one-fifth of the 50,000 residents of Boston who need them.

The challenges that those most affected by the bombings have been forced to confront are the same ones thousands of Boston residents are faced with every day. As the Renovate for Recovery effort moves toward its final project closeouts, the question is: What comes next? Instead of receding into history, what if the lessons learned through the program were to become the building blocks of a permanent program of renovation, with dedicated funding and compensated technical support? This should be the lasting legacy of this difficult chapter in the history of our city.

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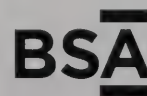
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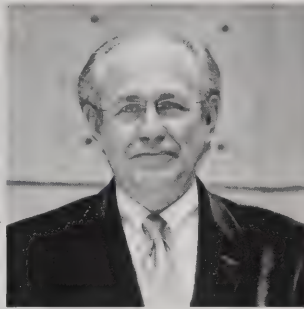
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Photo: Courtesy of NBBJ



Alex Krieger FAIA ("The once and future city," page 30) is a principal at NBBJ and professor of urban design at the Harvard Graduate School of Design. In his combined career of teaching and practice, he has dedicated himself to improving the quality of place and life in urban areas in the United States and abroad. He is a frequent adviser to mayors and their planning staffs and was one of the initial appointees to the Boston Civic Design Commission. In 2012, President Barack Obama appointed him to the US Commission of Fine Arts.

Photo: Jim Hooper



Russell Preston ("Bring on the joy," page 34) is founder of Principle Group, a planning, design, and development firm focused on creating authentic places. He serves as a commissioner of Boston's Air Pollution Control Commission and is on the board of directors of the Congress for the New Urbanism New England Chapter, and Washington Gateway Main Street in Boston's South End. He studied architecture at the University of Notre Dame and the University of Miami.

Photo: Frank Monkiewicz



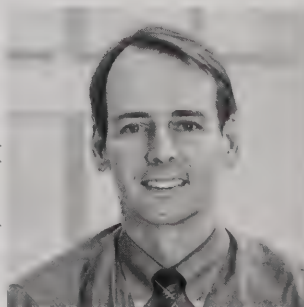
Brian R. Swett ("Ready or not?" page 38) is director of Cities and Sustainable Real Estate at Arup USA, a global engineering and consulting firm. He is spearheading the firm's work in the Americas in sustainability, transportation consulting, and energy masterplanning to bring strategic support to cities. Prior to joining Arup, he served as Chief of Environment, Energy, and Open Space for the City of Boston.

Photo: Peter Vandervort



Ann Beha FAIA ("Ivory powers," page 40) is a principal at Ann Beha Architects, whose projects have expanded the dialogue between tradition and innovation in their design for America's cities and campuses. The firm's clients include the Smithsonian, the US Department of State, University of Chicago, Princeton University, MIT, and the University of Pennsylvania. A graduate of Wellesley College and MIT, and a Loeb Fellow at Harvard University, she received the Women in Design Award of Excellence from the Boston Society of Architects.

Photo: Courtesy of Cliff Gayley FAIA



Cliff Gayley FAIA ("Unleashed," page 64) is a principal at William Rawn Associates, Architects, where his projects include the Cambridge Public Library, the W Boston Hotel, and the new tower for the Berklee College of Music. He has served as co-principal for design for the Mattapan and East Boston branches of the Boston Public Library, as well as for the renovation of the Johnson Wing of the Boston Public Library central branch.

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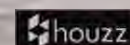
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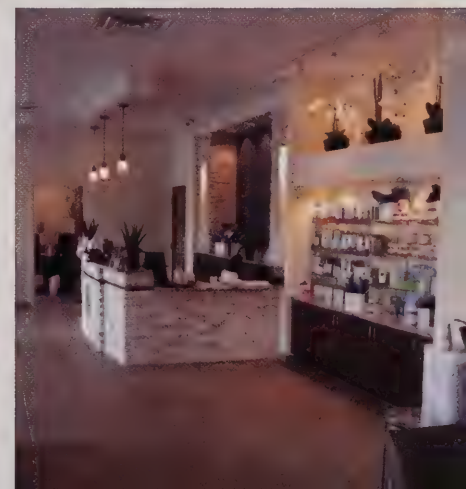


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Opinions and Observations



JUST ONE LOOK

The North Easton railroad station

Let's start with the arches. There are five of them—and they make the little railroad station in the village of North Easton, Massachusetts, designed by H.H. Richardson and completed in 1884, one of the most powerful works of architecture in New England. Four big arches puncture the thick granite walls of the building, flooding light into the waiting rooms. The fifth arch stands by itself in front of the station, legs spread, tautly balanced, bearing lightly the high-shouldered roof of the porte cochere.

After the arches, what you remember best is the roof. Richardson loved roofs almost as much as he loved arches. The gray slate roof of the North Easton station folds and refolds itself over the volumes of the building. The slates wrap themselves over long dormer windows; they extend out as wide sheltering eaves, held up by spiky diagonal wood struts.

Richardson's buildings always feel alive in this way, pulsing with energy. The station's walls of pinkish granite are roughly textured and laid in a crazy quilt of large and small rectangular blocks, drawing the eye to trace ever-changing variations of pattern, color, shadow, and light. Underneath the big arched windows, the stone bulges out into broad benches, equally pleasing to look at and to sit on. Some details are ferociously

archaic: the ends of beams carved into snarling wolves' heads. Other details are precociously modern: the ticket taker's window, a doubly curving grid of glass panes that evokes the surging movements of the trains.

Richardson's arches at North Easton are symbolic; the railroad station provides a passage between different worlds. When you stand under the porte cochere, you see a bucolic New England landscape: a meadow and a pond, with thick woods beyond. You are looking at the private estates of Richardson's clients, the Ames family, a family of innovative and successful industrialists. Walk around the station and you'll see, right across the tracks, the source of their money: a complex of granite factory buildings. This is the Ames Shovel Works, where, at the time of the Civil War, 60 percent of the world's shovels were made. Shovels led to trains; the Ames family went on to play a central role in the creation of the transcontinental railroad. In this little building, Richardson aligned his architectural skills with the primal energies of modern society.

Great architecture requires inspired clients. The train station is one of five buildings in North Easton designed by Richardson; they are accompanied by landscapes by Frederick Law Olmsted,

sculptures by Augustus Saint-Gaudens, and stained glass by John La Farge. The Ames family's continuing stewardship has helped preserve this remarkable ensemble. When the trains stopped running in the 1960s, a family member bought the disused station and donated it to the local historical society; the society has preserved the building, using it to display paintings, photographs, maps, and other artifacts. In 2008, when there was a threat to demolish the Shovel Works, the entire community, including several Ames families, united around a successful plan to redevelop the complex as mixed-income housing.

The power of the North Easton railroad station goes beyond the quality of its design. The building, and the village around it, are a living reminder of how great architecture gets made, how it can be preserved, and how it can adapt itself to new uses for the future.

JAY WICKERSHAM FAIA is writing a history of the work H.H. Richardson did for the Ames family.

ABOVE

East façade of the Old Colony Railroad Station, North Easton, Massachusetts, by H.H. Richardson. Photo: Daderot/Creative Commons



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The Other Architect

Canadian Centre for Architecture, Montréal

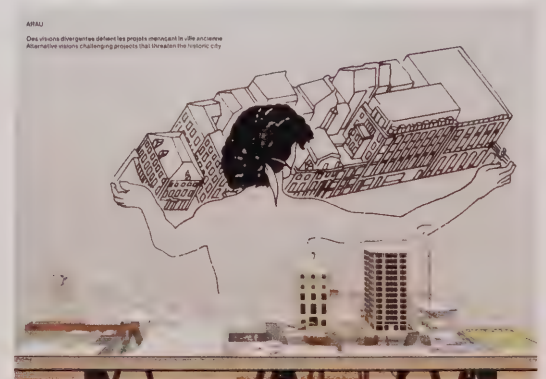
Through April 10, 2016

Architecture has long been unable to decide whether it is a technical discipline, concerned with the application of mathematical truths, or an aesthetic discipline, concerned with the evocation of human feelings. *The Other Architect* refreshingly rejects the terms of this debate, defining architecture “as an original site for the production of ideas,” with exhibits that showcase recent instances of such production.

The exhibition comprises 21 case studies in which architects explicitly generated ideas, not buildings. Architectural Detective Agency’s corner displays beautiful sketchbooks, used during its survey of historical buildings in Tokyo. At the next table, recordings of Design-A-Thon’s televised charettes, which broadcast architectural thinking into America’s living rooms. And in the next room copies of Architecture Machine Group’s hierarchical schematics of our concept of *house*, which manage to be both insightful and foolish. If the exhibition is somewhat unfocused, it is also persuasive in arguing for the teeming inventiveness of architects.

The most compelling case studies feature original graphic representations, whether sketches, diagrams, matrices, or maps. Giving an implicit nod to the derivation of the English word *design* from the Italian word *disegno* (“drawing”), the exhibition suggests that the skill of drawing is the great engine of architectural thinking. The most consequential ideas on display incline strongly toward the civic, so that the exhibition argues for the public quality of architectural thinking. If our increasingly image-obsessed and private-minded culture desperately needs more big thinking, *The Other Architect* makes out architecture to be just the kind we need.

JONATHAN POWERS holds a PhD in architectural history and theory from McGill University and teaches humanities at Champlain College in St-Lambert, Quebec.



THIS PAGE

Installation views of *The Other Architect*, Canadian Centre for Architecture, Montréal, 2015. Photo: © CCA

MATTER OF COURSE

"Women in Design" fall lecture series

University of Massachusetts

It's an interesting question: How are women faring in architecture after successive waves of supposed workplace upheavals? The lecture series "Women in Design," sponsored by the architecture department of the University of Massachusetts (UMass), Amherst, took a few steps toward an answer.

First, some facts. "Architecture is a man's game," *Architect* magazine wrote in late 2012. At that time, only 16 percent of the American Institute of Architects' membership was female. (The number is slightly higher now.) Women make up about half of enrolled architecture students but account for fewer than 20 percent of firms' principals and partners.

"Out in the field there is a huge gap" between men and women, according to professor Caryn Brause, who organized the series. "Even lining up eight speakers for the series—four in the fall and four in the spring—has proved something of a challenge."

Brause could have recruited all the speakers from her own campus. Eight of the department's 11 full-time faculty members are women. It is no accident, as the Marxists used to say, that the all-girl band in the architecture department has commissioned an innovative Design Building from the Boston firm Leers Weinzapfel Associates, whose two founding principals are women.

But I digress. I heard two of UMass' four fall speakers in this series. In addition, Karrie Jacobs, the founding editor of *Dwell*, sent me a copy of her lecture, "What Is a House?" based in part on editing the magazine; partly on material from her 2006 book, *The Perfect \$100,000 House*; and also from her role as a residential client. Jacobs and her husband commissioned a home from architect Mark Sofield, whom *Dwell* had lionized in a famous 2002 cover story, "America's Coolest Neighborhood," about Sofield's work in the planned community of Prospect, Colorado.

Jacobs waxed sardonic about being on the receiving end of the architect-client relationship, noting that she and her husband are "building a house that is twice as big as my perfect \$100,000 and roughly five times as expensive."

What about women in design? Jacobs' talk included shout-outs to architect Yumiko Foust, kit home constructor Rocio Romero, and Alabama housing activist Pam Dorr, who figured out how to provide \$20,000 homes for impoverished widows living on Social Security.

UMass architecture professor Sigrid Miller Pollin FAIA, the series' third lecturer, manages her own studio, with a significant track record in residential and commercial projects on both the West and East coasts. Miller Pollin is also an accomplished artist and interior designer. Her residential work, which seemed self-consciously "Modern" rather than original, didn't blow me away. But then again, I'm the lecture critic, not the architecture critic.

Some of Miller Pollin's most interesting work has sprung up on the UMass campus: the cedar-side Gordon Hall, built in 2003, and Crotty Hall, now being built across the street from



Gordon. The Crotty site is extraordinarily narrow and long—Miller Pollin called it a "Slim Jim" profile—raising the bar for creating academic office spaces and meeting areas inside.

Victoria Rospond AIA and Lea Cloud AIA, founders and principals of New York City-based CDR Studio Architects, delivered the final lecture of the fall, joking that their third partner, Jon Dreyfous AIA, couldn't participate "because of the chromosomal imperatives of this lecture series." Dreyfous was in Hawaii instead of frigid Granola Valley, so no one felt sorry for him.

CDR has an impressive track record. Rospond and Cloud designed the famous Hook and Ladder 8 in Tribeca, better known as the *Ghostbusters* firehouse for its role in the 1984 movie. More recently, they built a fireboat house on the Hudson for the Fire Department of New York, and Audi commissioned them to design a series of showroom-warehouses across the United States. "Does that deal include free cars?" I asked. Apparently not.

Their lecture focused on their Governor's Cup Pavilion, installed on New York's Governor's Island during the summer of 2014. More art installation than building, the gossamer shelter was assembled using 30,000 (disposed) plastic cups, with the help of more than a hundred volunteers who sewed the cups together, and \$20,000 of crowdsourced funding. The core building unit was a six-cup cell, which proved to be surprisingly strong. The Pavilion included a plastic cup-constructed bench, which easily handled the weight of the visitors who chose to sit on it.

Rospond and Cloud showed pictures of children yanking at the Pavilion's "pillars" and gamboling under its transparent overhang. "This is an example of a piece of artwork that became a community of interaction," Cloud said. "It was a community created by art."

Women in design? Whatever the question is, the answer is yes. Now it's time for the architecture profession to catch up.

ALEX BEAM writes a column for *The Boston Globe* and is working on a book about Vladimir Nabokov. "Matter of course" visits exceptional architecture classes at New England schools.

ABOVE

A tape-measure beam loops around trees, forming a serpentine canopy filled with lacy constellations of cups, at the Governor's Cup Pavilion in New York, by CDR Studio Architects. Photo: John Muggenborg

CONSIDERED

Chicago Architecture Biennial

As 2015 drew to a close, the energy in Chicago was palpable. Everywhere you glanced, there were stark reminders of the city's seat as the capital of American architecture: Thousands streamed in and out of the Cultural Center, where Norman Kelley adorned windows with vinyls depicting glazing patterns and window styles; teenagers studied Jeanne Gang's proposed community policing through design; millennials giggled as they located the mini figure entering the archway of an overturned ashtray as if it were a Roman stadium; and families explored a prototype of a house clad in nipa palm leaves that can be built in three hours. This past fall, the birthplace of the skyscraper reignited optimism in the transformative power of architecture—shades of 1885.



POLLY CARPENTER FAIA is a senior program manager and director of Learning by Design at the BSA Foundation.

LEFT

Norman Kelley's *Chicago, How Do You See?* used large vinyls pasted over the Cultural Center's windows to suggest the city's architectural heritage.

ABOVE

Sou Fujimoto's *Architecture is Everywhere* featured a collection of found objects that were turned into representations of larger ideas with the inclusion of scale figures and accompanying enigmatic statements. Photos: Polly Carpenter FAIA



SEEN

MBTA Train 163, Lynn Marsh, Massachusetts

All the photographs in my “No Transfer” gallery were made from the window of a bus or train. Starting out of frustration with working on the street in Boston—a difficult place for a street photographer—the bus series grew into an absorbing project. Working from a moving bus or train offered new challenges, how quickly I needed to work, the right seat, dirty and tinted windows. And I really liked the challenge. Almost immediately something different began to happen; I was responding to the first impulse before my mind started to run the process of “making a good picture.” The images in the series were made mostly in the Boston area and more recently in Los Angeles. They happen in a fraction of a moment. I see something and respond; there is no thinking involved. Making pictures in this way offers no second chances or time to consider anything, only perception followed by a response with a camera. Photographer Henry Wessel described this quality as being “outside your mind, your eyes far ahead of your thoughts.”

I am still learning.

MICHAEL HINTLIAN heads the documentary photography department at the New England School of Photography in Boston. *Digging: The Workers of Boston's Big Dig*, his photo documentary of the Central Artery/Tunnel Project in Boston, was published in 2004.

Black in Design

Harvard Graduate School of Design
Cambridge, Massachusetts
October 9 and 10, 2015

Whose role is it to build “just and equitable spaces at every scale,” and how do you do it?

In 2015, a year in which a national conversation on race was reignited with renewed urgency, the African American Student Union at the Harvard Graduate School of Design provided a platform for a dialogue on race and design that was decades overdue. Designers working at every scale—from beds to buildings to cities—highlighted the contributions of black architects, urban planners, and interior designers, and they created a vibrant portrait of contemporary design practice. The vibe in the standing-room-only auditorium transcended identity politics.

Perhaps more important than product and place were discussions of process. American cities face enduring, extraordinary tensions around who has access to power and who is making what decisions and for whom. Even in cities like Boston—cities with enlightened, open leadership—there is a residue of distrust and fear, hardened by years of neighborhoods or audiences being ignored, misunderstood, or feeling excluded entirely from the planning process. These tensions become especially acute today as housing costs soar.

This sense of alienation was underscored two months later at a daylong discussion “Design, Development, and Democracy,” which dove headlong into these tensions. Architects and planners, community advocates and activists, and academics and city officials focused a series of discussions on how we might drive a more inclusive development process in our city.

“I’ve been fighting the [Boston Redevelopment Authority] for 30 years,” charged Chinese Progressive Association’s Lydia Lowe, by means of introduction. The longtime Chinatown organizer shared the stage at the Bruce C. Bolling Municipal Building in Roxbury with BRA board member Ted Landmark ASSOC. AIA and South End Technology Center’s Mel King, frequent collaborators who have tackled equity issues for decades but who found themselves on opposite sides of the current power equation.

In a heated discussion, at times raw and deeply felt, the vast gap between decision makers in power positions who are striving to do well and the on-the-street activists who feel that their voices are muted and their concerns are ignored, was palpably evident.

If we hope to shape an equitable city, what will it take to change both reality and perception, especially attitudes several generations in the making?

GRETCHEN RABINKIN AIA leads the Community Design Resource Center at the BSA Foundation and is civic design director at the Boston Society of Architects.



MORE ONLINE

The Black in Design conference is posted on YouTube.

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Inspired by Boston's focus on its first citywide plan in 50 years, *ArchitectureBoston* kicks off a year of issues that will examine different aspects of planning. On the following pages, At Issue surveys five strategies of urban design—from reclaiming green spaces to leveraging cultural sensibilities—that shape cities and stimulate renewal.

LESSON PLANS

PHILADELPHIA

HOW TO PLANT A SEED

by Ashley Hahn

There are six green spaces within a five-minute walk of my South Philadelphia stoop. The closest is a pocket park two blocks south, facing narrow streets lined with row houses. It is a leafy refuge, a common ground where young families play, old folks catch up on benches, neighbors garden, and dogs romp. It's also the reason I chose this neighborhood 10 years ago.

That everyone should live in close proximity to green space is a deceptively simple idea. Green is good. Unfortunately, too many Philadelphians don't have the same easy access to nature, and adding new parks is hard because Philly is a dense, old city. But the city's last mayor, Michael Nutter, had the seed of an idea.

In his 2008 inaugural address, Nutter vowed to make Philadelphia America's "greenest city"—an ambition rivaling William Penn's vision of the city as a "greene country towne." Philadelphia released its first sustainability agenda in 2009, including

these "equity" targets: create at least 500 new greened acres, plant 300,000 trees, and ensure that every Philadelphian has access to open space within a 10-minute walk from home.

Philadelphia is roughly 13 percent parkland. But after Nutter took office, planners identified five dense areas, home to 200,000 people, where the nearest green space is more than a half-mile away. The city focused its work in these neighborhoods, seizing rare opportunities to build parks and to "green" other public spaces such as schools.

Now kids going to schools like William Dick Elementary in North Philly have a green schoolyard, where outdoor play and learning is richer, rain gardens capture runoff, and new trees add shade. In the Hawthorne neighborhood, residents have a lush new park that has become a community hub, realized as part of a public housing redevelopment project. In Kensington, the "Big Green Block" links a school, recreation center, park, and streetscape



HAWTHORNE
NEIGHBORHOOD

through green infrastructure. Citywide, once-vacant lots are thriving as urban farms, community gardens, and orchards that beautify blocks while fighting food insecurity. Along the Delaware and Schuylkill rivers, new parks and trails are changing our waterfronts.

Today 90 percent of Philly residents have walkable access to open space, up from 82 percent in 2010. More than 581 acres were greened, and more than 120,000 trees have been planted.

Impressively, all this was realized despite the recession's municipal belt-tightening. That has been possible partly because green amenities hit multiple policy goals. Recreation programs serve kids after school and encourage active lifestyles. Green spaces help cool the city and soak up stormwater. Philly-based studies have linked greening to increased personal well-being, decreased crime, and reduced blight.

The background for these green gains has been

our city's planning renaissance and a uniquely collaborative spirit. Since 2008, Philadelphia has adopted several interrelated plans that share green genes, including a new comprehensive plan, sustainability agenda, and an agreement with the Environmental Protection Agency to manage city stormwater using green infrastructure. Strong nonprofit partners and diverse funding sources, including local and national philanthropies, have helped stretch city resources further. Within government, shared goals have led city departments like Water and Streets to work collaboratively with Planning and Parks & Recreation instead of waging turf wars.

By prioritizing walkable access to open space, particularly in underserved neighborhoods, the city had made a powerful commitment to closing gaps in public space investment and ensuring that sustainability targets reach all communities. Just 10 percent more to go. ■

ASHLEY HAHN is a Philadelphia-based writer focused on planning, preservation, and public space. She is an editor of PlanPhilly.com, a project of the public radio station WHYY.

ABOVE

Hawthorne Park, by Lager Raabe Skafte Landscape Architects, provides lawns for visitors and plant beds that curve along its midsection. Photo: R. Kennedy for Visit Philadelphia®

LOS ANGELES

THE WISDOM OF CULTURE

by Jeremy Liu

JEREMY LIU, former executive director of the East Bay Asian Local Development Corporation in Oakland, California, is a cofounder of Creative Ecology Partners, a design studio and incubator for urban, economic, and community development innovation, and managing partner of Creative Development Partners, a real estate development and investment company in San Francisco.

ABOVE

Japanese Village Plaza in Little Tokyo, designed by David Hyun. Photo: Jakob N. Layman



We all live somewhere, which means we reside, work, play, learn, worship, shop, make, laugh, love, cry, and return to specific places. Like many other ethnic-based neighborhoods, Little Tokyo in Los Angeles is where all these acts of living collide and collapse into *one* place, where these layers support the individual, families, and the community through culture.

I first learned about the potential for a human-centered approach to urban development when I directed the Asian Community Development Corporation in Boston's Chinatown 10 years ago. We developed four-bedroom apartments as affordable housing because immigrant Chinese families often include three or even four generations in one household. We insisted on home ownership opportunities alongside home buyer education and financial trainings. We supported physical improvements to community gardens while organizing Chinese-speaking elderly gardeners to play a leadership role in their management.

We formalized this "cultural" approach to community development by piloting the Human Development Overlay District concept that was conceived by the Environmental Simulation Center in New York. Unlike typical overlay districts that commonly focus on physical development, this method focuses attention on health, access to jobs and economic opportunity, and social supports.

As an urban planner, when I think of Little Tokyo, I consider its significance as probably the most vibrant of the three remaining "Japantowns" in the United States, but when I experience the area directly, I'm drawn to the overlapping layers of culture, commerce, people, and place. Low-income and senior residents shop and socialize in the small businesses on East 1st Street, while across the street Japanese tourists board and alight from an everpresent line of tour buses at the Miyako Hotel. Clusters of teenagers ranging from fifth-plus

generation Japanese Americans to first-generation Korean Americans find their bubble tea in between the Japanese Village Plaza and the Japanese American National Museum. Executives from modern corporations with ties to Japan stride side by side with monks from Koyasan Buddhist Temple, one of the oldest in the United States.

To align their aspirations through the neighborhood's designation as a cultural eco-district, community organizations and residents worked with the city to create the Little Tokyo Community Design Overlay. In the words of Thomas Yee, director of planning for the neighborhood's Service Center Community Development Corporation: "[Sustainable Little Tokyo] is rooted in long-held cultural and community values passed down from generation to generation. We lifted fundamental community values like *mottainai* (what a shame to waste), *kodomono tameni* (for future generations), and *banbutsu* (interconnectedness) into a contemporary environmental context."

These perspectives are merging as planners, developers, activists, and cultural producers learn about how people shape the places where they live through their behaviors, patterns of use, and expressions. Expression is really key: Culture, as expressed through art, performance, rituals, food, and traditions, is how people can individually and collectively shape a place. The best creative placemaking efforts involve cultural organizations and artists who shape community development in ways that accelerate equity and increase the effectiveness of place-based strategies.

From new understandings of the dimensions of health as a social construct to culture as a reservoir of strength, the human development approach offers a framework to planning, development, and resiliency that can leverage and address the complexity of people and place together. ■

OKLAHOMA CITY

A PENNY EARNED

by Mick Cornett

Former Oklahoma City Mayor Ron Norick, having swung and missed at an economic development opportunity in the early 1990s, had a big idea. What if, instead of chasing after businesses with economic incentives, a city invested in *itself* and created the kind of community that would attract smart, creative young people—which would, in turn, attract businesses?

Norick developed the city's Metropolitan Area Projects (MAPS) initiative—a 1 cent sales tax with a start and end date and a list of capital projects to be built—designed to enhance the city's quality of life and generate private sector investment. Norick's pitch to citizens was simple: Even if MAPS didn't result in new businesses moving here, we'd have a better community for our residents. To the tune of \$350 million, the voters passed MAPS in 1993, and Oklahoma City's renaissance began.

With the city moving in the right direction, the next mayor, Kirk Humphreys, realized the district's schools were in a state of disrepair and needed attention. The school system lacked the bonding capacity or public support to address it. Humphreys proposed and voters approved a \$700 million MAPS for Kids, a second iteration of the penny sales tax, which would be used to renovate or build more than 70 inner-city schools.

Today, a third mayor is completing the final projects of MAPS for Kids. In addition to rebuilding our school system, MAPS for Kids added a brand new elementary school in the heart of the downtown business district. It's not uncommon to see 20 children and their teachers walking through downtown en route to a visit to the OKC Museum of Art, The Oklahoma City National Memorial and Museum, or other downtown points of interest.

We're often asked how, in a very conservative state, we are able to pass tax increases. An important aspect of the MAPS program is that the city pays cash for the capital projects. The money is collected, and the projects are built without debt. The success of the program has earned the voters' trust, and they seem to appreciate the fiscally conservative, debt-free design of MAPS.

After a community-wide conversation on health and wellness prompted by our decision to put the entire city on a diet, the conversation turned toward creating a built environment that nudged

people toward active lifestyles. A \$777 million MAPS 3 package that included bike trails, sidewalks, a 70-acre city park, senior wellness centers, a world-class white-water kayaking course, and public transit was passed by voters in 2009.

With all projects fully funded through MAPS, much of the work on trails and sidewalks is under way. The white-water course opens in the spring, in time for US Olympics trials. One of the four senior wellness centers is under construction, and we'll break ground on the park and modern streetcar system next year.

In each case, we had the advantages of some degree of desperation—a struggling economy, crumbling school infrastructure, and a battle with obesity—coupled with civic leaders with vision and a voting public willing to roll up its collective sleeves to work together and build a better community.

In the process, we've realized that people *used* to go where the jobs were. Today, Oklahoma City is mapping its future on the belief that people move to places that offer a high quality of life, with walkable streets, public transit, the arts, professional sports, and great public spaces. And the jobs follow the people. ■

MICK CORNETT, mayor of Oklahoma City, is currently serving his fourth term. He will become president of the US Conference of Mayors in June.

BELOW

The Boathouse District's riverfront buildings for community programs, including white-water rafting and kayaking, by Elliot & Associates Architects. Photo: Georgia Read



HOUSTON

BORN ON THE BAYOU

by David Gamble AIA and Patty Heyda

DAVID GAMBLE AIA and PATTY HEYDA are architects and urban designers based in Boston and St. Louis, respectively. This essay is adapted from their book, *Rebuilding the American City: Design and Strategy for the 21st Century Urban Core*, published by Routledge Press in November 2015.

BELOW

The Sabine Promenade, designed by SWA Group, improves local ecology and waterfront access for Houston. Photo: William Tatham/SWA Group



Below the skyscrapers and highway flyovers of this booming port city a water system winds, barely visible yet following the original logic of Houston's topography. These tributaries, called "bayous" in the South, have become the focus of an extensive planning effort that has repositioned a neglected corridor into a center of recreational and cultural life.

Like other bayous in Houston, the Buffalo Bayou was for decades considered little more than a sewer and water drainage system, best avoided by residents. It meanders approximately 30 feet below grade through the center of downtown, threaded between the maze of highway support columns and cutting across city blocks. As a principal drainage system for much of the city, it carries substantial amounts of water, but still occasionally becomes the site of major flooding.

In 1986, local leaders created the nonprofit Buffalo Bayou Partnership to oversee improvement projects and advocate for the area, but urgency crystallized in 2001, when tropical storm Allison hit Houston, causing record flooding in the downtown and becoming the costliest (nonhurricane) rain event in US history. With perfect timing, the "Buffalo Bayou and Beyond" plan was released in 2002, led by Boston-based Thompson Design Group. The planning effort, which still guides work today, anchors a paradigm shift in Houstonians' mental maps of their city.

The bayou was often inundated with trash, a result of Houston's street-water drainage system that collects runoff and debris and empties it into the creek. A

bright pink Skimmer Boat (christened *Mighty-Tidy*) purchased in partnership with the Port of Houston Authority, helped manage the recurring litter while adding visibility. Through this boat—and other advocacy measures such as canoe races, dragon boat festivals, tree planting programs, and community service cleanups—attention turned to an area of the city that most locals didn't even know existed.

Much of the public funding for the Buffalo Bayou project was supplemented through foundation partnerships and private donations. Although not unique in American cities, it stands out in Houston, a city with many Fortune 500 oil and gas companies. The city's characteristically conservative political economy lends itself to a climate where large companies *anticipate* playing substantial philanthropic roles in city building. The robust private sector aid seems to enable a kind of unspoken commitment to keep government presence small in rebuilding affairs—hence, also in corporate affairs.

While land acquisition and cleanup efforts in the bayou system continue, some more highly visible park segments have been created downtown. In 2010, Houston-based landscape architects SWA Group designed and completed the first of these, called the Sabine Promenade. This 1.2-mile stretch has become a below-grade link, connecting parts of the downtown that were previously fragmented by highway ramps.

The design features of the Sabine Promenade follow clues from the infrastructure above. Instead of shielding users from the gritty character of the roadways, trails twist and bend around columns as needed to move continuously through the space. The result is a multisensory environment, amplified by the rumble of trucks and traffic above.

What separates the Sabine Promenade from other contemporary open space investments is its ambition to take advantage of a degraded space, the kind found in almost any American city, then capitalize on the water course below. Such marginal spaces are seldom confronted or transformed. But in Houston—a city known for its free-for-all building environment with no traditional zoning laws—the bayou project serves as a new connective tissue. At local and regional scales, it provides a cohesive, environmentally forward gesture that recenters the haphazard. ■





DETROIT

WELCOME TO GILBERTVILLE

by John Gallagher

All cities have their corporate benefactors, but few enjoy one quite like Detroit's Dan Gilbert. Founder and chairman of Quicken Loans, the online mortgage giant, Gilbert moved his corporate headquarters from a suburban office park to downtown Detroit in mid-2010. Fired by a vision of remaking Detroit's tattered image, he embarked on a shopping spree for undervalued skyscrapers, snapping up dozens of properties in the city's core.

Gilbert's holdings now include some of Detroit's most notable architectural landmarks, including One Woodward, First National, Chase Tower, and Book Building. He owns the Greektown Casino, and he controls through master leases virtually all of the retail space along Woodward Avenue, the city's main street. His holdings now total nearly 100 properties, and *Forbes* magazine estimates his wealth at \$3.8 billion.

That he was able to grab so much so fast says as much about the depressed values of Detroit real estate as it does about Gilbert's own outsized ambitions. But it also upends the usual model of downtown redevelopment, which relies on the local municipality wooing a host of different developers with generous tax breaks on a project-by-project basis. Perhaps Gilbert is a version of the "great man" theory of history: that one visionary individual wielding power and money can do as much to stimulate growth as any city planning commission could.

To be sure, not all Detroiters are convinced that this "great man" is also a good man. That so much has happened in just five years has left Detroiters a little stunned. Critics grumble about one man controlling so much, and his focus on downtown has spurred a gentrification debate similar to (if not yet on the scale of) that taking place in other cities.

Even so, Gilbert, 54, retains the solid backing of Detroit's political and business classes. And although he's not the only important property owner or player in Detroit, it's getting hard to argue with the nickname that wags are attaching to the city's central core: "Gilbertville."

Many of the properties he purchased were half-filled at best when Gilbert got them. Today, the 1,500-person workforce he brought downtown with him in 2010 has swelled to about 12,000, and those underused downtown towers have filled up with educated millennials with disposable incomes.

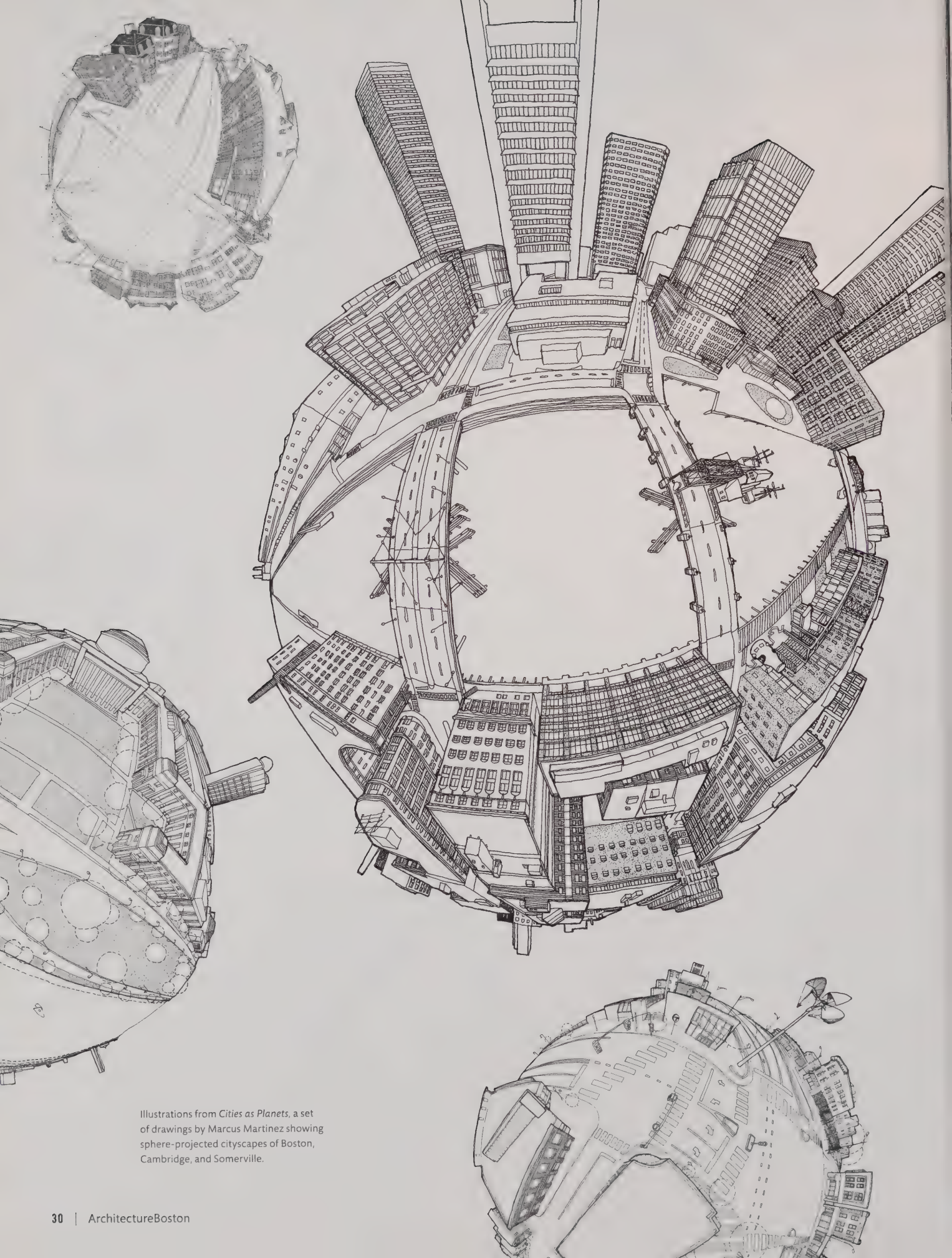
Teaming with Project for Public Spaces in New York City, Gilbert has enlivened Detroit's downtown with placemaking tactics that include a beach volleyball patch in summer and a host of new retailers, coffee shops, and eateries. Also in the works: a signature architectural statement now being designed by SHoP Architects for an important site once occupied by Detroit's iconic Hudson's department store, which was imploded in 1998.

Gilbert has moved into the civic space, too. He co-chaired the city's blight removal task force that strategized how to deal with the city's thousands of vacant eyesores. He helped pay for the much-praised Motor City Mapping endeavor that created the city's most accurate database ever of its 380,000 or so parcels. He was a financial contributor to Detroit's "grand bargain," the philanthropic effort to save the pensions of municipal retirees and the art collection at the Detroit Institute of Arts during the city's recent bankruptcy. And he is a sponsor of the city's M-1 RAIL streetcar line, due to begin operation in 2017. When that streetcar service starts, it will be under a yet-to-be-revealed name that Gilbert will get to choose—since he also bought the naming rights. ■

JOHN GALLAGHER is a business reporter and architecture critic for *The Detroit Free Press*.

ABOVE

Rendering of a development proposed for the site of Hudson's department store, designed by SHoP Architects and Hamilton Anderson Associates. Image: Rock Ventures/SHoP Architects



Illustrations from *Cities as Planets*, a set of drawings by Marcus Martinez showing sphere-projected cityscapes of Boston, Cambridge, and Somerville.

THE ONCE AND FUTURE CITY

WITH BOSTON ON THE RISE, LET'S DREAM BIG AGAIN

by Alex Krieger FAIA

As Boston nears its 400th anniversary, it is a pleasure to be in the city. Entrepreneurs and innovators keep the local economy humming. Young professionals, bikes at their ready, and empty nesters arriving with some means, populate newly deemed cool neighborhoods. Tourists fill cafes, sidewalks, and hotels, marveling that while history is found around most corners, contemporary culture is flourishing, too. Construction cranes are many and at work. The weather... well... nevermind that. The city is thriving. As Mayor Martin Walsh's Imagine Boston 2030 initiative proceeds, it seems a good time to plan. But what should we plan for?

It is exciting to observe the next sleek residential tower breaking ground, bemused though we may be about the rent or cost of a unit. Cities do not, however, derive benefit from private investment alone, and prosperous times can bring about complacency about civic ambitions. What we could use is some of the audacity of action that compelled the city forward at other moments of its history. The paradox is that periods of disinvestment rather than prosperity have tended to produce the city's most ambitious undertakings. Perhaps Imagine Boston 2030 can offer an exercise in planning from strength rather than desperation, "civic chutzpah" that is not the product of hard times.

By the end of 2015, more than 80 major projects were under way, totaling more than \$7 billion in construction value. What more might a city wish? Well, the 80 represent solid private enterprise, primarily for well-to-do sectors of the economy; public purpose (beyond growth) is not a primary motive. How will the completion of these, and the start of the next 80, help Boston's broad citizenry? Will the city become more desirable, affordable, equitable by the year 2030, or sooner? Reading about the virtues of a penthouse overlooking the Back Bay, available to rent for \$35,000 a month, some anxiety about the future accompanies the sense of pride in how far Boston has come since its last comprehensive plan in 1965.

A steady stream of private investment is essential for any city. But can it be channeled for greater public good? Beyond welcoming development, is our public sector keeping up with

its responsibilities, with sufficient policy and planning focused on housing affordability, transit expansion, environmental resilience, education and career training, regional cooperation, and the like? These are the questions that come to mind while scanning the forest of construction cranes on the skyline.

It is well to remember that Boston is the city that quadrupled its landmass by creating developable land from mud flats and unnavigable shoals. An elegant neighborhood was built by filling in the Back Bay of the Charles River, while solving a citywide sewage crisis. If there is a contemporary counterpart, it is not yet the Innovation District. Doubts grow whether it can become so, perceived as soulless and already traffic-congested, despite still empty adjacent acres.

Where is the current effort comparable to the building of America's first subway more than a century ago? How about the dedication required to create an Emerald Necklace, then inventing a commission for conservation and infrastructure management, becoming the basis for the nation's first regional plan? Bostonians invented the idea of a Charles River Reservation, designed the Esplanade, and gradually lined the river's edge with miles of public places and trails. We constructed a massive central artery, recognized it as a problem and ultimately depressed it while widening it. In the process, the city gained nearly 300 acres of parkland, in addition to the Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Greenway.

These are some of the notable transformations the city has undertaken, matched by a history of technological achievement: from clipper ships to the invention of the telephone to advancing radar research and introducing the microwave oven to bringing forth the computer age to accommodating one of the world's largest concentrations of educational, research, and healthcare institutions.

In contrast, last winter's revelation of the scope of deferred maintenance for the MBTA is making it difficult to move ahead with the rather modest expansion of a Somerville-bound Green Line. Always further away is another necessary transit addition. The long-anticipated "Urban Ring" is key to a city in which not everyone is heading downtown. Realizing it would alleviate substantial pressure on the T by diminishing the all-too-frequent



LEFT

Aerial view of the Public Garden in Boston. Photo: Steve Dunwell

BOTTOM RIGHT

Detail of the Back Bay in Boston, photographed from the 33rd floor of the Hancock tower. Photo: Rick Berk/Creative Commons

need to use two of its spokes to get to one's destination. Highway engineers long ago figured out the importance of circumferential movement across a contemporary urban territory. Should we not move ahead on a transit equivalent of Route 128? For a culture that no longer sees suburban acreage as necessary for the advancement of technology, is there doubt that a circumferential transit line would benefit Boston as "America's Technology Highway" did for the region a half-century ago? A period of local prosperity, at least as evidenced by all that construction, and with growing interest in urban living, should enable the advance of needed infrastructure such as the transit ring.

Cities as unlikely as Dallas and Phoenix are investing substantially in transit. It would be terrific if Imagine Boston 2030 could promote projects like the Urban Ring, even with funding not immediately apparent. No goal, no gain, to paraphrase our stalwart marathoning community.

With pride we note Boston's 60,000 gain in population over 15 years and expect another 50,000 or more by 2030. How will the newcomers move about, and will they be able to afford to stay? The city's destiny seems entwined with today's millennial generation, admired for shifting away from America's century-long fascination with suburban living. Approaching 2030, today's millennials will be in the thick of career and family nurturing, their needs and preferences likely to alter. It is today's school-age population—not all of whom will become app designers, venture capitalists, or celebrity chefs—who will be making their career and dwelling decisions nearer to 2030. How well we provide them with adequate mobility, sufficient job options, and affordable housing will determine their future allegiance to Boston. The current "return to the city" trend is not permanently assured, especially as the cost of living in Boston spirals upward seemingly exponentially. A clue arrives with the US census reporting that today a higher percentage of millennials lives with their parents than during the depth of the recent recession.

Times do change. Between 1950 and 1960, while local high schoolers were reading a civics textbook titled *Surging Cities*, Boston shed more than 100,000 residents! By the end of the 1970s, another 150,000 Bostonians would flee.

A 1960s column in *The Boston Globe* described "A hapless backwater, a tumbledown has-been among cities." The surge was out of town.

Amid the un-surge city, this 287-page textbook was intended to develop "among the young citizens of Greater Boston a better understanding of planning problems and encouraging a broader participation in their solution." It is a terrific read not only because of the audience for whom it was intended; but also because today's young citizens would benefit from its civics lessons. *Surging Cities* is worth rereading for the powerful way in which it advocates urban planning—and public investment—as means to a better urban future.

Faced with a rapidly diminishing tax base and people and jobs heading to the burbs or the Sunbelt, city leaders placed faith in public initiatives: The federal dollars beginning to accompany urban renewal programs. Hindsight questions the wisdom of allocating the majority of those funds to highway expansion and "slum" clearance. But some of the audacity of that period would be useful today.

Evoking the urban renewal era while discussing the present is likely to be misunderstood. There is no desire for a return to those top-down, citizen input-free, neighborhood-eradicating processes. At mid-20th century, the near total absence of private investment necessitated radical action. Boston's leaders hoped public works—like a modern government center for the "Cradle of Liberty"—would reverse the city's long declining fortunes.

With today's better fortunes, why not enlarge possibilities? Let's stop resting on the laurels, or regrets about the costs, of the Big Dig. Let's start imagining—reaching for—the next "Big Dig."

- If, as reported, the shortfall for "fixing" the MBTA is already an unimaginable \$5 to \$6 billion, let's add a modest 15 percent and decide that a transit line to intercept the "spokes of the hub" must be part of the necessary fix. And if not the Urban Ring, how about at least the Bus Rapid Transit long promised for that huge expanse of Roxbury/Dorchester that has only a few bus lines?

- Let's conceive and argue for a regional planning authority with actual authority. Few of our pressing issues, whether traffic management, housing affordability, climate change preparation, or resource conservation are solvable at the level of individual municipalities.

- Let's develop neighborhood support for greater density, without which accommodating population growth will be difficult for a city of a mere 48 square miles. Given citizens' concern about the impact of density, a "carrot" may be required. How about if neighborhood density increases by some preestablished percentage, property taxes in that neighborhood would be guaranteed to remain stable for a time or be reduced?

- Let's reassess the various restrictions along the Harbor that call for "water-dependent uses." It may be time to acknowledge that the proverbial longshoremen are unlikely to return in droves. For a postindustrial century encouraging "uses attracted to and enhanced by proximity to water" might be a more beneficial policy.

- Let's transform the Emerald Necklace into an Emerald Network for biking, walking, and recreating (as the Livable Streets Alliance campaigns do) so that the strands of a regional open space network reach every neighborhood, giving every citizen ready access to its pleasures.

- Let's invent a tax (tough word, yes) on luxury construction by revisiting and expanding the linkage programs, as Mayor Walsh recently did by increasing developer fees for workforce housing. Beyond affordable housing, linkage fees can be a mechanism for accruing resources to advance other public realm needs not readily provided by the market.

- Let's strengthen the Boston Redevelopment Authority instead of constantly threatening to dismantle it. Organize it to enable the proper management of today's

complex public/private development and fiscal partnerships. This is unlikely to be done better by separating long-range planning from economic development, zoning administration, and neighborhood urban design initiatives. Such disaggregation will more likely produce staff redundancy, confusion regarding responsibility, and less cooperation.

It is today's school-age population—not all of whom will become app designers or celebrity chefs—who will be making their career and dwelling decisions in 2030.

- Let's consider how a more imaginative—but predictable—regulatory and zoning framework would incentivize desirable outcomes. Other cities have incorporated innovative ideas such as transfer of development rights, multiple forms of incentive zoning, and new ways of thinking that focus more on the scale of buildings and forms of neighborhoods than on separating uses. Let's give intelligent zoning a try, instead of perpetuating the current system of posturing and bartering.

Some of these may seem difficult, naïve, or utopian, somewhat like founding "a shining city upon a hill," whose citizens, Governor Winthrop hoped, would "bear one another's burdens." Easing burdens on those who wish to come or remain in Boston is this generation's challenge. Still young by comparison to much of the world, Boston is nevertheless one of the world's admired cities. To remain so into its fifth century will require prioritizing the "building up" of the things urban dwellers value and share, our public realm. For true urban well-being, that is as important as ever-appreciating real estate. ■





BRING ON THE JOY

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT
STRATEGIES IN
THE AGE OF TWITTER



ABOVE

For a project in Maine, the author lived in the neighborhood and held charettes, presentations, and workshops in his cottage. Illustration: Adapted by Stoltze Design from a drawing by Russell Preston

by Russell Preston

In New England, changing zoning is more difficult than sending someone to the moon. In the spring of 2015, Dan Bacon, planning director for Scarborough, Maine, asked for help implementing a better zoning code for Higgins Beach, a picturesque community of largely seasonal residents. Outdated regulations were putting its historic character in jeopardy. Different tactics were needed to successfully change the zoning before the next season of construction.

The hard task was helping the residents understand that they controlled future development with their own regulations. Change like this takes trust, and my team did not have months to build that trust. The best tactic? Become locals. We decided to live in the neighborhood, and in June of 2015, we rented a cottage with a large living room to host a multiday planning charette. Every meeting, presentation, and workshop was held in that cottage.

With our open-door policy, it was not uncommon to come downstairs in the morning to find the dining-room table already filled with residents talking about the future of their neighborhood over breakfast. This all-access approach allowed us to educate in a much more meaningful way than a typical public meeting held on a Thursday evening in a school cafeteria. We could take impromptu walking tours to help neighbors see their community with new eyes. Late into the evening, we would talk on the porch with people who were curious as to what was

going on. It didn't take long before we were welcomed into the fold with sandwiches and blueberry pies.

What does it really mean to engage the public? Engagement has become so much more than just a required step to a planning process. When engagement is actually *the* process, one asks different questions, solves problems more collaboratively, and starts a genuine dialogue with the community—letting plans emerge that previously might never have been possible.

Crucial to this process in the Higgins Beach experience was allowing the community to criticize what they saw being drawn. These “pin-up” sessions, similar to a design school critique, were essentially listening labs, after which we would make changes, present refinements, and repeatedly alter the proposal. We held the final “pin-up” on the front lawn of the cottage on a Sunday morning, complete with fresh local donuts. On December 2, 2015, six months from the start of the process, the new zoning code for the neighborhood was formally adopted.

This approach to planning is happening all over the country. The Tennessee Brewery, a significant historical complex in Memphis, ceased operations in 1954. In the spring of 2014, when the then owners announced their desire to demolish it, a team of eight local “tacticians” mobilized to save the building. Naming the effort “Tennessee Brewery Untapped,” they envisioned a pop-up restaurant, a bar, a game room, a



beer garden, and an event courtyard for the space; for six weeks during the summer—for the first time in a generation—people were able to drink beer there again.

More than 25,000 people came through the doors to experience this pop-up. The community was asked to help with cleanup, building furniture and fixtures for the space, an effort organized through its Facebook page. Reaching thousands of “likes” within hours earned media coverage and a clever social media presence that used a witty approach with such lines as “We haven’t sent beer out of here since 1954.” Twitter and Instagram posts featured familiar graffiti art found on the brewery as imagery in the marketing. The “Untapped” event accomplished what had not been possible for decades: It brought new life to this once-forgotten place.

“Untapped” became a platform where a broad range of community discussion occurred, including how to save the building. Tommy Pacello, then a member of Memphis’ Mayor’s Institute for Excellence in Government, says “Art and music played a key role in programming the event space. We also were deliberate about mixing in lectures and meet-ups as a way to capture the creativity of Memphians in making the space vibrant.” “Untapped” was so successful that an unsanctioned pop-up trolley stop was installed by the team, including a station stop with signage adorned with the quote “your designated driver,” hinting at the importance of public transit in the city. The “tacticians” tracked everything—attendance, income, comments, the most photographed elements of the space—and this people-focused approach started a new conversation about historic preservation in Memphis.

Before the pop-up closed, a local developer stepped forward to explore redevelopment. By November of 2014, he had purchased the property, saving the building from demolition. Even more amazing: The \$25,000 used to produce the event created a 290 percent return on that investment; then, in August of 2015, plans were unveiled for a \$27.5 million redevelopment of the complex.

To help people create authentic places, put them at the center of the process. To facilitate a deeper dialogue between the community and professionals on a project—whether it’s a new public plaza or a citywide plan—take the role of the urbanist, and work at the intersection of planning, place-making, design, and real estate development. Forget the neighborhood meeting in the church basement at 7 p.m. on a school night.

Converting an existing parking lot to a public plaza seems like a no-brainer in a transit-served neighborhood such as Davis Square in Somerville, Massachusetts. Yet when city officials first presented the idea to a group of stakeholders, it was rejected. Why?

It is human nature to fear the unknown. Even no-brainer ideas can be dismissed. When the city asked for help with a new neighborhood plan, my team built the plaza as a demonstration and then asked the public what they thought about it. During the design charrette’s three days, the pop-up plaza was programmed with food, music, comfy seating, and carnival acrobats. We tested how well the parking lot performed as a plaza by programming it intensely.

Tactical urbanism is not about creating a spectacle. The planning team camped out in the plaza and engaged in conversations—with moms with their kids, older folks, professionals on their lunch breaks. And with that relaxed setting as the backdrop, residents visited the design studio set up in the vacant storefront next to the plaza. We made it fun. In turn, people who usually never participate in planning gave us valuable input on their neighborhood.

Why can’t planning the future of our neighborhoods actually be a pleasant experience? Most public meetings are organized in a fashion that fosters confrontation. Brad Rawson, now the director of transportation and infrastructure for Somerville, brought his band to the pop-up plaza and played music. The lesson here: Be creative, involve your assets in a genuine way, help people feel comfortable, and show them a possible future. Bring on the joy.

Tactical urbanism shows stakeholders how transformative change can be and provides planners critical feedback on how proposals can be made better. When the Davis Square community saw a rendering of what it had already experienced, it wasn’t a stretch to then think about having new development around the plaza and activities in the space, instead of parking. Davis Square’s Farmers Market wanted a more prominent location in the neighborhood to help increase vendor sales. What better place to suggest they move than to the new plaza? Change can be accepted if approached with the right tactics. With an iterative process, it’s possible to discover more opportunities to solve a community’s complex problems. The plaza is now becoming a reality.

The pop-up plaza is just one example of how Somerville is reinventing neighborhood planning. George Proakis, its planning director, realized that all too often planners host a public process whose outcome they’ve already decided; they

go on to present that outcome and naturally find themselves on the defensive. Proakis and his staff have created an alternative method; Somerville by Design is an approach that incorporates close coordination with the community, sincere discussions, contextual design solutions, and plans that lead to implementation. It has four phases: First, we plan the actual planning together with the community through crowdsourcing. Second, we help the community establish a vision for its future using methods identified during the crowdsourcing. Third, we host a multiday design charrette in the neighborhood, the key being to bring the designers to the community by setting up a temporary studio where we receive real-time feedback from stakeholders. The final stage is to capture the community's excitement by implementing the plan document and testing improvements through short-term installations.

Things don't always go as expected when you take a more iterative, tactical approach to planning. Enlightened public officials who want sincere improvements and are prepared to adapt along the way are key to success. If we guide it correctly, meaningful change begins before the final report is even published. Which brings us back to engagement. When you create a truly engaging process in which joy and authenticity are paramount, the report is not the product. Community-led planning by design is the route to real-world improvements that benefit the lives of people. ■

OPPOSITE

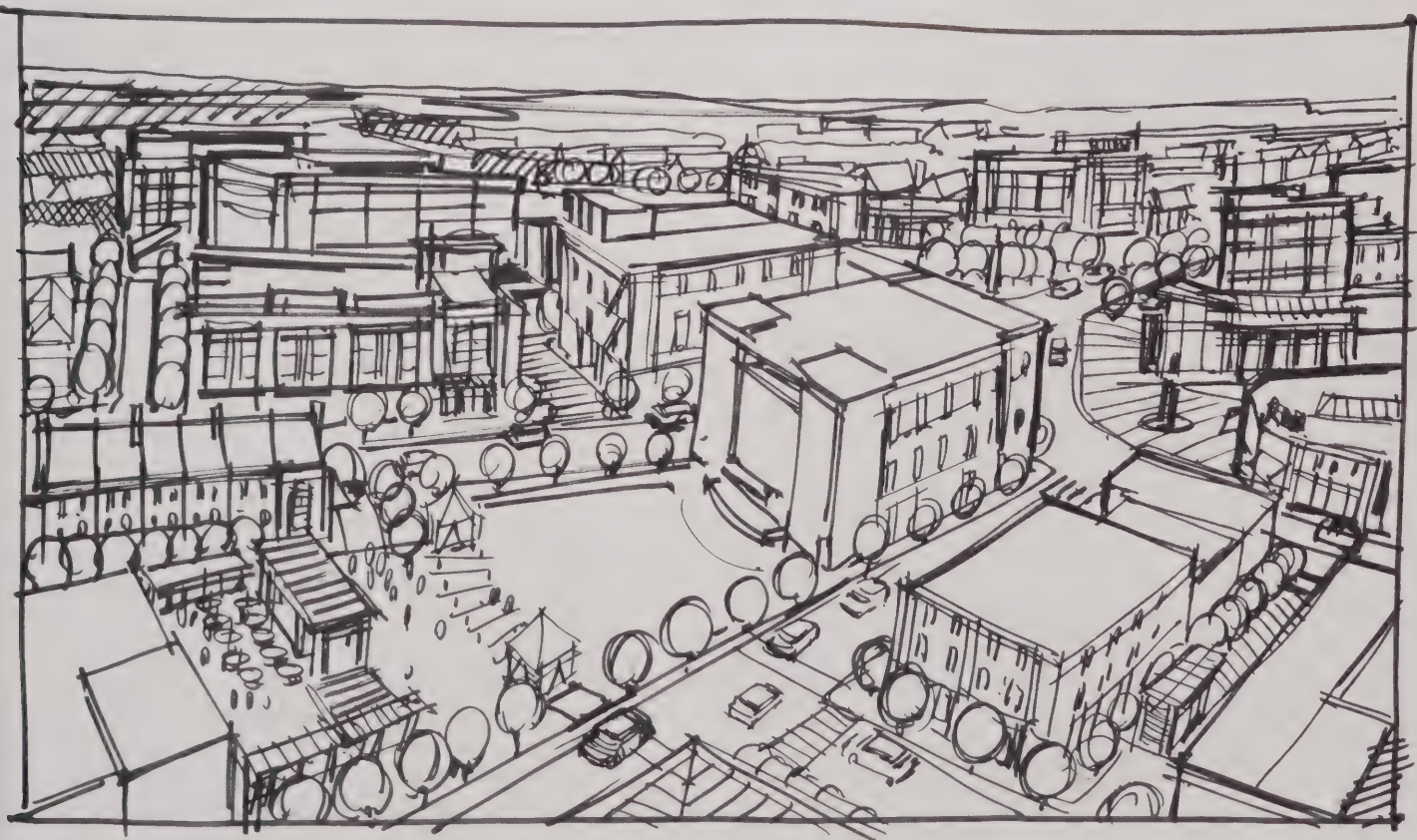
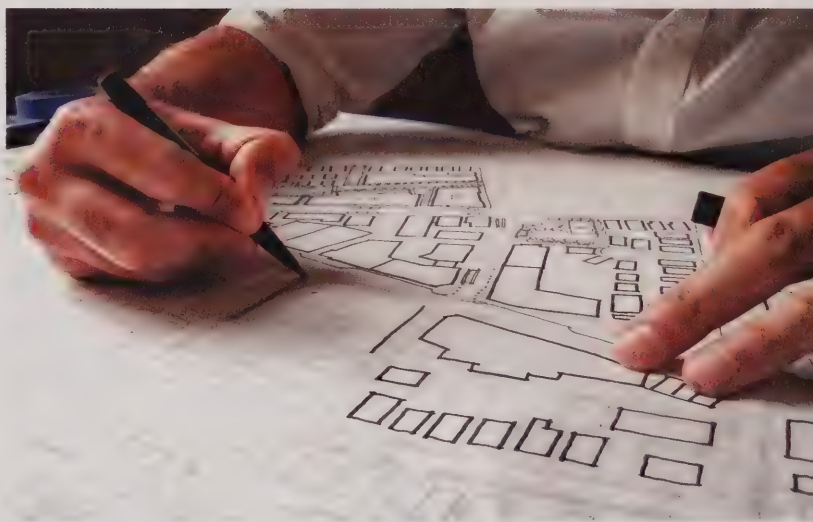
Concept design for the conversion of 12 parking spaces into a new public plaza in Davis Square, Somerville, Massachusetts. Illustration: David Carrico

BELOW

Urban design in progress at the public charrette for Davis Square. Photo: Dan Bartman

BOTTOM

Developing a plan for converting existing surface parking lots into new public space in Davis Square. Illustration: David Carrico



READY OR NOT?

PREPARING FOR OUR CLIMATE FUTURE

by Brian R. Swett

Boston faces a rapidly changing environment unlike anything it has seen in its past four centuries. Fortunately, the city has been an early national leader in weaving climate preparedness into its policies and programs, beginning with its first executive order on climate change in 2007. Building on this foundation, Imagine Boston 2030 can set the city on a course to be effectively carbon neutral by midcentury, while also prepared to survive and thrive in a rapidly changing climate.

Although the Paris climate talks at 2015's end achieved meaningful commitments to greenhouse-gas reductions, the planet is still on a path toward dangerous changes to the natural environment. Boston is at particular risk. The city is expected to experience significant increases in extreme heat waves and intense rain storms. Days over 90 degrees are projected to increase from a current average of 10 per year to 30–60 days by the end of the century.

Since many of its neighborhoods and buildings are built on filled tidelands, Boston is especially vulnerable to sea-level rise. Boston Harbor has risen roughly 10 inches since 1920; current projections indicate an additional sea-level rise of between 2 and 6 feet by the end of century. The costs could be devastating: A 2013 report from the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development says Boston can expect losses of more than \$230 million a year due to coastal flooding, making it the eighth most vulnerable city on the planet.

This threat is especially poignant in East Boston. Home to more than 40,000 residents encompassing the full swath of economic, ethnic, and demographic diversity, this shoreline community has large tracts of land that are vulnerable to flooding. Between Logan Airport and critical highway and MBTA tunnels, more than 250,000 people come through East Boston every day; the airport alone generates \$20 million in daily economic activity.

For several years, the community organization Neighborhood of Affordable Housing (NOAH) has been engaging East Boston's residents in understanding how they can reduce carbon emissions while getting better prepared for climate change. In early 2015, with the financial support of the Kresge Foundation and in partnership with the Urban Land Institute and others, NOAH led a climate resiliency planning process that included community members, business owners, and major institutions such as the Massachusetts Port Authority (Massport) and the state Department of Transportation. Residents learned about simple, low-cost ways to reduce flooding risks in their homes and strategized longer-term ideas for coastal parks and

green infrastructure to protect their community. NOAH recently secured a follow-up grant from Kresge to further develop this approach.

The kind of climate change planning under way in East Boston could be replicated in all neighborhoods and across all sectors of the economy. Rather than envisioning incremental change based only on what is viewed as economically, politically, and technologically possible, the city can set ambitious goals that will achieve environmental sustainability as well as economic and social resilience.

BUILDINGS

Following in the paths of New York, London, and Copenhagen, Boston should aim for buildings that are both *net-zero energy* and *carbon neutral*—that means buildings that produce or purchase enough renewable energy to meet their own energy needs and that remove or offset as much carbon from the atmosphere as they put into it.

Ambitious to be sure, but the city already has precedent-setting sustainability initiatives on which to build, including requirements that all major new buildings be LEED certifiable by the US Green Building Council. It will be important to establish clear expectations about preparedness for new residential, commercial, and industrial buildings, taking into account the ever-evolving nature of expected climate change impacts.

The city's full range of incentives should be deployed. These could include revising zoning to allow for additional height in areas where ground floors could experience flooding, incorporating "living with water" design strategies into zoning, steering project mitigation fees into neighborhood-scale resiliency efforts, and requiring buildings in projected flood zones to locate critical infrastructure out of harm's way. Strategies and incentive programs for adapting existing buildings will be more challenging but equally critical.

Given Boston's many innovative design and engineering firms, the building sector is ripe for creative solutions. A building should be as safe and useful at the end of its life as it is at the beginning; the challenge of climate change is also an opportunity for great design.

TRANSPORTATION

Boston's increasing population needs ways to get around that are affordable, safe, and ever-more carbon efficient. Mayor Martin Walsh's Complete Streets executive order encourages a mix of transportation options, from bikes to bus rapid transit.

But because our current network of roadways and mass transit is so vulnerable to sea-level rise, this is also a critical opportunity to think about how to prepare our transportation infrastructure for the coming storms. There is little point in creating climate-prepared buildings if people can't get to them after a flood or major storm. Such efforts will require close cooperation across jurisdictions, including Massport, the MBTA, and the state Department of Transportation. Boston can plan to be a city less dependent on traditional cars (and parking!) and more supportive of healthy, enjoyable, carbon-efficient, and climate-prepared mobility options that focus on people.

ENERGY

Boston's energy infrastructure has largely been built for the approach of the last century. To decarbonize our energy infrastructure and prepare it for a changing climate requires a wholesale rethinking of our supply, distribution, and end-use efficiency. By midcentury, the city will need to envision solar power covering Boston's rooftops managed by smart microgrids, a conversion from fuel oil and natural gas to super-efficient electric heat pumps or cogeneration steam for heating, the use of cold ocean water to cool our buildings through district-chilled water systems, and the large-scale procurement of wind power and hydropower. The city and its built environment are among the largest users of power in New England. To realize this energy vision, Boston will need to use that consumer power. The decisions made and investments approved by these authorities over the next 15 years will likely define Boston's energy infrastructure and supply options for much of the rest of the century.

WATER AND WASTEWATER

The Boston Water and Sewer Commission and the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority have been leaders at analyzing and planning for climate change vulnerabilities. Imagine Boston 2030 can expand on this work through embracing widespread adoption of green infrastructure solutions, such as the design of small parks and natural areas (sometimes referred to as storm swales) to better absorb rainwater. New York City and Philadelphia have made major commitments to implementing green infrastructure, and Boston should head down the same path. The ongoing restoration of the Muddy River in the Fenway—while falling short of being prepared for major storms—does demonstrate the aesthetic, recreational, and ecosystem value of such approaches; there are many more such opportunities in Boston.

OPEN SPACE

Boston is blessed with one of the nation's greatest networks of urban parks and open spaces. Beyond their beauty and tranquility, parks can help protect against storm surge, absorb precipitation, and reduce the urban heat island effect. Street trees and the urban canopy are critical resources in reducing the effects of heat waves. Planting thousands of trees to reach Boston's goal of a 35 percent tree canopy is not just about the beauty of our streets; the air quality and cooling benefits will be critical for Bostonians' health and well-being as we encounter our hot new climate in the decades to come.

NEIGHBORHOODS

Neighborhood-scale solutions undoubtedly will be a necessary element of preparing Boston for climate change as well as getting to carbon neutrality. In the Talbot-Norfolk Triangle section of Dorchester, residents have been working to develop the city's first eco-district, looking to create a new model of green and equitable redevelopment. Efforts include retrofitting an older housing stock to save energy costs and transforming vacant lots into community green spaces. The city's Climate Ready Boston program is currently working to identify resiliency districts and critical areas for preparedness planning at a local scale.

THE PATH FORWARD

Given what we know now, it is clear that climate change cannot be a separate planning consideration or a secondary principle. Boston has significant support from the private sector, civic society, and the citizenry in embracing the importance of climate change, and the city is actively participating in global groups on this topic, including the C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group. Imagine Boston 2030 is a profound opportunity to bring all these efforts together into a truly comprehensive strategy for the city's future in a changing climate. Nothing less than Boston's 500th birthday is at stake. ■

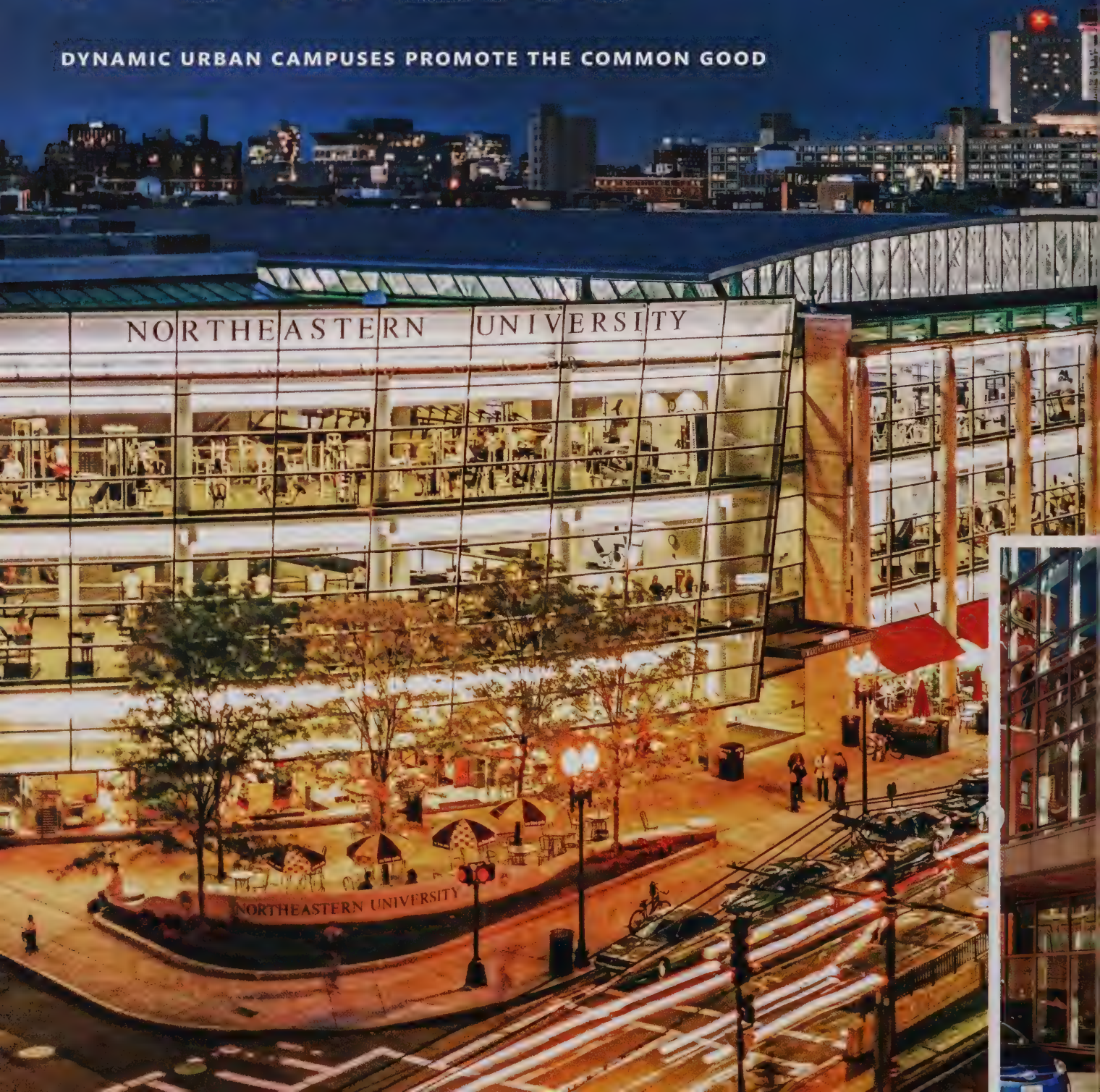
BELOW

"House," from *Natural Act*, a series of collages by Merve Özasan that questions the relationship between nature and humanity. Image: Courtesy of the artist



IVORY POWERS

DYNAMIC URBAN CAMPUSES PROMOTE THE COMMON GOOD





by Ann Beha FAIA

Our city is shared space. Our urban blender mixes universities, hospitals, neighborhoods, schools, and businesses in cocktails laced with challenges and opportunities. And at the center is the role that academia is playing in defining Boston.

Our “City of Eds” is properly named, with more than 30 higher education institutions in Boston proper. The Boston Redevelopment Authority counts more than 152,000 enrolled students, up from 130,000 in 1990, with more than 68,000 jobs generated by colleges and universities, and with students and their visitors apparently spending \$1.7 billion annually within the city footprint. The academic community is a Boston lure, synonym, and powerhouse. Yet we make it a tough city for them.

More than 600 acres of our city is occupied by educational institutions—but that’s only 2.8 percent of city land. Concentrated throughout neighborhoods, historic districts, downtown, and the waterfront, campuses are power properties. Their facilities, development, and economic impact make them networks, not just places. Competition for real estate acquisition and development opportunity—from the University of Massachusetts, Boston, to Wentworth, Northeastern, and Emerson, plus possibilities for future development at campuses like Simmons, Wheelock, and Harvard in Allston—make urban campuses complex and controversial.

Our campuses have evolved. Once-gated enclaves are porous. Commuter colleges and trade schools are now colleges and universities; real estate has been acquired, flipped, and retraded. At their best, these dynamic institutions have given back urban revitalization, public programs, cafes, retail, 24/7 action, youth presence, athletics, and green space. If we want continued growth and strength in Boston, robust urban solutions, an accessible and greened city, and the activation of historic buildings, the city’s colleges and campuses are our allies. We need to make their voices, visions, and contributions even more effective.

Does Boston’s academia have its own distinguishing trait? Seepage is one. The overlap of campus in neighborhood and urban settings is alternatively seen as an invasion or a salvation. We can experience the merge—city as campus/campus as city—in two provocative institutions: Emerson College and Northeastern University.

Emerson, the largest institutional owner in Downtown Crossing, founded in 1880 as the Boston Conservatory of Elocution, Oratory, and Dramatic Arts, has always been part of our fabric. It originally occupied



buildings on Pemberton Square, Bromfield Street, and in the South End's Odd Fellows Hall; Back Bay became its primary home in the mid-20th century. Owning a slew of tired mansions and apartment buildings, from Zero Marlborough Street to 303 Berkeley Street (now luxury residences), Emerson explored relocation in the 1980s, first considering the Pine Manor College campus in Chestnut Hill, then staking its future on Lawrence, Massachusetts, a huge opportunity for that aging industrial city. Plans fizzled with rising construction costs and legal challenges. As Emerson addressed the risks and loss of the "Boston factor," it began to sell its buildings, acquiring run-down properties near the dwindling Combat Zone.

Today this "campus on the Common" is connective, open, vital. Close to 5,000 students and faculty occupy a 10-block radius of largely repurposed historic structures. Emerson brought city theaters back—the 569-seat Paramount, the Emerson Majestic, hopefully the Colonial. Students and programs have vitalized the Little Building, the Walker Building, and the Tufte Performance and Production Center on quaint Boylston Place. The college has knitted itself into the urban fabric and brought back a threatened city precinct.

Interestingly, Emerson has never constructed a large "signature" building. No "gateway" announces its campus portal. Instead, new facilities are tucked into the streetscape, small lots, and alleys. Counterintuitively, its presence is without architectural assertion; instead, it is stitched into the city's fabric. (Recently, adaptive-use plans for the Colonial Theatre have had detractors, but the college is taking a fresh look to preserve more of the historic interior.) Emerson has been a downtown change agent, bolstered by new eateries, retail, successful and new housing, pushing on the edges and traditions of border neighborhoods, creating pressures and extraordinary possibilities. Student life has stabilized and energized tough, dark blocks. Other neighborhood advocacy groups have emerged, and the area is now a Business Improvement District. At Emerson, city and campus are one.

Northeastern University was founded on Huntington Avenue in 1898 as "The Evening Institute for Younger Men," in the

YMCA. Its 1980s enrollment stood at 60,000, supporting commuters and part-timers, many housed in the Fenway. Boxy gray brick structures and parking lots were signature features. Tightened to 20,000 students, today's Northeastern revolves around well-scaled green space, pedestrian walkways, and transport hubs. Its footprint extends to Roxbury, the South End, and downtown. On the Avenue of the Arts, new midrise construction, pedestrianized streets, and landscape has transformed the drive-through building assemblage into a welcoming, accessible, transparent, textured, and still-evolving precinct.

That ball got rolling in 1992 with a singular design gesture and change agent: A simple student services building, the Marino Center, designed by HNTB Architecture. Its double-height glass curtainwall showcases the exercise facility, active day and night. Huntington Avenue, known for solidity in its 20th-century structures, suddenly sported a giant, active, human screen. Later, appealing enclaves of housing replaced off-campus apartments, with William Rawn Associates, Architects' West Village introducing new scale and texture, and Kyu Sung Woo Architects' deft academic structures bound by open green space.

Northeastern is a builder: In 2013, it unveiled plans for a science and engineering complex on Columbus Avenue, bringing more life to this important transit corridor and precinct. In 2014, the university helped secure a \$20 million federal grant for infrastructure improvements at the MBTA Ruggles Station, and recently it renewed and expanded the city's run-down Carter Playground and Field, investing more than \$25 million as its sole supporter. This broad-based planning and construction program elevated a full university program to its current level of academic leadership and urban presence. Northeastern's *US News & World Report* rankings went from 162 in 1996 to 47 in 2015.

More signs of academic energy include Mass College of Arts' eye-capturing residence, the reach of Berklee College of Music on Massachusetts Avenue including Rawn's glass tower, new buildings at the New England Conservatory of Music (in which our firm is involved), and the Boston Conservatory. These institutions offer public programs, street energy, evening life, youth, investment, and a defining urban presence.

Crushed projects, however, include a notable duo: Suffolk University and Fisher College, each proposing dorms in residential neighborhoods, hit the wall. Suffolk relocated



its dorm; “Stop Fisher,” a local website, lobs accusations and antipathy toward its neighbor’s plans.

Academic institutions can’t stand still. Their core mission is intellectual exploration, and their future is staked on agility. They are created to promote new thinking and push boundaries and expectations. Staid is their enemy. It only makes sense that their facilities should reflect their vision.

In this, we are not their ally. City and state review and approval processes need to change. We demand filings; reviews; neighborhood engagement; PILOTS, or payments in lieu of taxes; concessions; citizen meetings; advocacy group encounters; BRA and Civic Design Commission presentations; reviews by Landmarks, Zoning, Traffic, Public Works, Historic, and Conservation Commissions; and so on. These processes are excessive, costly, tiered, and complex. We need to take another look and break down silos of individual interests. Mandated institutional masterplans require large teams of consultants: wind, shadow, environmental, and zoning specialists; attorneys; design and engineering teams; traffic engineers; preservation specialists and a new breed known as “The Process Manager.” The excuse is that it is all part of “The cost of doing business in Boston.” Excessive processes try patience and the pocketbook, and they shut down good ideas by default.

Idea: A shared, pedestrianized street—greener, safer, more welcoming—requires multiple agencies’ review, extensive studies, lengthy processes. Idea: A change in traffic patterns? State and city reviews for months. Idea: New green space? Extensive environmental process and community oversight, brokering, and revising.

Opinions and agencies, repeat presentation performances, and pontification about whether a proposal is “Boston enough” get into the bloodstream of a project and weaken its resolve. Controls have their impact; I see new ideas precalculated as too risky, with too many hurdles and too much chance for opposition quickly set aside by their proponents with the assumption that a turndown might follow months of costly advocacy.

If H.H. Richardson offered a vision for Trinity Church today, I would bet he couldn’t get it approved. Too many disparate materials, too many window styles, highly overdecorated, no retail at the ground level, dense and intense in its design, too derivative of Richardson’s world travel, not a “fit,” too big, overblown, assertive. Just not “Boston.” An adverse impact on open space. But Trinity is a defining Boston building—it is part of our city’s DNA.

This is our process. Does it make projects better, or do ideas die an early death, for fear of the process? How do we know what we are missing, and what do we want? Self-examination is overdue.

Let’s openly explore the 21st-century role and impact of Boston’s institutional properties. Support open inquiry and challenge assumptions. Imposed obligations, “gimmies,” and “tax” contributions need to be equitably and openly resolved. Let’s encourage, not discourage, impact. Projects that spur retail, new housing, day- and nighttime activities, safer streets, and greener open space, and that sustain mixed use are good for all of us. I’d take more height if it meant more green and sunlight for pedestrians. Support shared streets and widened sidewalks—they offer greater pedestrian pleasure, bike paths, safety, benches, trees, and public art. And at the core, let’s revisit and consolidate the review process. Set common goals for reviews. Eliminate silos of authority that toss projects and owners from agency to agency. Prohibit agencies from acting unilaterally, without input from citizens or their own appointed commissions. Diversify participation, with more millennials involved, bringing new viewpoints and youth to commissions and oversight groups. Clarify neighborhood roles, encouraging citywide vision, not just abutter attacks, on institutional plans. Encourage concessions that benefit all citizens, not just the noisiest.

Essentially, make creative planning and permitting an accessible and affordable process, earmarked by innovation, efficiency, and creativity and the common good. It’s a renewal of our core character—a shared city, but with a huge dollop of sensibility about where our strength really lies and a resistance to a bloated gamesmanship that dilutes action and new thinking.

Let’s ask ourselves how this “innovation hub” opens itself to the very institutions that fuel it. In the face of robust institutional strength, we have an unprecedented opportunity to envision, plan, and support the city we want; otherwise, it’s just the city we will get, in a world we worry about. ■



PREVIOUS SPREAD, LEFT TO RIGHT

Marino Center at Northeastern University, by HNTB, is a student services building that’s active day and night. Photo: Richard Mandelkorn

A multiuse residence hall at Berklee College of Music, by William Rawn Associates, Architects. Photo: Robert Benson Photography

Emerson’s mixed-use Paramount Center, by Elkus Manfredi Architects, is a residential, academic, and performance venue. Photo: Peter Vanderwarker

The Boston Conservatory’s Ipswich Studios, by Handel Architects and Utile, features performance, rehearsal, dance, and student service areas. Photo: Chuck Choi

THIS SPREAD, LEFT TO RIGHT

The Boston Conservatory, continued

The Tree House Student Residence of the Massachusetts College of Art, by ADD Inc, now Stantec, sits on a tight urban site. Photo: Chuck Choi

The Little Building at Emerson College, originally by Clarence Blackhall, is being renovated by Elkus Manfredi Architects. Photo: Rick Friedman

The mixed-use International Village at Northeastern University, by Kyu Sung Woo Architects. Photo: Timothy Hursley



MIRRORED

FIELDS OF DREAMS

The 1965 planners envisioned a grand "World's Freedom Fair," to be held in 1975 on the eve of the nation's bicentennial, celebrating "the values of individual and national freedom, and the need for universal peace." They proposed new sports and exhibition facilities in a "cluster zone" from Dorchester Avenue to the South Bay. The area remains in the sights of developers: Any resemblance to early proposals for a 2024 Boston Olympics is not entirely coincidental.

Fifty years is a long time, even for a city about to celebrate its 400th birthday. But much of the 1965 “General Plan for the City of Boston and regional core” holds up beautifully—as an artifact of an era, as a window into the midcentury thinking of city planners, as a compelling graphic document of urban hopes and challenges. Initially written to satisfy federal requirements for urban renewal funding, the plan became a touchstone for a new day of civic reform in Boston.

Produced by a team at the fledgling Boston Redevelopment Authority, the plan was in many ways prescient. Even before the invention of the floppy disk, the authors were touting Boston as “a city of ideas.” The plan raised questions about the pivotal role of private universities and regional authorities such as the MBTA promoting a healthy future. “The needs of the city,” it warned, “are too extensive to be met by local government alone.”

Today, the 1965 general plan looks less like a relic and more like a road map to the future. This gallery features selected images from the plan that reflect urban development issues still relevant today.

—Renée Loth

IMAGE



NEIGHBORHOODS

In 1965, Boston was a city of distinct community “islands”—often organized by parish or ethnic group—that fostered not only cohesion and local pride but also insularity and resistance to change. Today, those boundaries are blurring, as development is largely occurring in the interstices between neighborhoods. But successful new districts—SoWa, Fort Point, the D Street corridor—don’t just happen; they need an intelligent design.

All images courtesy of the Boston Redevelopment Authority

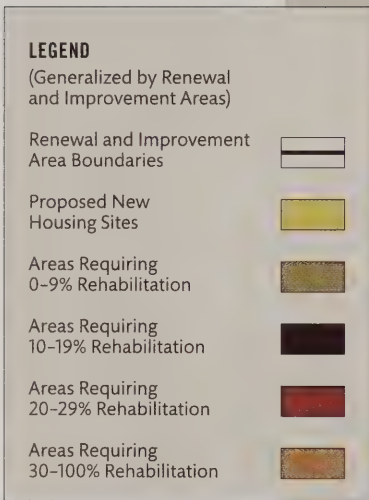


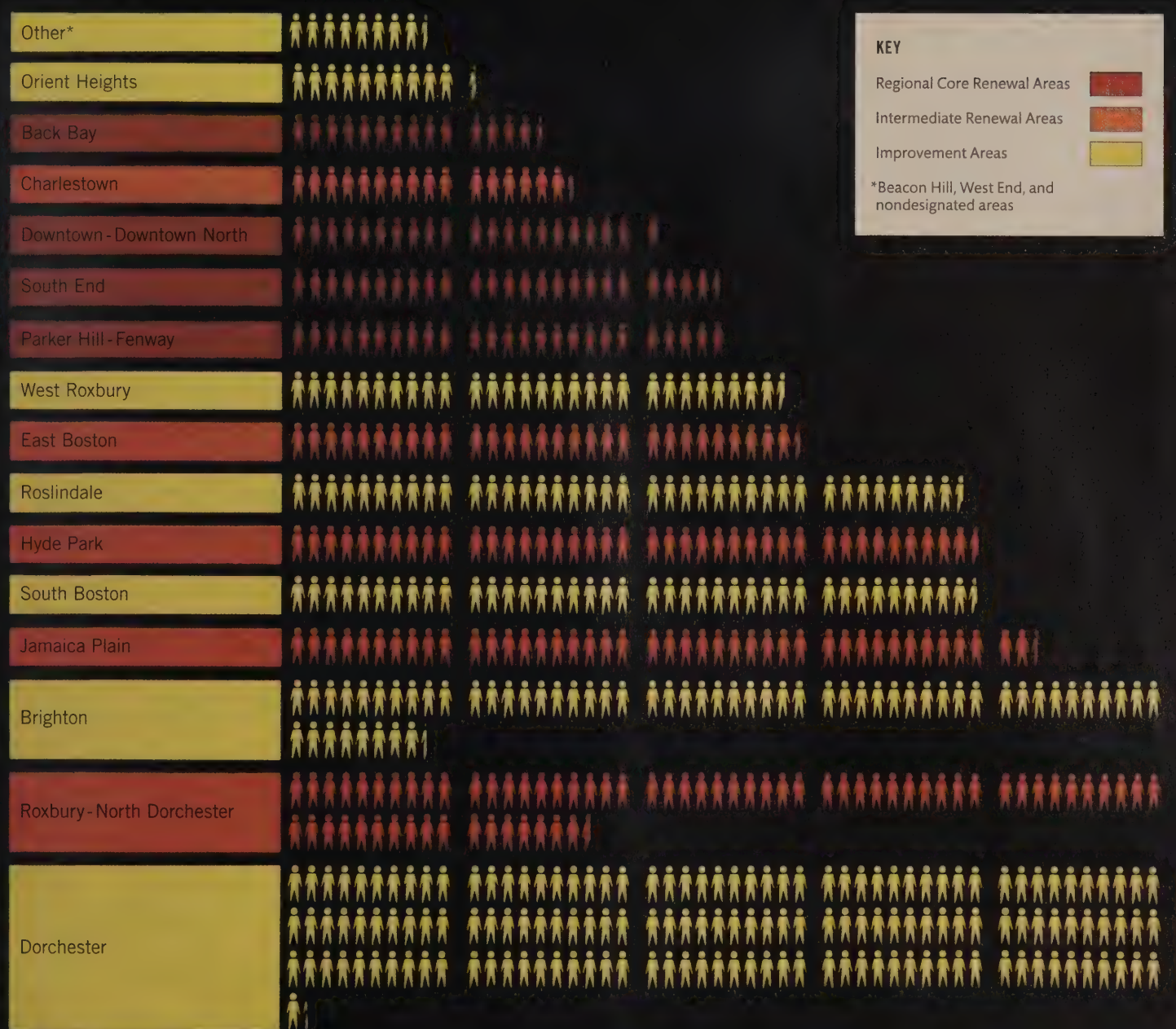
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HOUSING

The 1965 plan proposed the development of 37,000 new units of housing (including 5,000 subsidized public units) to accommodate a growing population the city's leaders could only dream about: Boston's population had plummeted by 100,000 souls between 1950 and 1960. Today the city is growing again, and Mayor Martin Walsh promises to build 53,000 new units of housing by 2030. But will supply outstrip demand enough to temper sky-high prices?





DISPLACEMENT

Urban renewal carries a deservedly bad reputation, forged in the wholesale “slum clearance” of Boston neighborhoods during the 1950s. But the 1965 plan proposed areas for rehabilitation that included the future sites of Villa Victoria and Castle Square, two affordable-housing developments that have helped the South End retain some measure of economic diversity. Today it is free market forces, not an all-powerful public authority, that most threaten Boston’s older neighborhoods.



LEGEND

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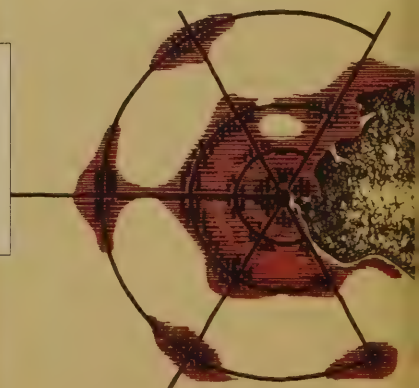
HUB AND SPOKE

The 1965 plan was unusual in that it went beyond the official boundaries of the city to consider the larger metropolitan region. The authors recommended a composite of three development patterns that would link adjacent cities and towns by developing new transportation corridors. Happily, one proposed transportation development—the Southwest Expressway and Inner Belt—was abandoned in 1970, before it could cut its swath through the neighborhoods, destroying thousands of homes.



THREE PATTERNS OF REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Top to bottom:
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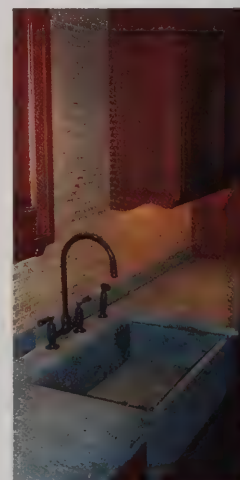
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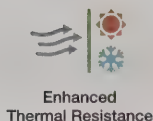


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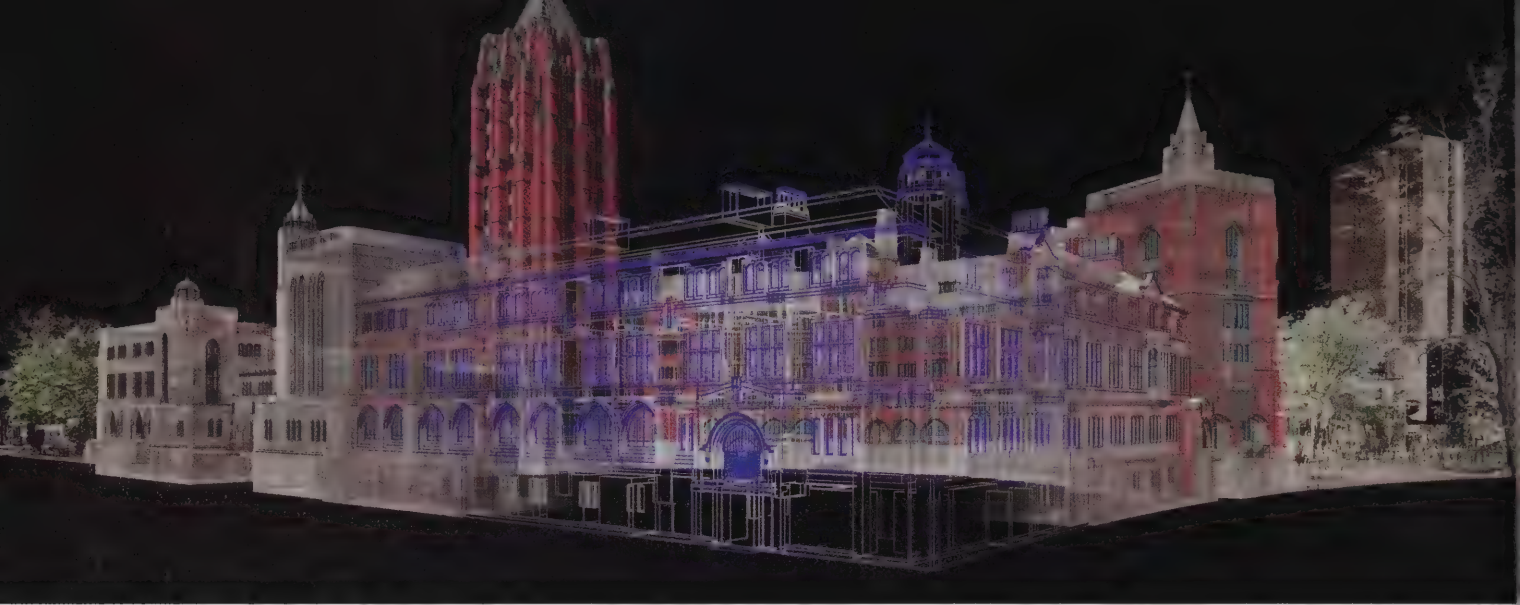
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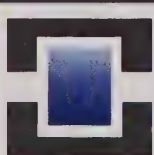
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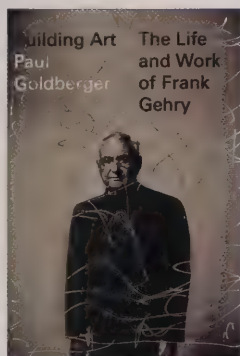
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BOOKS


Building Art: The Life and Work of Frank Gehry

Paul Goldberger

Knopf, 2015

Reviewed by Chris Bentley

Like many artists of his stature, Frank Gehry has often been caricatured—sometimes willingly, as when he appeared on *The Simpsons*—but never has the 86-year-old architect been profiled so thoroughly as he is in Paul Goldberger's new biography.

The narrative offers revealing accounts of Gehry's most famous pursuits: the Guggenheim museum in Bilbao, Spain, which catapulted him to artistic stardom, and the 16-year saga that led to the Walt Disney Concert Hall in his adopted hometown of Los Angeles. But *Building Art* also paints an unusually intimate portrait of its subject, whom it refers to simply as Frank. We watch a shy young Frank Goldberg, acutely aware of anti-Semitism around him, begrudgingly renounce his last name in favor of the ethnically ambiguous Gehry—an invention the budding designer crafted to resemble the typographic flow of Goldberg.

His first formative architectural experience comes in November 1946, when Gehry stumbles into a lecture by Alvar Aalto. The Finnish designer was discussing his work on the Baker House dormitory at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, its floor plan flowing with the riverfront to maximize views of the Charles. Gehry got to work, drafting at home until he could attend the University

of Southern California. "My mother used to say that he was shoveling coal in that back room," Gehry's sister, Doreen, tells Goldberger, "because everything [was covered in] pencil lead, pencil dust, all over the place."

Gehry would eventually go on to design his own building for MIT: the Ray and Maria Stata Center for Computer, Information and Intelligence Services. After Stata's completion in 2004, its warped façades and abstracted forms would draw praise from architecture critics and vitriol from much of the public, including the "seven-hundred-person client" that Gehry contends began the project "suspicious by nature of architecture." The building's mixed reception came on the heels of his success with the Guggenheim Bilbao, and it helped cultivate the strain of criticism that Gehry's buildings are needlessly formal, even frivolously devoted to architectural ideology.

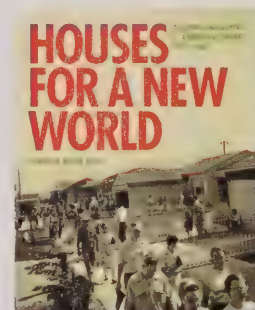
Goldberger's biography reframes that popular perception by tracing Gehry's design philosophy to humble beginnings, including an early penchant for unfinished surfaces and inexpensive materials like chain-link fencing that Gehry dubbed "cheapskate architecture." A young Gehry found himself drawn to anti-Miesian projects that favored approachability over geometric purity. He'd develop those instincts into a series of bold architectural salvos, notably enveloping his family's Dutch colonial house in Santa Monica with angular planes of corrugated metal and sharply angled glass that presaged the term "deconstructivist architecture" by nearly a decade.

Still, given the sculptural flair of his best-known work, it won't surprise many to learn Gehry always felt more drawn to the artist community in Los Angeles than to its architects. In another revealing anecdote, Gehry stages a farcical performance for the 1985 Venice Biennale with the artists Claes Oldenburg and Coosje Van Bruggen, in which the three

play surreally costumed characters with artistic ambitions. Gehry's role was "Frankie P. Toronto," a barber who wanted to be an architect.

Ultimately, the biographer shows us a sympathetic Gehry, a man who wanted to please everyone—someone who chased professional success and celebrity as a remedy for lifelong anxieties stemming from childhood. But Goldberger also describes a stubborn dreamer who declines potentially lucrative opportunities even while his young family scrapes by, never content to settle for anything less than complete creative independence. Goldberger's portrait illuminates the man as well as the artist.

CHRIS BENTLEY is a freelance journalist based in Boston. He is the former Midwest editor of *The Architect's Newspaper*, and his work has appeared in *CityLab*, *Dwell*, and *Chicago Architect*.


Houses for a New World: Builders and Buyers in American Suburbs, 1945-1965

Barbara Miller Lane

Princeton University Press, 2015

Reviewed by Julie Michaels

As a child of the postwar baby boom, I remember spending happy weekends with my brother and parents touring "open houses" in the suburbs surrounding New York City. We lived in a garden apartment in Queens and, to us, the model homes—split levels and low-slung ranches with their giant fridges, grassy backyards, and dedicated laundry rooms—seemed the ultimate in progress.

Years later, as an aspiring hippie, I'd dismissively sing, "Little boxes on the

hillside, little boxes made of ticky-tacky... little boxes, all the same.” How ironic. In less than a generation, the suburban tract house had gone from aspiration to eyesore. It was bad architecture, it chewed up the landscape, encouraged uniformity, isolated us from one another, and was responsible for all the ills of society.

In her book *Houses for a New World*, architectural historian Barbara Miller Lane rises to the defense of these split levels of the past. Her arguments are compelling, in part because we look back with nostalgia to a time when the hardworking middle class could afford simple homes with mortgages that weren’t made of empty promises.

First, the history: a depression and World War II had severely reduced a housing market unprepared for the postwar boom. Four factors led to the growth of these new communities, Lane explains: “the rapid spread of automobile ownership; the rise of a new highway system; the institution of low-interest long-term government loans, especially for veterans; and a new prosperity for lower-income people.”

In other words, families could now afford a car and a mortgage. They could commute from work to the suburbs on newly constructed highways and find their little piece of heaven on a 6,000-square-foot lot right next to their new neighbor’s identical home. But even as modern needs dictated a garage for the new car, they also eliminated other, now obsolete elements of American home design.

Gone were the formal parlor and sitting room, replaced by a casual, more open living room. The kitchen, once the domain of the hired cook, became a center for the happy homemaker. Air-conditioning (especially in the South) eliminated the front porch, replaced now by a picture window. Though Lane acknowledges the subtle impact of European Modernism on these homes, she sees a more immediate influence in the “house of the future” designs that appeared in World’s Fairs of the 1930s and ’40s. Here, the makers of kitchen appliances, electric utilities, and the manufacturers of aluminum siding contributed their vision of the future—and we bought it.

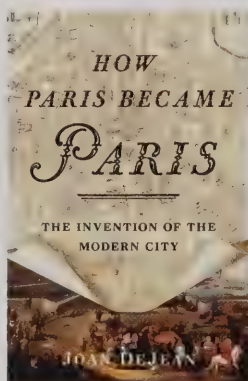
Lane focuses part of her book on the men who built these communities. Many

were unschooled construction workers, electricians, or plumbers, the laboring offspring of earlier immigrants—often members of the same family. In New England, she chronicles the Campanelli brothers, first generation Italian-Americans who, in the 1950s and ’60s, built 12,000 houses in 21 different locations around Boston, most abundantly in Natick.

Their houses were sturdy, stick-built, framed with wooden studs, and erected a few at a time. Standardized lumber sizes and new tools like nail guns, the Skilsaw, and paint sprayers allowed for fast production, while earth movers made land clearing easy.

Despite later criticism, the 13 million homeowners (by 1970, more than 20 percent of Americans) who lived in these houses loved them. As time passed, they added rooms, planted trees, sent their kids to neighborhood schools, and built community. Today, you drive through these old subdivisions and think they’re not so bad—cozy homes of 1,000 or 1,400 square feet that raised a family. Then you turn a corner and see a harder reality—customized McMansions that neither fit their lot nor do much for our endangered environment. But that’s a topic for a different book.

JULIE MICHAELS, a former editor at *The Boston Globe*, is a freelance writer who lives in West Stockbridge, Massachusetts.



How Paris Became Paris: The Invention of the Modern City

Joan DeJean

Bloomsbury USA, 2014

Reviewed by Thomas Vonier FAIA

“Oh, everybody knows that!” my Parisian friend scoffed. I was surprised to learn that Blaise Pascal helped launch the world’s first urban public transit system, in 1651—and that, today, the number 29 bus, running through the Marais, traces portions of a route from his failed carriage company.

Well, I didn’t know that—just as I didn’t know dozens of other facts about the many ways in which Paris has pioneered urbanity and captured the public imagination since the time of Henri IV, and not just through great architecture: “Between 1653 and 1667, the city acquired, in quick succession, three absolute firsts: a public mail delivery system, public transportation, and street lighting.” Works completed in the 1600s prefigured almost everything Napoléon III and the Baron Haussmann carried out—on a larger scale—200 years later. It was this earlier era that truly shaped the city so many love today.

Captivating details abound in *How Paris Became Paris*—about the Pont Neuf, the Place des Vosges (then the Place Royal), the Île Saint Louis. These places remain much as they were when built; in large measure, they made Paris what it is. If tourists consistently rank Paris among the most beautiful cities in the world, Joan DeJean says, that’s largely due to its “structured handsomeness” and “uniformity in its residential buildings”—achieved by the 17th-century architects, builders, and entrepreneurs who were royalty’s handmaidens.

DeJean’s account of how seminal architecture and planning left an indelible imprint on Paris makes good reading: “The [Île Saint Louis] provided a lineup of spectacular homes, great architecture best appreciated from afar, that drew Parisians to the riverbanks to admire this ‘city unto itself.’” She credits the city of the 1600s for other great innovations: shopping as a leisure pursuit and tree-lined boulevards made to encourage strolling. Buildings—in fact, entire neighborhoods—were made to promote merchandising.

Planners and builders of the era created alluring river vistas and fine places from which to see them. They designed

cityscapes that would inspire awe. Paris made an art and a science out of hawking the pleasures of the flesh—foods, fashions, furniture, sensations, spectacles, nightlife. Mixing of classes—and genders—in public was unknown in the era's stratified societies, so the curious were drawn to Paris from all over the world. Nobles and minions, men and women, rich and poor, mingled in *jardins, places, parcs, and trottoirs*, all made to foster social interaction and just plain gawking.

So Paris invented urban tourism and the idea of cities as places to be enjoyed for sights and sensations—to explore, discover, document, enjoy, and review, not simply to endure. Some assertions here may invite quibbling. But does it matter whether Paris *really* had the first public street lamps, when differences in such accounts (it might have been London) vary by just a few years? Did the advent of inherently “public” spaces

really produce pamphleteers and bill-posters, who spread dissent and, thus, revolution? Architects like to believe that spaces shape behavior, so it's enjoyable to learn how Louis XIV thought so, too.

Seventeenth-century real estate entrepreneurs built Paris, and not just for the rich, although merchants and financiers did become kinglike, building their own palaces. Private funds made the groundbreaking Pont Neuf, today the city's oldest bridge. The first to use stone, wider than any other, expressly made to be attractive, it was (and it still is) a beacon of civility, urbanism, fine engineering, and great enterprise. In DeJean's rich rendering, it changed everything.

After engrossing pages about the genesis of great structures, streets, and places, reader interest may flag at details about the period's fashions or its new breed of financiers. Admirers of the city's physicality will want more about

buildings and less about dalliance, political ferment, and clothing.

The period drawings and paintings the author uses for research bolster her discussions, providing contemporaneous evidence that the reader can assess. The paperback, at least, makes you wish for more of them, sharper and larger.

La plus ça change... Some aspects of today's Paris are nothing new: high prices, crowding, noise, pollution, petty crime, and, occasionally, terrible violence. Yet now—as then—it all coexists with a pleasure that is centuries old and mostly undiminished: simply being out and about in this rich, endlessly fascinating city.

THOMAS VONIER FAIA has lived and worked in Paris for many years. He will become president of the American Institute of Architects in 2017—the first member elected to that post from a chapter (AIA Europe) outside the United States.

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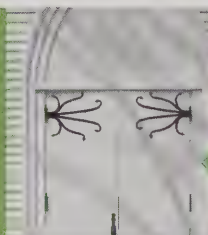
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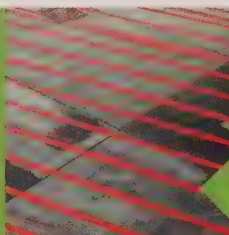
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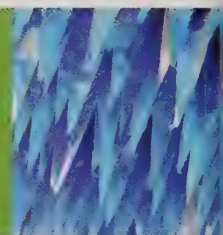
Galleries & exhibitions



White on White:
Churches of Rural
New England



On the Tarmac



Public programs

- Architecture Cruises
- Family Design Days
- Student Design Days
- Teen Workshop series
- KidsBuild!
- Film series
- Book talks
- Architecture tours
- CultureNOW Public Art
- LEGO® Design Challenge
- Typewriter Orchestra
- Letterpress workshop
- Artist talks
- StereoType open house
- TypeCast: Twelve Quick Talks on Type
- What the Sketch?
- Building Blocks series
- INTER/SECTIONS: The Work of Janet Echelman
- City Sketch: An Urban Drawing Walk
- "Tactical Urbanism + The Lawn on D"
- Back Bay's Evolving Skyline
- "Olmsted's Legacy: Landscape + the City"
- BSA Foundation Golf Tournament
- Dining with Design series

Grantee programs

More than \$46K in grants were awarded in 2014 for 2015 programming.

Asian CDC (Boston)

A-VOYCE: A summer youth leadership program that teaches concepts in community-driven planning.

Boston By Foot

Scholarships for underfunded schools to attend Boston By Little Feet Tours.

CareerPoint (Holyoke)

Youth participants learning about architectural history and historic building restoration.

CDRC (Boston)

Adaptation of the Living with Water design charrette into a series of neighborhood workshops in East Boston.

Coelho Middle School (Attleboro)

Let's Go Outside! Designing a Community Park: A program that enables 100 middle school students to develop and share their design ideas.

Community Boat Building (Boston)

Hands-on, interdisciplinary curriculum of experimental learning.

Future Prep 101 (Boston)

Half day seminar providing Massachusetts teens with design school prep.

Hawthorne Youth (Roxbury)

Build Up! Build Down! Build All Around!: A project that engages youth in a design curriculum.

Sponsored events



- WalkBoston conference
- IDeAS Boston conference
- BSA and BSA Foundation Civic agenda
- ImagineBoston 2030 Youth Brainstorm
- East Boston coastal/climate resiliency scan
- Living with Water Pecha Kucha
- Living with Water Semi-finalist Reception
- Living with Water Pin-up
- Living with Water Awards
- Housing Urban Design Workshop kickoff
- Housing Urban Design final presentations
- Designing Boston series
- Boston Futures series

ImagineBoston 2030 Youth Brainstorm



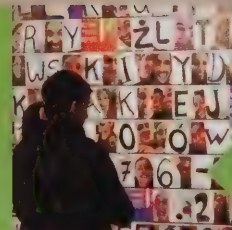
Bigger than
a Breadbox,
Smaller than
a Building



Building
Boston:
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Gallery
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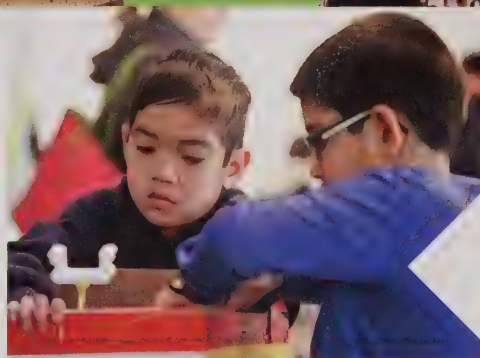
Construction



Stereotype:
New Directions
in Typography



City
Sketch:
An Urban
Drawing
Walk



KidsBuild!

MassArt Community Build Studio (Boston)

Community design workshops culminating in the construction of garden elements to support activities at the new Woolson Street Community Garden.

HighWaterLine (Boston)

Creation of a participatory public art project that creates a community working to build climate resiliency.

Preservation Worcester (Worcester)

A replicable after-school program for students to envision themselves in roles that develop and preserve the built environment.

Sociedad Latina (Roxbury)

150 middle school students with experimental, hands-on, STEAM programming.

Somerville Neighborways (Somerville)

A resident led initiative that will transform quiet, residential streets into a network of family-friendly, low-stress corridors.

Southeast Asian Coalition of Central MA (Worcester)

Youth Street Project: A program that uses design, sustainability, and building, to transform a street.

The Discovery Museums (Acton)

Backyard Builders, a year-long, building-themed program integrating STEM learning.

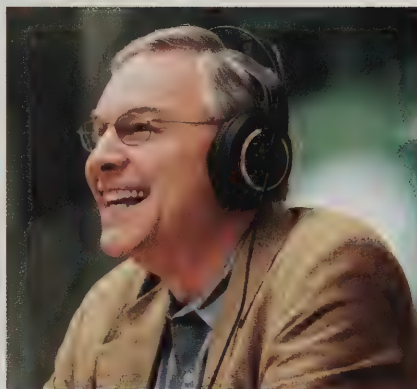
Wentworth Institute of Technology (Boston)

Co+Build and several small design/build projects that will improve the educational environment within three Boston public schools.

In 2016, Foundation Legacy Circle members, donors, and volunteers look forward to continuing the work—and play!—of using design to engage communities, inspire vision, and provoke positive change throughout Greater Boston.

To learn about the impact of Foundation programs on individuals, communities, and city systems, and to keep updated on Foundation programs and volunteer opportunities, visit BSA Space, 290 Congress St., Boston, or online at architects.org/foundation.

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Lisa Mullins

Bill Littlefield

Anthony Brooks

Meghna Chakrabarti

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UNLEASHED

by Cliff Gayley FAIA

When we got our first family dog, I was surprised to learn a new way to walk. Not the forward and up-to-sky and skyline gaze of an architect, but the down-and-outward search of an 8-inch-tall fur ball of pent-up energy. Unseen sounds and smells guide Hey Dan (or HD, though my daughter insists his name is Hayden) as I work to remain untangled, surging left toward the granite cornerstone, then pivoting back toward the bike chained to the street tree fence, and then stopping, listening with ears cocked, anticipating the dog rounding the next corner. Here, a recurring dynamic unfolds—the gravitational pull of dogs straining on their leashes, circling toward each other, whether old friends or new acquaintances.

HD's unquenched drive to encounter anyone and everyone who passes by, dog or human, feels like a referendum on our Northeastern norm of passing one another without much acknowledgment, eyes averted, moving in our own lanes. Walking with him, I break out of my lane, waving good morning at 5:25 to the woman tossing our morning paper from her slow-moving car, conversing at 8 AM with our neighborhood plumbing contractor (who is always at the ready with a doggy treat) while his dog and mine check each other out, and

running into unknown neighbors in the evening who say hello to HD and recount having seen my wife or daughter on a previous walk.

With HD, I navigate my neighborhood much more often than ever before. I encounter the daily parade of its different groups: the early risers, the workforce marchers, the families hand in hand on the way to school or to the playground, the university students hauling books during the day and laundry at night, the elderly couples strolling, the joggers and boot campers, the shopkeepers leaning out their doors, the liquor-store manager who welcomes dogs as well as their owners—and, of course, my fellow dog walkers, with their stop-and-start pace.

On each outing, I encounter my neighborhood, brick paver by brick paver. I decipher the complex micro-topography of our sidewalks: looking for the story behind missing pavers, feeling the slow progress of a tree trunk warping my path, pacing myself to the rhythm of stooped entries and cellar doors, marveling at the variety of mini gardens in planters. I map the pattern of quiet streets and active streets and measure their narrowness. With each trace of former storefronts converted to ground-floor housing, I think of the fragility of retail in our neighborhood and worry that I should be a better customer in the future.

Even the messy stuff of dog ownership is instructive. Being responsible for a dog in the city, ever ready with extra plastic bags, has made me hyperconscious of our mutual responsibility for keeping our streets and sidewalks clean.

Walking a city's open spaces—its streets and plazas, parks and waterfronts—is what I remember most vividly about cities I've visited and has always been the best way to get to know a place. For 30 years, I have been grateful for living in such a walkable city as Boston, and these days, I am seeing my neighborhood anew. It's a slower, friendlier place—a place where we pick up after ourselves and look after one another. My corner of the city feels a bit more village-like, each time I traverse familiar terrain to walk the dog. ■



LEFT

Per Strade Canine, by Riccardo Guasco



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PART 2

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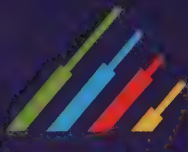
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TEMPORARY

FEATURES

ARTISSE

Now you see it

Season's fleetings. *Michael D. Burke*
A transitory nature. *Rebecca Roke*
Occupy Copley. *Ken Kruckemeyer AIA*
In a flash. *Dan Adams and Marie Law Adams AIA*
Concrete promises. *Eric J. Cesal*

Movable type

Ephemeral architecture responds
to our flexible, mobile nature
By *Robert Kronenburg*

Source material

Urban mining repurposes a building's layers
for longer life
By *Jean Carroon FAIA*

Model behavior

To ignite lasting solutions, try small-scale prototypes
By *Nina Chase ASLA*

License to thrill

Temporary art provokes and energizes the
public canvas
By *Geoff Edgers*

GALLERY

Limited editions

Julien de Casabianca's Outings project

FINISH

Leaving no trace

By *Allan Donnelly*

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LETTERS

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Reviewed by *Brent D. Ryan*

Just one look

Reviewed by *Jim Stanislawski AIA*

Matter of course

Reviewed by *Alex Beam*

Seen

By *Yorgos Efthymiadis*

Overgrowth

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Kenzo Tange Lecture: Toyo Ito,
"Tomorrow's Architecture"

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BOOKS

Heroic

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Where Are the Women Architects?

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ABOVE
Fungi (*Filoboletus manipularis*).
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IN THE MOMENT

A graduate school in Barcelona, Spain, creates a new master's degree in Ephemeral Architecture, offering "comprehensive training of designers and planners in the field of temporary spaces." Buzz-worthy biennales feature gossamer pavilions made of little more than paper and light. An architect fashions ad hoc shelters out of recycled cardboard tubes and wins the Pritzker Prize. Is Vitruvius spinning in his grave yet?

The ancient Roman builder believed that *durability* was one of three essential components of architecture. Yet many of today's designers are discovering the richness in temporary, tactical, and ethereal architecture that barely glances the land. Whether it be tiny mobile domiciles that follow the seasons or public art that evaporates before a single zoning regulation is written, these fleeting interventions provide a lively counterpoint to a methodical, sometimes ponderous, often cautious public planning process.

For *ArchitectureBoston's* yearlong series, "The year of the plan," we wanted to examine this trend toward a placemaking that is largely spontaneous and *unplanned*. Temporary projects offer "an escape," as one of our opening essays puts it, "from the slow and mediated relationship to the city that we normally experience as architects." The Snapchat generation is not only comfortable with moments that fade but also embraces mobile, shifting, transitory patterns as its personal aesthetic.

Maybe we are still shaking off the hangover from the Big Dig, the slow, expensive, and devilishly complex engineering feat that dominated Greater Boston for two decades. Like a bloated gourmand suddenly craving a simple plate of vegetables, we seem to want our public structures to be agile and mutable. It's fitting that some of the best temporary art in Boston—from Janet Echelman's transcendent net sculpture to this summer's Chinese Zodiac heads by Ai Weiwei—has graced the Rose F. Kennedy Greenway parcels that capped the Big Dig.

Some see temporary installations as more egalitarian and democratic—and certainly less expensive—than permanent, monumental structures that can carry a whiff of elitism. Of course, A-list architects also can join in the fun, as with the Serpentine Gallery in London, where Koolhaas, Libeskind, Hadid, and Gehry, among others, have installed temporary pavilions. But on balance, the barriers to entry in materials, permits, labor, and land are low enough with temporary structures to attract younger, less traditional designers shut out of more established commissions.

Indeed, there's an antiestablishment, even transgressive edge to this kind of drive-by architecture. Tactical urbanism is all about average citizens taking control of the planning process to demonstrate quickly and independently how a public space can be redefined. It's a challenge to the stereotypical planning order of decide-present-defend. When a local resident grows impatient with the gelid pace of local government and paints his own crosswalk at a dangerous intersection, it's not so much a civic crime as a call to arms.

Subconsciously, perhaps, the tilt toward the provisional may be a recognition that we live in rapidly changing times. Global warming and social upheaval remind us that all conditions are impermanent. Our prehistoric brains remember not to get too comfortable; we may need to flee at any time. High-tide lines that existed for centuries are being erased with each new moon. Few of the verities are really eternal.

Rather than letting it provoke anxiety, however, we could live in harmony with this truth. Rather than being locked in to old patterns that can't adapt to a new environment, we could learn to be more flexible and responsive to change. The unexpected is coming. Plan on it. ■

Renée Loth
Editor



Photo: Bert Seager

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Above: 175-185 Wynton Street in Waltham, MA designed for Hobbs Brook Management by Margulies Peruzzi Architects

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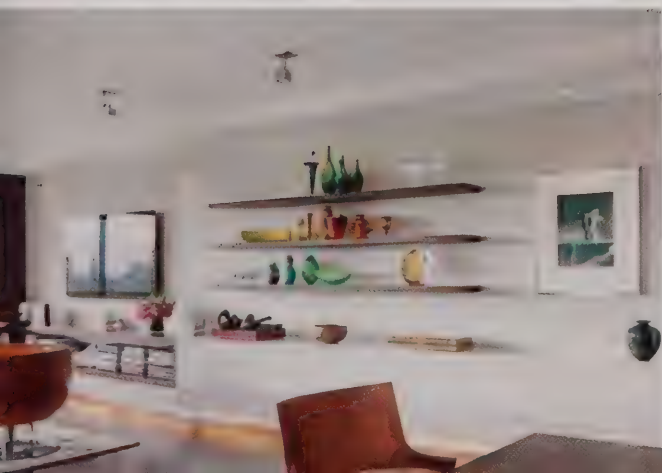
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HORNER

ON "FRAMEWORK" (SPRING 2016)

In reading Alex Krieger's essay ("The once and future city"), which encourages us to dream big again in planning Boston, I was struck by his modest expectations for the public sector's role. He cites the many transformative developments in our city's history that were accomplished by bold public funding accompanied by legacy governance structures, and he identifies critical planning questions facing us today: Can a steady stream of private development "be channeled for greater public good? Beyond welcoming development, is our public sector keeping up with its responsibility?"

After 20 years at the Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA), I wonder if we have been perhaps too successful in channeling public benefits from private and institutional development. We have allowed our public sector to scale back on its share of responsibility in public realm and infrastructure investments. During the last two decades, Boston's planning and development review process has focused on managing private and institutional development to mitigate negative impacts and maximize public benefits. In the process, our city has set the gold standard in leveraging private contributions to improve the public realm.

In "Ivory powers," Ann Beha highlights some of the tremendous city building done by our universities. But she notes that the city's permitting and review process is costly and excessive and may have become a disincentive for innovation. I wonder whether the current expectations and scale of the exactions have become disproportionately large.

How did the public sector become so timid? Is this the lingering effect of the Big Dig? The project was allowed to wind down without completing promised surface parks for the Rose F. Kennedy Greenway and associated transit commitments. Surely the BRA would not have allowed a private developer or institution this much slack? Should the public have to rely on the Conservation Law Foundation to file suit against the Commonwealth to

enforce promises of expanding transit?

The most urgent planning challenges for our city and region—climate resiliency, income inequality, housing affordability—will require unprecedented public sector leadership, ingenuity, and funding. The Imagine Boston 2030 planning effort is a great opportunity to recalibrate aspirations for the public sector and to create a new compact in which we all agree to elevate our proportionate contributions for the public good and hold each other accountable to our commitments.

KAIROSH SHEN

*Visiting Lecturer, MIT Center for Real Estate
Cambridge, Massachusetts*

Alex Krieger throws down the gauntlet in his excellent piece. As director of a regional planning agency serving Boston and 100 surrounding cities and towns, I second his call for dreaming big and suggest extending that call to the entire metro region. In recent years, we have seen a resurgence of strong planning at the municipal level: Somerville, Cambridge, Arlington, Watertown, Woburn, Boston, and others have undertaken masterplans. And our regional plan, MetroFuture, provides a bold yet achievable road map to a more sustainable, equitable region.

Massachusetts is one of the few states that does not require local zoning codes and permitting procedures to be consistent with masterplans, so implementation is where things can fall apart. The good news is that progress toward a more prosperous and inclusive future is happening through the individual efforts of the public, private, and nonprofit sectors. We are also seeing greater regional coordination through such efforts as the Metro Mayors Coalition, which includes 14 mayors and managers, including Boston Mayor Martin Walsh. The bad news is the challenges we face are significant: income and asset inequality, the high cost of housing, and the expected impacts of climate change, to



name but three. These challenges require a vigorous and sustained response if we are to succeed in overcoming them—and none can be accomplished by any one city acting alone.

That's why masterplanning efforts must "talk to each other." The people who live and work here pass seamlessly across municipal lines. They may live in one city, work in another town, and send their kids to school or activities in a third. Often, they don't even know (or care) when they cross a municipal boundary. We owe them a plan for the future that conforms to the patterns of their lives. Intermunicipal collaboration must become a centerpiece of our planning efforts.

MARC DRAISEN

*Executive Director
Metropolitan Area Planning Council
Boston*

Imagine Boston 2030 comes in the middle of one of the most remarkable transformations in urban history as 21st-century cities redefine themselves. Low-density auto-dependent suburbanization is giving way to an appreciation of what cities at their best can provide: community, places of culture and business that we can walk to, mass transit, and a wealth of amenities that can't be supported without density. Cities like Boston can provide meaningful responses to the issues of social inequity and environmental challenges.

Alex Krieger appropriately exhorts us to embrace new forms of civic generosity, broadening the beneficiaries of change beyond the private sector investment clientele as we expand our shared common

ground. "Lesson plans" from other cities urge us not only to think big but also to think *laterally*, from resourcefully clawing back green gains in Philadelphia to cultural planning that leverages diversity in Los Angeles to investing in human capital in Oklahoma City to resurrecting neglected bayous in Houston and undervalued architecture in Detroit.

As Boston looks to its own future, this reset is a wonderful opportunity to tap the shared wisdom and creativity of Bostonians while addressing big opportunities like creating new parks along the harbor and developing a more transparent planning process that improves neighborhoods and housing affordability.

KEN GREENBERG
Greenberg Consultants Inc.
Toronto

Brian Swett's "Ready or not?" rightfully highlights Boston's vulnerability to climate change from extreme weather events. Cities comprise interconnected systems, and the resiliency of the area's buildings, neighborhoods, transportation, energy, and water infrastructure are critical for our region's long-term survival. Many architects have embraced preventative strategies aimed at mitigating climate change with such programs as the AIA 2030 Commitment, LEED, and the Living Building Challenge, and the City of Boston published "Building Resilience in Boston" as a best practice guide for existing buildings. While designers must focus on minimizing environmental impacts, we also need to embrace and implement the principles for creating resilient communities.

Swett highlights the actions that have been taken, but I would argue that we need to be bolder and continue to be national leaders on climate mitigation. For the past few years, the American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy has ranked Massachusetts number one. Swett cites New York, London, and Copenhagen but neglects to mention the city of Cambridge's aggressive plan to get to zero carbon emissions for all buildings by 2030. The adoption of a similar framework for Greater Boston

will increase the scale of the plan's impact while establishing the area as a national leader in preparing for climate change.

ANDREA LOVE AIA
Associate Principal, Payette
Boston

Community engagement. Public process. Neighborhood outreach. No matter what the title, we've all witnessed successful events and epic failures. Many public agencies are still beholden to the three-meeting process: 1. a review of opportunities and constraints, and a listening session, 2. preliminary design-alternative presentation, and 3. the eagerly anticipated preferred plan unveiling (cue the confetti). As landscape architects, architects, urban designers, and planners, it is up to us to push our clients' expectations about how civic engagement can be performed. Increasingly, the profile of our "public" is diversifying. It is no longer reasonable to expect that the midweek school cafeteria meeting is going to be accessible for everyone interested in participating.

Russell Preston's "Bring on the Joy" highlights innovative ways his firm is yielding meaningful results. Renting a cottage in the project neighborhood? The potential for tricky conversations and awkward encounters multiplies infinitely. And that is exactly what design professionals must embrace in order to yield results that are grounded in local context and shaped as a reflection of community ideals. This takes guts, and it is what separates those who succeed and those who fail as they wrangle complex design challenges through the permitting and public feedback processes.

So bring it on! Take the plunge into the messy, unpredictable waters of true civic engagement. The results will be authentic, inspired, and joyful.

CHERI RUANE ASLA
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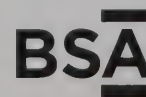
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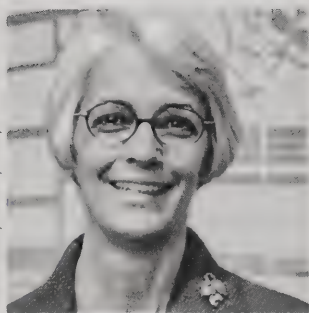


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IN THIS ISSUE

Photo: Courtesy of Goody Clancy



Jean Carroon FAIA ("Source material," page 34) is a principal at Goody Clancy, a Boston-based design firm committed to building social, economic, and environmental value through a diverse practice that embraces architecture, planning, and preservation. The author of *Sustainable Preservation: Greening Existing Buildings*, her work focuses on the creative reuse of existing buildings to shape a healthy and resilient world.

Photo: Janet Macoska



Geoff Edgers ("License to thrill," page 40) is *The Washington Post's* national arts reporter. Before that, he was an arts reporter for *The Boston Globe*, covering the region's major arts institutions, including the Museum of Fine Arts, the Boston Symphony Orchestra, and the Institute of Contemporary Art. He has written five children's books, including *Who Was Julia Child?* with his wife, Carlene Hempel.

Photo: Courtesy of Robert Kronenburg



Robert Kronenburg ("Movable type," page 30) is an architect and holds the Roscoe Chair of Architecture at the University of Liverpool in the United Kingdom. His research and writing engages with innovative forms of architectural design and popular music. His books include *Architecture in Motion*, *Flexible*, and *Live Architecture*. He is currently writing *The Architectural History of Popular Music Performance* for Bloomsbury Publishing.

Photo: Carey Walker



Nina Chase ASLA ("Model behavior," page 36) is the senior project manager at Riverlife in Pittsburgh. Formerly of Sasaki Associates in Boston, she works at the intersection of landscape architecture and urban design, positioning landscape architecture as a foundational building block for cities. Her projects advocate for public spaces and placemaking initiatives as drivers for urban transformation.

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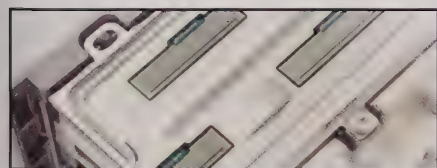


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Opinions and Observations



Megacities Asia

Through July 17
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

Although only China's Ai Weiwei is a household name in the United States, the 11 artists from five Asian cities showcased in *Megacities Asia* pack a cumulative punch. The overall collection is provocative, visually spectacular, and often profound, particularly the core of nine artworks located in the MFA's Gund Gallery (the others are found elsewhere in the museum, with one outside the Huntington entrance and one near Faneuil Hall).

Like Asian cities themselves, the show's art varies in texture, color, material, form, and experience. Metal and plastic represent materials used by many low-income city dwellers, while wood, brick, and bamboo represent historic buildings demolished by rapid urban growth. Immersive works have material from typical Mumbai houses (Hema Upadhyay's 8' x 12') and from demolished Shanghai homes (Hu Xiangcheng's *Doors Away from Home—Doors Back Home*); Asim Waqaf's enterable and touchable bamboo-and-rope structure, *Venu*, thrilled children visiting the exhibit.

Upadhyay's *Build me a nest so I can rest* is particularly poignant. Dozens of anonymous, migratory birds, each

clutching a message in its beak, speak to new city dwellers' diverse views and life stories. And a destroyed or vanished past animates Jeon Yongseok/flyingCity's *Drifting Producers* series, Yin Xiuzhen's *Temperature*, and both works by Ai Weiwei. *Megacities Asia* installations outside the Gund Gallery are large, loud, and colorful, like the iconic architecture of new Asian cities. Each of these works is designed for photography, and best of all is Choi Jeong Hwa's *Fruit Tree* at Faneuil Hall's Marketplace Center: a selfie there will provide one free admission to the MFA.

BRENT D. RYAN is associate professor of urban design and public policy and head of the city design and development group in the department of urban studies and planning at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

ABOVE

8' x 12', 2009, Hema Upadhyay. Aluminum, scrap metal from cars, enamel paint, plastic, found objects, M-Seal sealant, resin, and hardware. Photo: Anil Rahe; courtesy of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston



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JUST ONE LOOK

South Street Station

Most buildings tell a story, and a great story does not have a universal interpretation; it is informed by your unique point of view and imagination. I love to envision historic buildings in their heyday, as one might wish to be a spectator at the Roman Colosseum or alight a DC-3 via Eero Saarinen's TWA terminal at JFK airport. I have been fascinated by stories of industrial strength architecture—especially the robust, unapologetic power plants that fueled New England's manufacturing past.

One example is the South Street Station, also known as the Narragansett Electric Company Power Station in Providence, Rhode Island. Designed by Jenks & Ballou around 1912 in the Georgian Revival style, it is exactly how you would imagine an architect might design a major infrastructure building

in the early 20th century. A functional simplicity is conveyed in its massing, with a cubic headhouse facing the city and a long turbine hall stretching to the Providence River. While it does not stir my soul like my favorite buildings by Le Corbusier or Louis Kahn, it does stir my imagination.

I can see the cavernous interior, lit with enormous arched windows, sunlight slicing through the coal dust in fierce beams as in a high Gothic cathedral. Monolithic turbines the size of houses roar and vibrate like tethered beasts, shackled to the floor and imprisoned by muscular steel beams supporting overhead bridge cranes, pulleys, and chain hoists. The ravenous coal-eating turbines are fed day and night by barges arriving via the Providence River, delivering the pulverized fossil fuel via conveyor belts to interior rail cars, adding

to the metal-on-metal clamor. Towering smokestacks loom over Providence and coat downwind homes in fine black powder, making them almost unlivable in summer. I'm reminded of one of the most gorgeous lines Bruce Springsteen ever wrote, painting a picture of a similar industrial landscape in Youngstown, Ohio, with "smokestacks reaching like the arms of God into a beautiful sky of soot and clay."

Thankfully, the turbines are gone, and the smokestacks have been felled like the industrial sequoias of a bygone era. After decommissioning in 1995, the hulking structure sat vacant for years, boarded up and slowly decaying, with an unseen interior urban forest thriving in the dim light of a fractured floor slab. Several unrealized adaptive reuse projects have been planned for South Street Station over the years, including a potential rebirth as a State Cultural Heritage and History Museum. Currently, Brown University, the University of Rhode Island, and Rhode Island College are developing space in the building, giving new hope for its civic future.

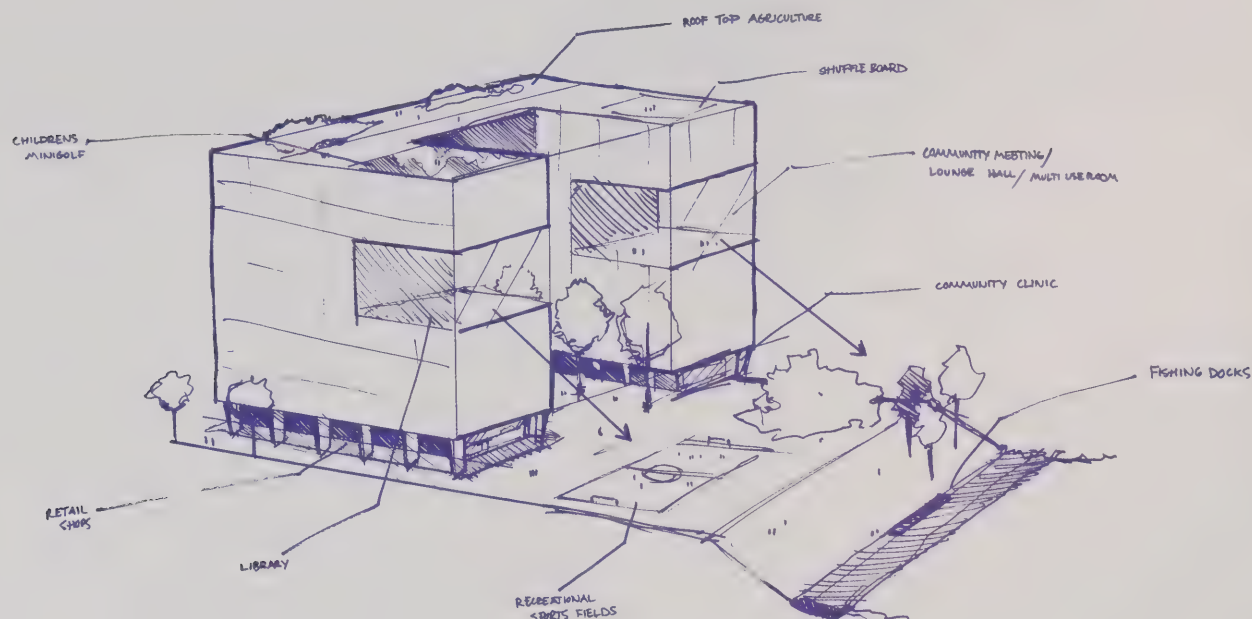
Similar cathedrals of electricity are easy to find, from the Mystic River in Somerville to the Connecticut River in Hartford. Skilled designers transform the lucky ones like the Tate Modern and Battersea museums, both on the Thames River in London. These brownfield brick behemoths are part of urban energy stories that are poised for happy endings. With some imagination, they can continue to power city life in new and creative ways.

JIM STANISLASKI AIA is an architect at Gensler in Boston, an environmentalist, and a painter of industrial landscapes.

LEFT

Interior of the South Street Station, 2013.
Photo: Michael Umbricht





MATTER OF COURSE

Rethinking Green Urbanism, and Architecture Studio: Reimagining Providence

Rhode Island School of Design

I had never visited the Rhode Island School of Design before. Why not, I now wonder? Whoosh down Route 95 or, more eco-appropriately, hop onto a train, and you land on its front door in less than an hour. Part of this is RISD's doing: The famous smoothing out of Providence's urban core supposedly hearkens back to a drawing on the back of a napkin sketched by three professors at the city's old Blue Point Oyster Bar.

The two courses I looked in on, "Rethinking Green Urbanism" and the studio "Reimagining Providence," were meant to be twinned, but for scheduling reasons, few students could attend both. Never mind. I attended both—and had plenty of fun.

Professors Anne Tate and Damian White co-teach the urbanism class, which covered an immense amount of ground on the long afternoon I visited. For starters, we read Dolores Hayden's provocative 1980 essay, "What Would a Non-Sexist City Look Like?" and then broke into the proverbial small groups for discussion.

Hayden, now a professor at Yale,

offered up a prescription to lighten the lot of single mothers and women, called HOMES (Homemakers Organization for a More Egalitarian Society). Her utopian vision of an "experimental residential center" with shared kitchen and day-care services went over like a lead balloon in my small group of three women and one man. Hayden's idea that "family rooms are converted to community facilities such as a child's play areas" struck a nerve with one student, who was raised by a single mother whom she knew would loathe the forced togetherness imposed by Hayden's confected neighborhood.

Another woman hated the idea of someone else doing her laundry or her cooking. "It's like that novel *The Giver*," she complained, referencing Lois Lowry's young-adult best-seller about a dystopian society where "the Elders" control every element of citizens' supposedly wonderful lives. White jokingly commented, "They are so reactionary—kids these days!" To which I would add: And the sledgehammer of child-rearing reality has yet to smite them upside the head.

While we discussed Hayden's essay,

White asked the students to simultaneously work on a drawing. These kids can draw! Xavier Rumph's sketch of a multifamily, multigenerational housing block "took me about five minutes," he said.

Wait, there's more. Three students contributed Pecha Kucha-style presentations, the Japanese format where 20 slides are displayed in 20 seconds, and delivered mini-lectures on Iranian architecture, fusion power, and adaptive reuse. But the class was far from over. Tate finished up with an interesting lecture on the evolution of urban transportation. Takeaway fact: Los Angeles once had 1,100 miles of urban trolley lines. That was then, this is now.

For her studio, Tate invited two architects from Boston and RISD interior architecture professor Peter Yeadon to a midsemester crit. Students unpacked revisions of a badly flooded Providence and a "Fun City" Providence and re-designed entire neighborhoods and the transportation system. The visitors pushed back, politely and sometimes hard. The student who completely reinvented

the Renaissance City's transportation system encountered some stiff headwinds. Was the existing system, which relies mainly on buses, broken? How did he know?

I liked Tyler Mills' reprogramming of the city's Pleasant Valley neighborhood as an interconnected Fun City, interlaced with zip lines and rollerblade tracks. He got plenty of pushback, too. "We don't have Google here; this is a city that makes things," Yeadon commented. He also called downtown Providence "dreary" and possibly ill-suited to the kind of joyful reprogramming that Mills was suggesting.

Dreary, maybe. But submerged? Quite possibly. The Providence River is an inlet of Narragansett Bay, so it was easy for one student to imagine downtown's Kennedy Plaza as a marina after a half-century of rising sea levels. Another proposed reclaiming land parcels from the bay and building high-rise complexes for postglobal warming apartment towers.

The visiting critics offered some bracing rejoinders to these schemes, too. "I like the pessimism in your project," Yeadon said to one student who had abandoned downtown Providence to the climate ravages of the future. "You are not assuming that the city is dynamic. Leaving the downtown fallow is really smart." Boston architect Douglas Dolezal voiced some doubt that the Narragansett Bay reclamation project was the ideal response to global warming. "I'm not ready for that solution—the high-rise stuck in the water," he said. "Maybe people just need to think about moving to higher ground?"

Or evolve gills? There may not be enough time for that.

ALEX BEAM writes a column for *The Boston Globe* and is working on a book about Vladimir Nabokov. "Matter of course" visits exceptional architecture classes at New England schools.

ABOVE LEFT

A sketch of multifamily, multigenerational housing. Image: Courtesy of Xavier Rumph



SEEN

Somerville

Five years ago, I made a big change by moving to the United States, away from friends and family. Once immersed in a new culture, I was struck by the obvious differences between my homeland and my new surroundings. In order to find my sense of place, I picked up my camera and started exploring the area that I now call home, walking through the neighborhoods and diverse cityscapes. I turned my attention to matters overlooked, fragments of working-class suburbia—such as empty driveways and cluttered backyards—that were normal to Americans but seemed odd through my eyes.

Spaces in between houses are always interesting. People walk through driveways on their way to work, pile up their seasonal belongings to hide them in plain sight from passersby, display the relics of their lives for all to see. This territorial separation, though, also acts as an intersection, creating a connection between neighbors, bringing them closer together.

YORGOS EFTHYMIADIS, a fine art and architectural photographer from Greece, has exhibited at the Griffin Museum of Photography and the Danforth Art Museum, where he was presented with the 2015 Emerging Artist Award.

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Overgrowth

deCordova Sculpture Park and Museum, Lincoln, Massachusetts

Through September 18

"Prolific expansion, growth, and mutation" in nature and the built environment is the subject of the deCordova's summer exhibition. As a landscape architect, I was enticed by the prospect of immersion in uncontrolled organic abundance, decay, devastation—all that which begets new life.

Whether an intentional curatorial choice or an inherent condition of working with a permanent collection, the work is intensely diverse, both in aesthetic form and thematic content. It includes a number of striking artworks, such as Laura McPhee's large-format photography recording the beauty and devastation of post-forest fire Idaho.

Across the gallery, prolific expansion of consumer culture is featured in Rachel Perry Welty's self-portrait, meticulously staged within a decorated collection of Styrofoam dinner containers.

Other pieces combine the grotesque and the beautiful. Constance Jacobson's highly detailed amorphic monotypes can be understood as a brain cross-section, a microbe, an ossified tree slice, or something else. One of the most awe-inspiring works—fascinating and terrifying—is Harold Edgerton's photograph of an atomic bomb blast, taken with a 10-foot lens from a distance of 7 miles, the graininess of the bulbous image entirely out of proportion with

the enormity of the event.

I loved the visceral experience of many of the individual works but wished the show was half as large so it could have felt more thematically consistent. My initial experience was similar to scanning stations on the radio—a snippet of one piece of music and then off to something else. But perhaps that's a fundamental subtext of this exhibition, with its starting point in overabundance. The image-ready culture of Google, Facebook, and Instagram trains us to edit out certain things and select others, skills that can be creatively employed to immerse oneself in the varied tendrils of *Overgrowth*.



SHAUNA GILLIES-SMITH ASLA is the principal of Ground, a design practice committed to the creation of exceptional, sustainable, and artful landscapes.

LEFT

Late Summer (Drifting Fireweed), Laura McPhee, 2007. Chromogenic print, 72" × 94". Photo: Courtesy of the artist and Carroll and Sons, Boston



Photo: Kai Nakamura

Kenzo Tange Lecture: Toyo Ito, "Tomorrow's Architecture"

Harvard University Graduate School of Design

March 7, 2016

Gathering with friends beneath the sakura trees each spring, just as the cherry blossoms begin to fall, is embedded in Japanese tradition. This instinctual sense of placemaking, of sitting below the wispy branches, was captured in Toyo Ito's subtle imagery of an encircling ring of fabric panels: "This is how I create 'Places,'" he said to an overflow audience at Gund Hall. Accordingly, Ito suggested, "Space is just void, an expanding and unlimited void."

Introducing three projects, Ito drew connections from linguistic structure. "The way that Japanese language is positioned in space is similar to how a ripple dissipates into water." This sense of the relationship between key elements inspires flexibility in the designer's work.

Employing this principle in the Sendai Mediatheque, the 13 structural tubes in the plan act as free-floating elements, creating spaces between them. Similarly, in the design of Taiwan's National Taichung Theater, which will be completed this year, the elements intersect both vertically and horizontally to create a suspended network of places tucked within the amorphous reinforced concrete structure. In the recently completed "Minna no Mori" Gifu Media Cosmos, in central Japan, Ito expressed the façade as an exposed sectional cut—such that the "spaces can dissipate continuously" to the outside, emphasizing his belief that "there is never any confinement to the architecture."

Dean Mohsen Mostafavi and a student asked Ito about the disjunction between digitally driven design processes and labor-intensive fabrication methods. Highlighting the intricate steel reinforcement assemblies at the National Taichung Theater and the undulating laminated timber roof of the Gifu Media Cosmos (above), Ito emphasized an appreciation for handcraft. Perhaps more important, he voiced a preference for a human-centered construction process: "The more people who can say that they helped build this project, the better."

THOMAS SHERMAN is an architectural designer at Kao Design Group in Somerville, Massachusetts, and an instructor in sustainable building systems at the Boston Architectural College.

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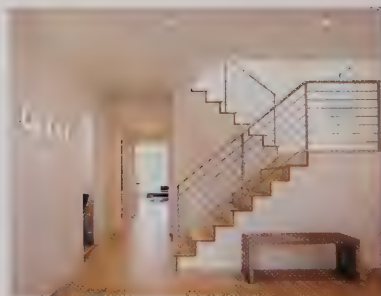
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THE YEAR OF THE PLAN

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SUMMER 2016



What endures? In this issue, *ArchitectureBoston* considers the appeal of structures that sit lightly on the land. From the ice shacks of northern Maine to burning effigies in the Nevada desert, ephemeral can be beautiful. And powerful.

NOW YOU



SEASON'S FLEETINGS

by Michael D. Burke

Early in January, sometimes on the very first day, a pop-up village appears in the middle of our small town in western Maine. One day there is nothing, the next, 20 or 30 houses. They seem to come out of nowhere, like toadstools after a rain, last about two months, then disappear one night, taking the village with them. The houses are small yet, like any house, have roofs and walls and windows and doors, and sometimes are carefully decorated inside. And these are the only buildings I know of that have a foundation not of wood or granite or cement, but of ice.

Ice shacks and the villages they create are an important part of life in a place like Maine, or in any of the other small towns in the northern tier of the United States. Unlike other communities, these villages have just one activity and purpose: to make ice fishing possible and more pleasant than it otherwise would be. On our pond, the ice-fishing season runs from January 1 to March 31, and on almost any day you can look across the pond and see fishermen puttering about in the village. Why, you wonder, would anyone subject themselves to those temperatures, the exposure, just to land a fish?

The reason is that ice fishing is a refusal to give in to winter. When you live in a place with as much winter as this, a place where a pond can be frozen solid for one-third of the year, one has to find a way to cope. The ice houses make it possible not only to resist winter but to enjoy it.

SEE IT



On a Saturday last February, when it was 8 degrees outside and a brutal northwest wind swept across the pond, the village expanded, becoming a wicked-cold Woodstock, because an ice-fishing derby was under way. The village, complete with vehicles and roads, swelled to perhaps 300 people, about 150 of whom had signed up for the derby. At 300, it was larger than some of the hamlets in our county.

I took a stroll through the village that day. The shacks ranged from the barest—four walls, a roof, a window, barely a floor—to impressively elaborate. As I walked by one of the latter, I admired its construction: 8-by-12-foot walls of ribbed-steel roofing panels over a 2-by-4 frame, with a roof slope of about 2 inches over 12 to shed the wind and snow. Waved inside by a friendly fisherman, I discovered a toasty space, thanks to the wood stove blazing in the center of the shack. There were three of us inside at first, and then eight, but homey all the same: food on the stove, plenty of supplies, pictures in frames, shelves, electrical wiring for a generator, even curtains on the windows. One could happily survive winter in a dwelling like this—not that anyone has, except in tales invented by old-timers.

The next day the village had lost half its population; by the first of March, it was a ghost town; in another month, there were no shacks and no trace that a village ever existed. Our pop-up villages are a reminder that winter, even in western Maine, is temporary. Someday, the pond will thaw. ■



	DATE MOUNTED 1.1.14
	DURATION 60 DAYS
<small>ABOVE</small> Ice-fishing shacks on Eagle Lake, Acadia National Park, Maine, 2014. Photo: © Debra Carr Brox	

MICHAEL D. BURKE, a professor of English at Colby College in Waterville, Maine, is the author of the memoir *The Same River Twice* (University of Arizona Press, 2006).



A TRANSITORY NATURE

by Rebecca Roke

	DATE MOUNTED 5.8.15
	DURATION 10 DAYS
<small>ABOVE</small> PaperBridge , by Steve Messam, a full-sized pack-horse bridge made from 22,000 sheets of paper, in the Lake District, UK, 2015. <small>Photo: © Steve Messam</small>	

The very idea of transitory, demountable, ephemeral architecture may seem counterintuitive to our usual perception of buildings as enduring spaces in which to dwell. Yet examples of small-scale buildings abound, many of which include delicate, momentary, or briefly inhabited works that illustrate the delight of such places.

In contrast with architecture that is substantial and solid, the designs of these tiny spaces frequently respond to subtle, changing qualities. Often, they encourage us to engage with the environments in which they sit as much as the works themselves. Such built projects encompass the ephemeral in various ways: They frame diurnal patterns of light and shade and mark seasonal change, they move according to varying weather patterns and scenery, and they inspire playful flights of fancy—even if the imaginative works last only a short season. They can also be seen as small weather vanes: registering a broader and changing interest in how we can occupy our environment intelligently, doing more and using less.

Steve Messam's *PaperBridge* in Cumbria, England, epitomized the way in which ephemeral works can pique curiosity and draw attention to context. This self-supporting crimson arch was formed of 22,000 sheets of red paper constructed according to ancient principles of drystone walls, without the need for glue, nails, or other adhesives. Assembled for a cultural festival in the Lakes District, the bridge allowed visitors to cross it—often with disbelief—and was equally arresting for its color, which boldly contrasted with and framed the soft and stony mien of the setting. At the close of the festival, the arch

was simply disassembled into the paper sheets from which it came, satisfying Messam's intent for the work to be fully recycled.

Similarly, the inflatable *CristalBubble*, designed by Frenchman Pierre-Stéphane Dumas, offers a design approach that responds to fleeting external conditions. With an easily erected translucent dome, the bubble was conceived to engage with daily change. Sharing its pneumatic qualities and mobility is the unusual public meeting room known as *Inflatable Space*, by the London-based firm Penttinen Schöne. The architects' intention was to create an accessible place that could be readily moved to give visitors a changing backdrop amid nature. Its arched entry points encourage visitors to enter the pavilion while light through yellow acrylic windows colors the interior.

Ephemeral qualities often refer to things that last but a day. Architecturally, this notion can be seen in spaces that encourage observation of passing moments in seasonal cycles of nature. The design of the *Exbury Egg* in England is intimately shaped by its environment. Employing yacht-building techniques to create a structure that floats on the tidal estuary of the River Beaulieu, the egg is a temporary workspace for artist Stephen Turner and is part of a public educational program that supports greater connection to river life and to natural patterns of change.

Although robust, ample buildings form the bedrock of architecture as we know it, these examples represent an increasing body of diminutive counterparts that offer an engaging way in which to experience the passage of time. ■

REBECCA ROKE is the author of *Nanotecture: Tiny Built Things*, which was published in March by Phaidon.

OCCUPY COPLEY

by Ken Kruckemeyer AIA

Today we might call illegally blocking access to a heavily used commuter parking lot to make a point “tactical urbanism.” But the tactic is nothing new. Just such an event was organized by residents of Boston’s South End in 1968, weeks after the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., to dramatize the city’s acute shortage of affordable housing.

For four years, the Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA) had been displacing South End residents in the name of “urban renewal” and had yet to construct a single new house. On Columbus Avenue at Dartmouth Street, people were being displaced and houses razed to make way for a planned parking garage and residential tower. This action precipitated a weeklong encampment, with hundreds of protesters erecting a “tent city” of temporary housing. Typical of the time, the city responded with arrests.

Neighborhood residents were the initial demonstrators. As the Tent City Task Force, they battled recalcitrant bureaucracy. Eventually, as the Tent City Corporation, they succeeded in creating the permanent and joyful mixed-income housing development that now fills that site.

Early on, the task force drew up a list of “Fundamental Principles,” a vision that served as a continual touchstone against which all proposals were measured. It included a physical prescription that envisioned buildings having an affinity with 100-year-old row houses on one side and a robust presence to Back Bay Station and the anticipated Copley Place shopping mall on the other. Equally essential was the requirement that new housing reflect the racial and economic mix of the South End. That meant “no” to the BRA’s typical requirement of just 10 percent affordable units; “no” to a forced joint venture with the Fitzgerald parking lot family, who owned half of the property; and “no” to the proposal from Copley Place for an enormous above-ground parking garage wrapped with housing.

We got to “yes” by showing another way. In the late 1970s, the task force led the BRA through the development of a moderate-income sweat-equity cooperative for the Frankie O’Day Block across Columbus Avenue. That success gave the task force the credibility it needed to become the Tent City

Corporation. With a team of professionals and the new “mayor of the neighborhoods,” Ray Flynn, it became possible to say “yes” to the successful creation of mixed-income housing on the site. The permanent Tent City Apartments, named in honor of the demonstration and designed by Goody Clancy architects, opened its doors in 1988. Today, three-quarters of the residents have low or moderate incomes and just one-quarter of the 269 units rent at market rate.

In 1968, the Tent City demonstrators had a vision for housing and a neighborhood that would prosper by being racially and economically inclusive. Then as now, public policy was timid. Developers and financial institutions were unwilling to lead. But neighbors took action with conviction. Tent City and the subsequent South End Neighborhood Housing Initiative developments are models for successful mixed-income housing that are widely respected but not often replicated.

Who in Boston will take the initiative today to resist the relentless pressures of economic and racial polarization and respond aggressively to the dwindling supply of low- and middle-income housing? As a piece of theater, tactical urbanism can startle. It also has great potential to capture imaginations. To turn a dream into reality, however, requires persistent audacity and tenacity. ■

	DATE MOUNTED 4.25.68
	DURATION 5 DAYS
<p>BELOW</p> <p>Signs marked off a demonstration area at the Tent City protests in the South End, 1968. Photo: Dan Sheehan/The Boston Globe/Getty Images</p>	

KEN KRUCKEMEYER AIA moved to the South End in 1967. He has worked with his neighbors to sustain a supportive and inclusive neighborhood.



IN A FLASH

by Dan Adams and Marie Law Adams AIA



DAN ADAMS and MARIE LAW ADAMS AIA are the cofounding partners of Landing Studio, an architecture, design, and research studio that works at the intersection of large-scale infrastructure and the city.

The artist Jenny Holzer once used light to project words into the ocean: as the waves broke, letters appeared momentarily on the white wash and then disappeared as the water settled on shore. Rem Koolhaas wrote about massive light masts at the shore of Coney Island in the 1880s that allowed Manhattanites to take part in sublime illuminated “electric bathing.” Architects Robert Mangurian and Mary-Ann Ray proposed lighting steel fire escapes in the St. Louis theater district to transform them into elaborate stencils that cast ornate shadows across blank building façades.

We never set out to work with light and don’t claim to be lighting designers, but many of our projects have started with light projection. Working this way is an escape from the slow and mediated relationship to the city that we normally experience as architects. With light, architecture can be constructed and reconstructed in realtime: surfaces immediately respond through

reflection and shadow; geometry is radically transformed with slight adjustments; and colors of light and the city mix with each other to produce unexpected effects.

Our work grew from a desire to engage the industrial operations and artifacts of the city—things such as stockpiles, tanks, and highways. Light proved to be a medium that can negotiate and even amplify the scale and kinetic qualities of these often dark, peripheral landscapes.

When we projected patterns of light on salt piles, they were most striking on Mexican salt that is directly evaporated from the ocean. The newly formed crystals are bright white and intensify the light by reflecting it. Salt mined from prehistoric oceans in Chile and Northern Ireland, on the other hand, is tan or even brown, with sediments that absorb and diminish light. Like Holzer’s waves, our light would appear and disappear as the salt piles rose and fell with each new shipment and winter storm.

In a later project, we observed that while oil tank structures usually look nearly the same from any side because of their cylindrical shape, they became exuberantly animated when projected with light. When we projected a series of lights on a row of tanks along a city block, the images looked most “normal” when you viewed them directly from the light source and would become increasingly distorted as you moved between lights, until suddenly they became recognizable again when you passed by the next light. The anamorphic light turns static architecture into a responsive character.

Most recently, we’ve been illuminating an elevated highway. Its underside creates a rare urban ceiling upon which to cast light into the distance. Like headlights cast onto the road’s surface or low moonlight glancing the sea, the light across such extensive surfaces doesn’t stop; it fades and merges with the ambient environment. For example, when pavement is damp and reflective, the red, yellow, and green of traffic lights aren’t just points but a communicative atmosphere.

Light allows a momentary reconsideration of form, movement, and scale. We are testing, one-to-one, new ways of seeing the ordinary elements and structures of the city. ■

CONCRETE PROMISES

by Eric J. Cesal

I've worked with and for disaster-affected communities the world over and perhaps have a special vantage point on the temporary and the ephemeral in architecture. In my work, everything is temporary along a long enough timeline. But some things are strangely permanent—like temporary architecture. Some designers fawn over that sort of thing and climb over one another to design the latest inflatable, flat-pack, insta-igloo that's going to solve all of the world's refugee problems.

I never really saw the sense in that, so I'll say this: To hell with your temporary architecture. That's not what architects do, and you should stop.

It's a ruse. To address the temporary dimensions of homelessness or placelessness is a de facto concession that we don't have the resources to address such problems on a permanent basis. That is false. There's more than enough wealth in the world to house every single Syrian refugee and every climate change refugee, and, technologically speaking, we possess all that we need to avert most types of so-called natural disasters. What we lack is the will.

The Syrian refugee crisis has given rise to a new debate and newish ideas about what to do in the face of unplanned mass migration. Unplanned isn't synonymous with unforeseeable. We know with certainty that our shared future will be a story of mass urbanization and displacement. We know that once-great cities will sink into the sea, and the competition for space will fuel conflict, which in turn will lead to more millions displaced. We can start planning for that future now. Or we can slap a Band-Aid on the latest crisis and see if we can get our designs published in the *Journal of Bleedingly Obvious Architecture*.

Temporary architectural solutions to humanitarian crises are a Hobson's choice that is presented to the dispossessed by those with wealth: You can have a temporary shelter or no shelter, but don't ask for anything permanent because we can't afford that. It is the ghettoization of the humanitarian spirit itself—effectively forcing those who would do good to do less than what is morally necessary.

Refugee camps such as Dadaab in Kenya and Zaatari in Jordan monstrosly prove that it's possible to corral and contain 80,000 people.

Indefinitely, in the case of Dadaab. Probably eventually, in the case of Zaatari as well. Throughout the 20th century, humanity continuously proved that when one community didn't want another community to assimilate, it could "temporarily" house people in some barren stretch of land that no one else wanted and keep them docile with the promise of a better tomorrow. I've never seen a temporary solution that didn't become permanent as a result of exhausted budgets and lapsing media attention.

The real solution to the real problem is daunting, but that's OK. How does the global community create permanent homes and communities for 4.6 million Syrian refugees throughout the Middle East and Europe without falling prey to the discredited, centrally planned, utopic visions of Modernism? How can we grant authorship, identity, and dignity to those who inhabit our work, when we don't have a single client, but *millions* of clients? How do we plan for a future of upheaval, dispossession, and conflict while making sure our built environment can adapt and safely protect the disenfranchised? How do we avoid capitulating to an aid industry that would offer one-year solutions to 30-year problems? I don't know, but there are 2.1 million architects in the world, and I think collectively, we could figure it out. If, you know, we wanted to. ■

	DATE MOUNTED 1990
	DURATION ONGOING
BELOW Somali refugees at the Dadaab camp in Kenya, the largest refugee camp in the world, July 2011. Photo: Tony Karumba/AFP/Getty Images	

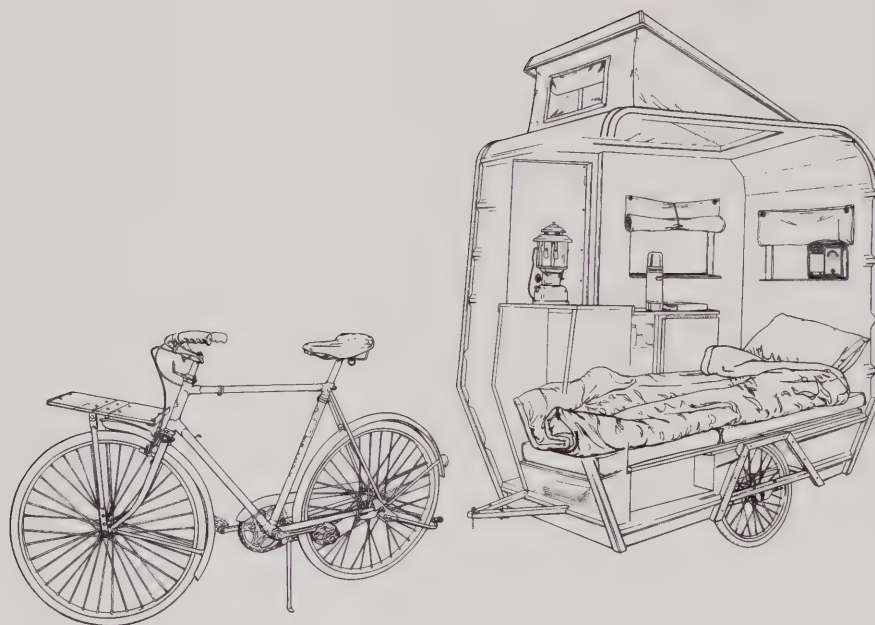
ERIC J. CESAL is a designer, writer, social advocate, and noted postdisaster expert, having led reconstruction programs after the Haiti earthquake, the Great East Japan tsunami, Superstorm Sandy, and other disasters. He is currently visiting faculty at Washington University in St. Louis, where he lectures on emerging trends in disaster and resilience.



MOVABLE TYPE

**EPHEMERAL ARCHITECTURE
RESPONDS TO OUR FLEXIBLE,
MOBILE NATURE**





by Robert Kronenburg

In the spring of 2009, New York architects LOT-EK created a temporary shopping complex on Boston's Fan Pier. Puma City, made from shipping containers, converted these humble industrial objects into architecture almost overnight. Just as quickly, it was gone, leaving only the memory of how, with a little thought, the pier could be transformed to a new purpose.

Ephemeral architecture has this capacity to create a significant memorable experience. Because it is erected over a short time, its assembly and commissioning becomes a sort of performance. Also, because its appearance is realized so quickly, it can add a more readily appreciated perspective on an existing landscape, altering people's perception of what the site may contain or what that part of the city might become. Because such buildings are temporary, regulations and controls are often relaxed, and a more avant-garde or provocative structure might be installed, paving the way for more inventive permanent solutions in the future. And because of its time-limited existence, ephemeral architecture has less risk attached, so taking a chance is easier to justify. If the intervention works, it can become a useful precedent for implementing beneficial change. Although

such projects may be small in scope and light in budget, they can have long-term effects in shaping the city.

Bostonians recently have had a few other opportunities to see the power and allure of temporary architecture. Most everyone in the area will have heard of Boston Calling, co-curated by musician Aaron Dessner. Since 2013, the festival has temporarily transformed Boston City Hall Plaza into an open-air concert space with the help of mobile stages, projections, and crowds of 20,000. Infinitely more modest is the homeowner-run group Greater Boston Tiny House Enthusiasts, part of a movement that is spreading across North America. Mobile, custom-made homes built on trailers or truck beds mean that people can own outright and move to new locations as their desires or work options change.

In fact, ephemeral building can be found in every country of the world. Its typology is so essential to the development of built form that the earliest buildings created were made in this manner. What is more, contemporary examples are usually technologically advanced, have strong sustainability credentials, and are visually innovative. Whether described as mobile, portable, or temporary, this building type is designed specifically to meet

OPPOSITE

Little Tag Along (2011), a functional sculpture from *Home in the Weeds*, a project by artist Kevin Cyr of Portland, Maine, that examines notions of home, self-preservation, and safe havens.

ABOVE

Little Tag Along (Cross Section), Kevin Cyr, 2011.

Images: Courtesy of the artist

changing requirements and take advantage of temporary sites.

Usually, the creation of ephemeral architecture occurs around the need to solve pragmatic problems, though often with aesthetic ambitions as well. Mobile buildings are used to provide essential services for housing, health, education, commerce, and industry. They are essential tools for exploration, research, disaster relief, and the military. But they also are used for entertainment, performance, and the visual arts. This is a form of architecture that responds most closely to the nature of human beings as peripatetic creatures—able to support our endeavors as we freely move from place to place.

The appeal of mobile architecture may be hard-wired. When human beings first began to build shelter 150,000 years ago, it was conceived as a tool to aid their hunter-gatherer existence. Such tools needed to be light and mobile and made from the materials on hand, generally bones or sticks for the structure and animal skins for the cladding: The first-ever buildings were tents. Their forms took many shapes—cones, tetrahedrons, truncated triangles, domes, barrel vaults—all of which became models for the permanent buildings to come.

These early human-made structures were economical and sustainable by necessity. Resources were scarce and locally sourced; often, recycled materials and components were an essential part of human survival; knowledge about technology was hard won by experiment and practical experience—therefore proven and well understood. These characteristics of vernacular

mobile buildings are important, and they are evident in modern versions we are familiar with today: tents, tepees, and yurts. Rolling and floating homes are also mobile buildings, but from a different, though still an ancient, legacy. Shelters like these are transported whole rather than being broken down: Barges, houseboats, caravans, trailers (like Tiny Houses) may be less sustainable in both construction and transportation, but they have the advantages of being more durable and more quickly ready for use.

These contemporary mobile structures, though familiar, are relatively small and unambitious: simple buildings that fulfill essentially domestic needs for shelter on the move. How can they be related to the audacious claims regarding universality of purpose? Because mobility is needed in many other situations as well, and where a need is identified, a solution must be found. Time and again, much more complex and profoundly more ambitious buildings have been erected to meet these needs, created by ingenious designers, engineers, architects, and construction specialists.

The largest mobile building in the world is Valhalla, a giant tented membrane structure designed by UK-based engineer Rudi Enos. It can be erected in a variety of patterns up to 252,478 square feet in area and shipped around the world in 10 standard containers. The New York-based practice FTL Design and Engineering Studio, specialists in such tented structures, design mobile buildings used for sporting, commercial, and performance events. Its pavilions for clients such as the 1996 Olympic Games, the New York Metropolitan Opera, Harley-Davidson, and Cirque du Soleil are lightweight, efficient, and evoke an image of elegance and technological innovation.

A key element in the success of these buildings is that they are lightweight and demountable: They can be put together and taken apart relatively easily, and they are compact when stored or waiting for a new deployment. Mobility is not just about designing an effective building in use; it is also about effective reuse. Making sure that the building can be reused, often multiple times, requires specialist knowledge and experience. For this reason, the construction of successful ephemeral buildings and structures today usually differs from conventional building. Design teams such as FTL and LOT-EK have a wealth of experience, but they frequently work in partnership with specialist contractors.

The entertainment industry is one high-profile field where this cooperative design/manufacture partnership is used. Large and complex mobile

BELOW

Shanty Chateau, Kevin Cyr, 2011. Digital C-Print, 30" x 40", from the *Home in the Weeds* series. Photo: Courtesy of the artist





shows created for touring events are great logistical exercises, both in terms of staging and transporting and erecting equipment. The sets utilize building-size structures based on temporary foundations with city-sized power sources. Perhaps the greatest to be made so far has been the 360° touring show for the band U2, designed by Mark Fisher of StuFish and engineers Atelier One, with New York designer Chuck Hoberman creating an expanding cone-shaped video screen that opened and closed during performances. At 210 feet wide by 164 feet high, the set—nicknamed “The Claw”—enabled the band to perform in the round to stadium-sized audiences. The production was manufactured in Belgium by Tait Technologies with Frederic Opsomer, and three structures were built so that one could be in performance, one be dismantled, and one be erected at any one time. This allowed the band to play consecutive performances during its tour. (Bostonians saw the show at Foxborough near the beginning of the second leg in September 2009, one of seven phases of a tour that lasted three years.)

It might be argued that shows like this are not architecture. However, they use architectural structures, engineering, and systems; they are architectural in scale and leave powerful impressions on those who see them (in the case of 360°, a combined audience of more than 7 million);

and they provide an intense, important cultural experience. They are the 21st-century equivalent of that other great mobile traveling show, the circus, with its “Big Top.”

Ephemeral-building patterns enable a quick and focused response to urgent design needs. Prescient clients commission buildings that have the potential for future reuse and redeployment on a different site, negating the need for inefficient permanent buildings that will only have to be demolished, with all the attendant waste. Sophisticated buildings are usually prefabricated, with construction taking place in a controlled setting, with higher-quality manufacturing by specialist teams focusing on efficiency. However, the accessible character of smaller ephemeral buildings does not preclude a DIY approach, using available resources and personal agendas to create something unique to the designer and/or user. Both methods have their advantages.

Mobile architecture has a heritage that goes back to the primal instincts of human beings’ wish to build—to make something inherently useful and responsive. That this flexible form of construction has proven itself adaptable to modern design methods and industries should be no surprise: We are flexible creatures and infinitely adaptable, so why shouldn’t our buildings be as well? ■

ABOVE

Camper Kart, Kevin Cyr, 2010. A pop-up constructed out of a shopping cart. The project investigates habitats, recycling, and mobility. Photos: Courtesy of the artist



SOURCE MATERIAL

URBAN MINING REPURPOSES
A BUILDING'S LAYERS FOR LONGER LIFE

by Jean Carroon FAIA

Let's face it: all human-built objects are temporary. Our buildings, our roads, our infrastructure will be on this planet for only a limited period of time. Still, that period has a wide range. The Grand Bazaar in Istanbul has been used and useful for close to 600 years. The big box store on the strip outside any American city is likely to be used for less than 20 years, which, in the scheme of things, is very temporary indeed.


Short-lived architecture is the new norm, but it has a serious downside. The environmental impacts from material consumption and the waste associated with a building's construction and demolition are an increasing cause for concern, and with good reason: The short service life of buildings is a major contributor to global warming.

The reason for a building's demolition is rarely its deterioration. Changing cultural expectations—more space and a different type of space—and economic conditions regarding land use are more likely the primary drivers. Demolition is most prevalent in urban areas where increasing population and economic incentives make the replacement of smaller, existing buildings with new, larger buildings advantageous financially. In Japan, the typical life span of

office buildings is between 23 and 41 years, and the average life cycle of wooden residential houses is 14 to 17 years. A large study of residential buildings in the United Kingdom found 46 percent of demolished structures fell in the 11- to 32-year range. The story is hardly better in the United States: The Brookings Institution projects that some 82 billion square feet of existing buildings will be demolished and replaced before 2030—roughly one-quarter of today's existing building stock.

Humans are consuming resources and producing waste at a greater scale than ever before, and per capita consumption levels are projected to increase with continued development. The building sector, according to the United Nations, is responsible for one-third of all material consumption and waste in the world. Can we, if environmental stewards, afford to build and rebuild our cities and buildings? And if buildings are to be temporary, used for only decades instead of centuries, should we, can we, build in a completely different way?

Ideally, we would use an object for as long as possible. But a building is constructed in sections, and its component parts can still have long lives even if the overall structure is damaged or destroyed. The best way to make new buildings reusable is to provide a robust structural system with a column



THIS SPREAD
Detail of a ghost building in
Chicago, 2013. Photo: Tim Jarosz

grid and generous floor-to-floor dimensions. This allows for any perceived use that might arise in the future. In Stewart Brand's seminal book, *How Buildings Learn*, he describes buildings with layers, from the interior walls and ceilings to hidden building systems and exterior cladding. Each layer has a unique service life, but the most durable is the structural system. Brand's concept of "Long-life, loose-fit" can apply to the most mundane of buildings, such as the many 19th-century mill buildings turned into housing or the transformation, in London, of the Bankside Power Station into the Tate Modern art museum.

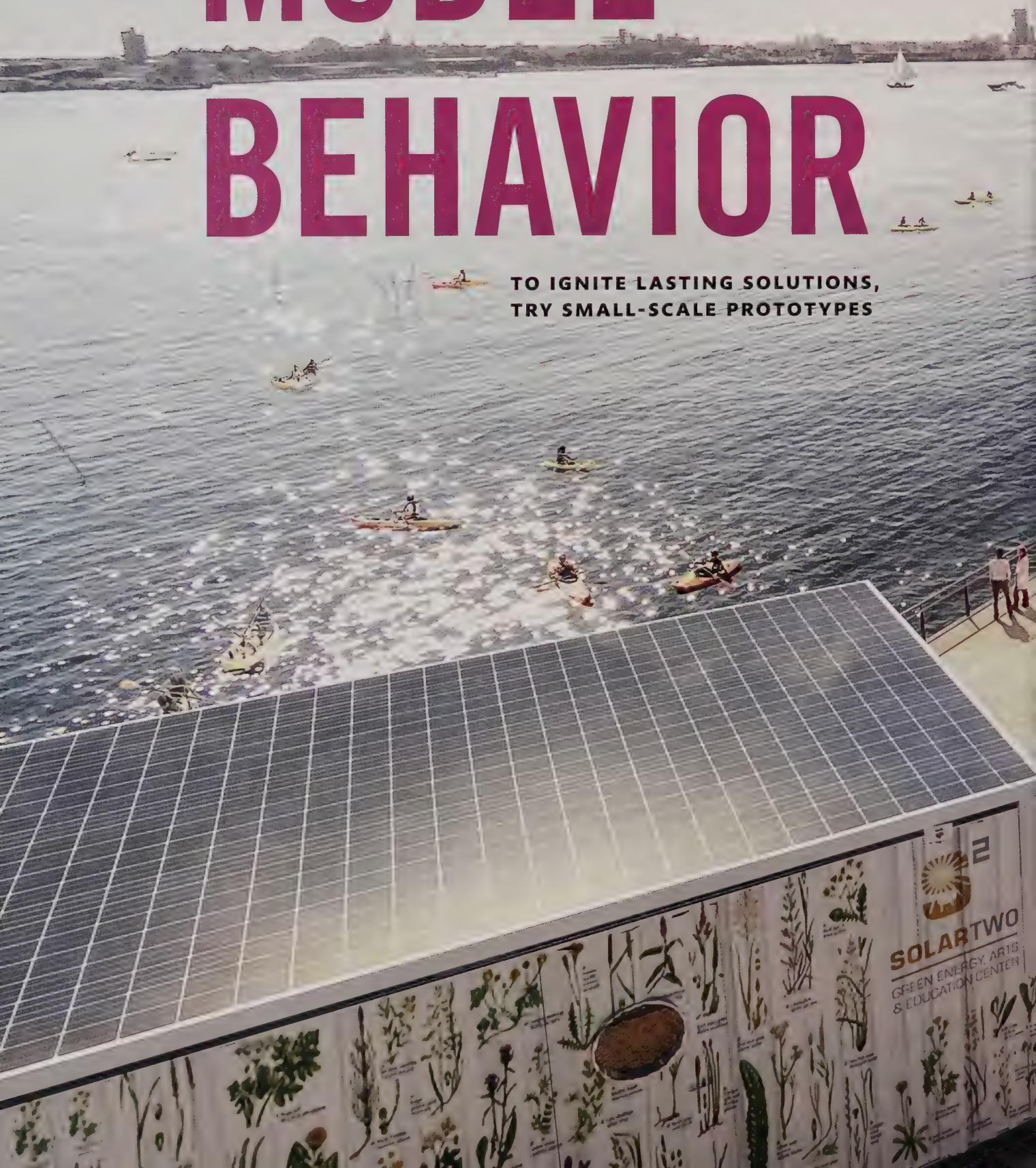
Adaptive reuse of buildings does not eliminate the waste stream, but it does start to change the paradigm with recognition that buildings are resources and that building materials have value. A new term, "urban mining," is beginning to be used to describe the repurposing of building materials as an alternative to recycling or pure demolition and addition to landfills. Urban mining focuses on component reuse. Reusing a prefabricated concrete panel almost eliminates its global warming impact compared with using a new panel, and it's even better than recycling the same panel, a process that requires substantially more energy.

The ability to mine buildings for materials and apply component reuse requires new ways of constructing buildings to facilitate deconstruction. Just as we have construction documents, we will need to develop *deconstruction* documents. Buildings designed for deconstruction will have mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems that are easy to disentangle. They will avoid binders, adhesives, and coatings that preclude separation and reuse of materials. Attachment systems will be reversible, unlike the nailing and drilling that currently may render materials un reusable or unrecyclable. The website of the US Environmental Protection Agency provides guidance on how to design for deconstruction, actual deconstruction case studies, and resources available in different communities.

For the good to the environment, we should be using buildings for as long as possible, and temporary architecture runs counter to this need. But urban mining offers a way to use and use again the component parts of a building—a kind of *serial* temporary use that over time can add up to quite a long service life. If we design thoughtfully and intentionally, we can bequeath a flexible, adaptable built world—a true gift to future generations. ■

MODEL BEHAVIOR

TO IGNITE LASTING SOLUTIONS,
TRY SMALL-SCALE PROTOTYPES





by Nina Chase ASLA

Pop-up, temporary, tactical, DIV. You cannot scroll through an article about urban design without finding projects that frame the process of city building as participatory, fun, and chock-full of experimentation. Designers, activists, and even developers have taken to the streets, quite literally, to prototype the potential of their cities. In New York City, Times Square has experienced a pedestrianized transformation

that began in 2009 with a tactical takeover by the NYC Department of Transportation using lawn chairs. In Boston, the Lawn on D has become the brightly colored, ping-pong table-infused poster child for temporary parks in underused neighborhoods.

Though conceived and implemented as pilot initiatives, these short-term projects have found a home within the tactical urbanism movement. This creative approach to testing temporary, locally based interventions geared toward long-term change has taken root in communities across the globe. The advent of creative placemaking, the maker movement's tools of digital production, and everyday citizens' frustration

with the often bureaucratic planning process has led to tactical urbanism's prominence in the urban design dialogue.

Designers have long recognized the influence of a good physical model, which in many ways is what these temporary, low-cost interventions can become. Sensory and interactive, the models invite stakeholders to connect with a future investment, albeit at a smaller scale and with less risk. They show citizens what they're buying before they write the check. But the tenets of tactical urbanism—quicker, lighter, cheaper—are not limited to temporary solutions.

Indeed, cities are resolving some of their most pressing challenges by using prototypes to inspire broader change. In Raleigh, North Carolina, a guerrilla signage campaign aimed at encouraging people to walk resulted in a new pedestrian plan for the city. In San Francisco, Park(ing) Day catalyzed an international phenomenon, transforming parking spaces into tiny pop-up parks. Cities across the country have since implemented formal programs that encourage cafe and restaurant owners to build permanent parklets in front of their shops.

In New York City, Janette Sadik-Khan, the city's former Department of Transportation commissioner, wielded pilot testing as her secret weapon. "Instead of arguing and debating, try something first and give people something to experience," she said in a recent interview with CityLab. "When you adapt a place and adapt a space, people adopt it." Her proof-of-concept pilots included painted bike lanes and those lawn chairs in Times Square. The efforts led to the transformation of more than 400 miles of the city's streets, integrating bike lanes, safer pedestrian crossings, and narrowed vehicular travel lanes. New York's Complete Streets have raised the bar for safer, more attractive, and efficient streets across the United States.

As cities search for solutions to large-scale environmental and societal pressures, tactical urbanism's can-do, optimistic approach has the potential to galvanize support for long-term strategies well beyond the scale of the parking spot. Citizens and municipalities have difficulty finding common ground on such issues as sea-level rise, drought, and housing shortages. To complicate matters, these issues are occurring at the scale of multiple cities or whole regions, which lack a single entity that can act unilaterally to address them. Pilot projects that embody the "test before you invest" mantra could help synthesize collective visions toward the future.

As Boston undertakes its first masterplanning process in 50 years, the city should harness the power of prototypes to test ideas. Rising seas, soaring housing prices, and underused land are serious issues facing Boston today. But it is not easy for the average citizen to imagine what a resilient coast could look like or what 50,000 new units of housing will mean for their neighborhoods. Because it's impossible to show what those projects might look like until they are finished in 10 to 30 years, garnering support is tough. Long-range planning at a city scale takes time, political will, money, and community patience. By applying the tenets of tactical urbanism, pilot



projects could show the untapped potential of our city sooner rather than later.

Take sea-level rise: Scientists project that Boston's tides will rise 2 feet by midcentury and 6 feet by 2100. This new tide line will transform the city's urban landscape and increase the probability of a major storm devastating the metropolitan region. After Superstorm Sandy narrowly missed Boston, the city has led the charge to be a model resilient coastal community. The Living with Water competition, sponsored by the city with The Boston Harbor Association, the Boston Redevelopment Authority, and the Boston Society of Architects/AIA, gave designers a platform to paint optimistic visions for our new wet future. Concept renderings showed raised sidewalks, floating buildings, and protective wetlands. But ask the average citizen what it means to build a resilient coast, and you'll often be met with blank stares. Prototypes show what is possible, which is imperative in the lead-up to making real changes to the way we plan and build in Boston.

One of the most successful projects to emerge from Rebuild by Design, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's resiliency competition for communities affected by Superstorm Sandy, was Bjarke Ingels Group's Dryline, a multifunctional seawall that aims to protect the lower tip of Manhattan while providing creative recreational and cultural amenities. Think seawall + benches + community spaces + farmers market stalls. One of the principles of resilient design is ensuring multiple uses for any given investment. Today's seawalls serve only one purpose: to keep the water out. Given the lack of valuable space in Boston, coupled with the need for better protective measures, our coastal edges should serve more than one role. Boston could pilot creative ideas for multifunctional seawalls before investing millions in storm surge infrastructure. Imagine a segment of an existing seawall in the Seaport District transformed to include seating, animal habitats, or recreational features such as a climbing wall at low tide. The existing seawall would provide necessary protection, while a series of newly designed temporary façades could illuminate the possibilities for multifunctional infrastructure.

Or imagine the Boston Harbor Islands transformed into a testing ground for a variety of resilient coastal strategies. An island could become a research hub for experimenting with new edge conditions, where we could document and quantify the protective effects of dunes, saltwater marshes, seawalls, or small flood gates. The temporary takeover of one or more islands could demonstrate the potential of innovative shoreline structures or plantings that could then be applied across the city. A partnership of this kind between the National Park Service and the city could serve multiple goals, inspiring and featuring the work of local designers and ecologists, educating citizens, and positioning Boston as a world leader in resilient construction and adaptation.

What about Boston's housing crisis? The Imagine Boston 2030 engagement campaign has confirmed that affordable housing is one of Bostonians' top concerns. The city's housing

efforts could be helped by experimenting with new land-use relationships in underused neighborhoods. Envision land currently zoned for industry in the Seaport or East Boston populated with new prefabricated workforce housing.

Tactical urbanism shows citizens what they're buying before they write the check.

The city also could experiment with a new land-use model that could lead to a better mix of low-density industrial use with higher-density residential use. Existing one- to two-story warehouses could be intermixed with temporary buildings placed on vacant industrial land. The structures could provide space for storefronts, apartments, and offices. In London's Shoreditch neighborhood, the temporary outdoor shopping district BOXPARK emerged from pop-up shops housed within 60 connected shipping containers. Similarly cost-effective prefab housing could demonstrate the potential of mixed-use zoning and grease the wheels for denser, more affordable neighborhoods that encourage 21st-century industrial uses such as maker spaces, fabrication studios, breweries, or indoor urban agriculture. Diverse industries could provide local jobs to Boston's neighborhoods while housing could create walkable transit-oriented communities, reducing traffic and sprawl. An affordable pop-up neighborhood, as a first step in redevelopment, could generate momentum around a new district and gauge interest in experimental housing typologies.

Boston is in the midst of a critical process that will inspire the development of the city for the next several decades. As a planning and design tool, tactical urbanism has proven effective in generating short-term action around long-term change, but it doesn't absolve those of us at the helm of city planning and design from committing to rigor, political process, and public investment. Where traditional planning approaches—so often opaque and abstract—fail to ignite public passions, tactical urbanism can add a dose of accessibility, whimsy, and imagination. Designers, city officials, community members all can engage with prototypes, creating a dialogue around what works and what does not. By harnessing the power of the prototype, Boston can show, not just tell, what's possible for our city's future. ■

PREVIOUS SPREAD

A rendering of the Dryline, designed by the Bjarke Ingels Group (BIG) after Superstorm Sandy, as a multiuse park and waterline buffer for Manhattan. Image: Courtesy of BIG

LEFT

BOXPARK Shoreditch, in East London, uses shipping containers to create a pop-up mall with short-term retail stores, galleries, cafes, and restaurants. Photo: Courtesy of Appear Here





by Geoff Edgers

My generous side thinks we should be grateful. For years, Boston has treated public art the way C. Delores Tucker approached rap: with fear and ignorance. We offered a broad palette of... bronze, from Horace Mann to Yaz. And when we weren't arresting artists as they arrived at their own openings—sorry, Shepard Fairey—we were at least making it incredibly difficult for them to find places to create dynamic public works.

That may be changing. There was that man in shorts appearing on the side of the shimmering former Hancock tower, and there's the ever-evolving mural canvas in Dewey Square. Let's not forget those glowing oval swings that popped up in a park on D Street and last year's most glorious marker of spring's arrival: Janet Echelman's colorful web rising over the Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Greenway.

It's enough to make you think Boston has turned an important corner.

But before we pat ourselves on the back, let's consider what's at play. The works noted above are all attention grabbing, progressive, and transformative. They're also temporary.

And that's the key. Boston is not Austin, Seattle, or Chicago, where money and support are plentiful for permanent artworks. Those cities have clearly figured out that public pieces, which introduce art to those who don't regularly meander through museum galleries, are not just electives. They're essential. Boston may not truly understand that. Consider the MBTA's decision to initially slice art out of the budget of its Green Line extension project. But we are getting better.

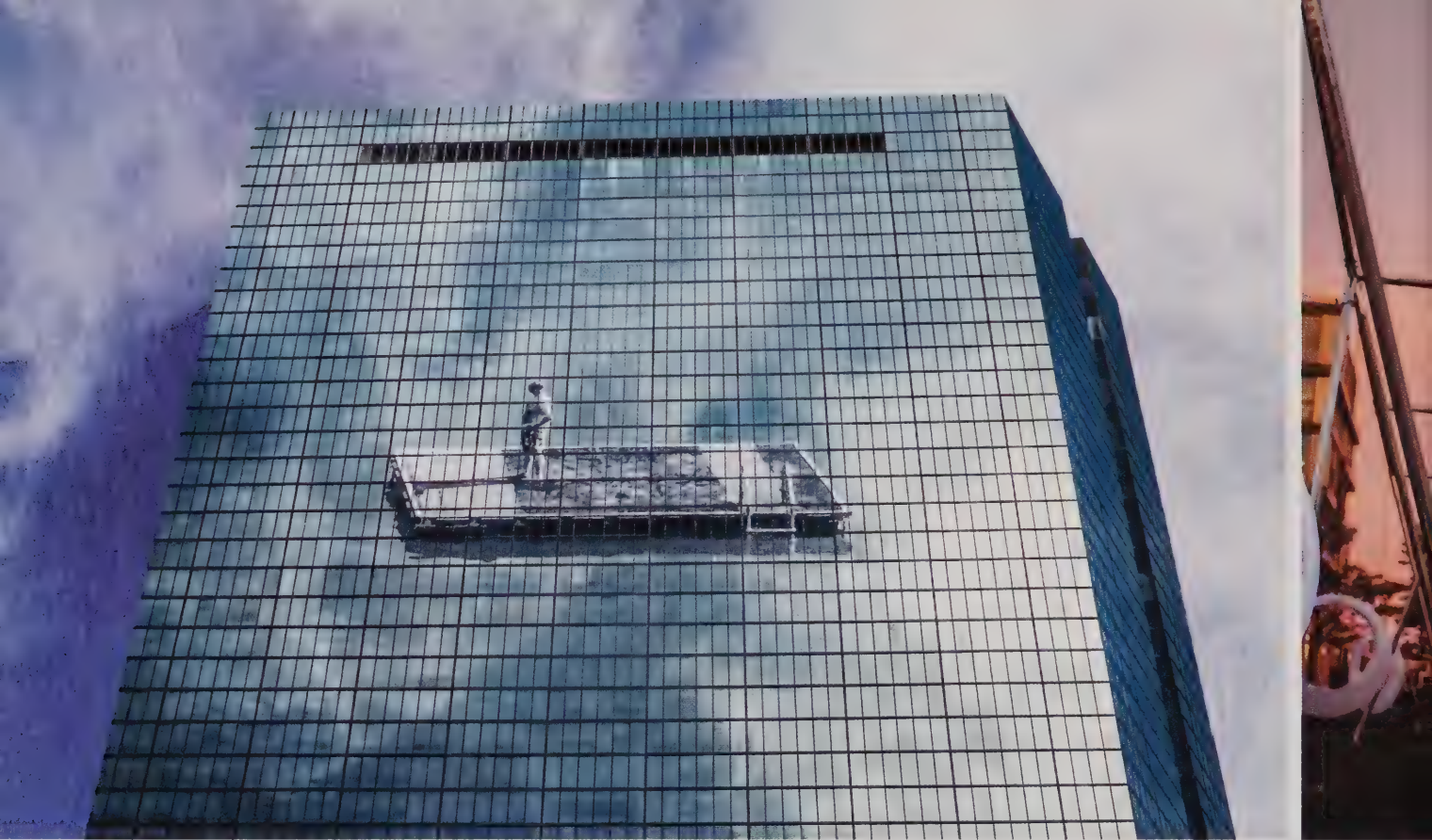
Echelman notes that her piece, which cost \$1 million and turned heads all last summer, was called *As If It Were Already Here*. "That's why I used that title," she says. "People had been

ABOVE

Left to right: *Seven Moon Junction*, Shinique Smith, 2014; *A Translation from One Language to Another*, Lawrence Weiner, 2015; *The Giant*, Os Gêmeos, 2012; *Remanence: Salt and Light (Part II)*, Matthew Ritchie, 2013. Photos: Geoff Hargadon, courtesy of Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Greenway Conservancy

LEFT

Adapted by Stoltze Design from a photo by Tim Sackton/Creative Commons.



complaining for years about what wasn't here. Suddenly, it was here."

What did the Brookline native, whose work has been installed around the globe, take the success of her project to mean? "Nothing is impossible anymore," she says.

Yes, this is now a city with an arts czar, a mayor willing to don a Guster hoody, and more than \$1 billion of museum expansions in its rear view. It's also a city with much to overcome. When I called the Boston Art Commission at City Hall, director Karin Goodfellow—who has been admirably trying for years to add some balance to the city's bronze-centric collection—was proudly talking up *Crisscross Signal Spire*. That permanent, interactive sculpture by Meejin Yoon AIA of

Höweler + Yoon Architecture recently went up in Dudley Square. What's more, she said, it represented the most the city has ever spent (\$400,000) on a piece of public art.

I congratulated her and then Googled the price tag for Anish Kapoor's *Cloud Gate*, the iconic "bean" in the center of Chicago: \$23 million. If we can't compete with cities like Chicago, we can at least focus on what we are doing well. Enter temporary works.

Curator Pedro Alonzo says the climate in Boston for doing short-term projects has improved in recent years. He should know. In 2009, Alonzo curated Fairey's Institute of Contemporary Art (ICA) show and found himself scrambling around for wall spots so the artist could install his trademark graffiti-inspired work in a public place. He found it far easier to work on the recent installation at the former Hancock tower by French artist JR. Alonzo has also been hired by The Trustees of Reservations for a multisite, multiyear project launching this year.

The temporary nature of the works, Alonzo says, doesn't just make them easier to accomplish. They can also be more daring. "It forces people to be more tolerant because it will go away," he says. "And it allows for newer work to come out, too."

Take the Dewey Square wall, on the side of a Big Dig ventilation building, which the ICA launched in 2012 with Os Gêmeos; the Brazilian twins painted a colorful image of a boy in pajamas. The piece garnered raves from observers, who passed by it during the morning commute or gathered under it for lunch on warm summer days. It also generated much conversation, particularly after a local TV station's message board prompted some odd and misguided interpretations of

\$1M

Cost for Janet Echelman's
*As If It Were Already
Here*, a 2015 Greenway
installation.

\$23M

Cost for Anish Kapoor's
Cloud Gate, the
popular "bean" in the
center of Chicago.



FAR LEFT

Mural, JR, 2015. Perforated vinyl, 150' x 86', 200 Clarendon, formerly the John Hancock tower, Boston. Photo: Leslee_atFlickr/Creative Commons

LEFT

Anna Kaertner sits in an illuminated swing, part of a Lawn on D art installation designed by Höweler + Yoon Architecture, outside the Boston Convention and Exhibition Center. Photo: Justin Saglio

the boy as a terrorist. Dewey Square has remained a revolving canvas, with the Museum of Fine Arts (MFA) and the MIT List Visual Arts Center taking turns with projects.

And the beauty of a great temporary project is that it doesn't disappear at the end of its run. It has staying power in our collective memories—even if it's up for just a few days.

Remember Krzysztof Wodiczko's 1998 piece on the Bunker Hill Monument? For three days, the Polish artist projected the stories of three mothers whose children were murdered onto the historic obelisk. It was daring and heartbreaking, and it transformed one of Boston's most familiar tourist spots. ICA director Jill Medvedow, who curated the project, references it in relation to Christo and Jeanne-Claude's *The Gates*, the 23 miles of saffron-colored "gates" installed in Central Park for two weeks in 2005.

"People had not seen the park in that way or the monument in that way," says Medvedow. "These are extraordinary works that got realized with incredible vision and an amazing ability to execute in real life and had tremendous impact on where we live."

During our chat, I brought up the MBTA's mess of an attempt to cancel the artist contracts for the Green Line extension project late last year, which the agency then reversed, sort of. (Artworks planned for other lines were apparently canceled with less publicity.) I'd expected Medvedow, such a public art advocate, to be outraged by the idea of cutting back on something with such a small impact financially on a project that's going to cost billions. Instead, she shifted the conversation.

In recent years, Medvedow says she has found herself thinking more expansively about the meaning of public art. It's not enough to simply add a piece in a park or a subway station or a building. There's a larger universe to consider, she says. The public realm needs trees along walkways, better public transportation systems, and other amenities to make city living more livable.

"Sometimes, I think the answer would be an incredible Anish Kapoor," Medvedow says, "and sometimes I think it would be a beautifully designed park."

She's right, of course, except for one important detail. Where's our bean? How do we, as a city, not only accept but also demand that our leaders find enough money so that we can create public art that's not simply there but is a world-class destination? The Boston Art Commission is at least trying. Recently added board members include MFA contemporary art chair Edward Saywell, Massachusetts College of Art and Design curator Lisa Tung, and Boston Cyberarts founder George Fifield. A pioneering figure in Boston, Fifield has been programming the LED display at the Boston Convention & Exhibition Center in South Boston, a spot that's both taken for granted and seen by tens of thousands every month.

It isn't going to be easy, particularly with a governor who has already vetoed a bill that would grant just a small percentage of the amount used on construction projects to the arts. But with a little creativity—and the right choices—Boston can still have a distinctive public art program, even if the canvas keeps changing. ■

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When Ingres painted the youthful Caroline Rivière 210 years ago, he couldn't have imagined that a simulacrum of his oil on canvas would one day grace the Rue Saint-Honoré in Paris. Enter Julien de Casabianca, a French artist who was inspired to create a second life for the mademoiselle on a wall near his office after he viewed her portrait at the Louvre in 2014. "She was painted at 13 and dead at 14. I had a 'Prince Charming' compulsion to liberate her from the museum. I did it for fun," he said in an e-mail. "But when I saw the passersby reaction in the street, I understood: There is something here, something to do full time."

His technique is to point, shoot, cut, and paste: he captures figures with his phone, prints out images on a Canon iPF8400SE, uses a blade to carefully slice around the silhouette, and then affixes the portraits to walls with a mix of wallpaper and wood glue and the help of a sponge roller. When de Casabianca adhered Rivière's image to a wall of rough-hewn concrete—ephemeral beauty unleashed!—his Outings street art project was born.

Since that fateful moment, de Casabianca has left his mark in 46 cities, with predominantly classical artworks drawn from museums in those cities punctuating gritty contemporary settings. The result is an arresting mix of urban placemaking and visual storytelling, fitting traits that honor his background as a journalist and filmmaker. The Boston area might get to see his brand of tactical urbanism up close if de Casabianca's plan to bring the Outings project to town in 2017 sees the light of day.

—Fiona Luis



OPPOSITE

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA
Artwork from the Fine Arts
Museums of San Francisco

LEFT

GDAŃSK, POLAND
Artwork from The National
Museum in Gdańsk

All Outings images
courtesy of the artist



ABOVE
PARIS, FRANCE
Artwork from The Louvre



ABOVE
PARIS, FRANCE
Artwork from Musée d'Orsay



LEFT
MOSCOW, RUSSIA
Artwork from The Pushkin
State Museum of Fine Arts



ABOVE and OPPOSITE

Diptych images on opposite sides of a wall

RAMALLAH, PALESTINE (above)

Artwork from Musée d'Orsay

JERUSALEM, ISRAEL (opposite)

Artwork from The Israel Museum



ABOVE

Julien de Casabianca at work in Ramallah.

I never know [the titles of the original paintings]...
I don't want to see my images attached to this
information because it is not about knowledge,
it's only about emotion. Outings is made in
poor areas, where people are afraid of museums;
they say it's not for them. [This project] says
that you can live the museum, free of knowledge.

JULIEN DE CASABIANCA

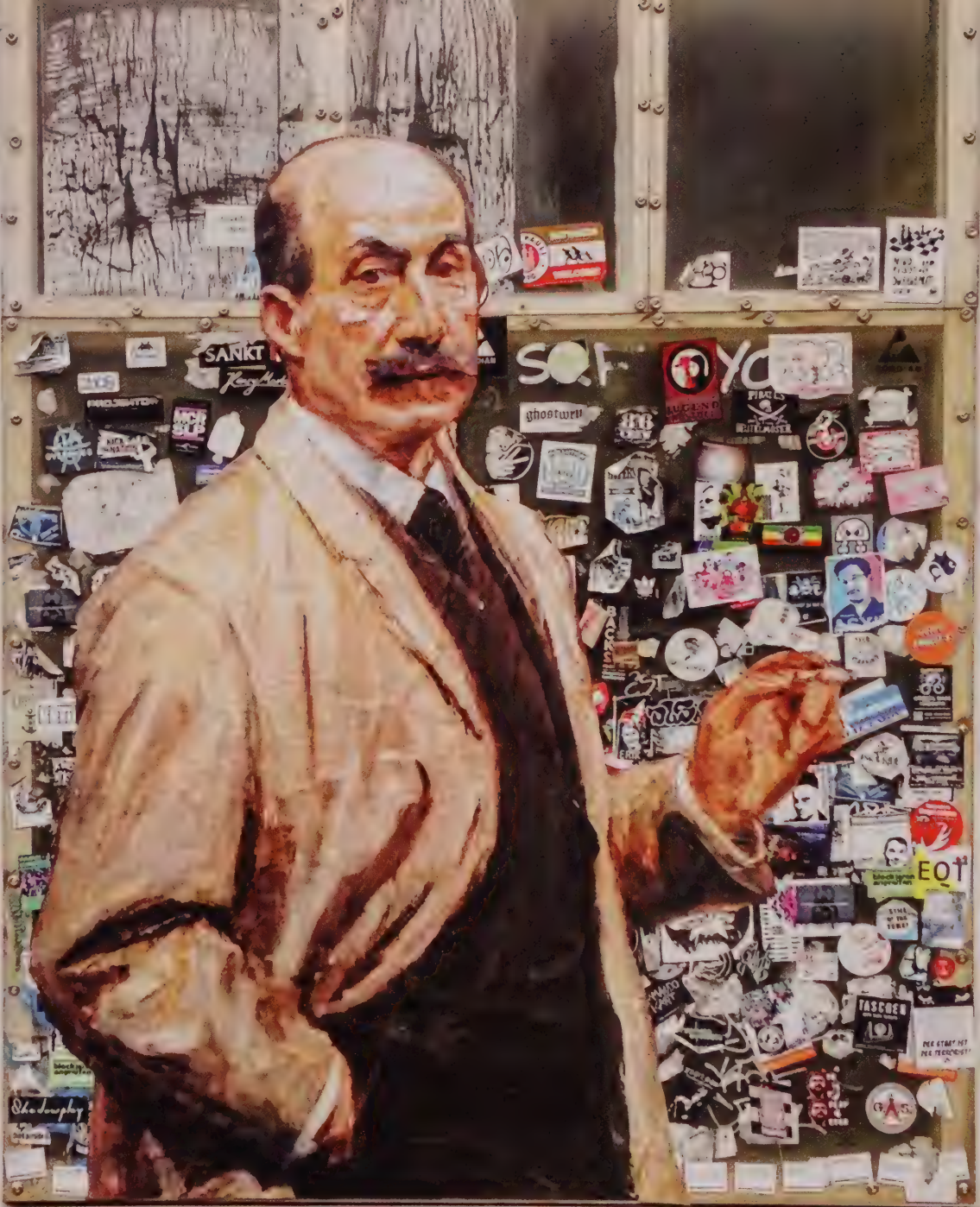




ABOVE
 HANOI, VIETNAM
 Artwork from the Vietnam Fine Arts Museum

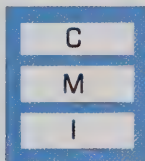


RIGHT
 HAMBURG, GERMANY
 Artwork from Hamburg Kunsthalle



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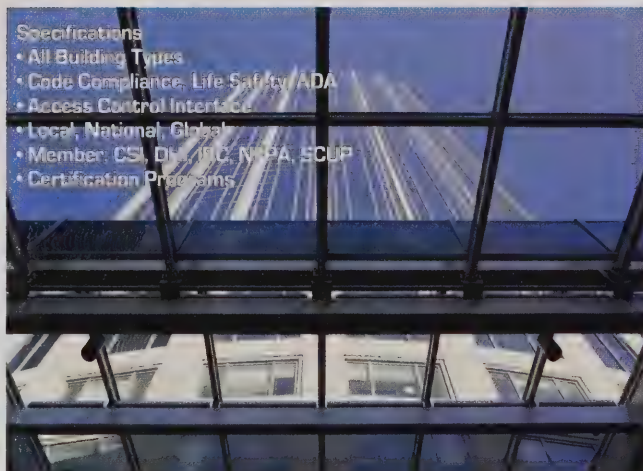
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The background of the poster is a high-angle, slightly blurred photograph of a crowded exhibition hall. Numerous people are seen walking, standing, and interacting at various booths. The lighting is warm and the overall color palette is dominated by the greenish-yellow tint of the overlay. In the upper right, a sign for 'ESTATE' is partially visible, and in the lower right, a sign for 'BALDWIN' can be seen. The text 'ABX 2016' is prominently displayed in the upper left, with 'ARCHITECTURE BOSTON EXPO' written below it in a smaller font. The dates 'NOV 15-17' are written in large, bold, orange letters across the middle. At the bottom, the event's location, website, and phone number are listed, followed by the BSA logo and the text 'Produced by BSA BOSTON SOCIETY OF ARCHITECTS/AA'.

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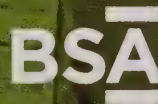
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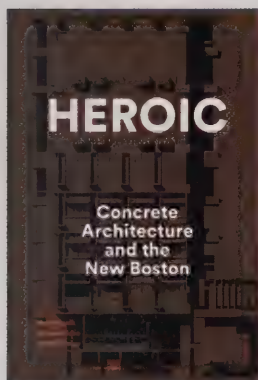
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BOOKS


Heroic: Concrete Architecture and the New Boston

Mark Pasnik, Michael Kubo, and Chris Grimley
The Monacelli Press, 2015
Reviewed by Victoria Solan

Ever since Howard Roark picked up a pencil, heroism has had a troubled relationship with Modern architecture. It's not at all clear whether "heroic" is the right adjective for the women and men whose impact on the built environment is necessarily collaborative and often anonymous. But "interesting," "creative," even "sculptural" don't leap off the page of a Kickstarter campaign, so heroic is what we'll settle for at the moment.

Leveraging funding from crowd-sourced pledges, as well as grants from the Graham Foundation and private underwriters, Mark Pasnik, Michael Kubo, and Chris Grimley have done a splendid job of drawing together photographs, drawings, and analysis of Boston designers' experiments in concrete expression. *Heroic*, which began as a 2009 exhibition at pinkcomma gallery (located within the trio's over,under studio), is now a comprehensive survey of some of the most important yet still not widely appreciated regional building projects of the 1960s and '70s. The book is a model for anyone interested in studying how international trends in architecture become intertwined with the local events and politics of a particular region.

Pasnik, Kubo, and Grimley are right

to focus on the narrow period when excitement about the formal and sculptural potential of a single building material—in this case, concrete—became so identified with nearly utopian visions about the power of government. Insightful essays by Elizabeth Cohen, Joan Ockman, Keith Morgan, and Douglass Shand-Tucci contextualize the places from which the architecture formerly known as Brutalism or Neo-Brutalism emerged.

Cohen's contribution, "Building Government Center," provides excellent insight into the role of politicians in shaping the physical environment of downtown Boston. Ockman nimbly demonstrates how theatrical experiments such as Paul Rudolph's Government Service Center (1962–71) could seem like an exciting release from the "exhaustion" of the International Style. The late 1960s was a period when it seemed possible that a building like Madison Park High School (Marcel Breuer & Associates, 1967–77) might serve as the stage for a renewed, integrated, and international city.

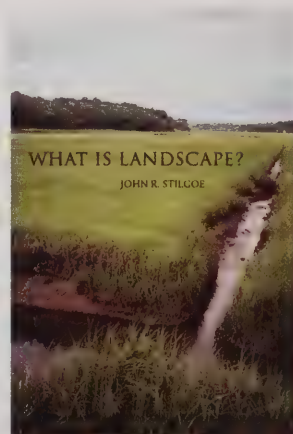
That the integrated city never came to pass does not mean its monuments should be ignored, argue the authors. Indeed, the frequently maligned structures of the period offer an important, if incomplete, lesson in how we categorize architectural achievements. Are these buildings valuable for their formal qualities and material experimentation, or do they still stand as a usable model for civic life? Pasnik, Kubo, and Grimley provide ample visual and written evidence for readers to make their own decisions.

Gorgeous reprints of photographs by Pasnik, Ezra Stoller, and others provide the strongest argument for reconsidering the architectural achievements of the period. True to the tradition of Modernist architectural photography, the book's many images are almost all taken in bright sunlight and then printed in high-contrast reproduction. With such

artful lighting and cropping, even the façade of Kallman and McKinnell's Government Center Garage (1962–71) seems playful. The New England Aquarium (Cambridge Seven Associates, 1962–69) also benefits from flattering portraits, which show off the joyous forms of the building in bright color. None of the buildings is shown in the rain, and one has to look hard to find snow at the edges of a few photographs.

As the authors of *Heroic* point out, the architecture of this period was a product of optimism about both the local climate and the price of energy. It would be rising energy prices and poor maintenance, as much as dissatisfaction with the scale and material of the heroic era, that would spell the downfall for concrete construction in much of the Boston area. *Heroic* is a terrific anthology of a vital moment in the history of architecture.

VICTORIA SOLAN, an architectural historian, writer, and editor, is researching a book on 20th-century design and holds a PhD from Yale University.


What Is Landscape?

John R. Stilgoe
MIT Press, 2016

Reviewed by Susannah C. Drake AIA FASLA

As I ride the train from Boston to New York City on a beautiful early spring weekend, it's easy to recognize the wisdom of John R. Stilgoe's book. First, the New England

coastal wetlands through which I am traveling are similar to the author's cover photograph, which he describes in a frontispiece as a "traditional if now bewildered landscape," but also because the author, an eminent landscape historian and photographer, bids us leave our electronic world behind and truly experience the natural terrain. An alchemist of words and images, Stilgoe takes us through a series of themes that explain society's conception of landscape. Terms such as making, constructs, echoes, home, farm, ways, and field (which also serve as chapter titles) frame a stance on landscape—with etymological dissections, literary reference, and historic events documented to enhance his arguments.

In the chapter titled "Making," Stilgoe describes turn-of-the-century aerial photographs created by amateurs with Eastman Kodak Company box cameras that were attached to balloons and floated hundreds of feet in the air to capture new perspectives on the landscape. While enabling a different level of understanding, this new technology also facilitated disconnection. Stilgoe builds on this idea with a reference to aviator Anne Morrow Lindbergh's *North to the Orient*, in which she suggests that rather than provide a greater understanding of the land below, she felt (as Stilgoe describes it) "that her body speeded along ahead of her mind, in a lack of synchronization robbing her 'of the realization of life and therefore much of its joy'." Excerpts of writings by Lindbergh, Edward Abbey, and others illuminate Stilgoe's stance on wilderness, perception, cities, planning, and modernity in clever ways that in a less skilled writer could be perceived as snarky.

With dusk settling over the Northeast Corridor, I am reminded of Stilgoe's comments on infrastructure, urbanity, and development. In a prescient passage, he describes pervasive use of outdoor lighting in cities and the false sense of security it offers to urbanites. He notes how the vast network of train lines that traverses the country is not lit, while our national highway system is fully

illuminated. He describes President Eisenhower's National Highway Defense Fund as a development scheme, suggesting that the 16,000 cloverleaf off-ramps created 64,000 new places for commerce. Eisenhower made people feel "safe" by bringing light to national infrastructure, enabling urbanites' move to the hinterlands. But the perception of safety is subjective, with rural dwellers experiencing a very different and nonthreatening perception of darkness.

It would be too simple to cast Stilgoe as taking a particular stance on settlement patterns or the way societies cluster, shaping and defiling the landscape. What he does is reveal how language evolved from Old Norse, Frisian, Dutch, German, French, and American contexts in relation to forces in nature. Stilgoe shines in his descriptions of the origins and iconography of "Home" and "Farm" in Britain and America: "Houses prove critical in any understanding of liberty and freedom in British legal thinking," he writes. "Legally, culturally, and emotionally, 'House' connotes far more than a shelter from bad weather or cold." In Britain, the terms *firm* and *farm* are synonymous, Stilgoe notes, perhaps referencing the Charter of the Forest that posited acceptable extraction of resources from the landscape as long as it didn't adversely affect one's neighbor. Unfortunately, large-scale farming in the United States today doesn't follow the 1217 model.

Beyond an etymological thesaurus, *What Is Landscape?* draws the reader into Stilgoe's wide-ranging, fertile mind. Part poet, part narrator, he uses his encyclopedic knowledge to create a book that is a valuable resource for landscape architects, planners, land managers, ecologists, and anyone interested in the natural world in which we live.

SUSANNAH C. DRAKE AIA FASLA, founding principal of DLANDstudio, is an internationally recognized urban designer and graduate of the Harvard Graduate School of Design and Dartmouth College.



Where Are the Women Architects?

Despina Stratigakos

Princeton University Press, 2016

Reviewed by Caroline James ASSOC. AIA

An important contribution to the discussion of gender and equity in architecture, *Where Are the Women Architects?* advances a deeper agenda: to document the swell of grassroots and institutional efforts to promote women in architecture and to mobilize new initiatives. The book showcases a bitter reality of underrepresentation of women in architecture. Nearly 50 percent of architecture students are women, yet Stratigakos doesn't see the progress today that we should hope for: Only 17 percent of licensed architects in the United States are women, with low pay, stalled careers, routine sexism, and low job satisfaction still the norm.

Stratigakos emphasizes breaking the silence and moving toward direct action: "I also see it as a clarion call. For those of you, like me, who care about architecture and want to see it a truly inclusive profession, I ask that you be vocal and make trouble."

Take her intriguing chapter on Architect Barbie, which she created with her University of Buffalo colleague Kelly Hayes McAlonie: "As a feminist scholar," she writes, "I am interested in analyzing the ideological fences that architecture has built around the profession—the barriers that determine the insiders and outsiders." The pair took a stand by developing quite a different image of the architect. While the stereotypical architect is a sleep-deprived male wearing black,

Architect Barbie, with her bright patterned dress and black ankle boots, unleashed discussions about how architects should look and act. Referred to as a lightning rod for long-standing tensions about gender, the doll launched with a symposium that ultimately led to the founding of the Missing 32% Project, a precursor to Equity by Design. This institution is leading a nationwide effort toward equity in the profession.

While students at the Harvard Graduate School of Design, Arielle Assouline-Lichten and I instigated a petition online to recognize Denise Scott Brown for her work; our aim was to correct the unjust oversight of an equal partner, one who deserved to share the 1991 Pritzker Prize awarded to her partner and husband, Robert Venturi. We reached out to colleagues, professors, and leaders in the profession for support and didn't second-guess ourselves, wonder how the petition would be regarded, or worry

who would disapprove. We were impatient to see proper recognition.

Through the thousands of people who signed, we became aware that the slight of Scott Brown resonated with many as an emblem of greater injustices in the system. My generation wishes for an architecture profession that welcomes diverse viewpoints and values.

Similar initiatives are sprouting in architecture schools. Women in Design at the GSD is spurring dialogues around equity and inclusion. On International Women's Day, students invited practitioners to share their thoughts about the state of women in design; the group then polled the GSD community to define what feminism, radical practice, equity, and "self-care" mean to them. These topics would have been taboo five years ago.

Stratigakos identifies a gap in public consciousness: the need for more public lectures about the status of

women. However, rather than simply describing the current status, these discussions should focus on women who have successfully challenged the status quo and identify the vehicles that could lead to action. This will shift attention away from "Where are the women architects?" to "There are the women architects!"

This book deftly records the groundswell of activism in architecture in print form, which helps to legitimize a movement. What if it became required reading for introductory survey courses on architectural history and theory? Her call to action—that equity is everyone's issue—is urgent, and it is up to all of us to pick up the charge.

CAROLINE JAMES ASSOC. AIA received her Master in Architecture degree from the Harvard Graduate School of Design. She is working toward architectural licensure at Maryann Thompson Architects in Watertown, Massachusetts.

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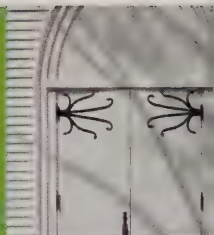
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- Student Design Days
- Teen Workshop series
- KidsBuild!
- Film series
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- CultureNOW Public Art
- LEGO® Design Challenge

- Typewriter Orchestra
- Letterpress workshop
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- StereoType open house
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- Back Bay's Evolving Skyline
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- BSA Foundation Golf Tournament
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Grantee programs

More than \$46K in grants were awarded in 2014 for 2015 programming.

Asian CDC (Boston)

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Boston By Foot

Scholarships for underfunded schools to attend Boston By Little Feet Tours.

CareerPoint (Holyoke)

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CDRC (Boston)

Adaptation of the Living with Water design charrette into a series of neighborhood workshops in East Boston.

Coelho Middle School (Attleboro)

Let's Go Outside! Designing a Community Park: A program that enables 100 middle school students to develop and share their design ideas.

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Hawthorne Youth (Roxbury)

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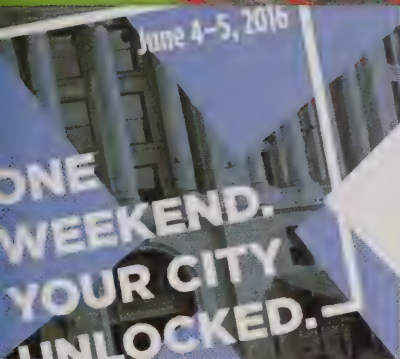
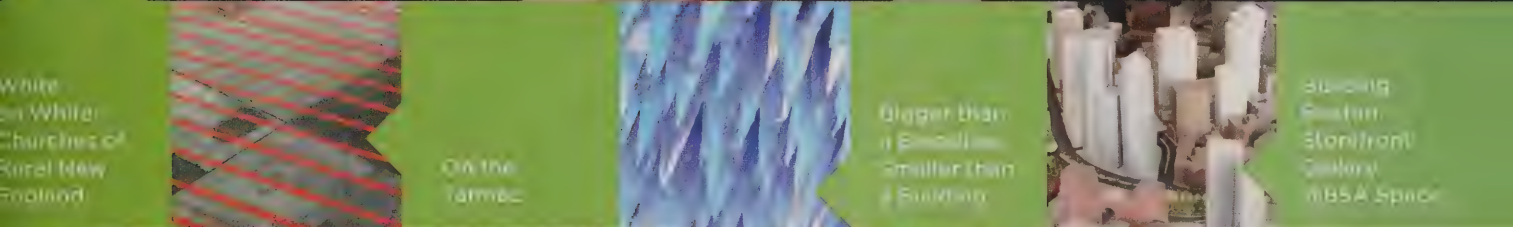
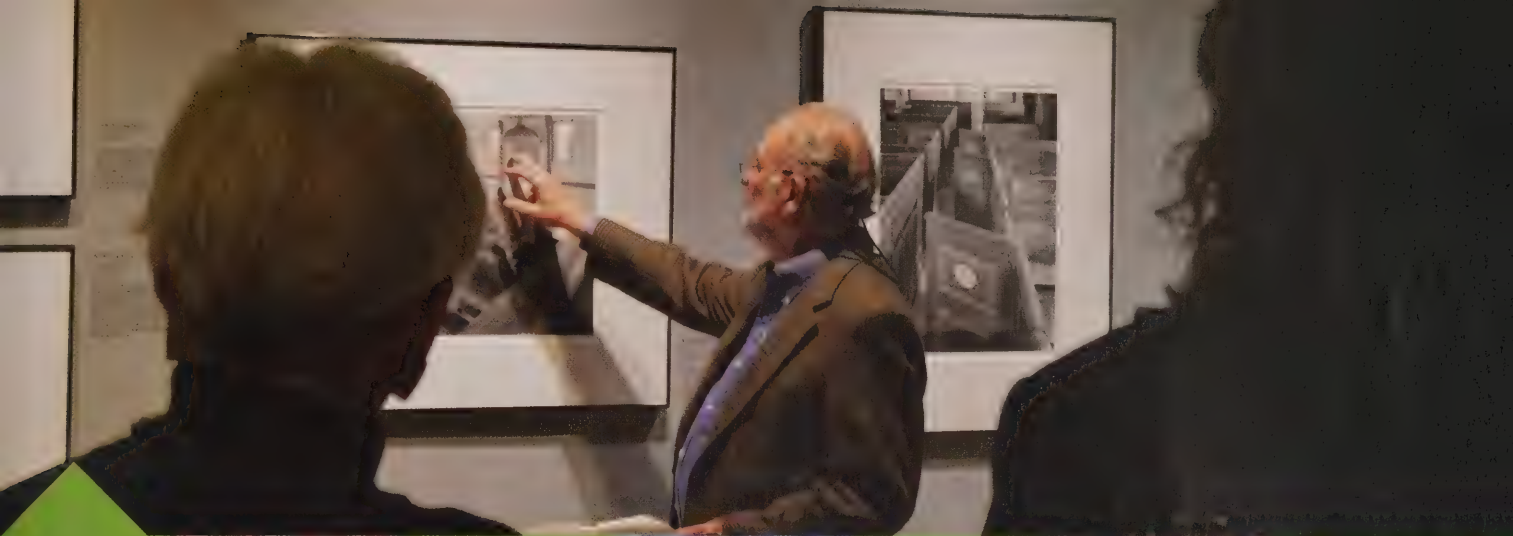
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- ImagineBoston 2030 Youth Brainstorm
- East Boston coastal/climate resiliency scan
- Housing Urban Design Workshop kickoff
- Housing Urban Design final presentations
- Living with Water Pecha Kucha
- Living with Water receptions
- Designing Boston series
- Boston Futures series
- Art + Placemaking in Communities of Color
- Northern Avenue Bridge ideas competition receptions

ImagineBoston 2030 Youth Brainstorm



2016 Common Boston Festival



KidsBuild!

MassArt Community Build Studio (Boston)

Community design workshops culminating in the construction of garden elements to support activities at the new Woolson Street Community Garden.

HighWaterLine (Boston)

Creation of a participatory public art project that creates a community working to build climate resiliency.

Preservation Worcester (Worcester)

A replicable after-school program for students to envision themselves in roles that develop and preserve the built environment.

Sociedad Latina (Roxbury)

150 middle school students with experimental, hands-on, STEAM programming.

Somerville Neighborways (Somerville)

A resident led initiative that will transform quiet, residential streets into a network of family-friendly, low-stress corridors.

Southeast Asian Coalition of Central MA (Worcester)

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The Discovery Museums (Acton)

Backyard Builders, a year-long, building-themed program integrating STEM learning.

Wentworth Institute of Technology (Boston)

Co+Build and several small design/build projects that will improve the educational environment within three Boston public schools.

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LEAVING NO TRACE

by Allan Donnelly

I couldn't see 10 feet in front of my face. When I had left camp minutes before, it had been clear. I shifted into the lowest gear and pedaled—hard—into the wind, the dust, the moment. I was headed to the temple with a specific purpose. And I wasn't going to let a little dust storm stop me.

As I rode into the dust, monuments appeared through the storm—temporary installations built by artists for the Burning Man festival in the Black Rock Desert—telling me I was still on the right path. The wind slowed me down some, but the sky began to open up, and I could see the temple standing tall on the horizon. I rode my bike up to its perimeter, pulled my goggles off my face and my handkerchief down from my nose and mouth, grabbed the hose of my CamelBak, and took a long drink of water. Soothing the dryness. Satiating the dust.

I turned to face it, the *Temple of Promise*, towering in front of me—a wooden cathedral, shaped like a cornucopia rising 70 feet off the desert floor; a series of pointed arches getting progressively smaller, clad in staggered 2-by-4s, twisting into a spiral so that the tail of the cornucopia created a courtyard. The team that built *Promise* labored together for a month in the heat of the Nevada desert to create a sacred space for the dwellers of this pop-up city. As I walked slowly toward the temple, the opening of the cornucopia grew bigger and grander in scale. I paused at its threshold, filled with a plethora of emotions: Bittersweet anticipation. Loving nostalgia. Beautiful serendipity.

I entered into the shelter of *Promise*. People were moving slowly, standing, sitting, lying down, looking around. Looking at messages written on the walls all around them. Messages of hope. Of grief. Of loss. Of love. Messages left by visitors from the temporary city surrounding this temple. Pictures of loved ones past. Objects left as altars and offerings, admissions and artifacts.

I went to the temple that day to let go of something: a long relationship that ended suddenly, one year earlier, on the very same site where the *Temple of Promise* now stood. I placed pictures on the walls, stapling them to the wooden slats spanning the arches. I walked down the spiraling nave of the temple, looking for open spaces on the walls. There wasn't much room.

As I walked, the peak of the arched nave lowered and lowered until just before I had to duck my head. There was an opening into the courtyard of the cornucopia. Three trees, made of metal and devoid of leaves but draped with offerings, stood in the center of the courtyard. I found an open spot for my last picture and hung it on the trunk of the tallest tree.

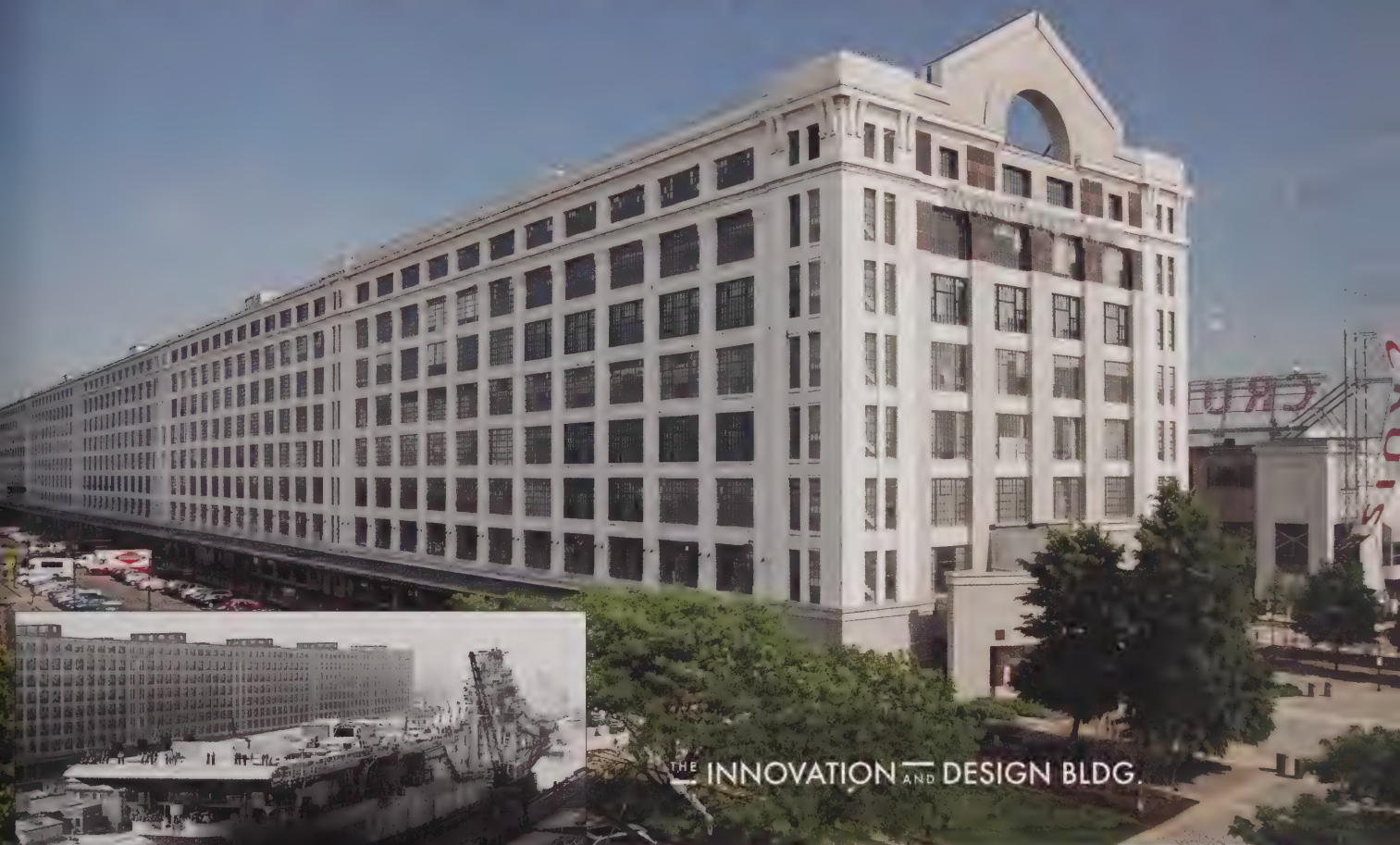
Three nights later, on the last night of the festival, I sat in silence with thousands of others to watch the *Temple of Promise* burn. The gigantic structure threw flames one hundred feet into the air, billowing black smoke, generating small tornadoes from all the heat. We sat and we watched. We listened to the loud crackle of the burn. We let go of our messages, our remembrances of the past and our hopes for the future, as the *Temple of Promise* vanished into the mystery of the playa and made space for a new temple, in all its ephemeral glory, to rise in its place next year. ■

ALLAN DONNELLY is a senior systems strategist at MKThink, a design consulting firm in San Francisco. He has attended Burning Man since 2011 and plans to be a contributing member of the 2017 *Temple of Dreams* project.

ABOVE

Temple of Promise, Burning Man, Black Rock City, Nevada, September 2015. Photo: Allan Donnelly

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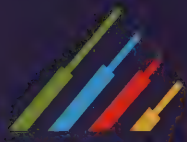
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Hedge Row & Roses, Roberta Neidigh, 2013. From the *Property Line* series, also featured in this issue's Gallery. Photo: Courtesy of the artist



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DESIRE LINES

I grew up in a New York suburb right on the border of Greenwich, Connecticut. In those days, the legal drinking age in New York State was still 18, and every weekend, thirsty pilgrims under age 21 streamed over the line to get soused in our town. It didn't take long for me to resent the interlopers who sullied my community's reputation—or to recognize the distortions that artificial boundaries can create.

The nation has since settled on a unified drinking age, but a patchwork of sometimes capricious, often conflicting municipal regulations remains, governing everything from taxes to tolls to the size of buildable lots.

In 1992, I spent several weeks in the frontier town of Texarkana, covering Ross Perot's presidential bid. My hotel was on the Texas side of State Line Avenue. Texarkana was a “dry” town, dotted with neat homes and churches, while just across the street, on the Arkansas side, a honky-tonk of bars, tattoo parlors, and shops selling liquor and fireworks proliferated.

Sure, there's something charming about a system where each community can create its own distinctive character, but a slavish devotion to local quirks badly impedes our efforts to plan a shared future. This issue of *ArchitectureBoston*, third in our “The Year of the Plan” series, considers the challenges and potential benefits of regional cooperation across geographic, political, and even psychological lines.

New England is particularly susceptible to traditions of local control, with its town meetings and other colonial vestiges. But there's a thin line between pride and parochialism. Here in Boston, the welter of jurisdictions with a claim on every decision—neighborhood, city, county, state, and sometimes quasi-governmental entities such as Massport—can derail the most dedicated designers. Boston and Cambridge have both embarked on major efforts to develop comprehensive city plans, but the two communities rarely consult each other—even though they each hired the same planning and architecture firm.

Like most things that divide us, borders are manmade. There's nothing inherently more enlightened or benighted about one community over another except that politics or economics make it so. These divisions—between city and suburb, town and gown, classical and modern—are mere social constructs, as artificial as synthetic turf and often just as ugly. In “Why can't we all just get along?” (page 32) Dante Ramos counts the ways that tribal identity politics can stymie progress. But on page 31, David Hacin FAIA sees fresh possibilities in the undeveloped territories between existing neighborhoods.

Several articles in this issue also look at conditions that don't submit to arbitrary constraints. The environment knows no boundaries, and neither do environmental threats such as climate change or industrial pollution. Rivers, breezes, the fog, and pollinating bees all meander indiscriminately between farm, harbor, and city. Nature abhors a border.

Commuter traffic, commerce, and electronic networks also flow to the place of greatest efficiency, oblivious to lines on a map. The information superhighway—that 1990s metaphor for the Internet—suggested an unimpeded current of data. But the better image is the World Wide Web, its spidery branches making ingenuous, unexpected connections.

This is as it should be. Because, really, most of life is not bounded by bright lines but instead moves on a continuum. Who can tell the precise moment when black shades to gray and then to white? Or when dawn subsides to day? Recognizing the truth of our interdependence will move us all forward, and not just when it comes to zoning regulations.

Our boundaries are more porous than we think. It's time we start acting that way. ■

Renée Loth
Editor

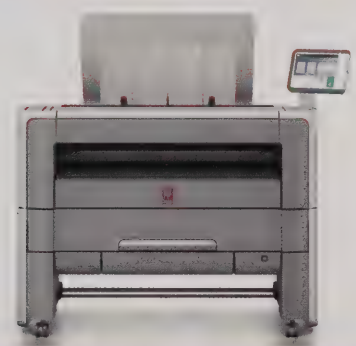


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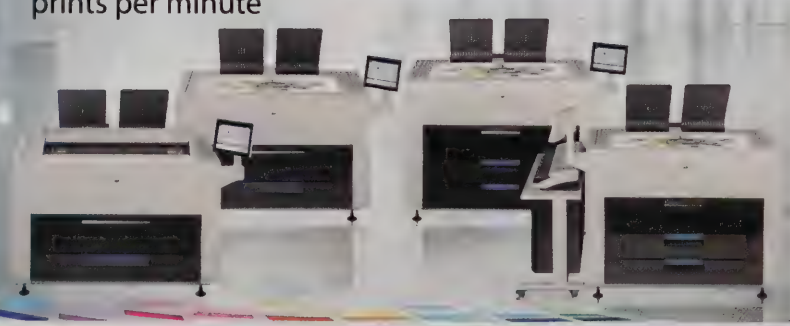
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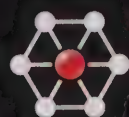
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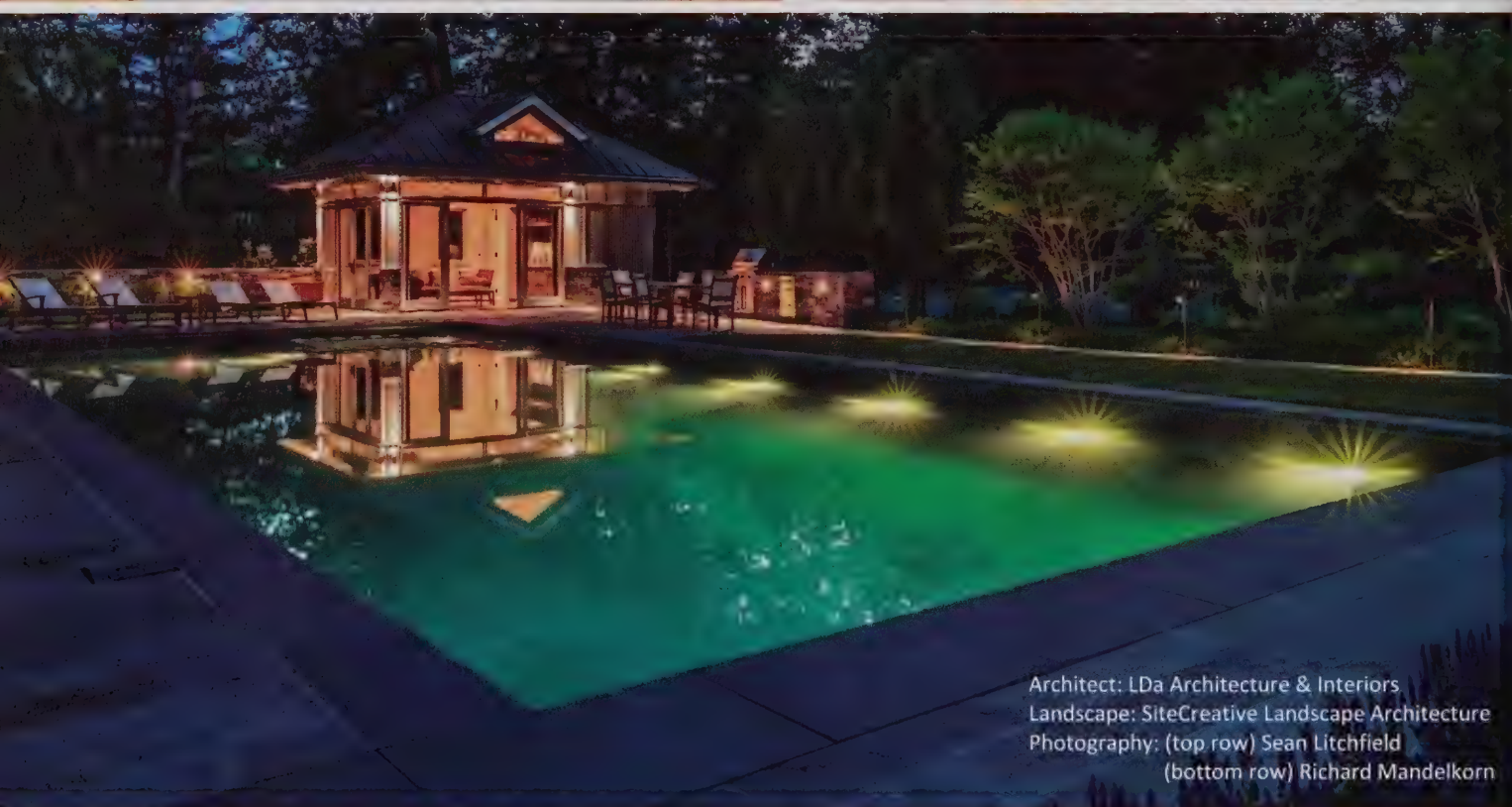
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ON “TEMPORARY” (SUMMER 2016)

As a former Cambridge and Boston resident while at MIT, and now a longtime New Yorker, I very much appreciated the tactical urbanism theme of your summer issue. Demonstrating an urban initiative by a temporary installation is always preferable to renderings and models. I fondly remember a long-vanished bus stop on Mass. Ave., across from MIT, fashioned from an old bus sliced down the middle. It was at once a shelter, demonstration of bus construction, and brilliant lesson in urban transit.

My recent experience with the installation of PlayCubes play environments on the Greenway near Chinatown was a similar example of a temporary intervention having an unexpectedly major impact. Spending time at this site allowed me to speak with residents and watch kids use this installation. They were delighted, and even teenagers flocked to climb and sit on it—as did several adults. Parents said this simple addition had transformed a formerly underused, barren plaza into an active area for their kids. As in the Times Square example, where temporary chairs and tables became permanent, many voices were raised to request making this installation permanent and to repeat similar installations elsewhere along the Greenway.

In our age of instant digital communication, a “pop-up” can have a wide impact on public awareness and understanding of public space.

RICHARD DATTNER FAIA
Principal, Dattner Architects
New York City

The original Tent City, described by Ken Kruckemeyer AIA in “Occupy Copley,” confirmed what today is self-evident: that residents have a legitimate stake in the neighborhoods in which they live.

Urbanistically, Tent City connected to its place in the city: it featured ground-floor retail spaces, individual entrances at stoops along the street, materials and forms sympathetic to the Victorian South End. Yet it simultaneously looked to the

future in a way few projects did at that time—compare it to the Copley Place Mall, Tent City’s hermetic neighbor and contemporary. Socially, Tent City was a new model in which individuals with dramatically different incomes would live together.

Opening in 1988, Tent City required 20 years of intense effort by a dedicated group of volunteers, neighbors, city officials, and a cohort of often uncompensated legal, financial, and design professionals whose shared goal was to meet the nearly intractable need for housing. The process of creating permanent affordable housing today is even harder. The need for multi-source financing—and the regulatory and administrative complexity that accompanies it—is daunting. It’s time to ask those institutions with greater resources and capacity to more vigorously support the enterprise of affordable housing.

ROB CHANDLER FAIA
Principal, Goody Clancy
Boston

In her excellent article “Source material,” Jean Carroon FAIA issues a critically important charge to the design and construction industry: most buildings today have appallingly short service lives that contribute significantly to global warming, and we desperately need to do better, which involves three principles: reuse existing buildings whenever possible; design new buildings for long lives, both in durability and detailing, and make the structural systems robust and the spaces flexible and easily adaptable to unforeseen future uses; and design building systems and components for disassembly and reuse at the eventual end of their long service life.

Rome, the “Eternal City,” is eternal in large part because it has consistently employed these principles for the past 2,000 years. Michelangelo never designed a new building—all his architectural works were interventions on existing



buildings. With their robust structural systems, tall ceilings, ample daylighting, wide stairs and egress paths, and flexible spaces, Renaissance palazzi were easily adapted into apartment buildings, embassies, museums, and academic buildings. When colossal public baths from antiquity were no longer needed, cut stone blocks, clay tile, and timber framing were easily removed and reused in constructing new buildings in the Middle Ages, Renaissance, and beyond.

Until we start designing and constructing buildings that have much longer initial service lives, and even longer serial lives thereafter, we are not truly being sustainable, no matter how many boxes we can check (white roof? bike rack?) or what plaque hangs in the lobby.

MATTHEW BRONSKI PE
Fellow, American Academy in Rome
Associate Principal,
Simpson Gumpertz & Heger
Waltham, Massachusetts

“Urban mining” (in “Source material”) may be a new term, but we have a long history of repurposing layers of a building that has become obsolete. Ise Shrine in Japan is rebuilt every 20 years; each time, dismantled columns, beams, and other components are bestowed upon other shrines, which reuse them in high veneration. The Coliseum had been a mine for stone and metal since the fourth century, and in 1452, Pope Nicholas V, intending to rebuild Rome, reportedly removed 2,522 cartloads damaged by an earlier earthquake. The ancient arena’s travertine can be found in buildings throughout the city.

In 16th-century England, King Henry VIII took lead from roofs and gutters of monasteries, then sold the properties to fund military campaigns. At Fountains, near York, the purchaser's son had his residence constructed on the monastic grounds, sourcing materials from abbey buildings, including a spiral staircase that was kept intact. At Castelvechio in Verona, Italy, the courtyard façade's door and the window frames and balconies we see today have existed since the 1920s, brought from a Gothic palazzo demolished earlier.

Granted, our times are politically and economically different. Yet, with a renewed mindset, we can find value and beauty in the reappropriation of buildings' layers.

RUMIKO HANDA, PHD
Author of Allure of the Incomplete, Imperfect, and Impermanent
Interim Associate Dean and
Professor of Architecture
University of Nebraska-Lincoln

"Temporary" highlights an important movement that has the capacity to ignite positive change. This issue came out as The Trustees of Reservations launched an initiative to create site-specific, curated art installations at our historic properties. It was reaffirming to read thought leaders who see temporary as a permanent trend.

Geoff Edgers conveys in "License to Thrill" how ephemeral structures have the power to stimulate transformative experiences. This is what we hope to accomplish as we invite visitors to the scenic and cultural sites we preserve and protect. Nina Chase's "Model Behavior" illustrates how prototypes can help cities address issues related to rising sea levels and blighted land—an exciting concept as Boston continues its visioning process for the waterfront and support of the arts, something we are honored to be involved in through a Barr Foundation grant. Rebecca Roke's "Transitory Nature" suggests that temporary structures encourage observation of nature's seasonal cycles and create an engaging way to experience a place.

Our pop-up model of Crane Beach "brought" one of New England's most popular beaches into Boston this summer for passersby to experience, with programming designed to illustrate the importance of protecting natural habitat to help address rising shorelines and erosion caused by climate change. The Trustees was founded 125 years ago by visionary landscape architect Charles Eliot to set aside "bits of scenery like a museum holds art or a library holds books." While it is our mission to carry on this legacy for everyone, we must also be adaptive, just like human nature and temporary art, to keep the next generation engaged in celebrating and protecting our culture and our communities.

BARBARA ERICKSON
President and CEO, The Trustees
 Boston

I enjoyed Geoff Edgers' survey of some of Boston's art in public places, especially his acknowledgment of Krzysztof Wodiczko's extraordinary Bunker Hill Monument piece. That said, I don't know if the issue is the comparative merits of temporary versus permanent art in public places. The distinction is more about the uses to which imagination, both the artist's and the viewer's, can be put: compare, for example, the Edgar Allen Poe item at the corner of Boylston and Charles streets to Jaroslav Róna's Kafka memorial in Prague sited between a church and a synagogue: both are bronze and both are permanent. That's about it.

It's imperative to acknowledge, in such a survey, the work going on—and the civic and aesthetic results of that work—in neighborhoods such as Jamaica Plain, with Urbano Project and the Hyde Square Task Force, and Four Corners, with the Dorchester Arts Collaborative. Robert Irwin has said that "the question is how you can take art out into the world." BostonAPP/Lab—Arts in Public Places—has, through its workshops and other projects, been focused on trying to find answers to that question, emphasizing the imperative of civic

engagement and, in so doing, defining what is meant by "the public" and by "the place." The goal is to link those definitions more forcefully to the art that emerges—whether permanent or temporary.

RON MALLIS
Executive Director, BostonAPP/Lab

Boston has, indeed, turned a corner in its receptivity to public art as Geoff Edgers postures in "License to thrill." That is why the city must continue to embrace temporary works. Now is not the time to put the brakes on and declare a style for one monumental sculpture, like a cut-and-paste copy of *Cloud Gate*. We need a few more laps around the track.

Public art is at an inflection point. You may define it as design intervention, while your neighbor imagines a Richard Serra bisecting a plaza; meanwhile, your community leader envisions an artist at the center of a socially engaged project giving voice to disenfranchised youth. In the midst of this redistribution of cultural meaning among artists, curators, and the public, Boston's urban landscape is being reimaged at the speed of light. We cannot expect every new permanent building or plaza to carry meaning, stimulate wonderment, or provoke civic dialogue. This is the work of artists and temporary public art.

Temporary gives us the freedom to try new characters and discover which types of work engender the progressive city we aspire to create. It allows us to develop a public art identity. With enough successes and, yes, failures, Boston can be a leader in redefining public art for the 21st century.

KATE GILBERT
Director of Now + There
 Boston

I read "Movable type" by Robert Kronenberg with great interest. Small-scale interventions in the urban environment have spiked in recent years. These structures seem to stretch well beyond the boundaries of architecture and plant themselves feet first into the realm of social activism. Whether

ephemeral or deconstructible, they are a response to a problem. At least the good ones are. As architects, we are trained to be problem solvers. Combine that training with a new generation of architects focused on autonomy and self-achievement, and the possibilities of these small gestures are limitless. They allow us to take our ideas off the page or screen and make them real, to create a sense of place within our environment. They give us permission to experiment. Collaboration with other disciplines and the general public creates an architecture for all.

More architects need to embrace this quiet revolution and create local solutions to local problems. Take, for example, a group like the Mad Housers in Atlanta. Volunteers, not architects, are building temporary shelters for the homeless. The AIA Small Project Practitioners provide them with assistance, through a design competition in 2015 to come up with ideas to improve the construction of these shelters. I like to think of these pop-up structures as our way of giving back to the community we live in. We have a duty as citizens to participate in the world around us, to leave it better than how we found it. If all of us did one small project with social impact a year, imagine how much we could change.

JEAN DUFRESNE AIA

Co-principal, *SPACE Architects + Planners*
Chicago

At the Mayor's Office of New Urban Mechanics, we're particularly interested in collaborating with designers, artists, and engineers on temporary experiments in the streetscape. For the past two years, we have held the Public Space Invitational (PSI), a civic design competition that aims to make Boston's civic spaces and infrastructure more intuitive, beautiful, and delightful. So far, PSI-winning teams have built projects that brought a tidal vibra-phone to the Congress Street bridge, provided pop-up learning opportunities on the Rose F. Kennedy Greenway through a portable reading room, and activated the mezzanine of City Hall with

brightly colored skateboard tape.

The invitational has become part of a series of initiatives by Mayor Martin Walsh to engage and support Boston's creative community. Our method of improving the city focuses on creating small, human-scale experiments. We are working to provide more opportunity for people to test a variety of interventions that can provide the basis for long-term, substantial improvements in their neighborhoods and look forward to creating innovative ways for residents and visitors to experience Boston.

NIGEL JACOB, *Co-chair,*

MICHAEL LAWRENCE EVANS,

Program Director

Mayor's Office of New Urban Mechanics
Boston

"Temporary" is thought provoking, inviting one to ponder what is not. I am old enough to have experienced one piece of "permanent" Boston infrastructure—the Central Artery—imagined, planned, permitted, constructed, and torn down so it could be replaced by another, all in fewer than my 70 years.

Then there is the Parthenon, which we think of as a ruin yet it survived intact for 2,000 years before a munitions explosion 500 years ago created the relic we see today. Or consider Rome, a site of continuous human habitation for 10,000 years. The streets have risen over the structures left behind. Where one used to climb steps to enter the Pantheon, itself a piece of urban renewal, now one walks down a ramp. Think of all the permanent structures buried under the architecture of that city.

It is striking that our imaginings are so limited by human perception—in this case, time. All human constructs are temporary: coming, going, lasting, or ephemeral. Place and time continually interact. We build up and tear down. The test of "good" is time, but even good is temporary.

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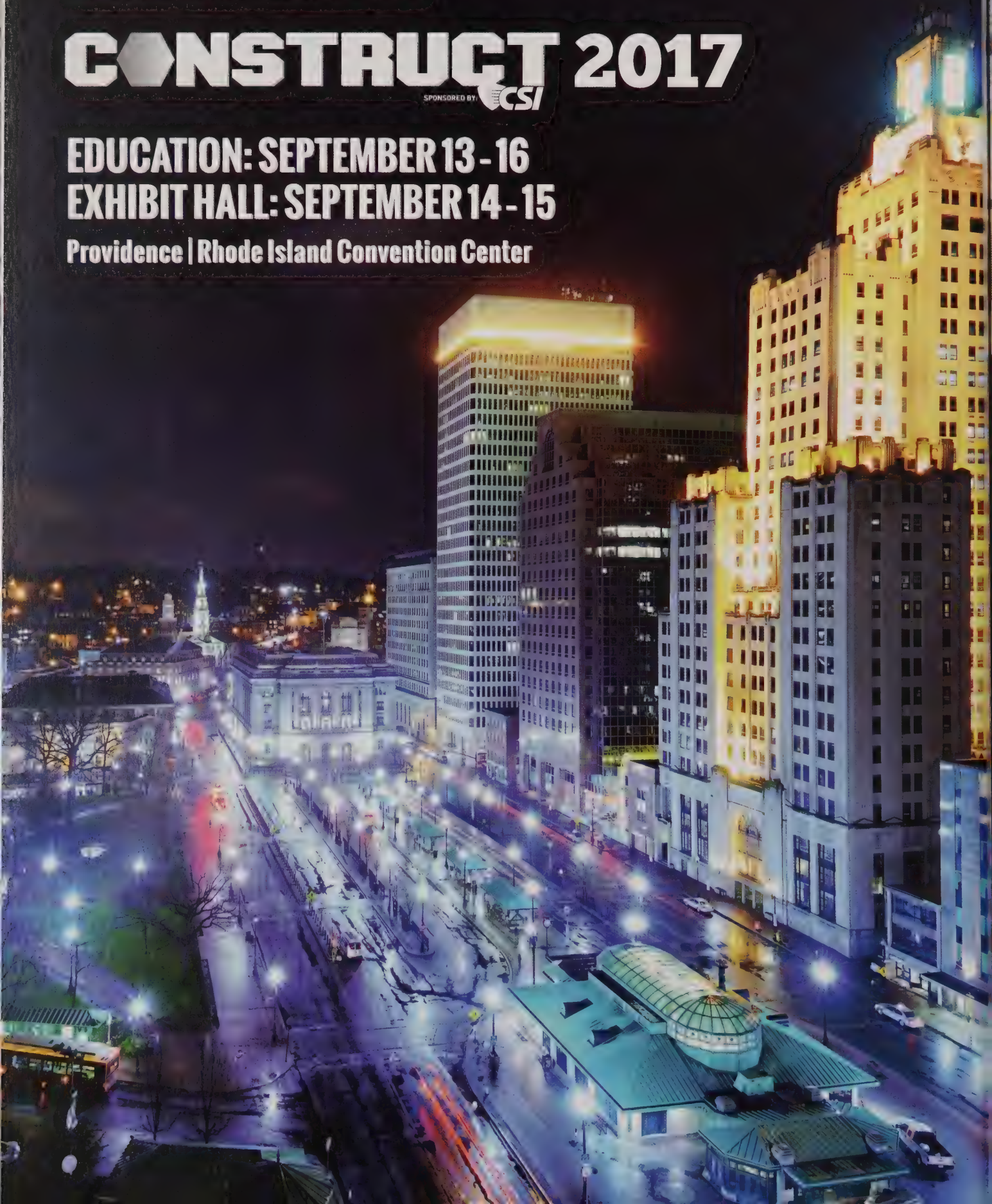
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IN THIS ISSUE



Photo: Josh Slater

Dante Ramos ("Why can't we all just get along?" page 32) is an op-ed columnist at *The Boston Globe*. He writes regularly about development, transportation, local and national politics, higher education, technology, and the transformation of the workplace. He has written for *The Economist*, *The New York Times*, and other publications and is a frequent commentator on radio and TV.



Photo: Michaelyn Straub

Joel Kotkin ("Suburbia reconsidered," page 36) is a presidential fellow in urban futures at Chapman University in California and is the executive director of the Center for Opportunity Urbanism in Houston. His eighth book, *The Human City: Urbanism for the Rest of Us*, was published in April. He is also executive editor of the popular website newgeography.com.



Photo: Kara Brodgesell

Allison Arieff ("Company town 2.0," page 40) is editorial director of the California-based urban planning and policy think tank SPUR and writes about design and architecture for *The New York Times* and the *MIT Technology Review*. She is the author of the books *Prefab* and *Trailer Travel: A Visual History of Mobile America* and has contributed to numerous books on architecture, design, and sustainability.



Photo: Paige McWhorter

Rickie Golden ("Crossing lines," page 64), a project director at Corcoran Jennison Companies, manages the development of urban mixed-use projects. A graduate of the University of Pennsylvania and Harvard University, she previously worked in development in New York City. Her volunteer, nonprofit work focuses on affordable housing and community development.



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UNSTRUCTURED

Opinions and Observations



Stickwork: Patrick Dougherty

126 Essex Street, Salem, Massachusetts

Through December 31, 2016

At first glance, the Peabody Essex Museum's first environmental art installation may seem easy to dismiss as an homage to Dr. Seuss—cartoon, folly, or caricature. However, residents of Salem have lived with this piece through the seasons and in varied settings: walks with children, touring out-of-town visitors, passing it on a run or bike ride, watching from the neighboring pub. We have witnessed the discovery of this unexpected delight, accented by smiles, gesticulations, and exploration.

Constructed from saplings gathered from neighboring North Shore communities, Patrick Dougherty's *What the Birds Know* has transformed the lawn in front of the historic Crowninshield-Bentley House (1727), a museum property. Dougherty drew from everything around him, "riding the wave" of a historic house, tree, lawn, corner sidewalk, fence, bushes. He embraced interactions with the community during construction: comments from passersby, volunteers collecting sticks, strangers assisting with assembly. In the process, the work became enmeshed in the materiality, character, and spirit of its place.

Dougherty says he "seeks a line logic" as he bends saplings and creates these structures: "Somewhere down deep in [birds'] minds is a set of circumstances that allows them to build beautiful objects. Objects that are amazing to humans because they are so complex." Over the past year, I have seen these volumes, dusted with snow and glistening with rain, and sought shade within. My daughters have run through, peeked out from, and played tag amongst them. With the passage of time, they seem to tip more and more, threatening to go right over. Branches have darkened or silvered. New line logics have emerged and woven this piece into our community. Come see for yourself.

RICHARD JONES AIA is the founder and director of Jones Architecture, Inc., in Salem, Massachusetts.

ABOVE

What the Birds Know, Patrick Dougherty, 2015.
Photo: Courtesy of Peabody Essex Museum,
Salem, Massachusetts

JUST ONE LOOK

The Redwood Library

Redwood Library in Newport, Rhode Island, is a shrine to reading in more ways than one. It still acts the way a local library should, lending the latest books and DVDs to a community that crowds around the narrow lanes that lead toward it. But it also tells an older tale, about how important design books were to early American architects desperate to find out the latest trends coming from Europe.

Peter Harrison is well known to Boston architects for his local masterpieces, King's Chapel on Tremont Street and Christ Church in Cambridge. But Harrison's talents took him further afield, and in the middle decades of the 18th century, Newport was giving Boston a run for its money as a center of wealth and sophistication. Here, Ben Franklin's brother James came to start the first newspaper in Rhode Island, after Boston's censors became intrusive; when the great Anglo-Irish philosopher George Berkeley desired an American sojourn, he, too, came to Narragansett Bay, where life was less chilly in every sense. (An early historian called Newport "one coat warmer" than Boston.) Among the small islands of the Bay, one might almost close one's eyes and imagine oneself in a secret corner of the Mediterranean. All that was missing was the Greco-Roman statuary and Palladian design elements.

That's where Harrison came in. Palladio was all the rage in England in the 1730s and 1740s, and Harrison was acquiring an impressive architectural library that included ample references to *The Master*. These gorgeous books conveyed all the details a hungry American architect needed to know, from doors and windows to interior furnishings. To colonial rustics, they offered a how-to course in grandeur.

When a wealthy Newport merchant, Abraham Redwood, gave the money to build a new library, Harrison was hired, and America's first Palladian sprang into action. Looking for a model, he chose a Roman Doric temple—possibly derived

from the Church of San Giorgio in Venice. Facing other empires much as Newport embraced the Caribbean, South America, and Africa, Venice was attractive to Newport. This strange new temple sprang from old antecedents, but it was bold all the same, beginning with its portico. In the fullness of time, America would see many other Doric columns, from the Capitol crypt to the Supreme Court—but these are the first. In other ways, too, the building reflected Harrison's classicism: its pediment, its Palladian windows, and the serene calm of its interior, with all of its marble philosophers. It is also amusingly American in one sense—for all of the Roman ambition that Harrison brought to the project, he was forced to settle on wood for the exterior, painted to resemble stone.

Harrison would go on to other projects,

including, just down the street, the majestic Touro Synagogue, America's oldest, which faces the street off-kilter, much as Rhode Island faces the rest of New England. But it would be difficult to build a more impressive monument to architectural reading than this one. Appropriately, the books that inspired the building are lovingly preserved inside, guiding the historian as they once aided the up-and-coming builders of a young empire.

TED WIDMER teaches history at Brown University and is a trustee of the Massachusetts Historical Society.

BELOW

Redwood Library and Athenæum, the oldest lending library in America, was founded in 1747 in Newport, Rhode Island. Photo: slgckgc/Creative Commons





MATTER OF COURSE

Cultural Resistance: Redevelopment in the Aftermath of War and Natural Disasters

Roger Williams University

"Away with the monuments," Friedrich Nietzsche opined in a famous attack on stultified 19th-century German history, and after auditing this course, I pretty much agree. Architecture 530.01 was a "blended, low-residency" class with a focus on architecture, reconstruction, and memory. In my case "low residency" meant that I could show up for only one of three class meetings. My loss. The trip from Boston takes you across the spectacularly beautiful Mount Hope Bridge that links Bristol to Aquidneck Island. Outside Paul Rudolph's spectacular University of Massachusetts/Dartmouth site, good luck finding a campus this, well, pelagic.

As promised, much of the classwork occurred online. The eight students discussed the readings in digital forums and posted their PowerPoint presentations on the shared website. It seemed to me that students reacted to readings—but rarely debated—in the online forums. Perhaps the format doesn't lend itself to vigorous interchange, although I've heard it said that today's students are generally reluctant to engage in verbal fisticuffs.

About one-third of the readings and two of the lectures addressed memorials

as points of intersection between architecture and history. Professor Hasan-Uddin Khan took a particular interest in the 16th-century Stari Most bridge in Mostar, Bosnia and Herzegovina, that was destroyed by Croat shelling in 1993 and rebuilt 11 years later. "The bridge was both a structure and a political symbol, as it linked two sides of a city that shared Muslim and Christian neighborhoods," Khan explained. He twice participated in reconstruction programs there, representing the Aga Khan Trust for Culture.

Between Khan's lectures and several of the assigned readings, it was hard not to conclude: Good grief, there seems to be a memorial for everything! In his 1999 essay, "Crowding the Mall," James S. Russell decried the "emotionally toothless" monumental additions to downtown Washington, DC. "As the number of memorials has proliferated, their emotional and artistic power has... waned," he wrote. "It is all too easy to conclude that commemorative architecture lacks emotional heft these days."

This course introduced me to the insipid, committee-designed Memorial to Japanese-American Patriotism on

Capitol Hill and to Louis Kahn's homage to Franklin D. Roosevelt, Four Freedoms Park on the tip of New York City's Roosevelt Island. One of Kahn's final designs, it strikes me as remote, inaccessible, and irrelevant, especially in light of two preexisting, uninspiring FDR memorials in Washington.

I wasn't taken with the National Park Service's Flight 91 Memorial in Pennsylvania, nor with NASA's Astronaut Memorial at the Kennedy Space Center in Cape Canaveral, Florida, both the subject of student presentations. And I was apparently the last person on Earth to know that Norway erected a costly, beautiful, and arguably pointless memorial to victims of 17th-century witch trials in remote Finnmark just five years ago.

I fell in love with a project outside Canberra, Australia, known as the SIEV X monument. SIEV X is an acronym for Suspected Illegal Entry Vessel X, the name given to a boatful of illegal refugees that sank in the vicinity of Australia's Christmas Island, killing 353 men, women, and children, most of them refugees from Iraq. The tragedy resonated loudly

in Australia because it occurred during the 2001 election campaign, when Prime Minister John Howard promised to interdict “boat people” immigration to the continent.

An Australian Senate investigation concluded that “it [is] extraordinary that a major human disaster could occur in the vicinity of a theatre of intensive Australian operations and remain undetected until three days after the event, without any concern being raised within intelligence and decision-making circles.”

After extensive discussions that included an attempt to ban the monument outright, a 14-year-old Brisbane schoolboy, Mitchell Donaldson, proposed the unusual design, a landscape of 353 white poles, each one separately decorated by schools, churches, and community groups across Australia. The poles adorn a grassy hillside and also outline the tiny 60-foot-long hull of the unnamed, doomed refugee ship.

Roger Williams student Lauren Sieving contacted Steve Biddulph, a psychology professor from Tasmania who was one of the prime movers for the 2007 memorial. “I realized the memorial is even more compelling than I presented it to be,” she wrote me in an e-mail. “For example, the placement of the poles points directly at the Australian Parliament building! How I would love to build a memorial in the US that points a finger at Congress.”

Biddulph told Sieving that the SIEV X installation “sends a message that not all Australians are frightened by refugees or regard them as less than fully human. That we cared enough to remember.”

Nietzsche was right: Away with the monuments! But let’s keep this beautiful one outside Canberra.

ALEX BEAM is a contributing columnist for *The Boston Globe* and the author of *The Feud: Vladimir Nabokov, Edmund Wilson, and the End of a Beautiful Friendship*.

FAR LEFT

Aerial photo of SIEV X Memorial, commemorating the sinking of a refugee vessel that took 353 lives in 2001. In Weston Park, Yarralumla, Canberra, Australia, September 2007. Image: Courtesy of SIEV X National Memorial Project

Design/Build: The Drawings of Phillips & Holloran, Architects

Cape Ann Museum

Gloucester, Massachusetts

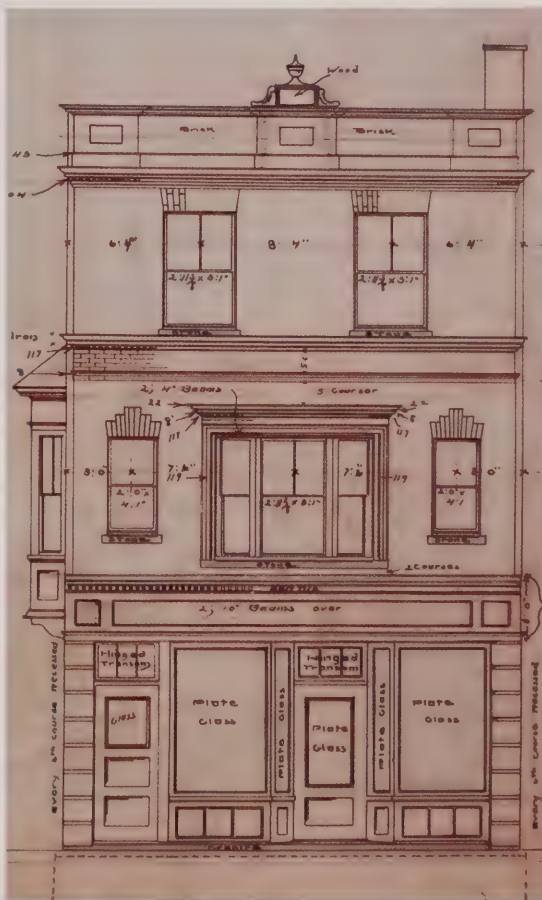
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Why should anyone make the long trek to the tip of Cape Ann to see an exhibition of architectural drawings? The charms of Gloucester itself are one obvious answer, as is the stature of the Cape Ann Museum, one of New England’s cultural treasures.

You may not know or care about Ezra Phillips, Timothy Holloran, or his son, Robert Holloran, but you should care about the idea behind this exhibition: architectural history is also social history. The curators have rooted this notion in physical terms—their thematic “sense of place”—but the accompanying text amplifies the connections between the people who inhabited this place and what they chose to build.

The firm was established in 1894 and continued through the mid-1960s. Phillips produced most of the exhibition’s ink-on-lichen drawings, many of which are house plans and elevations. Shingle Style, Colonial Revival, Queen Ann, Four-Square—these houses expressed the aspirations of the city’s gentry as well as the rising fortunes of the region’s immigrants and working class. Drawings of hotels, commercial blocks, and banks reflect the expansion of the economic base from fishing and granite to commerce and tourism.

Why else should you visit this exhibition? Phillips & Holloran represents a business model that still has relevance. As the profession in the 21st century continues to favor large corporate practices, the value and viability of the small general practice based in an outlying community or region are important to recognize. These are places where a talented architect can readily develop the business and social connections that sustain a practice and discover the satisfactions of influencing change as a respected community leader. Not a bad life.



ELIZABETH S. PADJEN FAIA

is an architect and writer. She was the founding editor of *ArchitectureBoston*.

LEFT

Main Street Elevation, Block for Howard Blackburn, Esq., Main Street, Gloucester. Ezra L. Phillips, 1900. Scale: 1/4"=1'. Ink on lichen. Image: Courtesy of Cape Ann Museum

CONSIDERED

Places of education

For several years, I photographed educational institutions throughout New England, ranging from public high schools and private boarding schools to fraternity and sorority houses. I became fascinated with the psychology of the architecture used to contain and educate young people during transitory times in their development. When I turned my lens from public and charter schools to more exclusive private academies, the contrast was vast. These were the privileged spaces where many of our country's leaders have been nurtured. Elite institutions were distinguished in their architecture and decoration, and in their cleanliness. The schools existed in environments that conveyed high aesthetic values and standards of behavior and made eloquent visual statements about the passageways to success, power, and opportunity. The implied yet absent human presence in the photographs creates a stagelike atmosphere, where the historical and cultural trappings of these settings can be on full display.

LISSA RIVERA lives and works in New York City. She received her master's in fine arts from the School of Visual Arts.



PHOTOS

Pool Room, Theta Xi Fraternity, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Boston

Lockers, Snowden International School, Boston

Library, Roxbury Latin School, West Roxbury, Massachusetts



Art in the Public Space

Pedro Alonzo and Trevor Smith with Jared Bowen

Le Laboratoire, Cambridge, Massachusetts

June 7, 2016

Boston has public art on its collective mind. Thanks to efforts by City Hall, an expanded Greenway program, and grand private-sector gestures, the city has seen an ascendance of outdoor artwork. It is no secret that a well-produced program can help transform a city (see Chicago) and bring to it global audiences. As Greater Boston densifies, art projects in the public realm and the conversations around them have multiplied. What is public art today if not the static bronze memorials of the past? Answer: temporary, interactive, playful, and provocative.

That was the overarching summation at Art in the Public Space, an evening of presentations at Kendall Square's Le Laboratoire, organized by The Trustees, Massachusetts' conservation and preservation nonprofit, to kick off its *Art and the Landscape* program. To celebrate its 125th anniversary, The Trustees have enlisted Pedro Alonzo, the curator responsible for French artist JR's bold statement on the façade of 200 Clarendon, to bring art installations to its properties. Alonzo previewed upcoming commissions of Sam Durant's participatory *Meeting House* in Concord and Jeppe Hein's reflective maze of mirrors at World's End in Hingham. He was joined by Peabody Essex curator Trevor Smith, who famously brought Theo Jansen's walking marvels, Strandbeests, to the area.

In a roundtable moderated by Jared Bowen, WGBH's arts editor, the curators discussed the arena of contemporary art that is happily leaking beyond institutional boundaries in our now-digital world. The conversation kept finding its way back to children, skateboarders, and selfies as the key markers of success, yet there was minimal discussion of public art's capacity toward social change and activism. One attendee remarked that the audience and presenting panel were still noticeably homogenous. With this rush of installations extending into natural and historical landscapes, let's look forward to projects that similarly push this conversation into new territory.

DINA DEITSCH, director of curatorial projects at Goodman Taft and Insitu Projects, is on the faculty at the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston and the Massachusetts College of Art and Design.

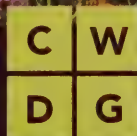
ABOVE

Mirror Labyrinth NY © Jeppe Hein. Photo: Courtesy of 303 Gallery, New York City; KÖNIG GALERIE, Berlin; Galleri Nicolai Wallner, Copenhagen

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An aerial photograph of a coastal landscape. A light-colored concrete wall runs diagonally from the top left towards the bottom right. To the right of the wall is a body of water with a greenish-grey hue. To the left of the wall is a sandy dune with a warm orange-brown color. Several dark, conical evergreen trees are scattered along the top edge of the wall. The overall composition is geometric and emphasizes boundaries between different land types.

THE YEAR OF THE PLAN

BORDERS

FALL 2016

With 101 communities in the Boston metropolitan area, what are the prospects for regional collaboration? In this issue, *ArchitectureBoston* examines how communities cooperate—or not—across municipal boundaries.



BRIDGE THE GAP

THE VIEW FROM THE STREET

by Jeffrey Rosenblum

Boston's population is at a 50-year high (with an 8 percent increase by 2030), but levels of car ownership and vehicle miles traveled are declining. What is going on? People today have different values as to what city life should look like, and automobile ownership isn't a big part of it. The pressure to rethink how we design our streets culminated in the concept of "complete streets," which provides for safe, comfortable access by all modes of transportation with an emphasis on biking, walking, and transit. But a lack of coordination among adjacent municipalities hampers efforts to realize a truly rebalanced urban transportation system. Boston, Cambridge, Somerville, and Brookline, for example, each has its own bicycle network plan—and none acknowledges the existence of its neighbors.

Other cities may be considered parochial, but urban "Boston" really excels, with each municipality advancing its own planning agenda. Until a decade ago, Cambridge was the only city in the area with bike lanes, pedestrian-focused signal-timing policies, and innovative traffic-calming measures (and was generally scoffed at by neighbors). Drivers take for granted that a road is still a road as we pass seamlessly from one town to the next. But one day in the early 2000s, as I rode my bicycle from Central Square, Cambridge, toward Boston, the bicycle lane suddenly disappeared when I reached the bridge over the Charles River. The bridge is owned by the state, and the other side belongs to the City of Boston. But from a bicyclist's perspective, it's all one street.

CHRIS SANDERSON, a Boston-based illustrator, has worked as an artist and designer for more than 15 years.

PREVIOUS PAGE

Field with Seawall, Chris Ballantyne, 2013. Acrylic on canvas, 20" × 16"
Image: Courtesy of Hosfelt Gallery
San Francisco



It took some time, but now all municipalities in the area are in on the Complete Streets action. Somerville is building a protected bike lane on Beacon Street, Boston is running a Vision Zero corridor planning process for Massachusetts Avenue, Brookline is about to reconstruct the abominable pedestrian crossing across Route 9 by the Jamaica Way, and Newton engaged in some tactical urbanism by temporarily redesigning a street for a day. But only so much progress can be made with each jurisdiction taking advantage of low-hanging fruit, such as adding bike lanes where they are easy to fit in.

Planners now recognize that every street cannot be made ideal for every mode. So the real challenge we face is creating networks, especially low-stress bicycle networks and bus-priority networks. As we usher in the next generation of street designs, the public debate on how to allocate limited street space will grow only more contentious as we weigh the trade-offs. Without municipal coordination, we will end up with a patchwork of individual projects.

Municipalities have shown they can coordinate. (Witness Metropolitan Area Planning Council's single-vendor Hubway

bikeshare program and planning for the Urban Ring transit project.) Can Massachusetts Department of Transportation serve as convener? (If successful, the Lower Mystic Regional Working Group will be a model.) Coordination can also be initiated by a nonprofit (LivableStreets Alliance's "Emerald Network" connecting Metro Boston's greenways).

Somerville mayor Joseph Curtatone is a champion for regional thinking, but the big player is the most essential. There is still time for Mayor Martin J. Walsh to turn around the GoBoston 2030 planning process in order to become a catalyst and leader for regional coordination. ■

JEFFREY ROSENBLUM, who cofounded LivableStreets Alliance, is a PhD candidate in the Department of Urban Studies and Planning at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He is a former transportation planner for the City of Cambridge.

A BONE TO PICK

by Heidi Stucker

HEIDI STUCKER is a food system planner with the Metropolitan Area Planning Council in Boston.

Every day, long before the sun is up, truckloads of produce from around the country arrive in Massachusetts at the Chelsea Market. Within hours, fruits and vegetables are sorted and loaded back onto trucks that deliver to grocery stores, restaurants, wholesalers, and food service customers across the region. If you live in New England, when you sit down for dinner tonight, chances are your salad will have moved through this distribution system.

This wholesale produce terminal, straddling the municipal boundaries of Chelsea and Everett, is a crucial component of the regional food system, supplying fresh fruits and vegetables to more than 8 million people in Boston, New England, and parts of Canada. The New England Produce Center, the largest privately owned produce market in the country, along with the Boston Terminal Market, a smaller, adjacent produce market, make up the Chelsea Market.

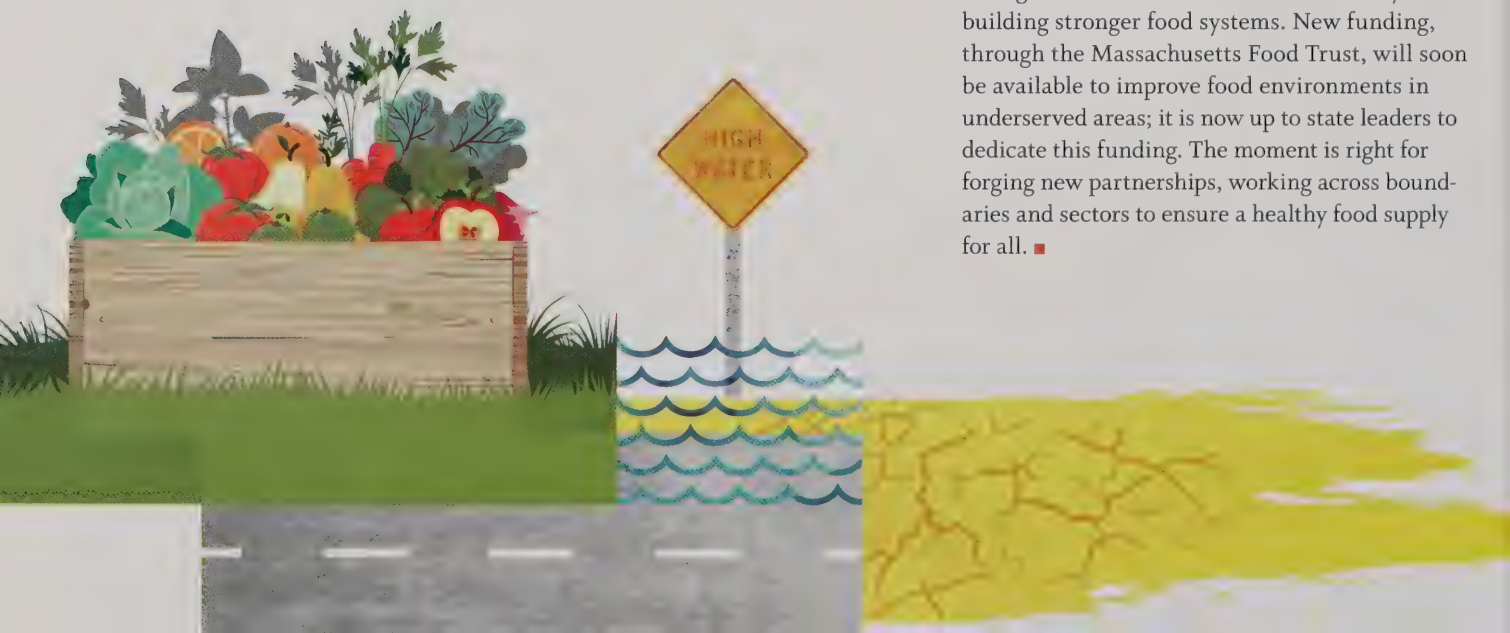
The facility was built in 1968 on low-lying land that in the early 1900s was wetlands and a portion of the Island End River, since filled in. So, as climate change alters the existing borders between land and sea, this vital regional distribution hub is also at risk. By today's measurements, it is susceptible to flooding; recent modeling released by the Massachusetts Department of Transportation shows that 5 feet of sea-level rise could inundate the Chelsea Market with up to 4 feet of water. According to flood projections, this could be possible within this century. Beacham Street is a deteriorating roadway

that serves as the main access point for the Chelsea Market, and any amount of flooding here could cut off truck access and impede business and employment.

Ironically, Everett and Chelsea, the market's host cities, have limited access to fresh fruits and vegetables. Vast quantities of produce enter and exit through these cities' borders every day, yet little of it stays. Both cities have significantly elevated rates of diet-related illness—including hypertension and diabetes—and roughly one-third of residents are obese, as compared to 22 percent statewide. They have four full-service grocery stores between them, serving a combined population of 80,000 people, with both of Everett's grocery stores located on the periphery of the city and feasibly accessed only by car or bus. Advocates suggest that these are too few and too difficult to get to. Community groups such as Everett Community Growers and Healthy Chelsea are increasing awareness and investment in food access issues by engaging residents in urban farming, community gardening, and hunger-relief efforts.

Increasingly tenuous regional food security and persistent community health issues in Everett and Chelsea call for deeper involvement by city and state governments and collaboration with community food advocacy groups and businesses. The interdisciplinary nature of food systems requires working across sectors, those conventionally boundaried. Solutions need to be advanced by whole communities.

Recent efforts suggest the political will is there to make change happen. Massachusetts and neighboring states have defined visions in recent years for building stronger food systems. New funding, through the Massachusetts Food Trust, will soon be available to improve food environments in underserved areas; it is now up to state leaders to dedicate this funding. The moment is right for forging new partnerships, working across boundaries and sectors to ensure a healthy food supply for all. ■





WHEN A RIVER RUNS THROUGH IT

by EkongKar Singh Khalsa

Borders and the names of the spaces within them are useful in that they help us to organize our experience, direct our actions, and condition our behavior. We know that there is a difference between the math department and the English department. There is a different expectation of behavior in the waiting room and the assembly hall. These bounded areas also help to create spheres of influence and lines of authority. It is essential, however, to integrate the distinct places and definitions we inhabit by reference to those principles and conditions that transcend limited boundaries.

Working at the watershed level is useful to that purpose in that the watershed boundary disrupts municipal, agency, and commercial borders and ignores property lines and the rights of ownership. The watershed boundary simply describes an area in which all water flows toward a single point—a river, lake, or stream. The water cares little for contradictory human constructs.

Recognizing we all live in a watershed helps to highlight shared, though often unrecognized, resources and concerns, and it allows a small organization such as ours to have outsized impact.

Though the Mystic River Watershed Association (Myrwa) has no regulatory authority or specific legal standing in many cases, we make an important difference in public policy and regional planning decisions by simply reminding all participants that there are underlying and irreducible conditions to which we must attend.

There are 22 towns and cities in the Mystic River watershed, all with their own concerns and agenda, and four state and five federal agencies

with a deep interest in watershed health. Myrwa often has served as a convener of these sometimes disparate interests and has helped to build consensus where often there was none.

A good case in point is the work Myrwa undertook to ensure that Torbert MacDonald Park in Medford received new funding for design and construction of long-overdue improvements. One of the largest waterfront parks in the Boston area, Torbert MacDonald suffered from poor access, extensive phragmites overgrowth on the river's edge, and a lack of facilities and wayfinding in the park.

We brought together 10 state senators and representatives, the City of Medford, private philanthropists, and senior planners at the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation to achieve a common purpose. As a result, in 2016 and 2017 more than \$650,000 will be spent on design for a new entry and playground, paving replacement throughout the park, a comprehensive invasive species removal, and the construction of a beautiful riverfront boat launch and sitting area. Without Myrwa's persistent advocacy, this work would not be under way.

The watershed boundary gave Myrwa standing and helped us to knit together disparate community interests. Reference to a shared watershed gave municipal, state, and federal agencies reason to work together toward a common goal.

The flow of water through the landscape is essential to every living thing and the natural border of the watershed points out that many of the boundaries we create are artificial and are ours to ignore as necessary. ■

EKONGKAR SINGH KHALSA, executive director of the Mystic River Watershed Association through Sept. 12, has worked for 25 years in environmental protection and restoration, on low-impact and brownfields development, and on public policy issues associated with these arenas.

GETTING ON TRACK

by Brad Bellows

BRAD BELLOWS is an architect in Cambridge, Massachusetts, a board member of the Association for Public Transportation, and a member of the North South Rail Link Working Group.

In the latter half of the 19th century, New England was knitted together by networks of railroads extending north, south, and west from Boston, built by private companies operating from eight facilities on the city's edges. By 1900, these were consolidated into two grand terminals a mile apart. The need for further unification, via a rail tunnel between the two, was recognized almost immediately; but plans faltered during World War I, and the passenger rail industry itself nearly collapsed in the following decades as transportation policy embraced cars and highway expansion. The rail link's proposed route became a notorious elevated highway. Now the pendulum is swinging back toward rail.

Our cities and regional highway system are collapsing under the weight of ever-increasing congestion. Millennials are embracing transit-oriented living while the economic, environmental, and social justice benefits of good public transportation are being increasingly understood. Good regional transportation not only protects air quality and fosters economic development but also is the single largest factor in a family's ability to escape poverty and find affordable housing.

The recent challenges of our rail system notwithstanding, we should recognize that in its nearly 400 route miles and 138 stations, we have inherited the core of what could become a world-class regional rail network and at a far lower cost than would

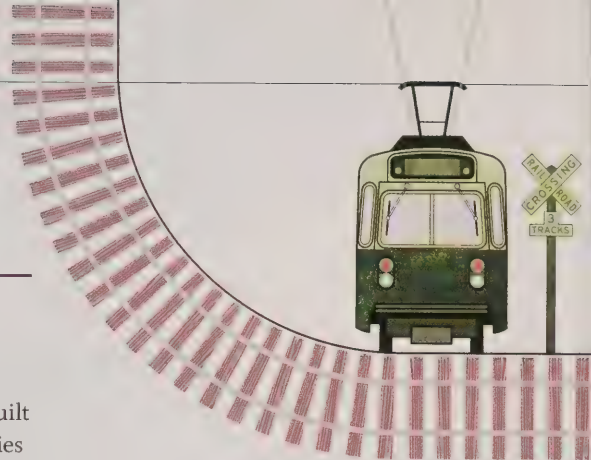
be required to create this anew—if that were even possible. System unification is the essential intervention that will unlock this potential. Why?

First, none of our fragmented rail lines provides effective distribution across Boston nor connects fully with existing transit lines, squandering the potential of both. Second, stub-end terminals are highly inefficient, needing vast rail yards on valuable urban land to park the necessary trains, limiting capacity and incurring operating cost penalties of up to \$100 million per year. Finally, the disconnection of our northern and southern lines denies everyone north of Boston direct access to the Northeast Corridor, where 30 percent of US jobs are located.

By contrast, a unified system, connected to transit lines, will streamline rail operations while improving service, increasing ridership, unlocking hundreds of acres of urban land for higher uses, improving access to Boston, and creating opportunities for work and housing. You shouldn't have to uproot the family if your job moves across our de facto Mason-Dixon Line.

Rail unification will benefit Boston, sparing it the waves of traffic it can otherwise expect while spurring investment in our older industrial cities that were built around rail and faltered with its decline. The current real estate bubbles in Boston and Cambridge are a measure of our broken regional transportation system, which rewards the few places that are easily accessible and punishes the rest. This pattern is unjust and unsustainable.

Cities around the world—Zurich, London, Berlin, Hong Kong, and Los Angeles, to name just a few—have built rail tunnels at reasonable cost and minimal disruption using the latest tunnel-boring machine technology, transforming “commuter rail” into the equivalent of urban transit at regional scale and forging a backbone for regional prosperity. This should be a key goal for Boston's 400th anniversary in 2030. ■



FROM THE EDGES, A NEW IDENTITY

by David Hacin FAIA

Boston is a city of neighborhoods in a region well known as a patchwork of towns with sharply contrasting physical and economic characteristics. We take pride in our Old World DNA and how geography has fostered and preserved unique communities. The city can seem like a medieval territory not unlike the opening title sequence of *Game of Thrones* with its spinning fiefdoms, full of intrigue that pits one neighborhood against the perceived encroachments of another.

The almost tribal nature of how our communities have been defined, culturally and physically, is visible in architecture—from the brick bowfronts of the South End to the wood-frame triple-deckers of Dorchester—but also in how they rub up against one another.

This is evident in neighborhoods such as Southie, the Back Bay, and the South End and in enclaves such as Bay Village and Savin Hill; all have boundaries that are clearly understood as a highway, street, or set of train tracks, often bordered by ragged stretches of “no-man’s land.” These areas of scarred, underused land resulted from deindustrialization, ‘60s-era urban renewal, and the failed (and realized) transportation plans of decades past. These borderlands have allowed neighborhoods to keep their distance.

In the past few decades, repair came in the form of public connections such as the Southwest Corridor Park, the Prudential Center arcades, and, most recently, the Rose F. Kennedy Greenway. Until recently, many adjacent neighborhoods have remained disconnected from one another by physical and psychological boundaries.

In a city starved for land and reinvigorated by economic and population growth, something was bound to give eventually. Development has moved from contested and congested central areas to the edges. Boundary zones have gone from being “nowhere places” to “well connected” in marketing copy; the real estate website Curbed has even suggested that we may need to create neighborhood names for these newly hot in-between places, such as D Street in South Boston. The next generation of young workers, eager to be centrally located and car free, is blissfully unaware of the identity politics that have characterized Boston for years.

Adjacent to my South End neighborhood, the so-called New York streets area is exploding with

development, including a previously unimaginable Whole Foods market; with two existing Asian supermarkets and competing outdoor Sunday markets, the area is becoming a destination for thousands of Bostonians. A few years ago, this area barely existed as an identifiable place on a map; today, residents of South Boston, the South End, Bay Village, and Chinatown share common ground, and the streets are alive with activity and diversity—and quite a bit of traffic. The same is happening all over town. Boston is being sewn back together piece by piece, like a beloved patchwork quilt that needed serious repair to become whole again.

Does this mean our city can finally grow together in other ways as well? Will decades of cultural barriers be broken down by a new sense of connectedness? Decide for yourself: Walk along Boylston from Fenway to Back Bay, take the T to Andrew Square or Dudley Square, or visit the SoWa/ South End markets on a Sunday. Boston is changing. The borders are slowly disappearing. It feels like a new city. ■

DAVID HACIN FAIA is the founding principal and president of Hacin + Associates and a member of the Boston Civic Design Commission.





**IN MASSACHUSETTS, MUNICIPALITIES
BALK AT COOPERATING—AT THE EXPENSE
OF REGIONAL PROGRESS**

WHY CAN'T WE ALL JUST GET ALONG?

by Dante Ramos

Massachusetts has 351 cities and towns, and if you spend enough time in any one of them, you could almost convince yourself that the known world ends at its municipal limits. The principle of local autonomy is enshrined deeply in the culture in the Bay State—sometimes in ways that make the place seem well cared for, as when homeowners tend their own shrubs, but also in ways that make the greater good seem elusive.

Under state law, for example, a casino's host community can wring major financial concessions from it, while neighboring cities and towns have far less leverage—even when the casino is right on the border. That's why Boston and Somerville have fought a Wynn Resorts casino just over the line in Everett. And then there's the issue of housing. Despite a serious shortage inside Route 495, local governments have defended their own ability to refuse new construction, regardless of the effects on everyone else.

Municipalities go it alone in still more stubborn ways. In the 1990s, Weston opted out of an effort to convert an unused railway into a recreational trail. Sentiment against the trail has mellowed, advocates believe, but the town's refusal lingers two decades later, in the form of an awkward detour between Waltham and Wayland. Belmont has been slow to deal with sewage leaks that pollute a brook in ways that mostly affect areas downstream in Cambridge.

In the ultimate testament to the power of local control, even the exceptions to the pattern—the initiatives that transcend municipal borders—are profoundly shaped by it.

Exhibit A: the bike-sharing network Hubway. It first launched in Boston in 2011, as longtime mayor Tom Menino got more serious about promoting healthy transportation and fighting climate change, and expanded to Cambridge, Brookline, and Somerville the following year. At that moment, Boston wasn't playing well with its neighbors. Around the same time, there'd been a move afoot to create a common website listing commercial properties available in cities and towns throughout Greater Boston, but the Menino administration wasn't interested. The mayor used tax incentives to poach Vertex Pharmaceuticals from just across the river in

OPPOSITE

They all fall down, Teeter Swings.
Keetra Dean Dixon, 2011.
Photo: Courtesy of the artist

Cambridge. He fumed when Partners HealthCare decided in 2013 to centralize its administrative offices in a new complex in Somerville.

But from the beginning, there was no question that a bike-sharing network had to stretch past Boston's city limits to places such as Kendall Square, Cambridge; Coolidge Corner, Brookline; and Davis Square, Somerville. "It is so much better for the user," says Nicole Freedman, a former Olympic cyclist whom Menino had hired to oversee the city's bike programs. "It is the difference between a niche, fun way to get around and real public transportation."

On a summer weekend, Hubway operates seamlessly. Yet the equipment is owned by four different municipalities that have separate contracts with Motivate, the contractor that operates the system. During the winter, Hubway operates only in Cambridge. The system's business model involves some revenue from outdoor advertising, which Brookline doesn't allow. Corporate memberships are another source of money, but who gets the revenue from, say, Harvard, which is based in Cambridge but has students and staff on both sides of the river? These weren't big roadblocks, but they were problems that smart, busy people from multiple municipalities needed to sit around and negotiate.

The very map of Massachusetts reflects a strong belief in local governance. Almost all of the state's 351 municipalities were established in the horse-and-buggy era. Their list of duties was shorter then, and there was a far greater possibility that a citizen's needs would be ignored if town hall were more than a few miles away. The view that larger units of government are unaccountable and prone to bloat helps explain why counties—the principal form of local government in much of the United States—have withered in Massachusetts.

But localism has its own shortcomings. Like the flora and fauna of remote archipelagoes, the political and regulatory cultures of individual towns diverge in exotic and sometimes random ways. In one city, a homebuilder can arrange for a curb cut at a short meeting with an inspector. In another city, it's a drawn-out process involving public meetings. "There are communities that I know of where the town manager is basically king, and there are towns where the town manager doesn't move without asking three different boards," says Marc Draisen, executive director of the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC). "The towns have just evolved differently."

The parochialism that dominates planning and zoning in eastern Massachusetts is at odds with the lofty reputation that the region enjoys elsewhere. The world knows "Boston" as much for the universities and tech firms scattered around the region as for Fenway Park, Faneuil Hall, and other landmarks of Boston proper. In their book, *The Metropolitan Revolution*, think-tank scholars Bruce Katz and Jennifer Bradley argue that metro areas as a whole are the key unit of economic growth. Other globally competitive urban agglomerations have

long recognized that. New York took greater control over its destiny by consolidating with its neighbors in 1898. Many large Sun Belt cities keep growth within their borders by aggressively annexing unincorporated areas around them.

In the last 20 years, provincial governments in Ontario and Quebec forcibly merged Toronto and Montreal with some of their innermost suburbs. Voters in Greater London created a unified mayorship for their city, which has long been divided into smaller boroughs. But structural changes of this magnitude are almost unimaginable in Massachusetts.

"It's not entirely arbitrary why we have boundaries where we do," says Ryan Centner, a London School of Economics urban geography professor who used to teach at Tufts University. Even so, he says, "those borders outlive their initial use but become difficult to change. Every time you create a political boundary, you create some kind of context for power." Money and jobs depend on the amount of control every city or town exercises over its own affairs.

The growing complexity of government in the 21st century is nevertheless forcing some cities and towns to rethink which tasks they undertake on their own. Regional organizations such as the Cape Cod Commission and the Franklin Regional Council of Governments offer member towns many of the services that counties in other states would ordinarily provide. Massachusetts has large-scale mutual-aid pacts for public safety and public works equipment, and there are dozens of multitown school districts. When recessions squeeze municipal budgets, town governments look harder at ways they can cut costs by working with the neighbors.

But many efforts at cooperation still fall short. Ashland and Hopkinton have spent years discussing a merger of their fire departments, to little effect. Local politics, the details of labor contracts, and sheer inertia are powerful disincentives. David Panagore, who's now the town manager in Provincetown but worked in municipal government in Chelsea in the 1990s, recalls when the sewer and water system in the latter community had a major rodent infestation and city administrators tried to enlist Boston's help. Boston agreed but demanded that workers receive time and a half. The joint rat-abatement effort soon petered out.

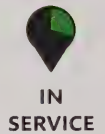
Tradition and human nature are hard to overcome even now, and Draisen thinks the state needs to offer more carrots—and wield more sticks—to encourage cities and towns to collaborate more. "Most of our communities have literally been on the map for more than 200 years," he says. "And if you ask the average person, 'Would you rather make the decision by yourself or with three neighbors?' most people will say, 'Well, I'll do it alone.'"

Despite everything, Hubway turned into a success story. "Honestly, it's one of the few examples of a place where four municipalities actually get together and run something," says Eric Bourassa, director of the transportation division of MAPC, which helped Freedman coordinate the effort.



HUBWAY STATIONS: WHAT'S AVAILABLE

MAP KEY



2011 Launched in Boston

2012 Expanded to Cambridge, Brookline, and Somerville

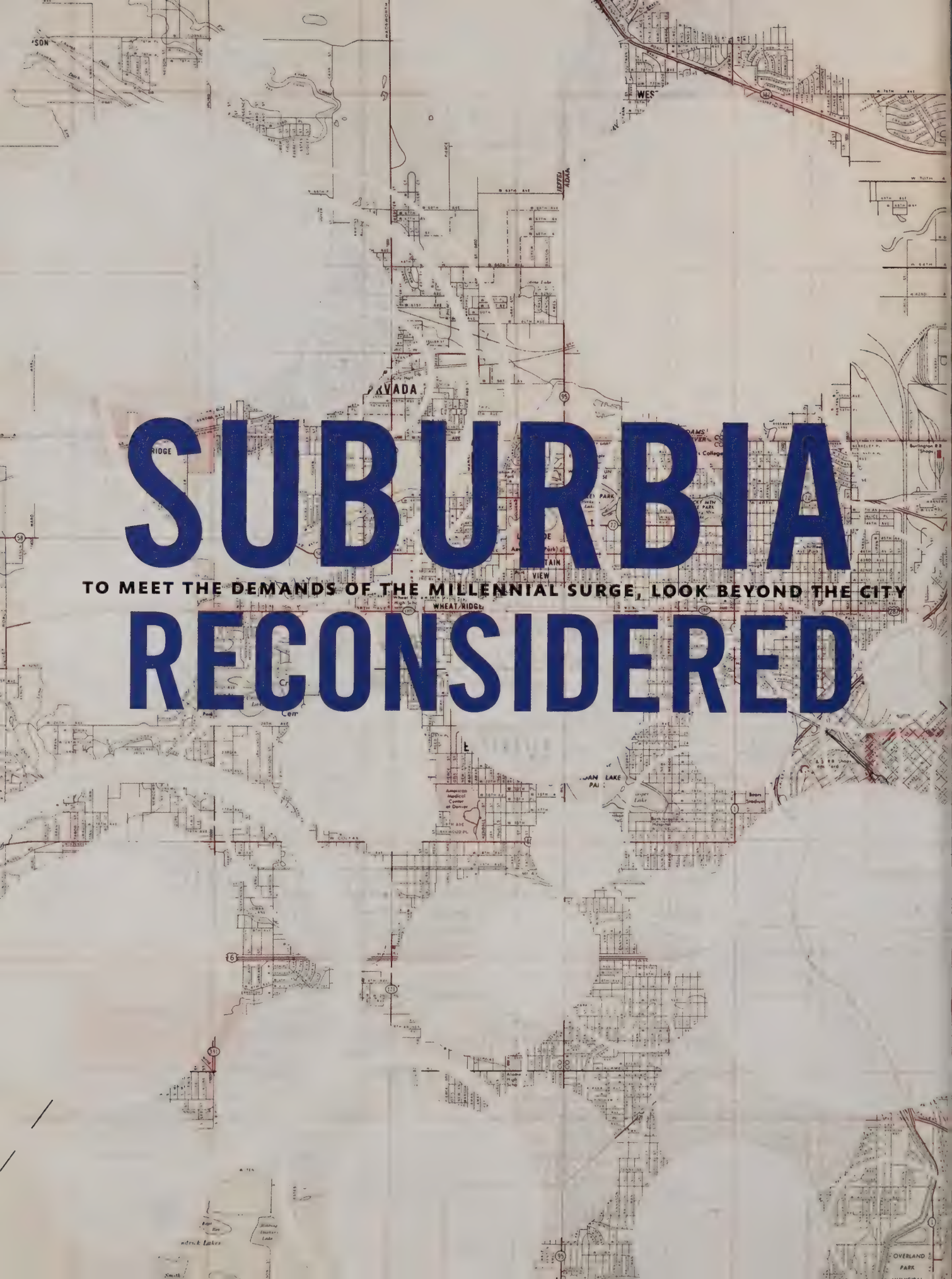
2016 150+ stations, 1,500+ bikes, 1.1+ million trips a year

"We got something up and running fast," says Freedman, who now works for the City of Seattle and is president of the North American Bikeshare Association. Somehow, within a few short years, Boston and its neighbors ushered in a whole new way of getting around a congested urban core. Hubway now includes more than 150 stations and 1,500 bikes, handles more than 1.1 million trips a year, and nicely complements both the MBTA and a wave of smartphone-driven transportation alternatives.

The advent of the innovation economy—and stiff competition from New York, Silicon Valley, and elsewhere—has given local leaders one more reason to present a united front. In December, Boston Mayor Martin J. Walsh and the leaders of five surrounding communities signed a regional compact to create a joint business-recruitment strategy. When I interviewed John Barros, Walsh's chief of economic development, in June, he'd just returned from the BIO International Convention in San Francisco, where the cities along the Red

Line marketed themselves as a single life sciences corridor. If efforts like these succeed, Barros says, "we should not be hearing about tensions [among cities] or moving a company from one municipality to the next. There should be a realization that, if a company is in Cambridge, it's still contributing tremendously to the economy."

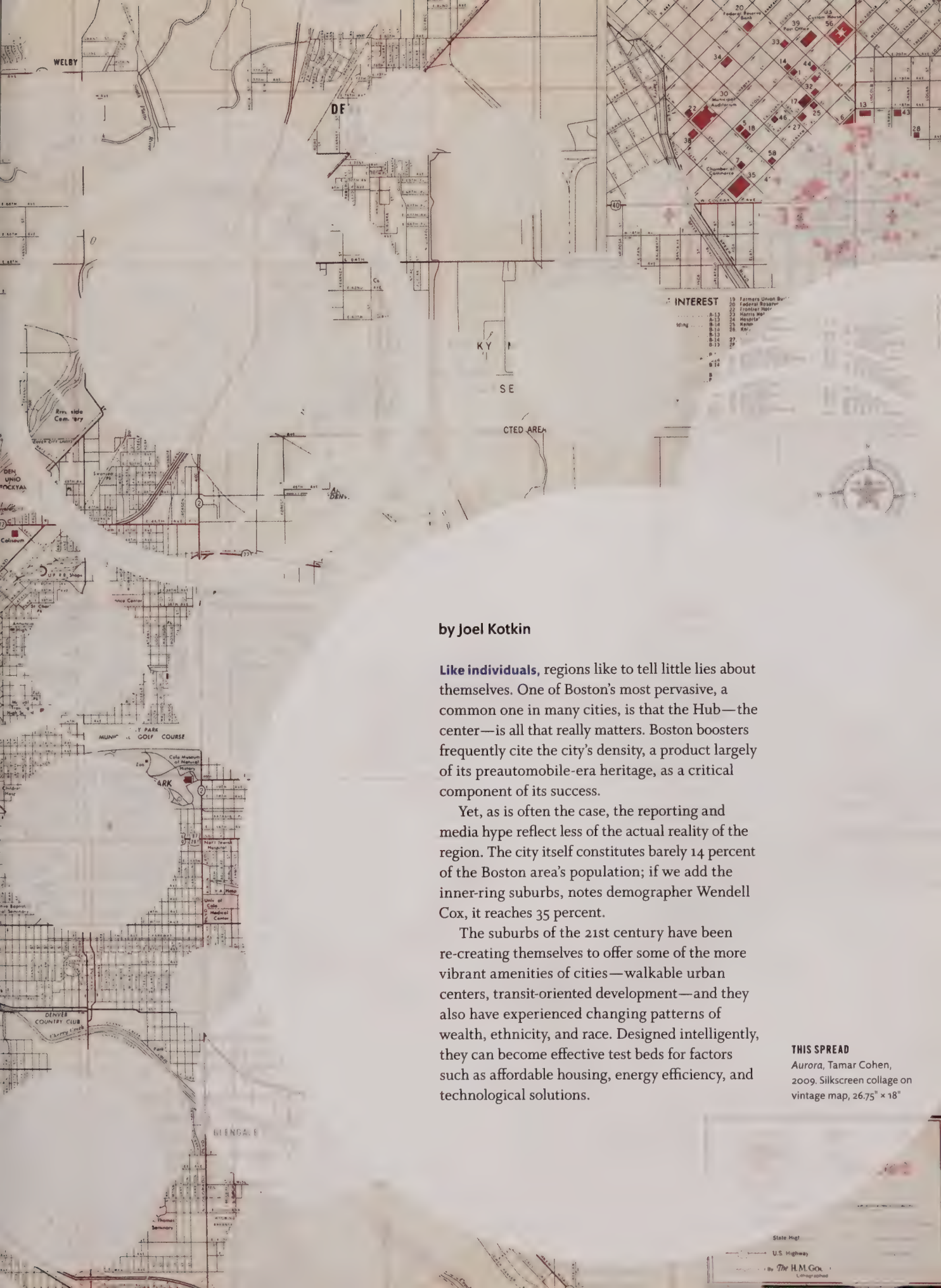
We'll see. Still, a changing economic balance between city and suburb may also help soothe old grudges. Menino and his predecessors came of age politically when the City of Boston was losing residents. With the city now growing faster than the rest of the state and its tax base swelling amid a nearly unprecedented development boom, "regional cooperation" is no longer a euphemism for "squeezing rich towns to help the decrepit urban core" or "letting suburbanites harp about a Boston they no longer live in." When the issue in question is how to bring new employers or new amenities to town, rather than who's bleeding residents to whom, it's easier to keep a conversation going on jovial terms. ■



SUBURBIA

TO MEET THE DEMANDS OF THE MILLENNIAL SURGE, LOOK BEYOND THE CITY

RECONSIDERED



by Joel Kotkin

Like individuals, regions like to tell little lies about themselves. One of Boston's most pervasive, a common one in many cities, is that the Hub—the center—is all that really matters. Boston boosters frequently cite the city's density, a product largely of its preautomobile-era heritage, as a critical component of its success.

Yet, as is often the case, the reporting and media hype reflect less of the actual reality of the region. The city itself constitutes barely 14 percent of the Boston area's population; if we add the inner-ring suburbs, notes demographer Wendell Cox, it reaches 35 percent.

The suburbs of the 21st century have been re-creating themselves to offer some of the more vibrant amenities of cities—walkable urban centers, transit-oriented development—and they also have experienced changing patterns of wealth, ethnicity, and race. Designed intelligently, they can become effective test beds for factors such as affordable housing, energy efficiency, and technological solutions.

THIS SPREAD
Aurora, Tamar Cohen,
2009. Silkscreen collage on
vintage map, 26.75" x 18"

BOSTON REGION

1,800

SQUARE MILES

2,200

DENSITY PER SQUARE MILE

21%

LIVE WITHIN THE
INNER-RING SUBURBS

14%

OF THE BOSTON
AREA'S POPULATION
LIVES IN THE CITY

CITY CENTER

INNER-RING SUBURBS

OUTER-RING SUBURBS

OUTER-RING SUBURBS

2X

THE POPULATION GROWTH HAS BEEN
TWICE AS LARGE AS THOSE INSIDE
THE CORE AND OLDER SUBURBAN RING

ROUGHLY 140,000 SINCE 2000

The Boston media and academic communities hail the region as densely urban, making it all but irresistible for millennials. This penchant for urbanity would be news for roughly two-thirds of the regional population, and for most young people as well. Nor is the area particularly dense by national standards. Indeed, among the nation's 41 urban areas where the population numbers more than 1 million, the Boston region, which now extends to New Hampshire and Rhode Island, ranks only 33rd. Spread over 1,800 square miles, this region has a density of 2,200 per square mile; in contrast, the density in the Los Angeles urban area, where I live, is 7,000 per square mile.

Boston is somewhat less dense than Sun Belt urban areas such as Las Vegas; Miami; San Diego; and San Jose, California, and significantly less dense than rapidly expanding urban areas in Texas. Visitors to Boston, from either the rest of the country or around the world, can be forgiven for thinking the region exists primarily between Logan Airport and the Back Bay. Planners, the media, and academics have a far less reasonable excuse.

Most Boston-area residents live in what planners demean as "mindless sprawl." Although there has been some small increase in the share of the inner core of the region, suburbanization continues to dominate. Since 2000, the population growth in the outer rings—roughly 140,000—has been twice as large as those inside the core and older suburban ring.

The real problem here is demographic stagnation, brought in large part by high housing prices. Like other legacy cities—those whose structure predates the automobile era—Boston's inner ring is becoming something akin to a gated community. In the City of Boston, the cost of living is nearly 40 percent above the US average. Condo prices have been soaring, including in lower-cost neighborhoods such as Dorchester and Roxbury. Overall, housing affordability adjusted for income is almost 1.5 times as high in Greater Boston than in key competitor regions such as Raleigh, North Carolina.

Expensive, thriving urban centers are wonderful for many things—architecture, the arts, good restaurants. They are not so good for middle-class families.

As Boston's suburban growth has slowed and prices have stayed high, families are increasingly out of fashion. Of the nation's 52 metropolitan areas with more than 1 million residents, the Boston urban area now has the 47th lowest percentage of population aged 5 to 14 (12.1 percent) in comparison with more affordable areas such as Salt Lake City,

Dallas-Fort Worth, Houston, San Antonio, and Raleigh (15 percent or higher).

This phenomena parallels another—rapid aging. The generations who settled in the region beyond Route 128 and Interstate 495, as well as those in the older suburbs, are becoming NORCs, or naturally occurring retirement communities. Of the 52 major metropolitan areas, Boston now has the 12th highest percentage of seniors over 65. By the end of this year, the Massachusetts Council on Aging estimates that the number of adults aged 60 and older in the “granny state” will be greater for the first time in recorded history than the number of children aged 20 and younger.

Boston boosters gush over the large presence of educated millennials, no surprise in the western world’s premier college town. Yet suburbs, particularly over time, matter to them, too. Nationally, most educated people aged 25 to 34 don’t end up in the urban core—three times as many settle in the suburbs or exurbs. High prices and the lack of an affordable suburban housing stock may explain why Boston’s millennial surge has begun to slow. Between 2011 and 2013, the growth among 25- to 34-year-old college-educated people was among the lowest of any in the country, up just 6.3 percent. That is barely half the rate for Nashville, Tennessee; Orlando, Florida; and Denver, and well below the growth in Cleveland and the big Texas cities (more than 10 percent).

Conventional wisdom insists that young people prefer the city and will want to stay there. But economist Jed Kolko noted last year in a *Huffington Post* article headlined “Urban headwinds, suburban tailwinds” that the percentage living in the inner city drops precipitously as they enter their 30s and continues to drop for decades. For most young people, dense urbanity represents a transitional stage.

Due to preferences or economic realities, surveys indicate that most millennials will end up as suburbanites. Research by such groups as Frank Magid and Associates, the National Association of Realtors, Nielsen, and even the Urban Land Institute all indicate that most millennials are destined to head to the burbs.

Last year, the National Association of Realtors found that 83 percent of millennials’ home purchases were single-family detached. So, as they start families, the suburbs are likely to remain “the nurseries of the nation.”

What do these trends portend for Boston? To be sure, the region will be able to continue to attract “the best and brightest,” and powerful companies seeking elite help, such as General Electric, can

continue to find the young, urban-dwelling, well-educated staff they crave. They may even pay them enough to perhaps secure a decent apartment along an MBTA line.

This leaves little space for anyone—except the young and hip, the well-to-do, and the childless. Most outside this charmed circle will live meagerly. No surprise that many continue to leave the metropolitan area, which has lost 250,000 net domestic migrants since 2000.

This scenario may please those who dream of a city lined with expensive high-rise apartment towers and filled with one-bedroom condos or studios that few families will want and many cannot afford. But it obliterates the prospects of homeownership for aspiring middle-class families. Boston’s sprawl could prove a vast field of opportunity—whether in the close-in streetcar suburbs built at the turn of the century or the much lamented postwar and 1980s boom tract houses. The region’s priced-out millennials are already spreading into working-class suburbs, such as Somerville, as well as Waltham and Medford. In the outer rings, however, there may be room, given the often extremely strict zoning, to relax one- or two-acre limits. Much of the country provides an excellent suburban quality of life at the fraction of that density.

The region needs to accommodate people when they leave their bar-hopping days and start shopping at Target and buying strollers. Does that mean we should turn the region into a snowbound replica of Houston? No, but there are things that can be learned from places that accept both “sprawl” and multipolar economies. Greater Boston should consider developing affordable suburbs like Houston’s Cinco Ranch, Sugarland, or the Woodlands, which offer good schools, parks, bike paths, and town centers. Nor would it be tragic if both older suburbs and newer ones develop their economies so not everything requires a commute into the densest part of town.

This message, no doubt, will infuriate those who feel cities are about reviving something that resembles, in form but not familial essence, the city of the 19th century. Boston is not just the charming old city or the exclusive inner suburbs such as Lincoln and Newton; it is also Revere, Framingham, and Waltham.

Ultimately, a city’s heart is not just in its center but wherever its people choose to settle. “After all is said and done, he—the citizen—is really the city,” observed Frank Lloyd Wright. “The city is going wherever he goes.” ■

COMPANY TOWN 2.0



THE 21ST-CENTURY OFFICE PARK TOUTS LIFESTYLE PERKS, HOUSING, AND AMENITIES GALORE

by Allison Arieff

Is the company town coming back?

Well, not in the deliberate way of its forbears, like Pullman, Illinois, or Hershey, Pennsylvania. But the confluence of a booming tech economy, dazzling competition for workers, and overheated housing markets is motivating some companies to consider a 21st-century version.

In the age of the industrial revolution, employers had practical reasons for creating company towns. Employers expanded their roles to become more paternalistic, providing not just jobs but housing, healthcare, schools, libraries, churches, and stores. This generosity was less altruistic than strategic: Companies could improve working conditions while deterring workers from activism and unionization. Employees were taken care of but had no autonomy.

Today, the drive for talent, especially in tech centers such as Silicon Valley; Seattle; Cambridge, Massachusetts; and Raleigh, North Carolina, has reached a fever pitch. The lengths companies will go to attract the best and brightest are unprecedented. Many new employees have the expectation that their employer will compensate them extremely well but will also operate private transportation shuttles to get them to work; feed them three organic, chef-prepared meals a day; and provide them with onsite services, ranging from haircuts to doggie day care to doctor appointments. Highly competitive recruitment has translated into increasingly jaw-dropping amenities, such as free iPads, lunchtime Pilates, and at-desk massages. The remake of the suburban office park is under way.

It is not surprising then, in hot markets that accompany the healthiest economic ecosystems, that housing might be seen as the ultimate amenity. It certainly is becoming an obstacle, if not the biggest obstacle, to hiring in these locations. But is it enough of one for employers to embrace the company town anew?

Sort of.

Call it the company town disrupted: The trend on the horizon isn't a paternalistic employer exploiting the trust and desperation of low-wage workers. To the contrary, Company Town 2.0 is a walkable, amenity-rich offering for highly paid

knowledge workers that has emerged as an indispensable tool for hiring the better engineer. As Jim Morgensen, vice president of Global Workplace Services for LinkedIn, based in Mountain View, California, explains, "Housing affordability has become a critical issue companies are facing in the Bay Area in terms of their ability to attract and retain talent, and as an employer, we need to support the creation of additional housing near jobs and transit."

These "new towns" are more New Urbanist than Manhattanish. Dense cities chock-full of tech clusters lack the square footage to accommodate the giant floor plates so many companies seek, for one. (Frank Gehry's single-story, open-plan Facebook building holds 2,800 employees in 430,000 square feet, for example.) And many feel that verticality (as in high-rise) deters the "spontaneous cultural collisions" believed to be so integral to the narrative of innovation.

Wired referred to Menlo Park as "Facebookville, California. Population: 38,207" in a 2015 article about the company's plan to begin to build housing for some of its employees. Although 394 units of housing does not a company town make, when companies like this one occupy such a large literal and psychic footprint in a city, one might argue that yes, a new paradigm has emerged. (And there's Apple, which occupies 60 percent of land in Cupertino, has offices in Sunnyvale, and will soon add 16,000 jobs to San Jose; and Google, which occupies so much real estate in Mountain View that it can feel very much like a company town, even without any worker housing.)

Earlier this year, the town of Burlington, Massachusetts, approved the Center at Corporate Drive, a 480,000-square-foot

OPPOSITE, LEFT TO RIGHT

Pullman, Illinois: A company town for workers of Pullman Company, railroad car manufacturers, designed by Solon Spencer Beman and landscaped by Nathan Barrett. Watercolor by George Yellich, 1895. Image: Courtesy of Northern Trust and Historic Pullman Foundation

San Ramon, California: Rendering of City Center Bishop Ranch, a new retail destination that will feature 300,000 square feet of retail around a one-acre piazza. Image: Courtesy of Renzo Piano Building Workshop



LEFT

Research Triangle Park, North Carolina: Rendering of the potential for open space at Park Center, a mixed-use community for 200-plus companies. Image: Courtesy of Research Triangle Foundation of North Carolina

Class A office park on 47 acres. Complementing the four-building park will be abundant amenities (including child-care facilities, fitness centers, a plethora of restaurants and, oddly, five Dunkin' Donuts) and 271 residences that "will allow young professionals an option to live in a new state-of-the-art apartment complex and to be in close proximity to the top-notch employment options located in town," said Robert Buckley, the project attorney. The residences will be attractive and ideal for seniors and young professionals alike, he explained, due to their close proximity to a rich mix of dining and entertainment options.

Workers aged 25–34 are staying in jobs for an average of just three years. And more young adults aged 18 to 34 are living at home with their parents than with a spouse or partner.

In Raleigh, Research Triangle Park (RTP) recognized that millennials were loath to situate themselves within its traditional corporate surroundings. The Park offered a convenient commute, but its owners saw that almost 40,000 people traveled to it every day—and then left to spend their money elsewhere.

So RTP is transforming itself into a mixed-use community. "I love the term 'company town,' and we have been thinking of incorporating that concept into elements of our new development," says Bob Geolas, RTP's CEO. "The planning of the RTP redefined the idea of the corporate community. The R&D headquarters connected to others by a larger park-like setting. Today, the concept of a central collaborative space, a new town square, a central park is revitalizing the 'company town' feel. For the RTP of tomorrow, the company town will mash up with

arts and music, family fun, and a larger commitment to company life as human life."

In San Ramon, California, just outside the conventional boundary of Silicon Valley but close enough to claim it, Sunset Development has been looking to adapt Bishop Ranch, a 10-million-square-foot office park, to the changing needs of workers, tenants, and the community.

"We don't just sit here and expect tenants will come our way if we do nothing," said Bishop Ranch's Alex Mehran. "Now we're trying to figure out how to make a highly amenitized workplace in the suburbs." They're going all in: Mehran hired architect Renzo Piano to create a new town center, one with an emphasis on walkability. Housing is also planned. "The existing edges must become more urban without further pushing the sprawl," Piano explained. "Build places for people, places to meet, where they can share values, celebrate rituals; this is urbanity."

A similar transformation is under way just an hour outside Manhattan in suburban Homdel, New Jersey. Bell Labs, the progenitor of the innovative corporate campus model (where the cell phone was invented and eight Nobel Prize-winning discoveries were hatched), has shifted dramatically from its single-tenant origins to become a mixed-use, multitenant project with its own transportation program. In envisioning the project, which is now known as Bell Works, Somerset Development's president Ralph Zucker embraced the tenets of New Urbanism to create an "urban oasis in the suburbs"—albeit an urban oasis adjacent to 103 acres of Toll Brothers' luxury homes.

Why the McMansions? Zucker's intent was a variety of housing types, but community resistance to housing, especially rental and multitenant, forced the compromise. It is possible that NIMBYism is the real reason we may never see a company town again; even if an employer wanted to house its own, it is frequently the case that the community won't let it.

There is no shortage of reasons for why the old model of the

company town probably isn't coming back. Job-hopping has become the new normal; workers aged 25–34 are staying in jobs for an average of just three years. In a company town scenario, would you be forced to leave your home every time you switched jobs? Also, young adults are living at home in record numbers. A new study from the Pew Research Center says for the first time in more than 130 years, more young adults aged 18 to 34 are living at home with their parents than with a spouse or partner.

This data suggests that the emerging model may be less company town and more postcollege campus, as exemplified by the new “community-driven living concept” developed by the co-working start-up WeWork. It's called “WeLive,” and it opened its first building in New York City last year, featuring 200 units on 20 floors located above WeWork's seven floors of co-working space below. Membership in WeLive entitles the resident to lease month-to-month furnished units that include beds, couches, linens, weekly housekeeping, onsite yoga, low-cost WiFi, and premium cable plus “all the coffee, tea, and beer you can drink.” The company is planning a second location in Crystal City near Washington, DC.

WeWork is multitenant; many members both work and live in the building. One can envision a company eager to locate in a city yet concerned about how housing and transportation costs impact its hiring decisions. Its target demographic is young millennials who've embraced rapid career shifts and the volatility of the gig economy.

Of late, employers have been bending over backward to discern the elusive desires of millennials. Although they may be the largest demographic group, they do not think or act as a unified block. Accordingly, the future company town (or variation on that theme) is likely to continue to morph as industries expand and contract, as housing dips and rises, and as corporations try to figure out what Generation Z is after. Ultimately, a dual company focus on productivity and worker satisfaction seems the most dependable goal to pursue. ■



ABOVE

New York City: Communal kitchen at WeLive, a co-living residential block in the Financial District. Photo: Lauren Kallen/WeWork



LEFT

Burlington, Massachusetts: Rendering of a proposed residential development at the Center at Corporate Drive, a 487,000-square-foot office park on 47 acres. Image: Courtesy of The Davis Companies

COMMUTER TRAILS

THE LONGWOOD MEDICAL AND ACADEMIC AREA'S TRANSIT PATTERNS OFFER A GLIMPSE INTO THE REGION'S TRANSPORTATION CHALLENGES

Companies and institutions in the 213-acre Longwood Medical and Academic Area (LMA) employ more than 46,000 researchers, educators, clinicians, and administrators (31 percent of whom are Boston residents) and educate almost 22,000 students. Every day, 110,800 people come to this dense city-within-a-city, which has the longest average commutes of any community in Massachusetts.

ANNUALLY, THE LMA ACCOUNTS FOR:

- + state income tax revenue of \$133.7 million on a \$2.5 billion payroll
- + 4 million visitors on average
- + 2.6 million inpatients and outpatients
- + \$22 million in total spending on T passes
- + 2.4% growth in T passes sold

The most-used train services for traveling to the LMA:



37%
GREEN LINE



25%
COMMUTER RAIL

Most train riders also take a bus (MBTA or LMA shuttle), which means traffic matters for transit users just as it does for drivers.



60%

The percentage of drivers who say they would take the subway/bus instead if transit were more reliable and efficient

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\$84.50–\$398.25/MONTH
commuter rail pass

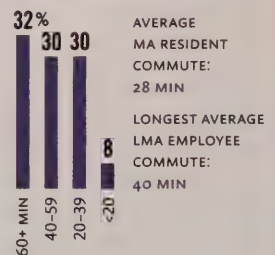
\$240/MONTH
parking (\$12/day
at Ipswich Garage)

\$264/MONTH
Plymouth and Brockton bus
(Plymouth to Park Square)

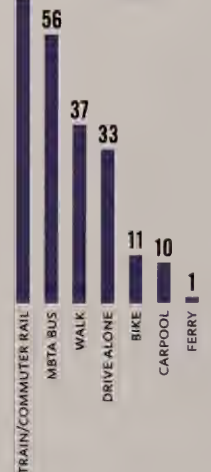
\$85/YEAR
Hubway bikeshare
membership

\$2.18/GALLON
average cost of gas in MA

LMA COMMUTING TIMES



LMA COMMUTING PATTERNS



SEVERAL APPROACHES COULD EASE FUTURE CONGESTION IN THE LMA



RAISE STATE
TRANSPORTATION
FUNDING LEVELS



IMPROVE
CROSSTOWN BUS
SERVICES



BUILD
ADDITIONAL
STOPS



AUTO, BUS, CYCLIST,
AND PEDESTRIAN
IMPROVEMENTS

All data provided by the Medical Academic and Scientific Community Organization, Inc., or MASCO, a nonprofit organization serving the 22 medical, education, and cultural institutions in the LMA. With MASCO's oversight, the members privately fund shuttle bus services and subsidize employee MBTA passes at a cost of about \$20 million annually.

MICHELLE
 LAWRENCE > BOSTON CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL
 TIME: 90 MINUTES DISTANCE: 32 MILES

If she misses her 5:35 PM train home, her commute can be up to 2½ hours

ANNE
 LAWRENCE > JOSLIN DIABETES CENTER
 TIME: 60 MINUTES IN, 120 OUT DISTANCE: 30 MILES

Carpools in; takes commuter rail home. Leaves house at 5:30 AM to beat heaviest traffic.

WEIXIU
 LEXINGTON > DANA-FARBER CANCER INSTITUTE
 TIME: 90 MINUTES DISTANCE: 17 MILES

Returned to driving when taking the Red Line from Alewife to the Green Line didn't save time.

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 EMPLOYEES WHO
 COMMUTE TO THIS
 THRIVING COMMUNITY?

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- BUS/SHUTTLE
- CARPPOOL/VANPOOL
- WALK
- TRANSFER POINT ○



ELAINE
 DUXBURY > BRIGHAM & WOMEN'S HOSPITAL
 TIME: 90 MINUTES DISTANCE: 40 MILES

The vanpool is the least expensive, easiest commute she has found in her 20 years of working.

TUCKER
 PLYMOUTH > MASCO
 TIME: 100 MINUTES DISTANCE: 40 MILES

Drives to a park-and-ride lot, takes bus to Boston, walks to Green Line, then walks the final leg.

ANNA
 BOSTON > HARVARD MEDICAL SCHOOL
 TIME: 15-20 MINUTES DISTANCE: 1 MILE

Walking to work is the safest way to commute, but she has to watch out for aggressive geese in the park.

BUFFER ZONE

When Roberta Neidigh began taking long walks in her Sacramento, California, neighborhood, a white shed she had driven by for 10 years and never noticed triggered an awakening that would lead to her photography project titled *Property Line*. “I grew up on 100 acres of farmland in northern Indiana, a very different place than where I live now. Rural open spaces are inherent in me, and I am continually interested in people’s histories and their landscapes.”

That shed opened a door to seeing plots of land in a more personal, slower light. “There’s an inherited form of community in these neighborhoods, a standard of expression that is still fresh to me even though I’ve lived here for 36 years.” Neidigh’s perspective celebrates both the humorous and the voyeuristic. Several generations have passed through these midcentury neighborhoods, and in her images she captures the tension between the different eras or in homeowners trying to maintain that cultivated community standard, no matter what. “We have a tendency to edit out the property line; we don’t look at how it touches our neighbor,” she says. That point of contact—the groomed lawn, the crumbling driveway, the fortresslike fence—reveals “an intersection that is usually ignored despite being in plain sight.”

In this body of work, Neidigh documents the abstract nature of that border and how homeowners protect it: Does it create tension? Is the visual dialogue natural or fractured? And is the boundary line something that divides us or connects us? —Fiona Luis

All images courtesy of the artist © 2013 Roberta Neidigh.

Prints are pigment ink on fine art paper in editions of 12 at 8" × 8", six at 11" × 11", and four at 15" × 15".



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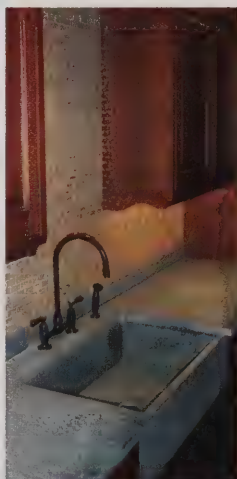
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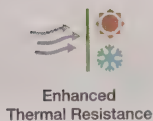
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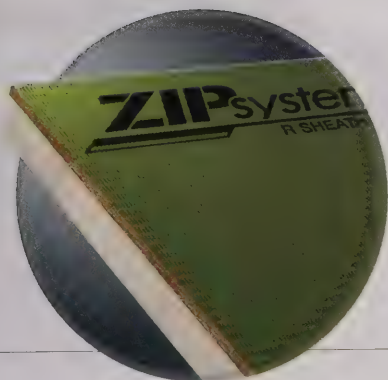
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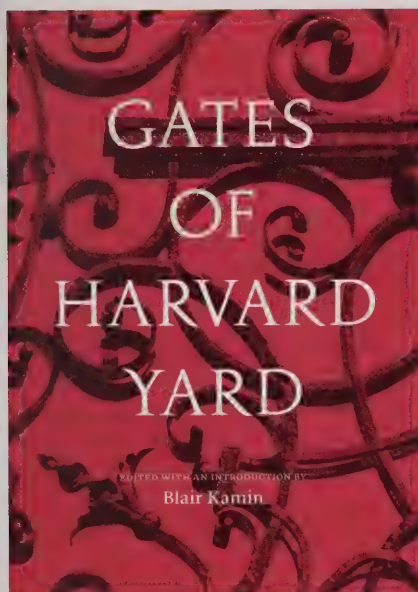
Glen S. LeRoy FAIA (Middle)

President of The Boston Architectural College
BSA Design School Representative
1-time show attendee

Josiah Stevenson FAIA (Right)

Principal, Leers Weinzapfel Associates Architects
2016 BSA Vice President/President-Elect
31-time show attendee

BOOKS

**Gates of Harvard Yard**

Edited with an introduction by Blair Kamin
Princeton Architectural Press, 2016
Reviewed by Elena Saporta ASLA

As one rushes from one section of the Harvard University campus to another, it's easy to overlook the 25 gates that enclose Harvard Yard. Passersby scarcely notice these portals, particularly those that remain in a perpetually closed position. These structures and their tall, connecting fences function much in the manner of background music.

Blair Kamin, the Pulitzer Prize-winning architecture critic for *The Chicago Tribune*, gently persuades us to pause at each one, to stop and listen for the voices embedded in these brick, iron, and limestone assemblages. Kamin, who spent some time on the grounds of Harvard Yard as a 2012 Nieman Fellow, has compiled more than two dozen essays describing each of its gates.

Two articles, "Harvard Memorial Gates," from *Architectural Review*, and "The Enclosure of the Harvard Yard," from *Harvard Library Bulletin*, published in 1901 and 1983, respectively, provided the foundation for *Gates of Harvard Yard*.

Working with his 2013 Harvard winter-session students, Kamin undertook the task of formulating a comprehensive history of the gates. He and his coauthors—with the smart addition of sketches, photographs, and an aerial map—take readers on a leisurely clockwise stroll around the yard, starting with the west side's Johnston Gate. Designed by Charles Follen McKim of McKim, Mead & White and completed in 1889, Johnston was the first and remains the grandest of Harvard's gates.

The Neo-Georgian structure standing confidently between Harvard Hall (1766) and Massachusetts Hall (1720) has come to emblemize Harvard. As such, it represents a significant departure from Harvard College's puritan roots. Before 1889, Harvard Yard had been defined merely by a simple post and rail fence. The construction of Meyer Gate came on the heels of Johnston, and a rapid succession of gate and fence projects ensued. With a few exceptions, McKim, Mead & White served as the go-to architectural firm. Individual classes of alumni were responsible for sponsoring and dedicating 15 of the 25 portals we see today.

Many endearing details and quirks of history emerge from the pages of this small, delightful book. One is reminded of Reverend Phillips Brooks' quote, "Ye Shall Know the Truth and the Truth shall set you Free" that appears as an inscription adorning the 1881 Gate outside the Phillips Brooks House at the yard's northwest corner. The words of Charles Eliot, longtime Harvard president, appear at Dexter Gate along the yard's southern edge. From Massachusetts Avenue, one reads, "Enter to Grow in Wisdom" and on the reverse side, "Depart to Serve Better thy Country and Mankind." The 1870 gate, now closed, gracefully frames Holden Chapel and its adjoining intimate, almost secret courtyards. At the yard's southwest corner, the 1857 Gate was built after the Civil War as

a gesture to welcome students hailing from both the North and the South. The most recent addition to the family is the Bradstreet Gate, completed in 1997. Dedicated to the women of Harvard, it commemorates the memory of Anne Dudley Bradstreet, first published poet of the American colonies.

In the introduction, Kamin states, "There are three certainties in life: death, taxes, and gates." Those are words for thought as one follows Kamin and his collaborators on their walk around Harvard Yard and their journey back to the Harvard of 1889.

ELENA SAPORTA ASLA is a landscape architect based in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Her firm, ESLA, established in 1990, specializes in the design and greening of urban spaces.

Twenty Over Eighty

Conversations on a
Lifetime in Architecture
and Design

**Twenty Over Eighty: Conversations on a Lifetime in Architecture and Design**

Aileen Kwun and Bryn Smith
Princeton University Press, 2016
Reviewed by Gordon Bruce

"I think it's sad that we rarely hear from people who have something to say..." This portion of a statement by Michael Graves underscores the central theme of this compact, engrossing book. In

examining the career paths of 20 design professionals who have lived past the age of 80, this collection of interviews weaves a rich tapestry of talent—authors; educators; architects; industrial designers; furniture, lighting, and textile designers; illustrators; philanthropists; and combinations thereof—all of whom have wisdom to share.

These 20 figures share the same period of history, albeit in diverse environments, and have contributed enormously to their various disciplines, so their names bear listing: Seymour Chwast, Milton Glaser, Bob Gill, Michael Graves, Richard Hollis, Lora Lamm, Deborah Sussman, Denise Scott Brown, Phyllis Lambert, Alessandro Mendini, Ricardo Scofidio, Stanley Tigerman, Ingo Mauer, Beverly Willis, Charles Harrison, Richard Sapper, Ralph Caplan, Jane Thompson, Jens Risom, and Jack Lenor Larsen.

In spite of their convoluted journeys, all 20 luminaries prevailed through the Depression and World War II, achieving careers that were advanced either through education or other serendipitous opportunities. During this period, most design-related professions were dominated by white males, and minorities and women confronted additional prejudices and barriers. The interviews with these pioneers—who list fisherman, philosopher, stand-up comedian, pilot, and dancer among their first jobs—collectively demonstrate that there is no singular guaranteed pathway to achieving excellence in any field.

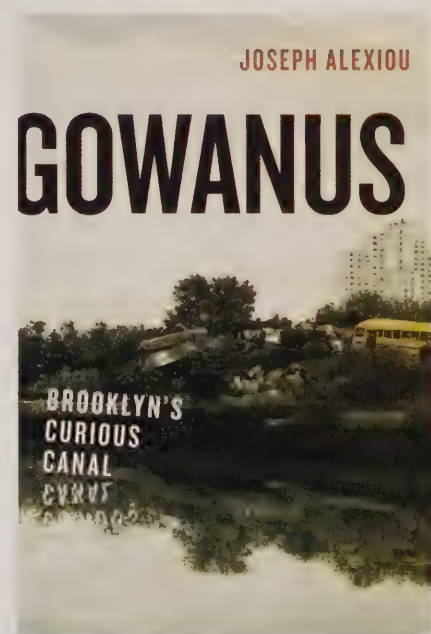
As an industrial designer for more than 40 years, I found it easy to relate to *Twenty Over Eighty*; its rich diversity of creative occupations, backgrounds, and personalities made for absorbing material. Its stark contrast to trendy design clichés and pervasive communication that continually bombard our culture—branding, user experience (UX), design thinking, and so on—made it a refreshing read.

During these last 25 to 30 years, the various design professions, which include architecture and advertising as well as furniture, industrial, product, and graphic design, have had to change drastically because of digitalization. Every interview in the book echoes with the same drumbeat: that individual leadership and critical evaluation have been replaced with professions that seek to compromise ideas in order to achieve coherence and harmony in groupthink environments. This, of course, dilutes the quality of design, making the conversations in this book all the more meaningful.

By highlighting each creative professional's character and integrity, Kwun and Smith deftly unveil how each one was able to nourish ideas while allowing for reflection on the most meaningful ups and downs of his or her respective career. I appreciated learning a lot about people I knew little about and even more about people whom I thought I knew all about. My only criticism: There are other admirable designers who have lived past the age of 80 and who have contributed so much to the various design professions, and I only wish that they, too, could have been included.

Along with being a resource-rich compendium, *Twenty Over Eighty* is, appropriately, thoughtfully designed. At the beginning of each of the 20 sections, a colorful "quick start" page highlights a brief biography, which is followed by a few pages of dialogue that outline the interviewee's experiences and visual examples of design and architecture; chronologies at the end of the book help fill in additional biographical details. Overall, it expresses a welcome—and all too rare—quality of user-friendliness.

GORDON BRUCE is an industrial design consultant based in New Milford, Connecticut, who has worked with multinational corporations in Asia, Europe, and the US. He is also the author of a monograph about Eliot Noyes.



Gowanus: Brooklyn's Curious Canal

Joseph Alexiou

NYU Press, 2015

Reviewed by Suzanne Spellman

Gowanus, one of the most important neighborhoods in Brooklyn, makes up a great deal of what was once called South Brooklyn. That's a big claim for a gritty, low-density industrial area with a long body of toxic water running through it, but there it is. The industry generated by the canal employed enough workers to populate at least three working-class neighborhoods, as well as the money to build many of the mansions up on the hill in Park Slope.

I've been writing about Brooklyn's architecture and history since 2009 and know a fair bit about this city's 19th-century history. I've always found Gowanus fascinating, so I hoped Joseph Alexiou's account would reveal new information in an interesting way. I was not disappointed. The best histories are, at their heart, great stories, and Alexiou is a gifted storyteller.

The book is a chronological history of Gowanus and its people, from the Native Americans, through the Dutch, the canal visionaries, the robber barons, the mobsters, the working folk, and, finally, the hipster transplants of

modern-day Brooklyn. All put their mark on Gowanus, and all get their due.

If Alexiou wasn't such a deft journalist, this might have amounted to nothing more than names, data, and dates. His coverage of the Battle of Brooklyn is as well told as the battle to develop Gowanus over the years. My favorite section concerns the business dealings of the family of Edwin Litchfield, who owned much of Gowanus by the mid-19th century. Litchfield could look north from the porch of his new villa on the hill, now part of Prospect Park, and see all the way to the harbor. Everything within his gaze was his.

His was a tale of Big Real Estate, Big Ego, Big Money, and Big Business. Alexiou conjures up a wonderful word painting of Litchfield's world and backs it up with copious quotes from articles that appeared in *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle*,

the city's most popular newspaper. The *Eagle* could be as businesslike as *The Wall Street Journal* and as gossipy as Page Six of the *New York Post*. It was the perfect medium to chronicle Litchfield's exploits, and the author makes us a part of this battle to buy, sell, develop, and control South Brooklyn and much of Park Slope.

Not bad for a swamp that nursed wildlife and orchards, ran red with the blood of patriots, and then spent almost 100 years as another kind of battleground, this time a fight between landowners, government, and private enterprise. In the end, Brooklyn had a canal with heavy industry and businesses along its length that helped make her one of America's great industrial and financial powerhouses.

The fight and colossal failure to keep the canal functioning is as complex a tale as its creation. Alexiou brings industrialists, land barons,

bureaucrats, criminals, and ordinary South Brooklynites to life; his use of source materials, especially the *Brooklyn Eagle's* archives, is impressive.

He ends the book with Gowanus in the midst of yet another battle—between Big Real Estate, which envisions a modern, upscale neighborhood along a cleaned-up canal, and those who would like to preserve factory buildings and row houses for future generations through adaptive reuse and community revitalization. Alexiou may have to write a second volume, continuing his engrossing dive into this fascinating and ever-changing neighborhood.

SUZANNE SPELLEN, under the pen name "Montrose Morris," writes for Brownstoner, a real estate, history, and lifestyle blog about Brooklyn. An architectural historian, she is currently working on a series of books on Brooklyn's neighborhoods.





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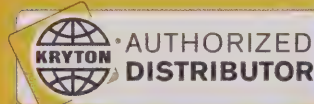
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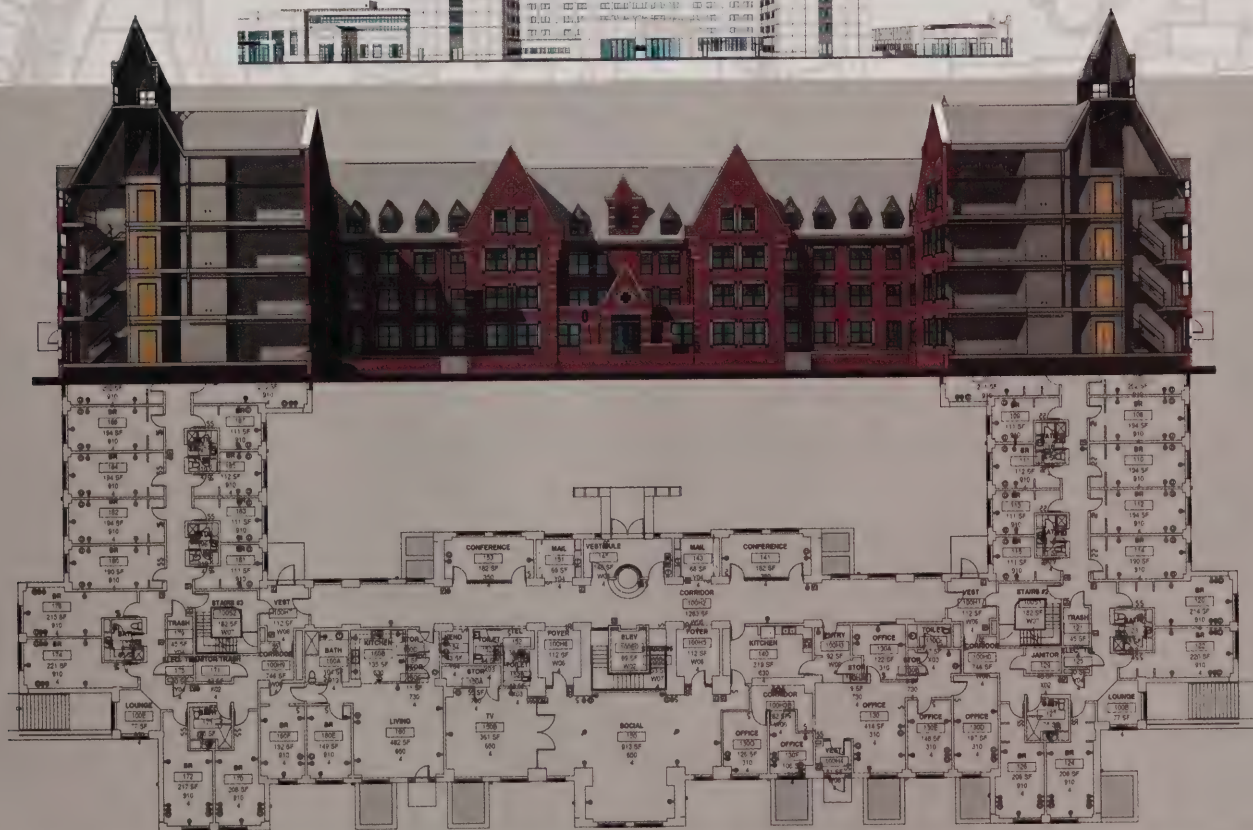


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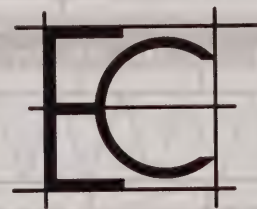


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CROSSING LINES

by Rickie Golden

6:59:00 AM

REM wraps up/consciousness begins.

6:59:30 AM

Reach for phone.

When I was little, I used to like to think about a giant map that traced the steps of every human on Earth. I wanted to see where people's lives intersected, to find the coincidences of two souls passing on the street before meeting in a different city, country, or hemisphere 20 years later. I pictured it as a beautiful jumble, with little or no space left untraced (except for maybe parts of northern Greenland). Some of this intersection is intentional (we meet someone and like this person and intersect our life with his or hers at planned intervals). Some is conscious but not intentional (work colleagues or extracurricular peers). Some is unconscious and unintentional (people we may not even see on the T, street, or in a restaurant).

If we bump into people enough, sometimes we befriend them, marry them, or start taking a different route to work.

Thanks to Google Maps' Location History, one of my childhood dreams has more or less come true. My phone is tracing the steps of every minute of every day of my life, probably since about 2012. So is yours.

As long as we have location services enabled on our phones, and as long as we have our phones glued to our hands and faces, our personal maps are being drawn at rapid speed. And apparently saved for discretionary use! (That's for another article.)

On a typical day, the location services on my phone are really leaning in. If I take a photo of how my succulent plants are doing and text it to my mom, it is saved with the heading "Boston—Downtown Crossing."

If I were using a dating app, the app would be constantly tracking my

location and matching me with hypothetical gentlemen within a radius that I would have determined—hypothetically.

I take between two and four Ubers a day, between two and six T rides a day, and I break out Google Maps for finding the best walking, T, or driving route—between three and 10 times a day. This all takes place within a five-mile radius.

To get to my office in South Boston, I take the T from my home in downtown Boston. There are few days when I don't have at least two meetings outside the office, often back-to-back. Some combination of Google Maps, Uber, and the T gets me there and back. As a developer, I am looking at maps and satellite views and plans throughout the day. I'm pretty sure Google Maps has figured out my secret projects.

Around 6:30 or 7, my evening activities in Boston or Cambridge begin and often include a work-related dinner, a board meeting, an organization's event, a date, or sometimes a second late-night dinner with my friends or colleagues; my steps and intersections are all being mapped.

I don't claim to have uncovered anything profound here, but I do think there is a sweetness and a smallness to humanity in the way we scurry around, often in a rush and always overlapping with one another, to get to the destinations we choose. And of course we are making and crossing paths, whether or not we are carrying a phone, as long as we are moving. Our personal maps evolve as our lives do, and as technology does. The maps in our phones can be plotted and saved. The saved locations show us where we have been and where we are going. ■



LEFT

T.I.M.E.—Tears In My Eyes, Jiyen Lee, 2011.
Video still; full HD; looping; 1 minute, 3 seconds.
Image: Courtesy of the artist



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— Rupinder Singh, Architect*



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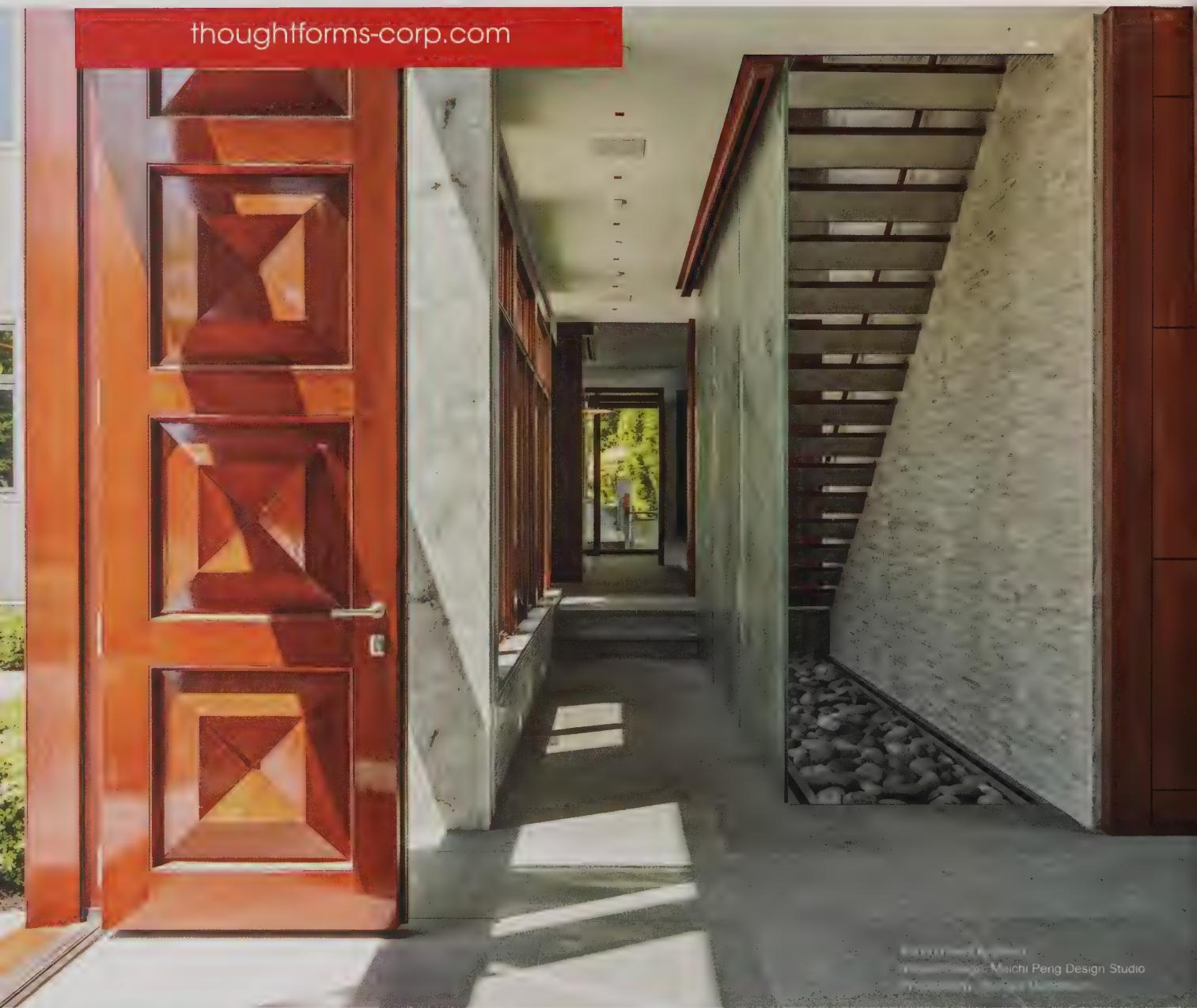
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*As Senior Vice President of **CANNONDESIGN**, Rupinder Singh worked on an 840,00-square-foot expansion of the Center.

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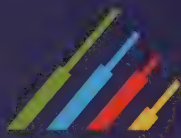
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Chelsea, West 29th Street, Preparing for Dinner Party, Gail Albert-Halaban, 2008. From the series Out My Window. Photo: Courtesy of Gail Albert-Halaban and the Edwynn Houk Gallery

COVER

Repair 1, Drew Tyndell, 2013. 35" x 40". Tyndell is a Portland, Oregon-based artist, designer, and creative director at the animation studio Computer Team. His Repair series is a study of homes and buildings under construction.



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ROOF, HEARTH, THRESHOLD

In the 1980s, I lived in a three-room apartment on the first floor of a triple-decker in East Boston. The rent was wonderfully low even for those days: \$85 a month. Who cared if the heat came from a gas stove and I had to brush my teeth at the kitchen sink? The place was affordable for a person making what we used to call “movement wages”—social worker, community organizer, artist, activist.

Today, the average rent for a one-bedroom flat in East Boston is about \$1,600.

That means a single tenant would need to make at least \$64,000 a year to avoid being “cost burdened,” or paying more than 30 percent of income on housing. It means thousands of working people can’t afford to live in this modest neighborhood. And don’t even get me started on the new luxury apartments on East Boston’s waterfront that command \$4,000 a month, or the landlords evicting immigrant families without cause in order to triple the rents.

Gentrification is just one of the factors driving the affordability crisis in Greater Boston, where more than half of all residents are now breaching that 30 percent income threshold. With real wages stagnant and housing costs rising faster every year, the center, as the poet said, cannot hold.

This issue of *ArchitectureBoston*, the fourth in our “Year of the Plan” series, examines the role the design community can play in untangling one of the region’s most intractable dilemmas: Where can the people live? According to a new report by the Urban Land Institute, Greater Boston will need 200,000 new units of housing over the next 15 years in order to serve a growing economy—including 108,000 units for lower-income workers.

A combustible mix of economic and political factors have combined to fuel housing inflation, not all of them unique to Massachusetts. The federal government stopped being a partner to communities in developing affordable housing at least three decades ago. In a 1994 referendum, Massachusetts voters exacerbated the problem by ending rent

control, even though the three communities that had the system voted to keep it. The state’s zoning laws have not been fully updated since 1975, and a bill that would have lifted restrictions on multifamily housing and dense development, among other solutions, died at the end of this legislative session.

The question is what to do about it now. We don’t suffer from a lack of ideas, from millennial villages and tiny houses to communal living and accessory dwelling units. We are rethinking public-housing projects into mixed-income developments and leveraging public lands to reduce development costs. And it can all be done without sacrificing design excellence or sustainability: Check out the work of Michael Pyatok FAIA on pages 32–35 or the inventive approaches our contributors offer in “Getting to yes.”

Still, one-off, incremental fixes won’t be enough. Boston mayor Martin Walsh has set a goal of 53,000 new housing units (not all of them affordable) in his Imagine Boston 2030 plan, and the city is on track with slightly more than 10,000 units as of this writing. Gateway cities offer another way into the market, if the state will invest more in the schools, transportation, and public realm in those communities.

But how about Boston’s leafier suburbs, which hold on too fiercely to exclusionary zoning, or the region’s employers, who don’t connect the dots between their workers’ grueling commutes and paying a living wage? The affordability gap, after all, can be closed either by lowering the price of the units or by raising the incomes of residents. Everybody complains about the cost of housing, but not enough people are doing anything about it. That needs to change now. ■

Renée Loth
Editor



Photo: Bert Seager

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ON “BORDERS” (FALL 2016)

One thing that keeps us in Greater Boston

is fierce pride in where we are from. However, “Borders” correctly probes at the underside of local pride and our insistence on maintaining control. From Jeffrey Rosenblum’s image of a disappearing bike lane over the Charles River (“The view from the street”) to the stubborn decisions of Weston and Belmont recounted by Dante Ramos (“Why can’t we all just get along?”), we are a region divided. Local control favors the status quo, but the stakes grow with the climate and demographic changes that demand coordinated, sophisticated regional responses.

Yes, one approach is patiently building municipal collaboration. Ramos tells the story of one such model, Hubway. Another modest approach is doing more and better regional and state planning; regional planning agencies fight for money every year, and we haven’t had a state planning office for decades. It may be time for the state to require every municipality to do some of what is needed, such as the multifamily zoning requirement in the housing/zoning bill passed by the Massachusetts Senate this June.

But if regional problems are rapidly gaining on us, can we stay ahead if we crawl one step at a time? Here is another approach: change the incentives that drive municipal decisions. Our problems are compounded because each municipality has the incentive to do what is in its own financial interest. Massachusetts restricts local revenue sources more than many other states, Prop 2½ restricts property tax spending, and state aid to municipalities has fallen since 2001. More local or state revenue options that encourage mixed-use development and housing (such as local sales taxes or tying state aid to housing production) would facilitate better decisions for the region.

ANDRE LEROUX

Executive director, Massachusetts Smart Growth Alliance
Boston

Jeff Rosenblum’s “The view from the street”

doesn’t look at regional transportation systems in quite the same way as the Boston Transportation Department. Go Boston 2030 has cultivated public involvement and online engagement at each phase of a two-year planning process. Last spring we convened two intermunicipal sessions and developed “Go Regional” as one of the transportation futures proposed in the public survey. We are excited about its policy coordination with Cambridge, especially the announcement of Vision Zero initiatives to eliminate traffic fatalities. We’ve joined forces to advocate for lowering default speed limits and share best practices. Mayor Martin Walsh continues to advocate at the state level for improvements that help Bostonians and regional workers alike, including the establishment of the Greater Boston Regional Compact to improve coordination of economic development and transportation initiatives along the Red Line corridor.

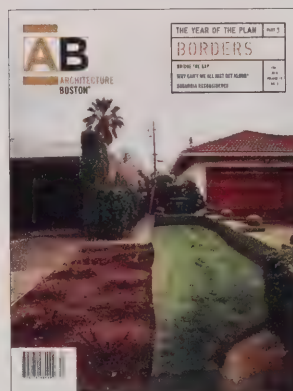
GINA N. FIANDACA

Commissioner, Boston Transportation Department

Joel Kotkin’s and Allison Arieff’s articles

in “Borders” raise challenges and opportunities facing our evolving metropolis. Kotkin (“Suburbia reconsidered”) presents data calling for affordable housing while warning us about our aging demographic profile. He argues that Boston’s revitalization has priced out middle-class families, noting that metropolitan areas like Houston creatively embrace suburban development that provides the affordable housing expansive workforces demand. His underlying position: Suburban development deserves attention comparable to urban redevelopment.

But Boston differs from cities like Houston, whose girth expanded outward, a suburb at a time. Instead, Greater Boston is a collection of towns (Lexington, Concord, Milton) that over time were



absorbed into a larger metropolitan area. Each has a history with a distinctive town center and common. Flying over Boston reveals a rich network of rivers, lakes, farms, woodlands, and wetlands interspersing urbanities of varying size and density. Our organic, chaotic metropolitan form is constrained by our rugged landscape, which restricts typical suburban sprawl patterns. It can also limit economic development.

Arieff (“Company town 2.0”) aptly notes that today’s company town must be multi-use, multitenant, and multigenerational. Taking cues from Bay Area/Silicone Valley communities where large corporate headquarters reside, she describes how once-single-use domains like North Carolina’s Research Triangle Park are becoming amenity-rich environments where people live, work, and play. Boston has many such suburban corporate campuses (Burlington, Waltham, Braintree), which could become denser community forms and develop distinctive identities. They could conserve and generate energy in ways that minimize carbon footprints. A vibrant form of urbanity may evolve, punctuated by density while preserving ecology and character.

PAUL LUKEZ FAIA

President, Paul Lukez Architecture
Somerville, Massachusetts

“Borders” addressed the regional challenges of metro Boston—transportation, food security, watersheds, and demographic trends. An important omission was any mention of two of the area’s foremost contributors to regional planning: Charles Eliot and Benton MacKaye.

Eliot, a landscape architect, laid the

groundwork for the Metropolitan Park Commission. In 1896, he led a campaign to consolidate the region's water, sewerage, and transportation services into a never-realized "County of Boston." MacKaye, a conservationist, envisioned a regionalism far greater than the scope of most planning today, through the Regional Planning Association of America (RPAA). Its principles framed the New Deal's foremost environmental accomplishments, including the Tennessee Valley Authority and the Greenbelt Town Program, and contrasted sharply with those of its much-loathed antipode, "metropolitanism." RPAA leaders called for a radical restructuring of the landscape and economy that would bring the bioregional resources of town and country into balance.

We believe in reigniting regionalism at the scale espoused by Eliot and MacKaye. A conference and exhibition at MIT last spring began a dialogue about the future of suburbia and the pressing need for a new model of bioregionalism; *Infinite Suburbia* (Princeton Architectural Press), coedited with Joel Kotkin and Celina Balderas Guzman, will be published next fall.

Contemporary efforts like Hubway and the Mystic River Watershed Association offer counternarratives to the parochial localism that dominates planning today. Yet these projects fall short of the visionary regionalism conceived by Eliot, MacKaye, and the RPAA. We must continue to develop models that go beyond the obsolete "cities versus suburbs" dichotomy.

ALAN M. BERGER, *Co-director*
DAVID VEGA BARACHOWITZ,
Visiting researcher
Leventhal Center for Advanced Urbanism
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Cambridge, Massachusetts

I am teaching a seminar on the relationship between real estate development and design at Northeastern University; one of the issues we are exploring is the correlation between parcelization strategies and housing types and their combined impact on neighborhood patterns. Given our focus, the photographs by Roberta Neidigh ("Buffer zone") are a perfect case study. They tell the story

of the sometimes unresolved tensions at property lines that were not predicted by the planners who initially conceived them. Compare the negotiated landscape between the single-family houses featured in Neidigh's photo essay with the emphatic (and efficient) zero lot line between the rowhouses of the Back Bay.

TIM LOVE AIA
Principal, Utile
Boston

This summer, A Better City released a report called "The State of the Built Environment" that projected a 17.5 percent population increase within the 16 municipalities that make up Greater Boston's inner core by 2030. To handle this, we need a transportation network that keeps pace with ridership demand, connections to the urban core, and emerging job centers. The city and state are taking steps toward a regional approach to transportation and economic development.

Mayor Martin Walsh has reinvigorated the Metro Mayor's Coalition, which represents 14 communities; his endorsement makes it easier to collaborate on regional challenges starting at the city level. The city's Go Boston 2030 aims to keep commuters on major arterials, like I-93, instead of having drivers take shortcuts through local roads. To meet this goal, Boston will need to operate closely with state and regional partners.

The Baker administration's Focus40 asks the MBTA to create investment priorities to meet Greater Boston's needs. The winter of 2015 taught us that the economic health of Boston, Cambridge, Somerville, and the rest of the region are related, that each community depends on a reliable public transit system. We are becoming a more unified region than ever before because of our transportation system, commuting needs, and economic activity—a welcome change from the competitive governing philosophy of the past.

RICK DIMINO
President and CEO, A Better City
Boston

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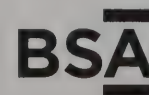
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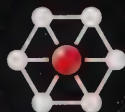
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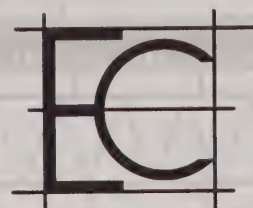


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IN THIS ISSUE

Photo: Courtesy of Michael Pyatok FAIA



Michael Pyatok FAIA ("Unpacking the problem," page 32), a graduate of Pratt Institute and the Harvard Graduate School of Design, has been an architect for almost 50 years. Since 1984, his office has designed more than 35,000 units of affordable housing in the US and abroad. In 2013, the AIA awarded him its Thomas Jefferson Award for Public Architecture in recognition of the design quality he has brought to affordable housing. He has taught housing design at Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Harvard; University of California, Berkeley; Washington University; Pennsylvania State University; the University of Washington; and the University of Oregon.

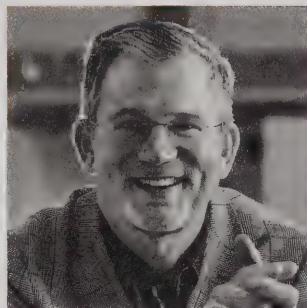
Ellen Perko AIA, Mark Hutker FAIA, Josh Safdie AIA

("Now trending," page 36)



Photo: Dan Cufirina

Ellen Perko AIA is an associate principal specializing in residential architecture at CBT Architects in Boston.



Mark Hutker FAIA is founder of Hutker Architects, with offices on Martha's Vineyard, Cape Cod, and in Boston.



Photo: Courtesy of Josh Safdie AIA

Josh Safdie AIA is a principal at Kessler McGuinness & Associates in Newton, Massachusetts.



Photo: Courtesy of Jamila Bradley

Jamila Bradley ("Welcome, home," page 64) is a youth advocacy coordinator for Y2Y Harvard Square, the nation's first student-run overnight homeless shelter for young adults. She has worked with the Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless and the Massachusetts Housing and Shelter Alliance. She is the legislative aide to Vice Mayor Marc McGovern in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

"Conversation," page 40



Photo: Noah Da Costa

John McAslan HON. FAIA is executive chairman of John McAslan + Partners in London. He trained in the US with Cambridge Seven Associates before establishing his own firm and has won in excess of 100 national and international awards. In 2012, he was appointed Commander of the British Empire by Her Majesty the Queen.

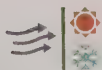


Photo: Ben Gebo

Tamara Roy AIA is a principal at Stantec Architecture and 2016 president of the Boston Society of Architects/AIA. Her design portfolio includes luxury, mixed-market, and affordable housing throughout Boston. Dubbed "the mother of the micro-unit," she became one of the earliest promoters of compact living when she advocated for changing the policy of minimum unit sizes in Boston's Innovation District.



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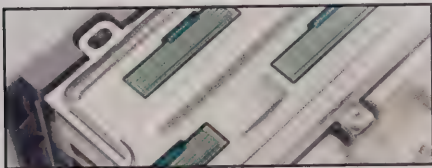


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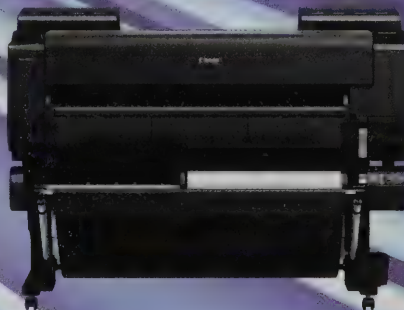
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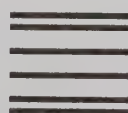
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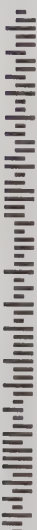


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UNSTRUCTURED

Opinions and Observations



GENIUS LOCI

Gion Morisyo

In the **Kamibentencho neighborhood** of Kyoto, Japan, there is a narrow lane that leads to the Yasaka Shrine. Other than being a shortcut to the shrine and the temples and gardens situated beyond it, the lane, whose name is probably known only to the people who live along it, is best known for the *oyakodon* stand at its midpoint and the lines that start to form in the late morning. By midday it is crowded with people: school-children waiting in line for lunch, neighbors carrying bags on their way home from the shops along Higashi Oji Dori, and tourists and pilgrims on their way to the temples and shrines. Lost among the jostling crowd but directly across from that rice-bowl stand is an understated door with a sign no larger than a business card identifying one of the more storied *ryokans* in Kyoto: Gion Morisyo.

Gion Morisyo has been in existence for more than one hundred years; this traditional inn was a favorite retreat of the revered Japanese writer Junichiro Tanizaki, whose novels

intricately describe the domestic landscape of his characters as they search for identity and meaning in a rapidly westernizing Japan. Many architects and designers know him more simply for his seminal essay on the nature of beauty, "In Praise of Shadows." Known during Tanizaki's lifetime as *Yado Hana* (The Flowers Inn), Gion Morisyo occupies a site much smaller than the average South End townhouse lot yet offers a richly textured experience and a potent synthesis of Tanizaki's themes of place, object, memory, and emotion.

Traveling to Gion Morisyo always brings the same rapid emotional deceleration—the efficient exhilaration of the Tokyo-Osaka Shinkansen, the arrival at Hiroshi Hara's bizarrely futuristic and bombastic Kyoto Railway Station, the chaotic taxi ride across the Kamo River and up into Minamimachi and Kamibentencho until, like a salmon swimming upstream, the streets get narrower and the stream of automobiles becomes a stream of pedestrians. The taxi is abandoned, and the last

steps are taken to the doorstep of Gion Morisyo. Stepping inside, time and space suddenly compress. Uncannily, Mrs. Morita, the gentle owner, senses my imminent arrival and stands waiting at the other end of the small courtyard. The disassociation is made greater by her limited English and my even more limited Japanese. With warm smiles and remembrances, she bows graciously, carefully places my shoes on the first step, gestures to enter, and then disappears.

Left alone to navigate the dimly lit interior spaces is like being inside an old wooden sailboat. The ryokan seems to sway and roll beneath my feet as the sounds of the city gently lap up against its sides. The narrow corridors and stairs twist and turn, then double back on themselves. Rooms unfold and hover above interior gardens. The intimate scale, dark textured surfaces, creaking floor beams, and muffled voices in a language not easily understood all serve to heighten my senses while simultaneously slowing down experience. I am left keenly aware of the present moment and the intrinsic beauty of ordinary things.

In the summer, there is the ground-level tatami room with its shoji screens slid back at night, leaving me suspended above the garden like an insect on a leaf. The carefully framed views, the smell of the moist fertile earth, and the sounds of the rustling leaves and trickling water make me a part of the garden, not just a viewer of it. In the winter, the experience is very different in the upper tatami room, with its shoji screens softly rattling in the wind and the distant view across cold, silvery rooftops to the Kodai-ji temple.

Waking early from jet lag and reading by the soft predawn light, I feel the shadows strengthening as the ryokan starts to stir to life. I know exactly where Tanizaki was sitting when he wrote his memorable observation: "And isn't it better really to leave things only hinted at?"

BRYAN IRWIN AIA is a principal at Sasaki Associates in Watertown, Massachusetts.

LEFT

Interior of Gion Morisyo, Kyoto.
Photo: Jose Ignacio Arbuló

Oskar Hansen: Open Form

Yale School of Architecture
New Haven, Connecticut
Through December 17

Oskar Hansen (1922–2005), the Polish architect, theorist, urban planner, and artist, was a deliberate provocateur. In the recorded interviews interspersed throughout this intimate exhibition—curated to present the evolution of his work through films, photographs, and sketches—he deploys the word “polemics” repeatedly.

Open Form, the theory he introduced in 1959, was a flexible architectural framework with an “average human being” as the central focus. It represented a break from what Hansen termed Closed Form—structures whose foremost purpose seemed the glorification of their architects. Hansen was a member of Team 10, the architectural group that formed to refute the urban vision of Le Corbusier and his disciples.

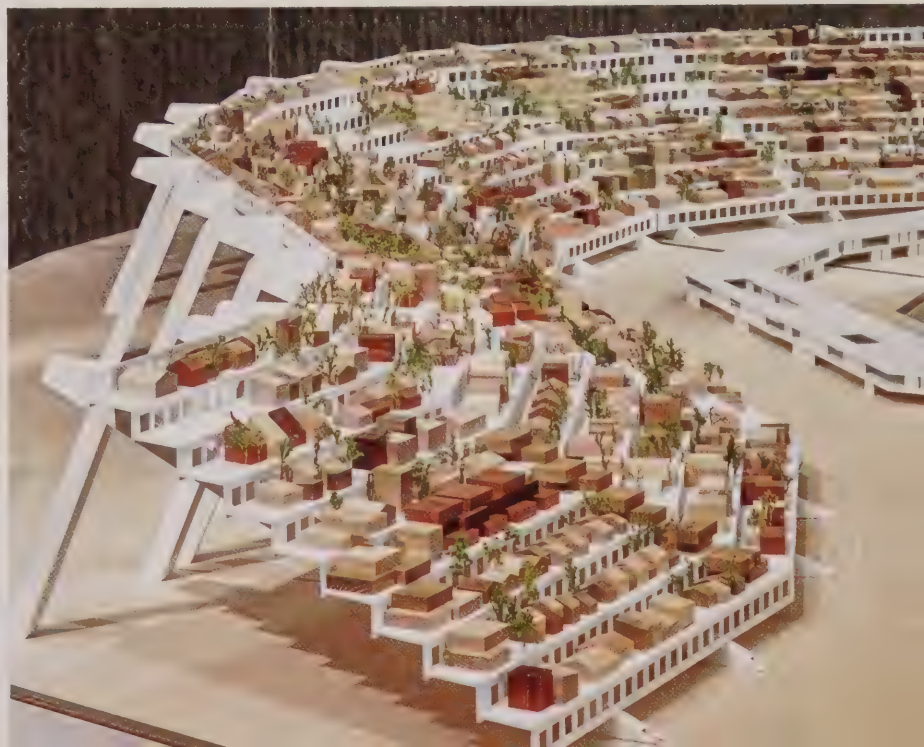
On display is the design that Hansen and several colleagues presented for a 1957 international competition for a memorial at the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp. The ruins of camp were to be obliterated by a giant asphalt road, upon which visitors could leave their own tokens of remembrance. Though “The Road” won the competition, survivors of the camp opted for the more conventional memorial that occupies the site.

Hansen adapted Open Form on a larger scale in the 1960s, with his Linear Continuous System, which envisioned four settlement belts throughout Poland. The inhabitants of these homes would have equal access to such resources as sun and green spaces. Many of Hansen’s designs remained theoretical, though they exerted a wide influence, particularly on the generations of students he taught at the Warsaw Academy of Fine Arts. They found a natural extension among visual artists who saw possibilities for unique expression in Open Form—some of whose works are on display at Yale—and continue to inform debates on the future of architecture today.

SARAH L. COURTEAU is a freelance writer who lives in Connecticut.

BELOW

Linear Continuous System: Western Belt, Oskar Hansen, 1977. 63" × 144" × 24", reconstructed by Onimo Makiety Architektoniczne, 2014. On loan courtesy of the Museum of Modern Art in Warsaw, Poland. Photo: Rich House Photography



HOMiE: In Our Eyes

Museum of Fine Arts

Boston

Through January 22, 2017

In museums, artwork by teenagers—usually fostered by education departments—rarely makes it to gallery walls. How could it measure up to the emotional wisdom of a Rembrandt, the color sense of a Titian, or the conceptual savvy of a Warhol?

The Museum of Fine Arts takes a gamble, then, with *HOMiE: In Our Eyes*, an exhibition of 44 works by Boston teenagers curated by the museum's Teen Arts Council. And it pays off. The success of this heartfelt and affecting show hinges on a theme personal to everyone: home.

The young artists aim straight—no adolescent deflection, no irony. For many, home is where they find structure and validation. Student athletes Walter Ramos and Kevaghnn Plummer draw cleats; music lover Frannik Dionicio renders headphones.

Youthful passion carries such works, as well as several loving (and more literal) portrayals of home. In a self-portrait, Adler Arcene's digital work spotlights his neighborhood in Mattapan, with Morton Mini Market flowering from his head like a cozy dream. Another digital piece, Boyi Wong's crisply composed *Together*, depicts the family dinner table from above.

The idea of home can be fraught, too—filled with longing, loss, and hope. Ali Ali's mixed-media *Coming Back Home* shows, in grainy black-and-white, the bombed-out shell of his hometown, Damascus, Syria, as the artist in the foreground bears witness—and asks us to. Others introduce slyly complicated notions: In his photo of coin-op binoculars on a ferry to Martha's Vineyard, William Burnett flips the simple association of home

as a singular place; 25¢ *Away From Home* hints that instead it might be a destination as yet unseen.

Several such works limned with innuendo and suggestion set off a viewer's own chain of associations, deepening *HOMiE*. But for all those twists, the show's sincerity brings it home.

CATE MCQUAID is a freelance writer and art critic who covers galleries for *The Boston Globe*. Her work has also appeared in *Art New England* and WBUR's *The ARtery*.

LEFT

Together, BoYi Wong, Boston. Digital artwork. Image: Courtesy of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston





SEEN/UNSEEN

The Big Urban Room

Seen is the arced wood ceiling—a matrix of curved planes, feathered and in motion—floating over the Big Urban Room at the newly transformed Boston Public Library (BPL). Spanning 180 feet long and 60 feet wide, the ceiling's sculpted form reshapes and redirects light from the continual glass walls that open the library seamlessly to the city along Boylston and Exeter streets. Its perforated surface absorbs sound from the library's most active space, which brings together the newest books, interactive digital technology, a café, and a broadcast studio.

Unseen is a powerful absence at the front door—a relocation that has created the space needed for the Big Urban Room. This relocation of the circulation desk 60 feet from the front door is a big deal, embodying the BPL's strong commitment to visitor experience. More broadly, it represents a cultural shift in library services nationwide, challenging the decades-long presumption that a circulation desk (plus its adjacent back-of-house spaces) must be at the front door, a security presence

controlling people and collection. Free of this obstruction, the Big Urban Room spreads along the full frontage of Boylston Street, welcoming the city, immersing the visitor immediately into the life and energy of the library.

Seen and unseen are elements defining a new experience for Boston, the Big Urban Room: active, immersive, welcoming, and open to the street.

CLIFF GAYLEY FAIA is a principal of William Rawn Associates, of Boston, which worked on the transformation of the BPL's Johnson Building.

ABOVE

Interior of the Big Urban Room at the BPL.
Photo: Bruce T. Martin

Urban Housing Unit (uhü) Through December 9
One Room Mansion Through February 6, 2017
 BSA Space, 290 Congress Street, Boston

The **Urban Housing Unit (uhü—pronounced “yoo-hoo”)**, a mobile prototype housing model designed by LiveLight and the Boston Society of Architects/AIA in partnership with the Mayor’s Housing Innovation Lab and the BSA Foundation, wraps up its months-long road show on the channel-facing lawn outside BSA Space, where the 385-square-foot prefabricated apartment joins the exhibition *One Room Mansion*. Designed to revamp BSA Space into a building with compact apartments connected by corridors, *One Room Mansion* spotlights space-saving innovations that make these units work for singles and small families. Could this modest concept—individual living spaces grouped with communal amenities—help meet the demand for affordable housing near transit, restaurants, and workplaces? Curated by Aeron Hodges AIA and A. Quinton Kerns, the exhibition will showcase demographic and design research while exploring 21st-century residential dwelling options for all ages and incomes.

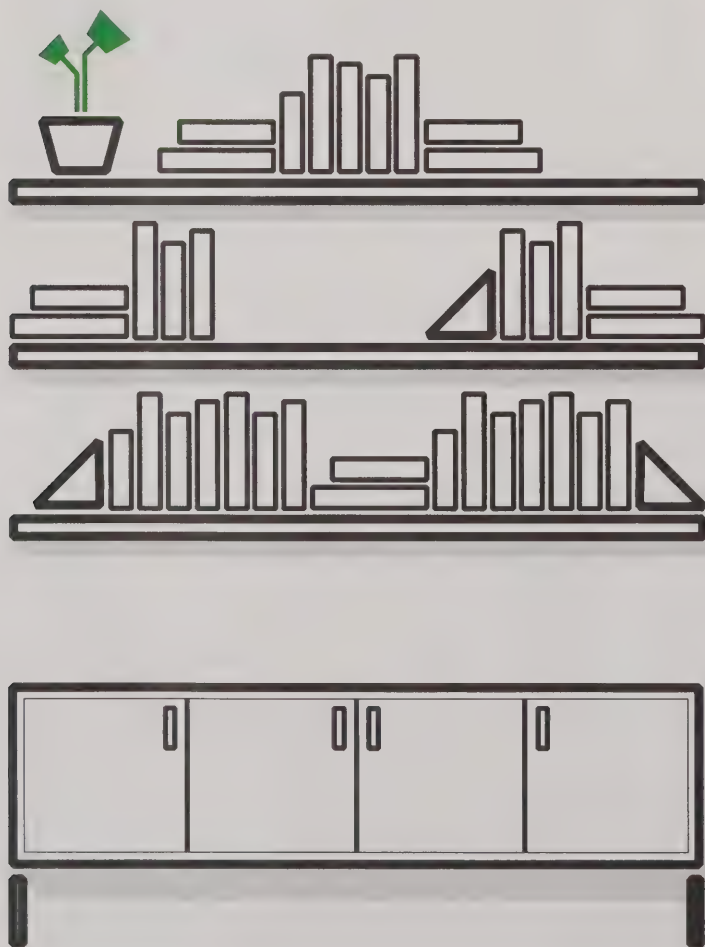


TOP

Urban Housing Unit (uhü) interior.
 Photo: Paige McWhorter

LEFT

Graphic icons for the *One Room Mansion* study. Image: Courtesy of the Boston Society of Architects



Chris Reed | Work-Life

Landscape Lecture Series

Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum

September 8, 2016

Stoss, a landscape architecture firm, was born 15 years ago. So was founder Chris Reed's eldest son, a fact that Reed employed to reflect on his work and life. Speaking in Calderwood Hall, Reed offered a thoughtful perspective on landscape architecture that was founded on his passion for landscape urbanism, ecology, and research. He effectively drew parallels between his teenage son at home and his teenage practice at work, both in awkward stages of morphology between youthful exuberance and a more serious adulthood.

By integrating a keen sense of humor into the presentation, Reed grounded his talk in a way that underscored that work is life and can be fun. His projects span a wide range, from the speculative and "a bit over the top" (LA Freeway) to built landscapes that improve quality of life and beckon people to engage with one another, a rarity in the denuded landscapes of our urban environments. Case in point: Green Bay, Wisconsin, where his project, City Deck, was intended to be—and has become—the front porch of the city. He was also retained to assist with the design and programming of the retail storefronts abutting the site. And, as he said, "The confluence of activity and design has created a vibrant public open space that supports social equity in the city."

Reed reminded the audience of Frederick Law Olmsted's transformative interdisciplinary work at the turn of the 19th century, urging fellow landscape architects to renew their role in reshaping cities to overcome social inequity, climate change, and rapid urbanization. Civic leaders, he said, are investing in physical and social infrastructure by reclaiming forgotten real estate and supporting the idea that landscape should, can, and will play a more prominent and formative role in our vibrant public spaces.

Reed's interest in creating operative, living, vibrant landscapes reminded me of Abraham Lincoln's directive, "Whatever you are, be a good one." As he steers his developing practice through growth spurts and the dating scene (by teaming with OMA on Kentucky's West Louisville Food Port), he seems poised to be a role model for landscape architecture leadership in the reimagination of our cities.

CHERI RUANE ASLA is president of the Boston Society of Landscape Architects and the vice president of Weston & Sampson's Design Studio.

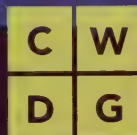
BELOW

City Deck is part of a redevelopment project along Fox River in Green Bay, Wisconsin. Photo: Mike Roemer



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THE YEAR OF THE PLAN

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WINTER 2016

The City of Boston's first comprehensive plan in 50 years sets a target of 53,000 new units of housing by 2030. Can we achieve this goal?

In this issue, *ArchitectureBoston* opens a toolkit of ways to challenge the rules and shake up the status quo.





GETTING TO YES

KYLE NELSON is an illustrator and
art director at Stoltze Design.

PREVIOUS PAGE

Development, Amy Casey, 2010
Acrylic on paper, 10" x 10"
Image: Courtesy of the artist

THE CONVERSION CALCULATION

by Daniel Bluestone

Great expectations are greeting Boston's commitment to increasing the housing supply by 53,000 units by 2030. Affordable-housing advocates see stabilized rents. Community leaders anticipate stemming gentrification and preserving neighborhood heritage. Architects and planners see venues for transit-oriented development; innovations in energy and infrastructure sustainability; tests for new building materials; and new designs, like micro units for Boston millennials. Developers envision streamlined permitting and burgeoning opportunities on city-owned lots made available for new housing.

But something is missing. Surprisingly, the effort fails to promote the creation of additional units within existing buildings. With new units in multiple-family housing often costing more than \$400,000 each, we should be looking not at new housing to solve the supply and affordability crisis but at existing buildings.

Think about it. Boston has thousands of dwellings that already have roofs, walls, foundations, and utilities in place. All we need is to settle on economical, sustainable, and elegant ways of adding apartments to these buildings. Most of our housing units were produced for households far larger than those currently occupying them. The average occupancy in a Boston dwelling is 2.49 residents. With increases in single, elderly, and millennial households, Mayor Martin Walsh anticipates fewer than two residents per new unit. Why build from scratch when we can simply create new units within existing walls?

Although we don't pay nearly enough attention to the precedents, they are all around us. J.E. Barlow & Company's Brighton row house development, at Commonwealth Avenue and Wallingford Road, is one. In 1909, Barlow built 50 two-story brick row houses. Each had a kitchen, dining room, parlor, and hall on the first floor, with four bedrooms and a bathroom above. In 1917, one owner installed a bathroom on the first floor, converting his house into two apartments. Others soon followed suit: Several conversions came in the 1920s; the most recent was in 2012. Some carved three units out of the houses; two doctors and a dentist created live-work spaces with residences above ground-story offices. Today, only 22 houses have not been converted; there are 86 units in the place of the original 50.

In 1892, architect Arthur G. Everett designed himself a rambling 2½-story Victorian house on Chestnut Hill Avenue. He lived there with five members of his family and two servants. By the 1970s, Everett's house had four units; later, two additional units were added—six perfectly serviceable units in the place of one. The density of additional residents gives vibrancy and vitality to the neighborhood.

Boston has 15,000 triple-deckers. They have many common elements. Imagine streamlining a permitting and contractor trades program called *Three + One*, developing design templates for easily adding one more apartment to these buildings (adjusting zoning and building ordinances as necessary). Investing in existing dwellings stabilizes them while making them more useful. We would get to 53,000 "new" units less expensively, more quickly, and much more sustainably. Adopting this vision, we could easily zoom right past that ambitious goal. ■

DANIEL BLUESTONE directs Boston University's Preservation Studies program and inhabits the former living room and parlor of a 1911 apartment in The Norma, subdivided in 1957.



A BASE FOR THE FUTURE

by Alexander D'Hooghe and Aaron Weller AIA

ALEXANDER D'HOOGHE is founding partner of ORG Permanent Modernity and associate professor in architecture and urbanism at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. **AARON WELLER AIA** is a licensed architect at ORG Permanent Modernity.

The development model for new housing has become shortsighted. An increased demand for housing, particularly in urban areas, has created a marketplace with little or no risk, high returns on investments, and a priority on condominiums with inflated price tags.

With many Greater Boston municipalities grappling with rent destabilization and a lack of housing diversity, what can result when housing development is viewed as a long-term investment? How about the concept of “solids,” coined by Frank Bijdendijk, a former housing czar in the Netherlands? The concept continues the structure-infill ideas outlined by another Dutch architect, John Habraken, in his 1961 book *Supports: An Alternative to Mass Housing*.

Solids are flexible and durable buildings that allow an investor to model economic viability over a long period. In contrast to selling fast and building cheap, a durable building is constructed with materials and details that age well and thus accrue value over time. Plus, a flexible building can accommodate changes in lifestyles or even uses, yielding profits over multiple generations.

Such a building—think of the Roman basilica type or industrial-era warehouses—requires higher initial investments than is currently normal, which can be offset if operating costs are low and by separating permanent or collective elements from temporary or individual ones. The initial investor of a solid building constructs the “base” elements (load-bearing structure, access and circulation, roof and exterior façade, common services and amenities),

and the “fit-out” (partitions, finishes, fixtures, and so forth) is determined and paid for by another investor: the inhabitant.

The division between permanent and temporary elements results in a housing typology unlike today's developments. One example is Solid 11 in Amsterdam (2010), designed by Tony Fretton Architects for the Dutch housing commission. The client required that its main building components have a 200-year life span, with a floor plan that could change according to user needs. More recently, our market building in Brussels features a double-height structure that can be filled internally with mezzanines or expanded vertically with additional floors.

The conventional building template consists of “towers”—rooms, units, or offices built of steel or wood-frame structures—above a concrete “podium” for parking, storage, cultural amenities, and commercial retail. The tower and podium are efficiently organized for particular uses, with every space programmed and compressed to maximize rentable or resale square footage. Ceilings are low, walls abundant, and windows correspond precisely to interior arrangements. In the future, it will make more sense to demolish and rebuild these buildings rather than adapt and reuse.

Solids, on the other hand, are not towers built on podiums but sustainable “shells” with generous floor-to-ceiling heights, open floor plans, long structural spans, high load-bearing capacity, and large mechanical and circulation areas. The spatial quality of solids is akin to the industrial warehouse that has successfully morphed into mixed housing. Unlike older buildings, solids are not a finite resource; they marry a durable, flexible building type with a development model that is economically feasible in the short and long term.

Imagine housing that provides a stable residence for precarious millennial or immigrant workers within open floor plans, movable partitions, common services, and shared resources; or multifamily units that adapt to changing tastes, growing families, or an aging population. Could light, “clean” industries, maker spaces, or live-work arrangements exist alongside, above, or below? Municipalities should invest in “base” buildings as long-term public assets that help resolve affordable-housing shortages today and—who knows?—can segue into an alternative use that meets a future need. ■





THE LEVEL OF THE LAW

by Jerold S. Kayden

Should everyone be able to move to the suburbs? Do people have a right to move anywhere? Housing and job markets say no. Many suburban communities around Boston lack housing at prices affordable to many families. Many Boston neighborhoods are also beyond financial reach. If this were only a matter of markets, one could criticize the economic system that promotes them and advocate for public subsidies. Does the conversation materially change if local zoning laws themselves, rather than an invisible hand, play a significant role in fostering exclusionary results?

That was the question facing the New Jersey Supreme Court 41 years ago in *South Burlington County NAACP v. Township of Mount Laurel*, which it answered by reading New Jersey's state constitution to require that the suburbs relax their zoning to permit development of housing accommodating a fair share of the region's lower-income needs. Thanks to this and subsequent rulings, according to housing advocates, more than 60,000 new units of affordable housing have been built in New Jersey's suburbs.

Mount Laurel was something of a riposte to the United States Supreme Court's earlier refusal to find a similar requirement in the federal constitution's due process and equal protection clauses. In the years after *Mount Laurel*, no other state court has followed suit. At one level, this is not surprising. Legally, the New Jersey decision bound only actors in New Jersey, without binding precedential effect elsewhere. What's curious, however, is that no other state court found the *Mount Laurel* invitation sufficiently compelling that they looked deeply into their own constitutions to see if there was a *Mount Laurel* opinion lurking therein.

The Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court is one of the nation's leading courts in finding rights in the state constitution before they are found in the federal constitution. One need only reference *Goodridge v. Department of Health's* (2003) conclusion that barring an individual from the benefits of civil marriage solely based on sexual orientation violated the state constitution's requirements of due process or equal protection. It is time for someone to put before the court the possibility that a suburb's unwillingness to zone enough land for development of multifamily housing affordable to lower-income families is similarly problematic.

The idea that unelected judges should make decisions based on state and federal constitutions overriding majority decision making by legislatures is always controversial. Chapter 40B, the Massachusetts legislature's thoughtful response to local exclusionary zoning, has made inroads in forcing local governments to expand housing opportunities throughout the Boston region, although many believe it is not nearly enough. A judicial examination based on fundamental ideas of equal treatment may yield more. As US Supreme Court Justice William J. Brennan, Jr., once wrote, "State constitutions . . . are a font of individual liberties, their protections often extending beyond those required by the [US] Supreme Court's interpretation of federal law. The legal revolution which has brought federal law to the fore must not be allowed to inhibit the independent protective force of state law—for without it, the full realization of our liberties cannot be guaranteed." Justice Brennan's invitation continues to resonate. ■

JEROLD S. KAYDEN, an urban planner and lawyer, is the Frank Backus Williams professor of urban planning and design at Harvard's Graduate School of Design.

NEW FAMILY FRAMES

by Matthew Littell

MATTHEW LITTELL is a principal at Utile, where he leads projects in affordable housing and planning. Last year, he directed a research studio on ADUs at Northeastern University.

In the search to house its booming population, Boston is looking everywhere. Given their preexisting density and relative stability, established residential neighborhoods typically have not been targeted for large-scale solutions to our 53,000-unit deficit. Recently, however, the city's Department of Neighborhood Development has spearheaded efforts to tackle the shortage at a much finer grain. New proposals would allow the formerly forbidden Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs), more commonly known as "granny flats" or "in-law" apartments, in existing owner-occupied one- to three-family buildings in select neighborhoods. The plan, which follows those in many other cities including Portland, Oregon; San Francisco; and, more recently, Cambridge, Massachusetts, wisely recognizes that Boston's housing crisis cannot be solved through the creation of new developments alone: The city must also find ways to evolve its 19th-century residential fabric to meet the needs of its 21st-century occupants.

Like much of our zoning code, the prohibition against ADUs traces back to a mid-20th-century bias toward the nuclear family as the ideal unit of cohabitation. More-nuanced living arrangements that might have included the extra "half" unit for

Grandma on the third floor, for example, did not fit the mold of inflexible zoning codes or public expectations about what constitutes a "family." Today's Boston is noticeably more socially complex and accepting. These additional units can provide the flexibility to support a growing population as well as a more diverse and vulnerable one.

Consider not only the elderly but also recent college graduates who cannot afford their own apartments, an adult child with mental disabilities, young parents willing to exchange housing for child care, a young couple in need of a small, affordable apartment, or empty nesters seeking to downsize in place. These scenarios are not typically supported by new luxury construction in former industrial areas or downtown. Allowing homeowners more freedom to adapt their existing homes to changing needs can promote long-term occupancy and neighborhood stability.

As the city proceeds cautiously, it will no doubt encounter the usual resistance to any form of densification, including concerns about parking, traffic, displacement, and change of neighborhood character. Beyond that, acceptance will require a more fundamental shift in our relationship with our neighbors and how we negotiate the balance of public and private in the intimate space between residential dwellings. What does it mean, for instance, for a unit to have its front door in the backyard? Our zoning code has for decades safeguarded a very traditional and uniquely American ideal of how and where residential occupation presents itself to the public, where front doors are located, and the distance to the property next door. Accessory Dwelling Units will challenge those norms by occupying the remaining layers of underused space in backyards, attics, and garages, and create new kinds of overlap between new kinds of neighbors.

In a city that tends to resist change, acceptance of ADUs will require time but ultimately could result in richer and more inclusive forms of residential life. Alone, ADUs will not provide the raw numbers of units the city so desperately needs, but they can help. More important, they can set the stage for long-term preservation and adaptation of sensitive neighborhoods that continue to struggle with the pressures of Boston's extraordinary growth. ■



BEACONS IN THE DISTANCE

by Theresa Park

Food, clothing, and shelter make up the holy trinity of basic needs. Yet even in the 21st-century United States, people struggle to find adequate housing that is within their means. For cities to thrive, they need to offer housing options for people of all income levels and household types. Those options also need to be in close proximity to jobs and a decent quality of life. As Boston struggles to meet this need within its tight 48 square miles, Gateway Cities already are equipped to lend a hand.

For centuries, Gateway Cities—roughly defined as older industrial communities such as New Bedford, Lawrence, or Holyoke—have offered immigrants a place to launch new lives and build on their aspirations for a better future. To these new residents, homeownership is an important first rung on the ladder of opportunity. Yet the abundance of amenities and housing opportunities that Gateway Cities offer still remains unknown to many.

The shape and form of these older cities are what all communities are striving toward: smart-growth, mixed-use, and pedestrian-focused for a multigenerational population. And they are a housing bargain: According to *Banker & Tradesman*, the year-to-date median sale price in Lawrence for a single-family home is \$229,000 versus \$3.24 million in downtown Boston. They are places where you can find work opportunities, invest in an education, meet friends for dinner and entertainment, raise a family, and rest your weary head at night.

I speak from firsthand experience. My family moved to Massachusetts from Korea in the 1970s. The city of Lawrence was our first home—and it allowed us to move from a small apartment to a duplex purchased with another Korean family in a brand-new subdivision. Although we eventually moved out of the city, without the opportunity to find that affordable apartment and home, we might not have been able to move past that first rung. I remain convinced that if not for my family's ability to find a place where we could live within our means, we would have struggled. Instead, within that first generation, my parents' four children have become professionals in real estate, engineering, urban planning, and education—the great American success story.

About 80 percent of the people who live in Lawrence work elsewhere. Jobs in Boston are being filled by people traveling from other communities,

which means lower-cost cities within reasonable commuting distance are helping Boston meet its housing needs. What could go a long way to ease Boston's housing crunch—and help Gateway Cities achieve their full potential—would be to increase investment in public infrastructure and transportation, whereby trains and buses could offer greater frequency of service, with stops that match journey-to-work patterns.

Because Gateway Cities have always offered a welcoming beacon to new immigrants, they are frequently seen as disadvantaged from a socioeconomic standpoint. What the numbers do not reveal, however, is the beautiful diversity of people, the sheer goodness and generosity of residents, a coexistence of neighbors from absolutely every walk of life, and a can-do spirit born from years of overcoming long odds.

Those who are late to realize the beauty of Gateway Cities will have missed a great opportunity to be agents of change in a dynamic and innovative renaissance of old postindustrial cities. Their past glory is being reawakened every day, as new residents mix with old to shape and transform the cities of the future. ■

THERESA PARK is an urban planner with 20 years of local and regional experience. It has taken her that long to work her way back to the City of Lawrence as director of its Office of Planning and Development.



UNPACKING THE PROBLEM

IS AFFORDABLE HOUSING CAPITALISM'S HOPELESS QUEST?



by Michael Pyatok FAIA

The choice to spend most of my career focused on affordable housing was an effort to improve the plight of America's struggling underclasses. I entered the profession 50 years ago, in the midst of the anti-Vietnam War protests, civil rights struggles, and antipoverty campaigns. In the spring of 1968, when Martin Luther King, Jr., was assassinated, I joined the Poor People's March on Washington, then led by Ralph Abernathy, and helped build Resurrection City on the Washington Mall. Soon after that, Robert F. Kennedy was gunned down, and Eugene McCarthy, the progressive candidate, did not get the Democratic nomination. It seemed like I was attending a protest somewhere along the New York-DC corridor every weekend.

These formative events shaped my career choices. Our economic system's inequities were blatantly visible everywhere; closer to the home of my profession, urban renewal was no friend to the poor and much worse for minorities. It seemed only natural that a young architect seeking to apply his craft to address some of these issues would choose housing and community development. Harvard's Graduate School of Design and Pratt left their marks in skilled form making and problem solving—they just needed the right direction.

It is clear to me, after decades of working within the system, that the housing programs descending from the ones initiated as part of the New Deal were never able to address the fundamental contradictions built into our economic system. Today, we are shocked by the ever-rising costs of delivering housing and by the magnitude of profits earned by all whose hands are in the real estate industry. Equally shocking is the shrinking government commitment to bridge the gap between what it costs to produce housing and what it costs to rent or own it for that 40 percent of Americans who can't compete because the compensation for their labor is just too low.

Decent housing should be an inalienable right, as should healthcare and education. These are inextricably linked—people can't have one without the others. Yet they are still very much commodities bought and sold on markets that provide only for those with means and underserve those without. In *The Housing Question*, Fredrick Engels pointed out 130 years ago the internal contradictions of the capitalist system: Primary employers want to keep workers' wages low so companies can return sizable profits to their owners and investors. Yet those who produce housing need people's wages to be as high as possible so they can maximize their profits. As long as housing is treated like any other commodity on the open market, then those who earn more for their labor get more housing, and those who earn less get much less, or none at all—or they must steal from other essentials such as food, health, education, clothing, transportation, and recreation to keep a reasonably decent roof over their heads.

OPPOSITE

Migration #7, Ted Lott, 2015.
Wood, found object,
electrical, 13" × 11" × 14.5".
Image: Courtesy of the artist

BELOW

Palo Alto, California: Tree House Affordable
SRO + Special Needs provides 35 studio
units for single adults, with common indoor
and outdoor areas. Photo: Ted Rzad



About 40 percent of American households today must spend more than 30 percent of their income for their dwellings; if a household exceeds that figure, it will probably be spending less than it should on other essentials. Some studies show that more than 8 million households are spending as much as 70 percent of their incomes to avoid being homeless. In recent decades, wages have stagnated or diminished for the bottom 40 percent partly because US companies have shifted tens of millions of manufacturing jobs overseas; at the same time, states had to cut safety-net programs because taxes were diminishing under the pressure of free-market politicians.

My generation, unlike the "Greatest" one that slugged its way through the Great Depression and World War II, had been spared seeing widespread homelessness until the Reagan administration dramatically cut Housing and Urban Development's budget in the early 1980s at the same time it drastically cut taxes on the wealthiest Americans. Up to that point, there was a kind of social contract in America, established by Franklin Delano Roosevelt and accompanied by a strong union movement, based on the belief that those who have more must help those with less for the sake of the greater good.

Even Dwight Eisenhower understood this, taxing the top 10 percent of earners at a 90 percent tax rate during the 1950s to help build the interstate highway system, an infrastructure project that would yield economic benefits for decades, notwithstanding some of its devastating effects on inner cities. After Ronald Reagan, George H.W. Bush, and George W. Bush,

that effective tax rate—once all deductions and exemptions were applied—plummeted to about 15 percent. And that transportation system, both highways and rails, is now falling apart because free-market politicians have argued themselves into a corner: to them, government is an impediment to free enterprise, an obstacle to concentrating wealth in the hands of a few.

Enlightened minds in the business sector see the benefits of government-funded housing programs as indirect subsidies to the business community and as supplements to workers' incomes. These programs allow businesses to pay modest wages that yield the profits expected by investors and owners, while the government pays a sizable portion of a worker's paycheck usually allocated to housing expenses. But to politicians elected in gerrymandered rural districts, income supplements in the form of housing assistance are seen as handouts that undermine individual responsibility. Hence, the US has one of the weakest housing subsidy programs for lower-income renter households among all industrialized countries, at the same time providing about \$200 billion per year as subsidies in the form of tax deductions to homeowners, most of which goes to the top 20 percent.



ABOVE

Phoenix: Devine Legacy Affordable Family Housing
Units are protected from the desert sun with
sunscreens on the exterior and a shady courtyard
on the interior. Photo: Babe's Photos

In a society that is wired to be economically unjust, governed by an ideology that blames individuals for falling behind and not the wiring itself, what are architects to do when it comes to the housing question?

We must first accept the fact that those of us designing affordable housing that depends on these limited subsidy programs are being used to create smoke screens, putting a handsome face on an ugly problem. Through good design, we are making it seem like the United States is solving its housing problem when nothing of the kind is happening. But does this mean we cease and desist and shy away from the challenge? That is one response. Another would be to use our talents to the best of our abilities to create models, demonstrations, or reminders of what the world could be like if the system were more fairly structured at the workplace; if not there, at least a world in which having decent affordable housing is a collective responsibility that should be borne by all of us, just as we do for our highways and the military. Good design for affordable housing keeps those dreams alive for what a better day could look like.

So I offer four of my office's recent affordable housing developments in that spirit—to demonstrate that in spite of callous disregard for the poor compensation received by millions of working Americans, and the intentional shift of the wealth they produce into the hands of just a few controlling households, there are nonprofit housing development corporations with the savvy, along with their architects, to pull rabbits out of a hat.

TREEHOUSE Palo Alto, California

On a site surrounded by low-rise, high-end condominiums, the Palo Alto Housing Corporation (PAHC) managed to insert a version of an SRO (single-room occupancy) for 35 low-income singles and couples, at the same time saving a dozen heritage oak trees. Weathering a lengthy process of resistance based on "parking and traffic" concerns, PAHC with our help steered its project to completion with a design that captures the pride of its residents and the respect of neighbors.

DEVINE LEGACY Phoenix

During years of white flight to the suburbs, Native American Connections (NAC), a social service nonprofit, quietly assembled properties left behind by fleeing wealthier classes at bargain prices. Almost 40 years later, NAC is developing affordable housing on these sites; this one is in a highly prized location one block from a light rail station and across from the central high school. With our assistance, NAC developed 65 units of affordable rental housing for low-income families as the first LEED Platinum apartment project in Phoenix. The Native American community demonstrated that the most sustainable way to live in the desert in the 21st century is within the inner city—not sprawling into the desert at three units per acre but on a light rail line at 100 units per acre, in a building that conserves energy and water.



LEFT

Oakland, California: Seven Directions + Native American Health Center incorporates modern cultural artifacts, including a two-story, ceramic mosaic story pole featuring seven North American tribal myths about life and death. Photo: Frank Doman

BELOW

Oakland, California: Fox Courts Affordable Family Housing is organized around two intimate scaled courtyards lined with open walkways serving two-story stacked townhomes. Photo: Frank Doman

FOX COURTS *Oakland, California*

When Jerry Brown, as mayor of Oakland (1998–2006), encouraged the downtown development of about 4,500 market-rate units, he discouraged any affordable housing from being built. A coalition of housing advocates formed to prevent downtown’s “Jerrification,” forcing the city council to set aside a 0.9-acre site in a market-rate development for affordable family housing. The city sponsored a competition, which my firm won, with Resources for Community Development as the nonprofit developer. Stacked townhomes on single-loaded open-air corridors provide everyone with natural ventilation. A child-care center and café occupy the ground floor facing a new park/plaza, and lower-level townhomes, elevated atop a half-sunken garage, are accessed by stoops.

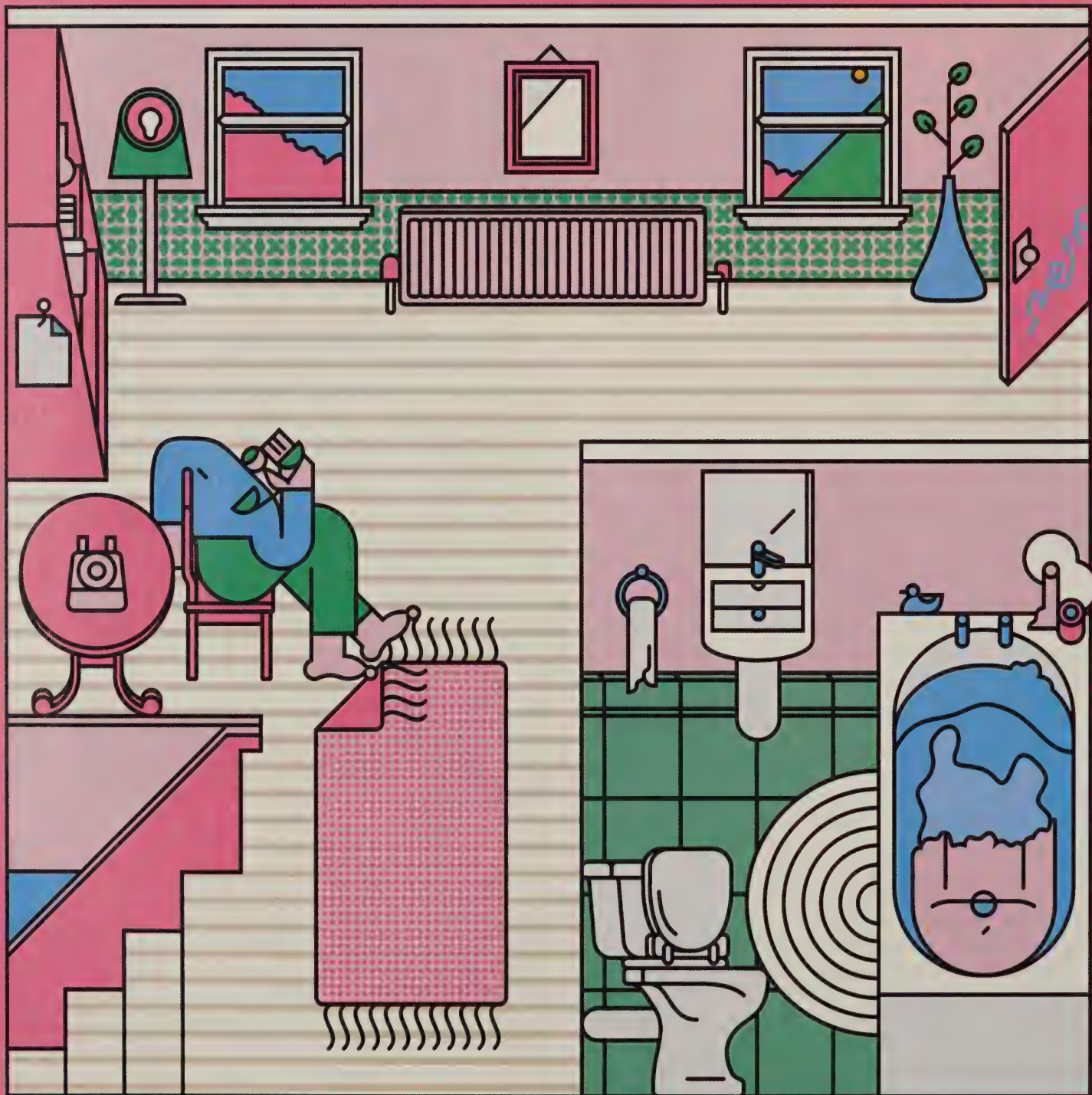
SEVEN DIRECTIONS *Oakland, California*

A few blocks from a Bay Area Rapid Transit station, this mixed-use building has 36 low-income families living above a neighborhood clinic and a 40-car at-grade garage on 0.66 acres. A joint venture between the Native American Health Center (NAHC) and the EastBay Asian Local Development Corporation, it also serves as a cultural center for Native Americans. NAHC raised funds to hire artists to express the presence of Native Americans in Oakland. A steel eagle’s feather rises the full height of the building; a two-story mosaic-covered concrete column at the clinic entry reflects seven North American tribes; the interior entry to the second-floor clinic is framed by two 8-foot-high totems carved by a member of the Tlingit tribe of



Alaska. The courtyard contains a kiva for gatherings and ceremonial dances; a stone wall at the back “weeps” a gentle flow of water to nourish plants growing from the wall.

During this past year, it was heartening to see the magnitude of support for Bernie Sanders among the young for an American form of “democratic socialism.” The average age of that support speaks to a hopeful vision that these policies may someday take root again because they have time to grow and eventually change the character of our country. Maybe this time around we will achieve, or at least come closer to, a day when decent, affordable housing will be defined as an essential right and not as a commodity, a fundamental foundation of stable family lives, and, as such, a pillar of our economy’s success. ■



NOW TRENDING

**WHAT'S IMPORTANT TO OWNERS
BUILDING HOMES TODAY?**

FLEXIBLE STORAGE, SEAMLESS SPACE

by Ellen Perko AIA

In the design of custom homes, less is more. The old expectation of formal living and dining rooms has given way to open, informal spaces that flow from one area to the next. These spaces are intended to have multiple uses from day to day, and in order to allow for this flexibility, customized storage in a variety of sizes and configurations becomes key. There needs to be a lot of storage located in the right places.

Sometimes it can seem like a splurge to have cabinetry custom designed for a space and specific needs. If there is adequate space to store children's toys and other items, then a room can seamlessly transform from a play area to an adult space for entertaining. Then, when a family downsizes into fewer rooms, the added storage allows for more open, less cluttered space.

This attention to quality of storage goes hand in hand with a noticeable focus on aging. In other areas of the world, it's culturally typical for several generations to live together under the same roof; in the United States, the benefits of multi-generational living are just starting to be realized.

Now, when designing a home, some clients will request an area that initially may be a first-floor guest room with an en-suite bathroom. As the family evolves, an older parent may

move into this room for a visit or even an extended stay. As the years continue, this same room may transform into a master suite for the homeowners so that they do not have to climb stairs in their elder years. In one case, our firm transformed a portion of an existing home into a sitting room and bedroom with an accessible bath as well as a small galley kitchen. This space can be used as a guest suite, as a first-floor bedroom for the homeowners, or for live-in help, enabling the couple to remain in their home for many years to come. It does not take an extraordinary amount of added equipment or hardware to make a space accessible. Providing an adequate area to move around among fixtures, along with well-placed blocking located within walls, will allow a space to accommodate changing future needs.

We are seeing this more and more—houses designed to age and adapt with homeowners' changing needs. ■

Continued on next page

A BALANCED, MEANINGFUL APPROACH

by Mark Hutker FAIA

I find that our clients are increasingly seeking authenticity. They are gravitating toward meaningful design rather than ostentation.

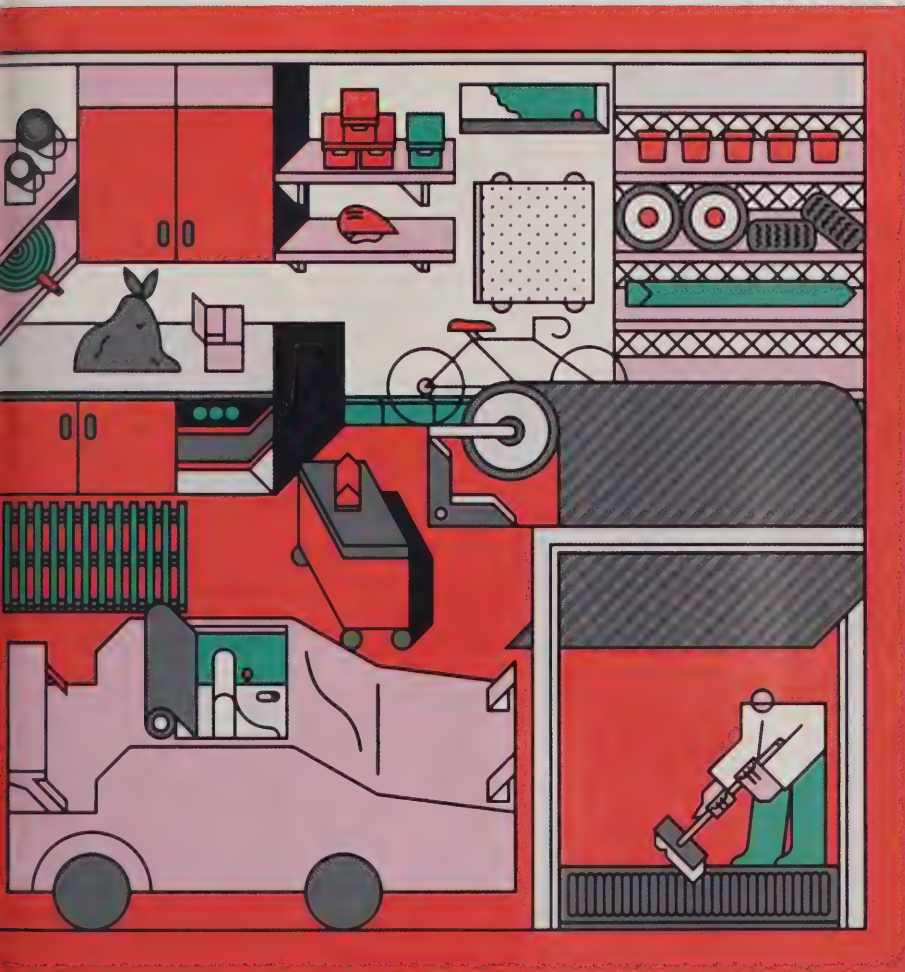
One trend I've observed is what I call the "anti-McMansion." Instead of designing a grand show house that accommodates every possible contingent use, our highest-end clients are interested in right-sizing true to their needs. "Build once, well" is a common refrain in our office, and I think it rings true for a lot of people considering new construction or renovations. Bigger does not always mean better. The key is often creating hybrid spaces that can accommodate large groups when the whole family is in town but also feel comfortable for just Mom and Dad. Our homes change as our lives do; it makes sense for them to be agile, fit, and trim in their shapes and configurations, with no wasted space.

Another trend is stewardship. Scalability is in itself a sustainable proposition, but there is also a heightened awareness of and demand for a balanced approach to energy conservation

and use. That starts with investing in the performance of the building envelope (high-quality insulation, doors, and windows). These elements will always pay back over time. And, while they amortize, you're much more comfortable in the house. Many clients are also looking to more active systems, such as solar, closed recirculating cooling (CRC), and geothermal, to create homes that produce more than they consume.

Finally, clients are looking for narrative in their home's design and material construction. They are seeking homes that relate to their natural context as well as the life patterns of their occupants. Materials and shapes are chosen with the local landscape, construction heritage, and vernacular in mind. Design details are at times derived from history (that of a place or family with relevance) or created to inspire and engage their users. Rather than looking at architecture as an inert shelter or investment strategy, people are coming to recognize the potential for affirming, effervescent homes that add joy and meaning to their lives. ■





THE EASE OF UNIVERSAL DESIGN

by Josh Safdie AIA

Although many of our clients are people with disabilities or older homeowners hoping to age in place gracefully, just as many are “typical” clients without disabilities, whom the average person wouldn’t expect to be interested in Universal Design. And they’re not—or at least they don’t think they are. Yet many of the requests we get from them suggest otherwise.

The 21st-century sensibility is to aspire to a more streamlined, user-friendly way of life. We are seeing these Universal Design goals applied equally to renovations, additions, and new construction, in single-family homes and in multifamily apartment buildings. At the heart of its seven principles is the simple belief that products and

environments should be “usable by all people.” Three are particularly appealing today.

Simple and intuitive use: The coffee table cluttered with seven remote controls is a thing of the past. With the increased connectivity of our technology, home systems operate simply and elegantly via smartphones or other wireless devices. Thermostats and security systems have had this capability for some time, but we are now seeing this user interface in home media, lighting systems, baby monitors, even wall ovens.

Size and space for approach and use:

We are designing kitchens, bathrooms, and other spaces in the home that are specific to residents’ unique sizes, shapes, or habits. Kitchen counters



are set at 38 inches for an unusually tall couple, or a portion is set at 30 inches for a built-in kids’ station. Pocket doors to bathrooms and closets provide for more room in tight spaces, and oversize showers accommodate the family pet, a shower chair for Grandpa, or a portable baby tub.

Flexibility in use: Clients are carving must-have bonus rooms out of attics and basements, adding them to existing residences, or giving them prime real estate on the main floor of new houses. It’s the epitome of flexibility. Over a homeowner’s lifetime, the family might use this space as a kids’ play area, an entertainment center, a home office, a guest room, an accessible bedroom on the main floor of the home, or a private room for a live-in home health aide.

As we continue to become more diverse in age and ability, these trends will persist. How it *works*, more than how it *looks*, will be the standard by which good design is measured. ■



ARTWORKS: Drew Tyndell.
His work walks the line between
sculpture and painting, collaging
together geometric shapes to
create depth and space.

“IT’S A BASKET OF SOLUTIONS”

British architect John McAslan’s presentation at the 2016 AIA convention, “Making Room: The Housing Crises in London and New York,” was a hit with architects and advocates alike, as he outlined commonalities between the two world capitals and offered a template for change. In this condensed interview, McAslan HON. FAIA and Tamara Roy AIA expand the lens to include another high-cost city, Boston, and discover many similar challenges and opportunities.



John McAslan: When I arrived in London, the population was about 6 or 7 million people, and you got on a waiting list for a [government-subsidized] Council flat. It was incredibly easy. And it’s now phenomenally difficult. The population of London has returned to its prewar figure of about 8.5 million, so it’s equivalent to New York. If growth continues and we can’t meet the housing targets, which we won’t, people will be pushed out to the suburban areas, which increases commutes, decreases quality of life, and pushes up prices.

There are extraordinary statistics, equivalent to New York, probably comparable to Boston, where graduates want to continue living in the central parts of cities. Up to 75 percent of their net income can be spent on housing. My son spent 60 percent of his on housing. He makes that choice because he wants to live away from home, completely understandable, but it’s almost an unaffordable proposition.

We lack a rent-controlled, affordable model and stock because, in the late ’70s or 1980, Margaret Thatcher sold Council flats to private tenants, which was a great vote-winner. London’s Council stock was depleted from about a million to 400,000 units; there is very little available Council housing that is rentable at 40 percent or 60 percent of market value. Housing that’s available becomes densified, and it’s often in an unregulated rental market, which means that landlords can have short-term leases, so they can just keep increasing rent.

When Great Britain removed its rent-control conditions, it meant that the private sector, a great majority of whom are

landlords who own one or two properties, created an unsustainable rental model. It's not fair that people can't get rent-controlled properties [unlike], say, in Europe, where you get security tenure for five years in Germany. Here, that's virtually impossible. And because it's a private development model, it attracts higher-paying professionals who are paying a premium for their rental proposition, which also becomes incredibly—as an investment proposition for somebody—attractive.

Tamara Roy: It's the inverse of what we would need: for a development to be 75 percent affordable and 25 percent luxury; instead, what is being put out to the market is 75 percent luxury and 25 percent affordable. In Boston, it's 13 percent—a drop in the bucket.

John McAslan: The proportions are all wrong. Two [London] mayors ago, Ken Livingstone, who was a very good mayor, had a 25 to 35 percent affordable requirement for development. The previous mayor, Boris Johnson, removed that requirement. The current mayor, Sadiq Khan, is talking about a 50 percent affordable requirement. No developer can build a scheme, given the cost of land in London, and provide 25 percent, let alone 50 percent, of affordable and still make it a comfortable proposition without cheapening the product.

Developers will find a way around the requirement or will offer alternatives by having what we'd call committed payment. They'll improve a public amenity and generally that's more attractive to them than providing, on the doorstep of the private development, affordable housing, because they would rather have a gated development with nice sidewalks and

landscaping, rather than affordable. Because there is this ridiculous perception that affordable means you're getting derelicts and God knows who, which of course isn't the case. It's people—nurses, students, doctors, teachers—people who can't afford...

Tamara Roy: Construction workers, cooks...

John McAslan: Who are providing an extraordinarily valuable service.

Tamara Roy: What you're showing us is that Boston is not in as bad a spot as London because our land prices aren't as escalated. But it's disheartening to hear what happens when you let "the market will solve the problem" narrative run its course. It's a hard problem to solve. One of the things you have talked about was [to ask] whether municipalities can build housing, rather than relying on the private market?

John McAslan: It's easy to see what happens when you don't have some sort of intervention. Look at a city like Bogota, with 8 million people. It had 800,000 people 20 years ago. Or Lagos. Those cities have imploded. It's impossible to get anywhere. There's no kind of civic structure. If you don't address the problem of transportation, which of course is a key issue in New York and London and Boston, if you don't get the infrastructure in place, then heaven knows what's going to happen. There is a point where the attractiveness of a city like London or Boston as places to invest will deplete. To hell with this; I can't afford to live here. I can't get to work. Going to museums, parks, concerts; cycling along the Charles River—all those things I've come to enjoy are being eroded. I'm going to do something else.

No single strategy is going to sort this out. It's a basket of solutions. Probably the most significant is the one you raised, which is to get land back into the system—land that's owned by the local authorities, but which is derelict for whatever reason. In the case of London, in [the borough of] Haringey, where we are working, it's effectively public-private partnerships with developers and institutional investors to develop that land and borrow for it. Something like 30,000 homes are envisaged in the next two decades.

Tamara Roy: So there's hope.

John McAslan: There's hope.

Tamara Roy: If those 30,000 homes are affordable.

John McAslan: That is entirely to build affordable homes, mixed-use communities, schools, community centers—all the things we borrow to fund that. I use it as an example because we set up a design studio in Haringey. Years ago I visited the Mitchell Giurgola office in New York, with this guy Steve Johnson, who





worked with Cambridge Seven [Associates] and [then] went to work for Mitchell Giurgola. This was a prestigious firm, and their office was above a launderette. I thought, Wow, this is amazing. Here they are in the middle of basically what seemed like kind of a battleground, doing great architecture.

Tamara Roy: When you say you had a design studio, you mean you opened your office there?

John McAslan: We opened a small office there as a partnership with Haringey Council, called N17, which is the postal code. There are no architects in Haringey to speak of, although it's a borough of 300,000 people. We sent a memorandum of agreement, hired apprentices from the local college, and trained them up. The agreement was that we would provide pro bono services to enhance what was formerly an old funeral parlor and open a design studio and forum for discussion for regeneration.

The reason that was so important was, in 2011, Tottenham, which is part of Haringey, had the worst riots in 20 years, and

the fifth anniversary was this summer. So it was politically a very smart thing for Haringey to open up a place where postriot redevelopment could take place. There's been huge investment. Developers have performed because the land is cheap. There's a huge amount happening in Haringey, and we've been the beneficiaries of projects through this initiative. The idea is that you get this public-private partnership with local authorities who can borrow because they're successful businesses and can invest in either replenishing existing building stock or redevelop on brownfield sites; there's the possibility of up to half a million homes being provided in the next couple of decades.

Tamara Roy: You said it's all affordable. How did they find that private partner interested in doing this?

John McAslan: Because they'll find housing associations, which are government funded. They'll get private developers. There is a deal they're making (a) with the local authority, (b) with

the lender, to have their investment repaid. They're not there as charities, but they're an affordable model. And the densification that you get—if not micro-housing, then smaller unit sizes, co-op houses, and mixed-use—means that you can crank up the density. The financial model works. The key is to find developers—and there are [examples] like Related, in partnership with Argent, who are wonderful developers here, and Stanhope, who are development managers.

The private market in London is saturated; the land is so expensive. The value of property in the private sector is dropping. The high-end private sector dropped 5 percent in the last year. If you're a developer, you think this doesn't look so attractive. It's expensive to build; the market is uncertain. It's entirely international because no British can afford it. It's Russians and Indians and Malaysians and wealthy Greeks and Italians. This isn't a market for British people. The product we're selling—big, lateral apartments of 5,000 square feet—can suddenly become unfashionable. So they shift very quickly.

Tamara Roy: The car analogy, because everybody in America has cars, is that you've gone from the Lexus to the Prius. You get something more sustainable, less expensive, and where demand is huge.

John McAslan: Another interesting one is getting Transport for London [the city's public transportation agency] and network rail, agencies who have lots of residual land, to become developers. Transport for London believes they can build 100,000

homes in the next decade. I think that's pretty optimistic, but that's bringing land back into the system.

Tamara Roy: Wow. By saying "becoming developers," what does that mean? Do they actually hire people who then will develop?

John McAslan: Transport for London or network rail have masses of land on the edges of their railway system, which were formerly depots or land that was just bought.

Tamara Roy: We have that, too; it's called Massport. They've got tons of land, but mostly they use it as income-producing. They realize they can sell it or give a long-term lease to developers, and they can make money off of it, rather than what you're saying, which is to be a little more focused and say, "What we need is affordable housing. Can we use this land to a good purpose for society?"

John McAslan: They are looking at effectively developing a property partnership with private developers, and I think there's something like 15 property developers who have gone on their framework, to develop their land with a combination of private and affordable, but where the concessions are such that the affordable element is significantly higher than the 25 percent envisaged. The private element is affordable because it's on land that would be regarded as secondary. Its attractiveness is it's close to public transportation.

Next is looking at bringing back into use unused space



above shop units, for instance, which is classic in Great Britain, where you have the ground-level shop. The thing is—and the [new] mayor here is probably going to be a breath of fresh air—to really come to grips with the problem. If government doesn't do it, then in the next decade people will just drift off and say we can no longer afford to live here. We'll go to Rotterdam or wherever.

Tamara Roy: That's happening here as well. What makes you hopeful about what the mayor may do? He said he's looking at 50 percent, right?

John McAslan: I think 50 percent affordable is probably a political wheeze. He'll probably not achieve it, but he's looking beyond the market sector. He understands that the issue can't be left to the market economy. It has to be tackled differently. There's all sorts of opportunities to increase density without dramatically reducing the quality of the place. It's just to get land back in the system. Find a model that gets underutilized land back into play.

Tamara Roy: Do you see the general population understanding this dynamic about housing shortages and density? Because Boston has a community-focused planning process, and that's often where some of these ideas hit a wall; even though they know there's a housing shortage, the neighbors don't want the character of their neighborhood to change. So we get stuck. Nobody wants density. Are you running into the same thing there?

John McAslan: I think we are. In London, there aren't vast pockets of land that are visible and accessible. There are tracts of land that are disconnected from urban neighborhoods. Also because the scale of development is usually midrise—four, five, six floors. The issue of scale isn't so much a problem with affordability because to build affordably, you have to build relatively low in scale. Towers are for the private sector. What's interesting, though, is you get educational institutions like Imperial College expanding their campuses on land that was low cost. Imperial built university student residences, I guess about 20 to 25 stories, in the vicinity of a neighborhood with two, three stories. Huge uproar. But it got planning permission because it was for education. This wasn't private development. It had massive opposition [but] achieved permission because the view from the local authority was that this is a world university moving into a derelict piece of land, actually an old prison, bringing jobs, valuable resources, and 5,000 students into a neighborhood that was previously dead. The architecture's pretty dreadful, very big in scale.

Tamara Roy: But there was a positive narrative about it, right?

John McAslan: That won the day. Sometimes scale and quality of building has to take second place to the regeneration of what was a pretty down-in-the-heel part of the city.

Tamara Roy: That's happening here as well. There are growth zones the mayor is working on, near transit, in some tough neighborhoods. But as long as it has the positive narrative of having a higher amount of affordable housing than a private development would, it has more likelihood of going forward.

John McAslan: Exactly. For instance, we've been looking at the Baltimore-Penn Station with Arup for a possible project. It's got about 5 acres of derelict land as part of the development scenario. When I was walking around there a month ago, I felt, well, this bit of Baltimore, [with] the station 3 miles from the city center, has got very low usage. But the neighborhood is now funky. There's a college of art. There's cultural stuff happening.

There is a point where the attractiveness of a city like London or Boston as places to invest will deplete. To hell with this; I can't afford to live here. I'm going to do something else.

Tamara Roy: There can be a new day.

John McAslan: That's where density offers a chance to create vitality. Politically, you've got to be open to the bigger picture.

Tamara Roy: One thing you're talking about, then, is trying to look at what is city- and state-owned land, which makes affordability possible, and how do they overlap with places that might be able to become dynamic corridors?

John McAslan: It can't be left to the market. It can't be left to developers. [If] developers are creative, they can see there is another model that they can make money and provide—

Tamara Roy: Something needed.

John McAslan: A provision and a need, then they're going to jump at it. That's why I'm not at all dismissive of developers. I think it's just a case of being politically open to their ability to fund and be creative about mixed-use development. Developers have a huge part to play in focusing their input into ways which also serve the need.

Tamara Roy: And empowering the governmental leadership to be doing it.

John McAslan: Exactly. ■

MEET THE MEDIANS

IN BOSTON'S OVERHEATED MARKET, WHAT ARE THE HOUSING TRADE-OFFS FOR A FAMILY OF FOUR?



THEY EARN 100% OF THE
AREA MEDIAN INCOME:
\$94,100



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TRAVELERS' HOTEL, EARNING **\$75,000**

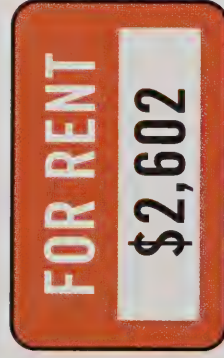
*Managers make up most of the total jobs in Massachusetts

PARENT 2 WORKS PART TIME (<30 HOURS A WEEK)
IN A RESTAURANT, EARNING **\$19,000**

*Food-service workers make up one of the fastest-growing sectors



FOR THEIR HOUSING TO CONSTITUTE THE
STANDARD 30% OF INCOME, IT WOULD HAVE
TO BE \$28,230, OR \$2,352 A MONTH



BUT AN AVERAGE 2-BEDROOM
APARTMENT IN BOSTON
RENTS FOR **\$2,602**



SO THEY ARE SHORT **\$250 A MONTH, OR \$3,000**
A YEAR—NOT INCLUDING UTILITIES,
TRANSPORTATION, AND OTHER NECESSITIES

WHAT ARE THEIR OPTIONS?

Compared to half their peers, the Medians are actually fairly well off. This *should* be a family with plenty of housing options, but this menu of strategies shows how layered the challenges are.



GO TO A GATEWAY CITY: LYNN

The Medians probably could even buy a 4-bedroom Victorian here. But they might worry about schools with overall lower test scores than Boston—or the added cost if they end up sending their children to private or parochial schools. They could rent comfortably, and accessibility to Boston isn't bad, but they will need to commute into work, increasing their expenses and time commitment.



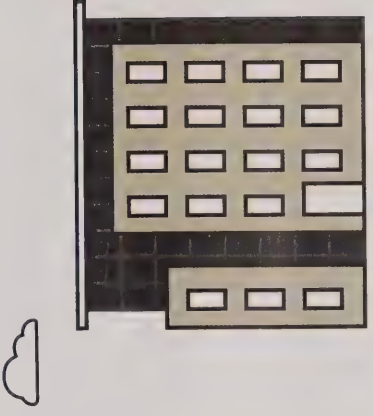
SPEND MORE THAN THE STANDARD: ARLINGTON

They can choose to be housing-cost burdened and allocate 40% or more of their income in rent. They'd get a higher-quality school system, but that would mean less money available for other expenses. One parent might even need to take a second job, leaving less family time. They could get by with one car, and there might be health benefits if one parent chooses to bike to work.



"DRIVE TILL YOU QUALIFY": MIDDLEBOROUGH

Get in your car and travel far enough from the city core until you reach a town where housing costs are low enough for a bank to approve a mortgage. In Middleborough, 87% of single-family-home transactions in 2014 and 2015 were affordable to the Medians. The family would need to consider the expense of two cars—or one car and one commuter-rail pass—but would get a more stable suburban school system.



MAKE IT WORK: BOSTON

About 25 percent of Boston housing would be affordable to the Medians, if they could find it; with a 2015 rental vacancy rate estimated at 1.4%, these units are rare. The family probably would have to settle for a smaller 2-bedroom rental and depend on shared urban amenities, such as public parks and libraries, for recreation and enrichment. Because of public transportation and shorter commutes, they could give up their car and save about \$9,000 a year.



THE THINGS THEY CARRY

In training his Nikon lens on the possessions of ordinary Chinese during the past 16 years, Huang Qingjun has borne witness to China's changing real estate landscape. His sweeping yet intimate portraits of families amid their household items—furniture and flasks, electronics and heirlooms, clothing and cosmetics—chronicle the layers of modernization that have settled over this vast country of 33 provinces. The series, called *Jiadang* ("Family stuff"), has driven the Beijing-based Huang to respect minimalism. "We own too many unnecessary things. Home is where I can rest, recharge my energy, and gain inspiration." He laments that China's rapid economic development has been a boon to citizens in urban areas while leaving behind those living in remote swaths of the country. For his part, Huang, 45, says that if a camera were to focus on the contents of his own abode, photographs and books would dominate the frame. —Fiona Luis

OPPOSITE

JIN KUIJI AND CHEN YOUZHEN;
ZHEJIANG PROVINCE, 2011

The couple lived in their house for more than 60 years. Their ancient bed was the only possession too difficult to move outdoors for the photo shoot. Jin has since passed away.







ABOVE

WANG LIPING, LI YINZHEN, AND WANG XIANGGUI; GUANGDONG PROVINCE, 2011

This fishing boat can house up to 10 people for about three months. At the time, the couple's 17-year-old daughter's dream was to attend a university in a city.

OPPOSITE (TOP)

HUANG XUFENG AND LIU YUHONG; HEILONGJIANG PROVINCE, 2009

Huang and Liu operate an inn and organize games for tourists in their hometown of Shuangfeng, a popular winter destination. Their child had to travel to another village for school.

OPPOSITE (BOTTOM)

YANG LIU; BEIJING, 2014

After Yang graduated from university and worked for 15 years, she launched her own company in 2014. Her apartment is in a residential area of Beijing. She loves art, music, golf, and travel, and has visited 20 countries.





ABOVE

BATU AQIER AND AOYONG QIMUGE;
INNER MONGOLIA, 2007

Most Mongolians have electricity, running water, and live in brick houses. This couple earns their living from more than 200 sheep and five cows. Their yurt—with a TV receiver, wind turbines, and fences—contains traditional furniture as well as modern products.

OPPOSITE

LIU MANFU; HEBEI PROVINCE, 2014
A practicing Taoist, Liu has lived on Jimingyi Mountain for more than a decade. He was 12 the first time he visited the mountain to worship Buddha. His children live in a nearby village; he prefers the quiet life.





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Principal, Leers Weinzapfel Associates Architects
2016 BSA Vice President/President Elect
30-time show attendee

Tamara Roy AIA (Right)

Principal, Stantec
2016 BSA President
15-time show attendee

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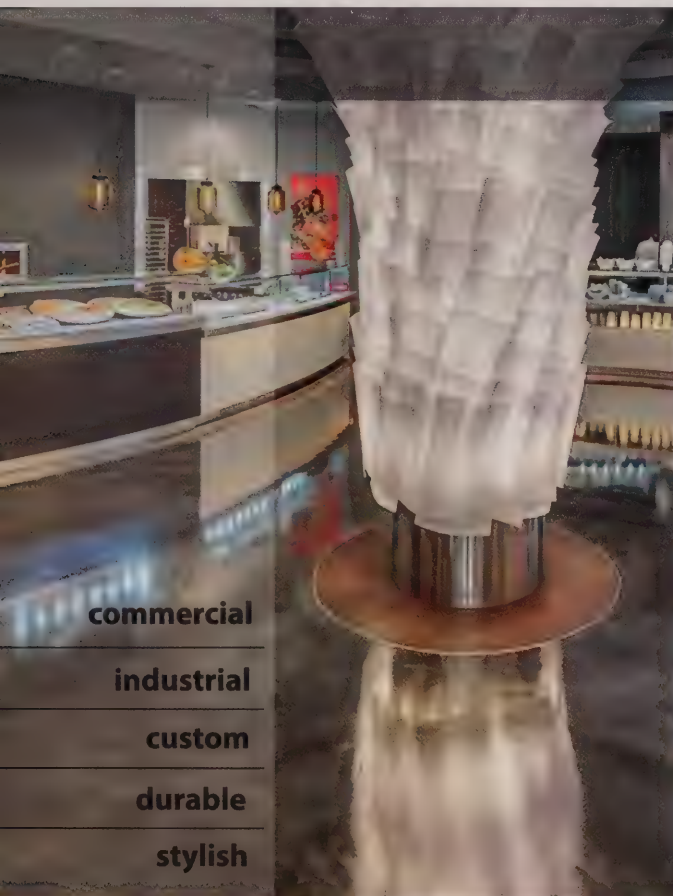
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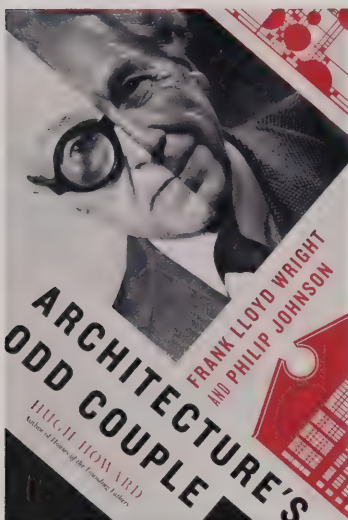
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BOOKS



Architecture's Odd Couple:
Frank Lloyd Wright and Philip Johnson
 By Hugh Howard
 Bloomsbury Press, 2016
 Reviewed by Alex Beam

Praise first: Hugh Howard is a honey of a writer. He has a fluid and descriptive prose style, and if you are looking for capsule biographies of Frank Lloyd Wright and Philip Johnson, Howard delivers both here. *Architecture's Odd Couple* treats the reader to lengthy digressions on the creation of the Museum of Modern Art, the construction of Wright's masterpiece, Fallingwater—Johnson said it “excited his bladder”—and 25 fascinating pages on the Guggenheim Museum.

So...what does the Guggenheim have to do with Johnson, who is mentioned only once in that chapter? Well, nothing. Howard gamely records that Wright's Guggenheim and “Johnson's” Seagram Building were “rising simultaneously” in Manhattan, in “an undeclared competition.” It's hard to imagine two buildings that have less to do with each other. Pier Luigi Nervi's Modernist George Washington Bridge bus terminal was being built around the same time. Was that part of the competition, too?

Howard's dubious attribution of the Seagram Building to Johnson raises a second big problem with this book, in addition to the well-scripted padding.

The author wants us to believe that The Master and The Magpie are the two “grand men of American architecture,” who would become “inextricably linked in the evolution of mid-twentieth-century architecture.”

Really? To prop Johnson up to Wright's level, Howard takes a number of liberties. It's pretty rich, for instance, to attribute the magnificent features of the Seagram Building to Johnson. In her 2013 book, *Building Seagram*, Phyllis Lambert, the daughter of Seagram's founder Sam Bronfman, wrote: “Although Mies [van der Rohe] was unquestionably the architect of Seagram, Philip's interest in what one can best call ‘atmospheric lighting’ would be the source of his major contributions to the building.”

Howard does admit to some doubts about Johnson's overall role in the Seagram project but then concludes: “Whatever Johnson's contribution to the overall look, his work... clearly elevated him to the A-list of New York architects.”

Whatever, indeed. The false equivalence that places Johnson on a plane with Wright permeates the book. Howard makes much of Johnson's elegant 1942 thesis project for Harvard's Graduate School of Design, the courtyard residence at 9 Ash Street in Cambridge. But even he concedes that the house “bore an unmistakable resemblance to a Mies design”; 9 Ash is a so-called Mies courthouse run through a Xerox machine, which didn't exist at the time.

Howard then devotes a whole chapter gassing about Johnson's Glass House in New Canaan, Connecticut. Even Johnson admitted this famous borrowing was Mies's Farnsworth House dumped on the ground, instead of magically hovering on angel-white, 5-foot-tall rolled steel girders. “The idea of a glass house comes from Mies van der Rohe,” Johnson wrote in a monograph on his glass house. “My debt is therefore clear.”

Howard makes Wright and Johnson out to be great rivals, but I don't see much evidence that the two men interacted at all. Johnson barely appears (three Index

mentions) in Meryle Secrest's 634-page Wright biography. In two of those three appearances, he is being blown off by Wright's hostile quips. The most famous one occurred just before a Wright appearance at Yale, in 1955. “Philip!” Wright shouted, seeing Johnson in the crowd. “I thought you were dead. Little Phil, an architect, all grown up, and *actually* building his houses out in the rain.”

That was payback for Johnson's suggestion that Wright was “the greatest American architect of the 19th century,” a jab that Wright never forgot nor forgave.

When Johnson visited Wright at his Taliesin headquarters in 1945, Wright murmured, “Ah, the prince visits the king.” There are, indeed, fascinating odd-couple rivalries in 20th-century architecture—Johnson and Mies, to name just one. But this is not one of them.

ALEX BEAM recently published *The Feud*, a book about modern literature's odd couple, Vladimir Nabokov and Edmund Wilson.



The Tale of Tomorrow: Utopian Architecture in the Modernist Realm
 Edited by Robert Klanten and Sofia Borges
 Gestalten, Berlin, 2016
 Reviewed by Hubert Murray FAIA

A mostly pictorial collection of cool-looking architecture from the mid-1940s to the mid-'70s, *The Tale of Tomorrow*

Many of the architects and their buildings are familiar to students of this period: Le Corbusier, Oscar Niemeyer, Eero Saarinen, Kenzo Tange, Louis Kahn, and Buckminster Fuller are represented. There are, too, the lesser knowns and under-recognized: Bruce Goff and Herb Greene working in Oklahoma and the Southwest; Zvi Hecker in Jerusalem and the Negev; John Lautner in California; Bertrand Goldberg in Chicago; and Lina Bo Bardi, an astounding Italian architect who built prodigiously in São Paulo. Then there are the ranks of the obscure, such as Jean Daladier, a French geodesic enthusiast; André Waterkeyn, architect of the Atomium, icon of the Brussels World's Fair in 1958; and Piet Blom, author of the Kubuswoningen, 38 upended cubes in Rotterdam, intended as affordable living quarters.

This confusion of meaning and expression is revealed in Klanten's introduction: "We thought we could cast a better world in raw concrete and sweeping glass and cantilever it over the edge of our flawed present, over the chasm of our human failings, and into the open, untouched air of an ideal future . . . it felt like architecture might save the world." Classic utopians such as Robert Owen, Charles Fourier,

As pure utopianism, the Matromandir (a place of meditation resembling a giant gilded golf ball set in watered lawns) at Auroville in Tamil Nadu, India, is in, but disappointingly, the collective residence for this ashram, Golconde in Pondicherry, an outstanding work of refined Modernism by Antonin Raymond and George Nakashima, is overlooked. In the United States, *Modernism* is represented by numerous individual houses (for example, Monsanto's House of the Future), but the quintessential *utopian* visions of this period, Soleri's Arcosanti in Arizona and Disney's EPCOT (the Experimental Prototype Community of Tomorrow), are inexplicably absent.

HUBERT MURRAY FAIA is an architect and planner who lives in Cambridge.

By Matthias Hollwich with Bruce Mau Design



Reviewed by Philippe Saad AIA

Without acknowledging these major difficulties, *New Aging* becomes

a fictional essay with dynamic layouts, coupled with colorful illustrations of a utopian lifestyle. The book fails to address the nuances of getting old, and it doesn't elaborate on the tools necessary to guide people through the aging process. Moreover, it doesn't define its audience, either in regard to age or generation.

In some of the illustrations and concepts, we can see that the book targets baby boomers; in other illustrations and chapters, it is Generation X that is the center of discussion (the ones who might live forever). So is the intended audience 40-year-olds who first experience signs of aging, 50-year-olds going through a midlife crisis and depression, or 60-year-olds who are anxious about the next chapter of their lives? In many instances, the book seems to be written from the perspective of, and for, a rich and bourgeois urbanite with a leisurely

schedule—someone possibly depressed, struggling to find meaning in life.

Instead of dwelling on advice about writing memoirs, downsizing responsibilities, hiring a contractor to build a room with a view, or advocating for the architectural profession by recommending people meet with architects to ensure their bedrooms are suited for a hospital bed when it is needed, I would have liked to hear more about the progressive concept of never retiring (touched upon only very briefly in one chapter). The author could have delved into why the tail end of the baby boomers and subsequent generations might shed the retirement concept entirely, which would have helped clarify *New Aging's* audience.

This book uses buzzwords superficially in an attempt to situate itself in the realm of the aging discourse. It fails on several fronts: from why one should stop denying the aging condition and

instead carefully plan the next chapters in life to embrace the inevitable, to why the upcoming generations might never retire and how to go about it. The title could have easily been reduced to its subtitle: "How to live smarter now to live better forever."

The dimensional guidelines and room checklists offered to the reader represent the book's saving graces. Condensed and well illustrated, they make accessible the architect's cheat sheets when designing for an aging population. When it comes to embracing the aging process, "Dare to ask for help" is the sentence that stands out most.

PHILIPPE SAAD AIA, a senior associate at DiMella Shaffer who has worked on the design of senior-living, multifamily residential, and higher education projects, also serves as president of the nonprofit Greater Ashmont Main Street.

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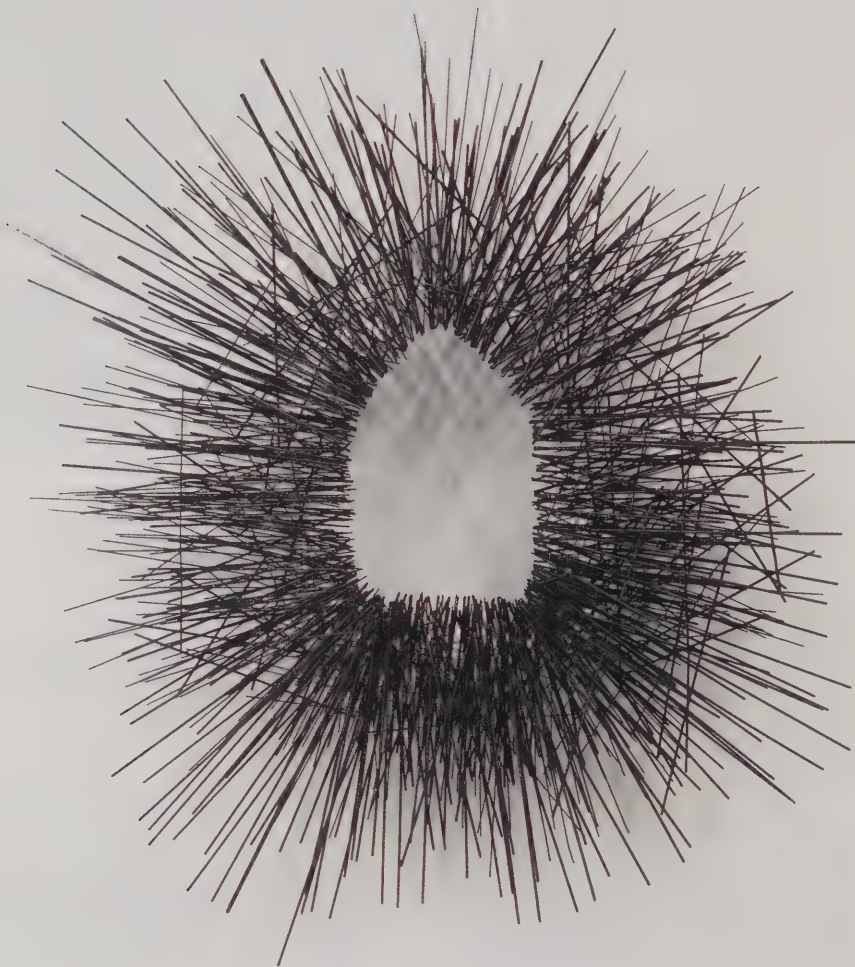

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ELEMENTS FOR A GREAT OUTDOORS

Outdoor spaces are meant to be shared. We can have an intimate conversation with a friend or a loved one, or enjoy an event with a crowd of people, and feel just as connected. Outdoor spaces should be admired for their ability to bring us together in comfort. That should be the goal of the people who design them. As the exclusive DuMor Site Furnishings representative for the northeast U.S., O'Brien & Sons provides New England's most experienced design team to assist you in making your vision a reality. Talk to us and discover why our customer relationships are as long-lasting as our installations.



WELCOME, HOME

by Jamila Bradley

Vaulted ceilings. Bay window overlooking the Charles.

Home is one of those words that can mean so many things, based on where people carry the word. It's easy to lose the definition when you are constantly faced with crucial questions like "When did a basement turn in to a garden view?" and "What evil human decided to linoleum over those beautiful hardwood floors?"

The dialogue around home can escalate quite quickly from the longitudinal, latitudinal location of your childhood bedroom to the first apartment you rent, where your name on a piece of paper signifies ownership despite the message

your milk-crate coffee table may be sending. But even that scope may not be broad enough for those forced to create home in the abstract.

The physical home is supposed to stay perfectly encapsulated in time, so that the people it belongs to can grow, change, travel, and still have the true north of *home* to always return to. The mental gymnastics required to assemble a sense of home that can be carried with you is infinitely more complex.

Imagine pouring the concrete into a foundation that sits at the base of your sternum, collecting a sense of permanence with crude bricks composed of survival and defense mechanism, watertight and windproofed by the knowledge that the corporeal home has been snatched from beneath you, commodified and then held above

your head in a way that will never again provide actual shelter.

When I first moved to Boston, I was enamored by the bricks. The context has changed for me now, having spent the time I have on the wrong side of them.

The sturdiest, most beautiful homes I have seen do not have oak doors or wraparound porches. They don't have the coffee table with a small, dark, rough patch in the wood that you can still feel with your finger from a candle you toppled at age six. They aren't filled with things and stuff, photos and embroidered pillows or a cat to wind its way between your ankles after a long day.

My true home is built on the back of the institutions, people, and circumstance that have failed me. We live in a world where developing sharp corners and jagged edges will keep you alive.

The home you carry around inside is responsible for housing the bits of yourself that you haven't weaponized or had stripped of their sparkle because of the way life can happen at you, without your consent.

Some of us have to build a home that can withstand elements much more devastating than fire and floods. A home whose walls won't be shaken by rape, trauma, violence, and fear. It's the one place that will stand when everything around you crumbles. It's the single place where you can tuck away your softness and renew your resiliency before the world strips it away, and you know it'll always be there when you return to it. The lights are always on, the key is always under the mat. And, Jesus Christ, what a view. ■

ABOVE

Vacio de una casa, David Moreno, 2013. Steel piano wire, silver weld, black paint, 25.6" × 23.6" × 7.9". Image: Courtesy of the artist



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