

THE ARCHITECTS NEWSPAPER

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COURTESY AUSTRIAN CULTURAL FORUM

RAIMUND ABRAHAM, 1933–2010

Raimund Abraham was an architect famous for his drawings and models of visionary projects, as well as buildings such as the Austrian Cultural Forum in New York City and the **continued on page 9**



STEVE MINOR

CITY TAKES OVER BROOKLYN BRIDGE PARK, GOV. ISLAND

SAFE HARBOR

Brooklyn Bridge Park finally opened to the public on March 23, but the real cause for celebration came 12 days earlier, when the state announced it **continued on page 14**

MAKI'S NEW MIT MEDIA LAB OPENS IN CAMBRIDGE



ANTON GRASSLI/ESTO

ODE TO CONNECTIVITY

The Media Lab at MIT has helped pioneer some of the last quarter-century's advances in social connectivity—wireless networks, viral communications—but since 1985, its engineers, programmers, artists, and scientists have been sequestered inside I.M. Pei's

Wiesner Building, a warren of offices and corridors walled off from the world around it.

That all changed on March 5, when the MIT School of Architecture + Planning, which oversees the Media Lab, dedicated a \$90 million building designed **continued on page 4**

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PRESERVING TRACES OF SEGREGATION IN THE SOUTH

LEGACY OF SHAME

Signs reading “white” and “colored” appear once more outside separate waiting rooms in a century-old train depot in Orange, VA. The depot reopened February 21 after a restoration by the nonprofit Montpelier Foundation, which maintains the property **continued on page 7**

CONGRESS EXPLORES DESIGNATING THE HUDSON RIVER VALLEY



JAMES BLEECKER

NATIONAL PERKS

A new bill making its way through Congress could be the first step in turning the Hudson River Valley into a national park. In March, the House approved the Hudson River Valley Special Resource Study Act, a bill that would authorize a National Park Service (NPS) study on adding a 182-mile stretch of land on both sides of the Hudson from Fort Edward in Washington County south to Westchester County. Authored by **continued on page 3**

STUDIO VISIT> GARRISON ARCHITECTS. SEE PAGE 12



COURTESY GARRISON ARCHITECTS

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INTERIORS DIRECTOR
Jeff Greif

EDITORIAL INTERNS
Rebecka Gordan
John Leimbach

CONTRIBUTORS

MARISA BARTOLUCCI / SARAH F. COX /
DAVID D'ARCY / THOMAS DE MONCHAUX /
PETER LANG / ALEXANDRA LANGE / LIANE LEFAIVRE /
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POP GOES PUBLIC SPACE

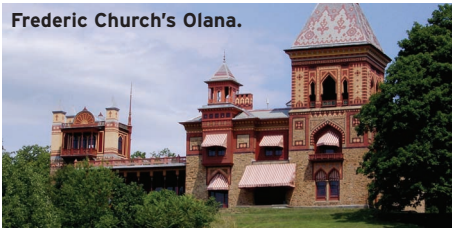
New York has long been a laboratory for ideas about the high-density American city, in particular through its pioneering efforts to invent new forms of public space. From Central Park to Robert Moses playgrounds and bonuses for public plazas in Midtown towers, the city has helped define both the form and legislative framework for public space in this country. In 1961, for example, New York created the legislation for what are now called privately owned public spaces (POPS), and the city has over 500 of these hybrid “parks.” The legislation allowed developers to create and fund public spaces in and around their buildings in exchange for more rentable square footage. These spaces—which are overwhelmingly located in Manhattan—have become an integral part of New York’s urban life.

In the comprehensive study of POPS, *Privately Owned Public Space: The New York City Experience* (Wiley, 2000), Jerold Kayden provides detailed information about their successes and failures. He points out that the program’s results have been mixed, and that “an impressive amount of public space has been created in parts of the city with little access to public parks, but much of it is not of high quality.” The book notes that while some spaces have become valuable public resources, others remain inaccessible or devoid of amenities. “In response to the perceived failure of many of these spaces and to community opposition,” the book adds, “the types of spaces permitted and their locations have been curtailed in recent years.”

In fact, a number of POPS are now threatened with privatization—always a temptation in space-hungry Manhattan. The through-block arcade that connects 56th to 57th streets at the Parker Meridien hotel is a prime example. The hotel recently began renovating the passageway, and seems to be installing seating for a new cafe in the space and discouraging public use of the area unless food and drinks are purchased from the hotel—all of which is illegal according to the rules governing POPS. In response, public space activists recently met in the hotel to protest this “taking” and raise awareness about the plight of POPS around the city. They made the point that the Department of Buildings has neither the staff nor the interest to aggressively regulate these spaces, and suggested that POPS need a group—analogueous to the Prospect Park Alliance—to help defend them.

This is an important idea, and would help make the point that planning in high-density cities must grow from the bottom up. Kayden’s book was co-authored by the Municipal Art Society and the Department of City Planning, and the movement to highlight POPS has also been supported by the Design Trust for Public Space, another organization that grows out of New York’s unique planning tradition. At a time of concern about privatization across the country, skirmishes over spaces such as this one remind us that an engaged public empowered by a strong planning tradition is still the best formula for creating a truly sustainable city. **WILLIAM MENKING**

Frederic Church's Olana.



OLANA STATE HISTORIC SITE

NATIONAL PERKS continued from front page

Congressman Maurice Hinchey, the legislation will go for a vote before the Senate in the coming months.

“We are thrilled with Congressman Hinchey’s proposal and his leadership toward the possibility that the Hudson Valley might qualify to become a National Park,” said Joan K. Davidson, chair of the Hudson-Fulton-Champlain Quadricentennial Commission. “The designation would bring federal money in. It would help with conservation of natural resources and historic properties, it would help get the river cleaned up once and for all, and it would be a tremendous boost for the right kind of tourism and economic development.” Davidson is on the steering committee of an organization called Our Hudson Tomorrow, whose goal is to create a long-term plan for the Hudson Valley. She said she expects the group’s ongoing studies on everything from environmental conditions to agriculture and marketing would be considered should the NPS study go forward.

Though support for the bill has been strong, some property rights advocates have opposed it, even though it prohibits forced acquisition of private land. In January, Carol LaGrasse, president of the Property Rights Foundation of America, testified before the Committee on Natural Resources that the region would face a significant loss of local tax revenue if the tax status of some federal, state, local, and nonprofit sites changes. Yet historic and environmental groups have applauded the measure, envisioning a more secure future for at least 25 of the 41 state parks and 14 historic sites threatened with closures due to budget cuts in the coming fiscal year.

Mark Castiglione, acting executive director of the Hudson River Valley Greenway, which also manages the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area, said these organizations and others would be positively affected by a National Park designation for the region. He said there would be a potential for heritage areas to gain more national funding, allowing them to develop more dynamic programming.

In a release from his office, Hinchey said that his proposal would require the NPS to consider the economic impact of a national park designation in addition to its environmental impact. Sections of the park, as well as national river and recreation areas, would have to encompass non-federal lands and the NPS must collaborate with private property owners to achieve its goals. The bill also has guidelines for the NPS to consider similar national park models, including the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area, a 72-mile corridor in Minnesota that, like the Hudson River Valley, includes a range of natural, historic, and economic resources.

The NPS study, which could take up to 24 months, is required before the Hudson River Valley becomes part of the national system. If the plan is found to be feasible, Hinchey said he would immediately introduce legislation necessary to make the designation.

JENNIFER K. GORSCHÉ

LETTERS

REMEMBERING GIORGINI

Thank you for publishing the article on Vittorio Giorgini (AN_05_03.17.2010). I cannot say enough about the rigor, energy, character, and care that he conveyed through his teaching. He put forth the most complete foundation of practical and theoretical challenges one is likely to ever experience—a methodology bound to last a lifetime, timeless guides, techniques, and questions; each specific enough to pursue and implement on a daily basis, yet open and impactful enough to fuel an eternal search. Rooted and practical, inspirational and tastefully sophisticated, and thoroughly authentic: He was, and still

is, a rare and welcome visionary.

GREGORY HORGAN
HORGAN BECKET
BROOKLYN

CALLING RESCUE 1

Regarding the new building for Rescue Company 3 (“To the Rescue,” AN_04_03.03.2010): In 1988, Elemental Architecture, then The Stein Partnership, designed the new headquarters for Rescue Company 1 on West 43rd Street. The new house incorporates features developed specifically for R-1, including a quick-release system allowing the company’s Zodiac res-

cue boat to be dropped from the ceiling and attached to the truck in a matter of seconds. At the opening ceremonies in 1988, Captain O’Flaherty observed that there was finally a building specifically designed to meet the needs of a modern fire rescue company.

CARL STEIN
ELEMENTAL ARCHITECTURE
NEW YORK

CORRECTION

Our Q&A with William Krisel (AN_04_03.03.2010) misidentified one of the architect’s housing projects in California. It is Corbin Palms, not Gordon Palms.

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Clockwise from top left:
The third-floor atrium;
a double-height lab space;
the first-floor atrium;
the exterior features
aluminum pipe louver screens.



ODE TO CONNECTIVITY

continued from front page

by Fumihiko Maki. A series of stacked, glass-walled volumes open to one another and to the surrounding Cambridge campus, the 163,000-square-foot structure counts as Maki's most accomplished U.S. work to date, and sets a powerful example for how architecture can promote social serendipity.

The idea of ad-hoc encounters is by now a common trope—it was the driving logic at MIT's nearby Stata Center, designed by Frank Gehry—but Gary Kamemoto, director at Tokyo-based Maki and Associates, said that inspiration for the new building actually came from one well-loved space buried within the Pei structure, also known as Building E15: a double-height, cube-shaped research volume. "E15 is almost opaque from the outside," Kamemoto said during a tour of the lab on opening day, but the structure's voluminous interior space could be counted on to spark collaboration. "They almost wanted to turn that building inside-out and expose everything."

Working with Boston-based executive architect Leers Weinzapfel and structural engineer Weidlinger, Maki created seven cube-shaped lab spaces staggered vertically around a pair of interlocking atria. This complex sectional arrangement offers striking views from one lab to another, as well as transparency to the streetscape. The double-height labs themselves are ringed by glass-fronted offices at a mezzanine level, reached by spiral staircases, and carefully detailed for maximum visual connections to the labs below.

Slicing through the central atria—which are on staggered floors to further connect the labs, cafe, and lounges at various levels within the building—are three staircases colored brightly like a De Stijl composition, while transparent elevators add to the dynamic sense of motion. Mullionless glazing throughout allows views clear through the structure, which connects on several floors to the existing Pei building.

In keeping with the mandate for openness, several public

spaces are located on the top floor, including a rounded, 100-seat lecture theater and a 3,500-square-foot multipurpose space with views to the Boston skyline. The four-story, street-side atrium is flanked by gallery spaces and notched ground-floor corners that—as at Maki's new Annenberg Public Policy Center at the University of Pennsylvania—draw the sidewalk within. Nearly the entire building, lab spaces included, is publicly accessible during daytime hours.

To adhere to local energy codes, an exterior screen of aluminum pipe louvers shades the lab spaces—an idea borrowed from traditional Japanese bamboo screens—while daylight is carefully modulated through the use of two different types of glass: clear insulated glass with a low-e coating for the screened areas, and fritted low-iron glass for the more public zones.

The School of Architecture + Planning will make use of some of the new building's facilities, including its digital fabrication lab. (In fact, the architecture department is a bit miffed that it remains

stuck in its 1916 headquarters, some distance away. "So now I'm demanding another building," Adèle Naudé Santos, dean of the School of Architecture + Planning, said with a laugh.)

Maki's design has already won praise from lab members who find it an ideal container for their work. "It's a space

that allows a lot of social interaction, and it's very minimal at the same time," said Sotirios Kotsopoulos, a researcher at the Mobile Experience Lab. "And the light is extremely beautiful." At a place where engineers are crafting the next generation of responsive environments, Maki's ode to connectivity can

be considered a breakthrough in its own right. "This is an organization that is constantly trying to reinvent itself," Kamemoto explained. "Every time we come to the building, the research changes, and the way the building is being used changes—which will keep the building alive."

JEFF BYLES



PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANTON GRASSI/ESTO EXCEPT LEFT: ANDY RYAN

WHEN THE CEILING IS TOO HIGH, PART I

"If the paintings are too large, cut them in half!" snapped the diminutive Frank Lloyd Wright when we questioned him about the low ceilings in the Guggenheim Museum way back in 1959. "Just asking," we responded. We never dared to add, "But what if the rotunda is too tall?" Of course, Eavesdrop was much younger and non-confrontational in those days.

Decades have passed, and to celebrate the museum's 50th anniversary, the Guggenheim invited two hundred artists, architects, and designers to imagine their dream interventions for *Contemplating the Void: Interventions in the Guggenheim Museum*. The invitees' much-publicized visions were offered in an online auction to raise money for exhibition programming. To our chagrin, bidding on the work by architects—Ben van Berkel, MVRDV, Greg Lynn, Snøhetta, Daniel Libeskind, among others—did not keep pace with the artists. The value of most of the lots was around \$5,000, but bids for the architects' work languished at three figures as bidding ended on March 18 (even though he used to write for us, curator David van der Leer did not spill the final beans). The auction may be over, but the works are still on view until April 28.

ROOTING FOR PETER AARON

We heard a wrenching story from Erica Stoller of Esto that we want to pass on. A few weeks ago, brilliant lensman Peter Aaron was locking up his bicycle (would that we were so responsible and health-minded) at the curb in front of the movie theater on 23rd Street at Eighth Avenue when a truck lost control and ran over him, breaking both legs while his wife watched. After long hours in surgery, Peter is doing fine and re-learning how to walk. Please send along encouragements!

WHEN THE CEILING IS TOO HIGH, PART II

Height and voids exist in real life, too. Dallas architect Bob Borson ruminates about these and other architectural perils in his thoughtful blog, *Life of an Architect* (lifeofanarchitect.com). Eavesdrop loved one post in particular, "Ceiling Heights and 'Scoreboards.'" It's the tale of a client whom Borson calls "Mrs. Pickle," who wanted every ceiling in her house to be 14 feet (closets too), because her friends' ceilings were 12 feet. This is called "score-boarding"—when the buzzer sounds, the team with the highest score (or the tallest ceiling) wins. Borson's team cried foul before time ran out and exited the game with the consolation that the higher the ceiling, the better to hang oneself. There's even mention of "FLW of the Seven-Foot Ceilings," and once again Eavesdrop has gone full-circle.

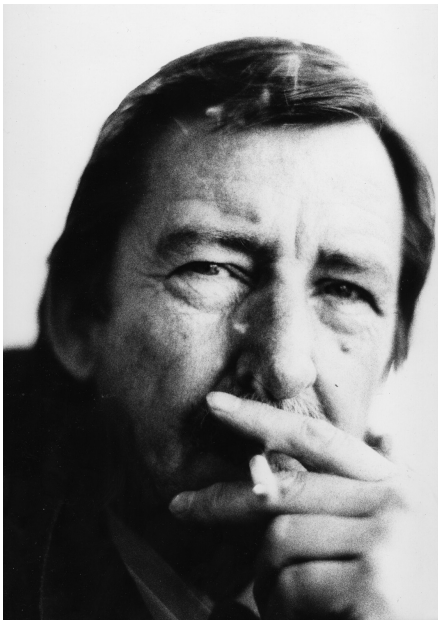
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> **THE MARK RESTAURANT**
25 East 77th Street
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Designer: Jacques Grange

The 1927 Mark Hotel in the Upper East Side Historic District reopened last summer after a major refurbishment. French interior decorator Jacques Grange, known for playfully eclectic designs for clients like Yves Saint Laurent and Princess Caroline, was chosen to breathe life into the establishment and its newly opened restaurant. For the Mark, Grange fused colorful Art Deco motifs with a sort of *Broadway Boogie Woogie* modernism. "You can see the influence of New York in all the designs I did at the Mark—it is very creative, inventive, and artistic," Grange told AN. The Mark is his first hotel, and so too the ground-floor eatery, helmed by Jean-Georges Vongerichten, is Grange's debut restaurant design. At the entrance, a curvaceous bar topped with stainless steel and accompanying amoeba-shaped tables catch the eye. Beyond lies the 120-seat dining space, where rose-colored chairs contrast with Venetian glass columns and a tiger-patterned broadloom carpet. An expansive skylight, previously hidden in a second-floor banquet room, is framed by white limestone and accented by a surrounding glass artwork, one of many pieces custom-made by contributing European designers.

REBECCA GORDAN



HALBERT NOORDA

BOB NOORDA, 1927–2010

Back in the early 1960s, Bob Noorda was the designer in Milan with whom I most wanted to work. His famous graphic designs for Milan's Metropolitana subway were of the highest standard. His elegant figure and gentle manners opened all doors of Milanese society, giving him access to the best clients. His manners were polite, subdued, what we used to call those of a real gentleman.

We started our friendship by driving to Venice every week to teach graphic design at the School of Industrial Design. That

experience and closeness cemented our friendship, and in 1964 we decided to merge offices. Then with some friends in Chicago, we started Unimark International in Milan. For a year we worked together at the same desk, each one of us on his own projects, all the time exchanging our impressions and opinions. When I left for the United States, I left my clients in his hands and he took great care, losing not a single one.

In the following years, we worked on other projects together, one being the signage for the New York City subway in 1966. I remember when Bob came to New York. He spent every day underground, recording pedestrian traffic flow in order to determine where signs should be placed. I remember how we decided all details, from typeface to type spacing, color-coding to implementation. Bob had a systematic mind, and it was always a pleasure to see logic prevail over emotional issues to deliver the best possible solution. His work was extremely civilized, his Dutch origin reflecting that culture and bringing a quality of sparseness and essentiality to all his work. Bob's excellent sense of typography could be seen in the endless lists of publications designed by him through the years. His wife Ornella, a prolific designer, was a complementary presence in his life, bringing a witty and fresh component to his sober style. When Unimark closed its U.S. offices, Bob kept the Milan office going, eventually under his ownership for many more years.

Bob was a designer who contributed enormously to the recognition of our profession, a noble person to whom we designers are all indebted. His example will remain a beacon for us all. **MASSIMO VIGNELLI**

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LONG-AWAITED RESTORATION WORK COMMENCES ON LOUIS KAHN'S TRENTON BATH HOUSE



The central atrium and its flanking concrete-block pavilions, shown prior to restoration. 55 years.

The road to restoration has been long and full of potholes. In 1984, largely through the effort of architectural historians Susan Solomon and Lydia Soo, the Bath House was placed on the National Register of Historic Places. Time and poor upkeep had taken a toll on the facility, however, and in 1996 the JCC announced plans to demolish some of the adjacent day-camp pavilions. The announcement sparked international protest from groups who thought all of Kahn's work would be erased. In 1997, both Preservation Philadelphia and the New Jersey chapter of the AIA placed the Bath House on their endangered buildings lists. In addition, a delegation that included members of those organizations, Preservation New Jersey, and Keast & Hood—the project's original structural engineers—as well as Michael Mills of FMG, approached JCC to talk about restoration options. "What we told them was that there were grants available," said Mills.

JCC applied for and won a grant from the New Jersey Historic Trust (NJHT) that provided funds to prepare a preservation plan. FMG drew up the plans in 2003, but before work could get underway, another obstacle presented itself. In 2005, with its community in the area dwindling, JCC decided to move operations to West Windsor and sell the facility. Once again, the fate of the Bath House was up in the air. To the rescue came Mercer County. The county executive, Brian Hughes, and planning director Donna Lewis, who had taken her children to the JCC, expressed their commitment to architecture by acquiring the site and transferring ownership to Ewing

Township. The township renamed the facility the Ewing Senior and Community Center, and received a \$750,000 matching grant from NJHT. Finally, FMG was poised to put its preservation plans into effect.

"The bath house is in pretty rough shape," explained Mills. "Part of it has to do with the materials used and the design. Part of it has to do with what happened after Kahn was let go." A Greek cross in plan, the Bath House consists of four concrete-block pavilions topped by pyramidal, wood-framed roofs that surround a central open-air atrium. While the roofs are in good shape and will only be resurfaced in the black tiles of the original design, the concrete-block walls have not fared as well. In order to let light and air into the interior of the pavilions, the roofs neither shelter the walls nor are outfitted with gutters. Kahn wanted water to run over them freely, a poetic idea, but one damaging to the concrete, which is stained and coated with moss and mold. To combat future water damage, FMG is rebuilding the walls with a water-resistant coating and placing gutters discreetly along key areas of the roofs.

The restoration will also replace several elements of the original design that have been removed over time, including a mural at the entrance, as well as a set of gates that will be fabricated from Kahn's drawings. A shallow pond that once existed at the center of the atrium will be recalled in the form of a circular, at-grade pebbled paving element. In addition, a snack bar that was added to the side of the Bath House after Kahn's services were relinquished will be removed and replaced at a more appropriate location by a new snack bar designed by FMG. **AARON SEWARD**

BATHING BEAUTY

In the war to preserve America's midcentury architectural heritage, another battle has been won. Contractors are now busy in south New Jersey restoring one of Louis Kahn's early works, the Trenton Bath House. Completed in 1955 for the Trenton Jewish Community Center (JCC), the Bath House services an Olympic-sized outdoor swimming pool and day-camp pavilions, also designed by Kahn. The structure is an early example of the classical geometries and powerful spatial ensembles that Kahn would develop further in later works such as the Richards Medical Center at the University of Pennsylvania, the Salk Institute in California,

and the Kimbell Art Museum in Texas.

Overseen by Princeton firm Farewell Mills Gatsch Architect (FMG), the preservation effort will return the building to its original condition and add a new snack bar and picnic area sympathetic to Kahn's original master plan, which envisioned an entire campus for the JCC but was only partially realized before Kahn left the project. (A community center building was later designed by architects Kelly & Gruzen, and completed in 1962.) Construction on the Bath House is expected to wrap up in July, but the pool will open on Memorial Day as it has done for the past



PHOTO © ANDREW LOXLEY

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JOHN STRADER/MONTEPIELER FOUNDATION

LEGACY OF SHAME continued from front page for the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and which made the unconventional decision in 2009 to preserve the original design in an attempt to bring to light the realities of segregation.

Built in 1910 on what was once James Madison's estate, the Montpelier depot followed the standard plan used by southern railway companies at the time, with a wall separating the "white" waiting room from the "colored" one. Embedded in the midpoint of the wall was the station agent's booth, from which the agent could look out into each waiting room through a different window. The depot was desegregated in the 1960s, and after train service ended in 1974, the building was taken over by the post office, which removed the wall, converting the "colored" waiting room into a lobby and the "white" one into a storeroom.

The Montpelier Foundation's decision to replace the dividing wall was motivated by a desire to be truthful about the history of the depot and of the region, said Tom Chapman, research coordinator for the foundation. "We realized, looking around us in the local community, a lot of those segregated spaces that existed are hidden. They've

been renovated or covered over and you wonder, why is this door here? Now we can tell that story," Chapman said. The divided waiting rooms are accompanied by a plaque explaining the history of the depot and of civil rights in America.

Professor Robert R. Weyeneth, a professor of Public History at the University of South Carolina who specializes in the preservation of segregated architecture, pronounced himself "thrilled" with the example of Montpelier. "The tendency so far has been just not to think about it or possibly to erase it, by covering up the 'colored' balcony in a movie theater, for example," Weyeneth said.

The few exceptions mostly come from Florida and Georgia, which Weyeneth has dubbed "pioneers" of this approach to preservation. "To the extent there has been interest in this general topic, it's usually in the 'heroic' architecture of segregation," he said, citing the recent example of the Rosenwald Schools, a group of southern schools which served as anchors in their rural African American communities, and which the National Trust is spending over \$4 million so far to restore. "That's the easy segregationist architecture to preserve. The tough stuff that is so sensitive is the architecture of white supremacy," Weyeneth said.

Public reaction to Montpelier's decision was mixed at first. "Putting the signs above the door brought out some very pointed comments," Chapman said. "Some people said, 'I've been there and done that, and I don't want to see it again.' And some people thought we were just doing it for shock value." But many changed their minds after the foundation explained their rationale. "They may not all be happy with it, but they understand what we're trying to do," Chapman said. **JULIA GALEF**



FRIENDS OF MOYNIHAN STATION

GROUNDWORK MOVES AHEAD FOR MOYNIHAN STATION

SOM Back on Board

SOM has taken up the conductor's hat once again for Moynihan Station, the decades-overdue expansion of Penn Station championed by the late Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan. The Empire State Development Corporation announced on March 18 that it has selected SOM to recommence design work for the \$267 million first phase of the project, which is limited to infrastructure and platform expansion, leaving a major renovation of the McKim, Mead & White-designed Farley Post Office to a future date.

The current phase includes an expanded concourse for Amtrak below the post office, new connections between platforms and concourses, and access to the station west of 8th Avenue. While this may seem a modest start, SOM principal-in-charge

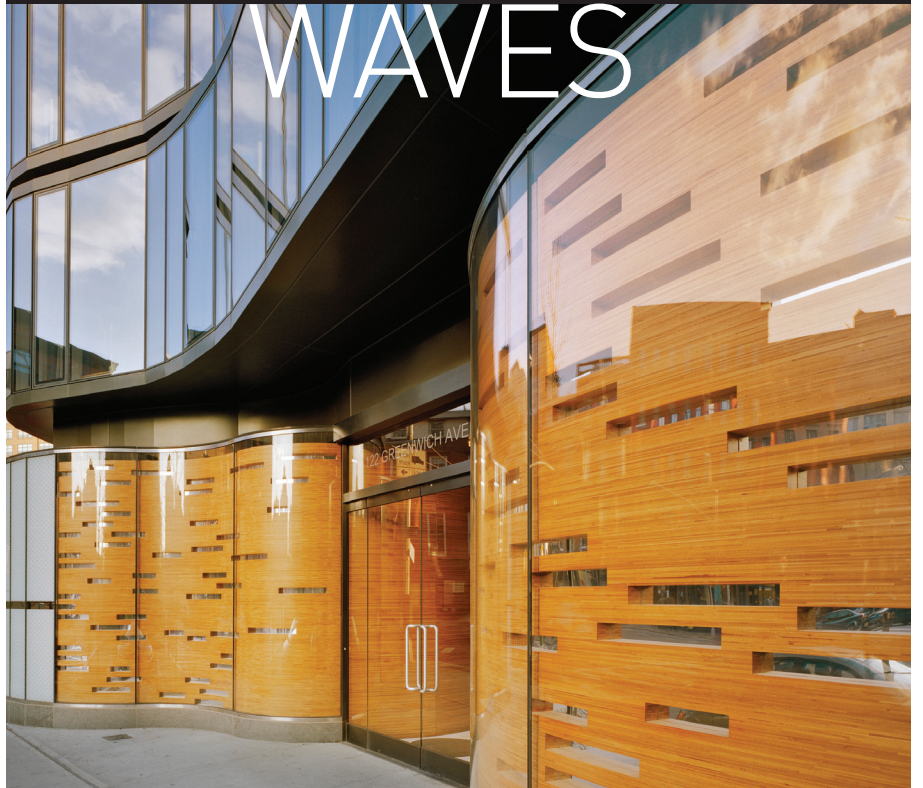
Mark Regulinski said that it will have a huge impact on user experience. "What the state calls phase one is really an enabling project, and it will set the foundation for everything to come after," he said.

The firm has worked on Moynihan Station on-and-off since 2001, when it unveiled plans that included a vaulted atrium between the 1912 post office and its 1934 annex to the west—known to some as "the potato chip"—which drew mixed reactions. James Carpenter Design Associates was brought on in 2005 to rethink the signature glass elements, and Carpenter tapped HOK to help with architectural and planning aspects of the project. After developers Vornado and the Related Companies became involved, they rehired SOM, but the project was eventually shelved.

Then last September, Amtrak expressed renewed interest in moving across 8th Avenue into the Farley building, and the state brought HOK back to the drawing board, as the firm has a longstanding relationship with the train operator. "HOK did all the design work that brokered this deal," HOK principal Wayne Striker said, referring to Amtrak's return to the Farley building. (HOK was vying for the phase-one work, but SOM landed the job, as its drawings were nearly complete from its time working for the developers.)

The current phase is being funded in part by \$83 million in stimulus money secured by Senator Charles Schumer. There will be no design work within the Farley building, however, which still lacks funding or a definitive plan. **MATT CHABAN**

MAKING WAVES



Greenwich Village has a current all its own, so architect **Kohn Pedersen Fox** wanted a free-spirited façade for new condo **One Jackson Square**. More than just eccentric expression, the undulating walls maximize the site's allowable floor area in two separate zoning districts. Realizing a design this fluid demands an extraordinary level of precision. With no two window panels alike, high-tech computer modeling needed old world craftsmanship to produce the desired metal and glass waves—making the new facade at Greenwich and 8th as unique as its time-honored neighbors.

Transforming design into reality

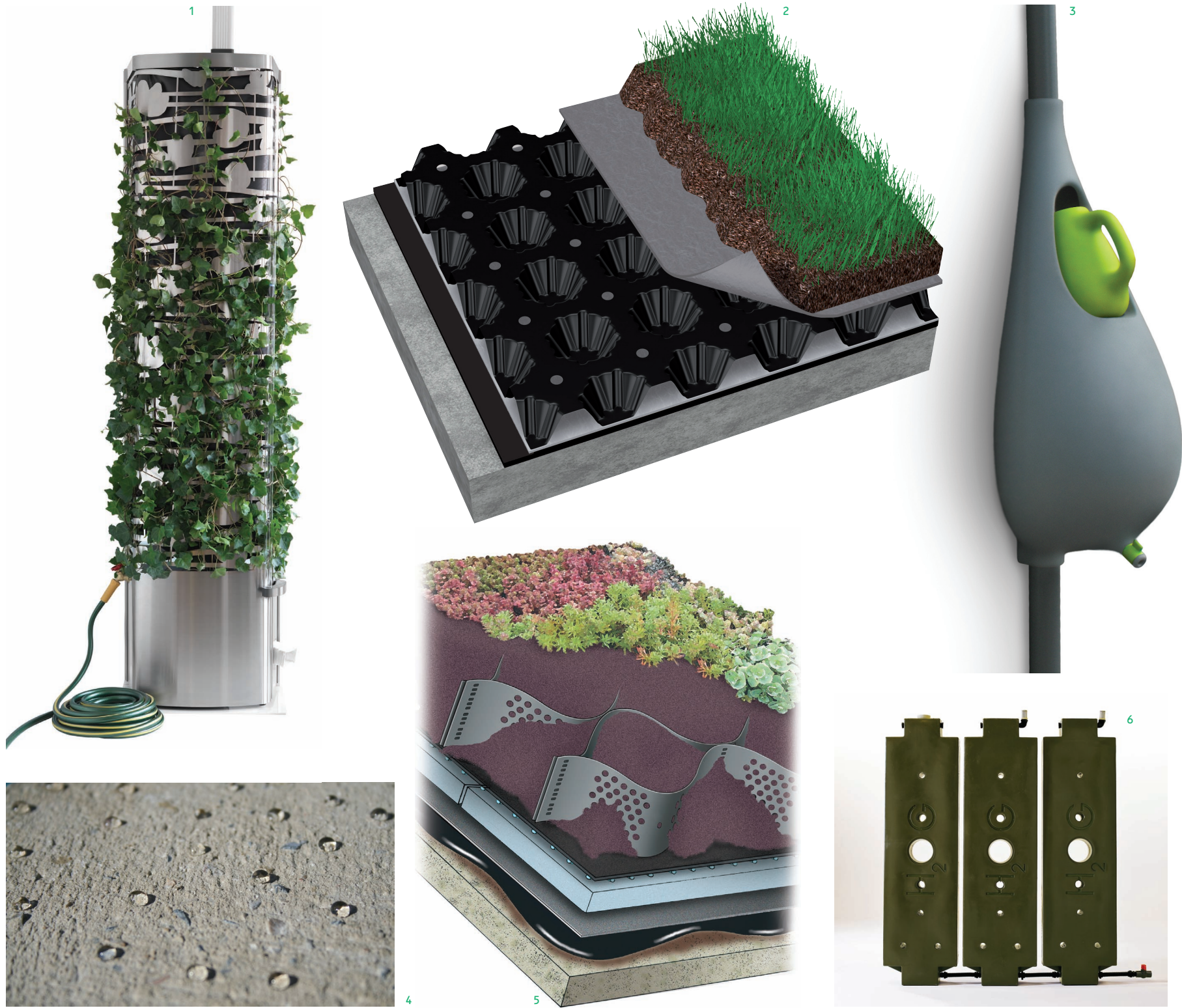
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Architect: Bill Pedersen,
Kohn Pedersen Fox
Associates
Photo: © Paúl Rivera

THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER APRIL 7, 2010



IT'S TIME TO GET SMART ABOUT
SAVVY RAINWATER MANAGEMENT.
BY JENNIFER K. GORSCHÉ

WATERSHED MOMENT

1 **CISTA**
MOSS SUND ARCHITECTS
AND FIGFORTHY

Born out of a collaboration between Toronto-based architecture firm MOSS SUND and industrial designers figforth, the CISTA is an 8-foot-high stainless-steel cistern that holds up to 100 gallons of rainwater. Its vertical arrangement and raised tank create the water pressure needed to operate an attached hose, and a compartment in the base conceals space for a climbing plant that can be trained up the exterior trellis. The system, still a prototype, can expand horizontally or vertically. www.mosssund.com

2 **DELTA-FLORAXX**
COSELLA-DÖRKEN

A new membrane from Cosella-Dörken is a combined water retention system and drainage board for garden roofs. Delta-Floraxx, made of a high-density plastic, substitutes for a gravel drainage layer, reducing the height and weight of materials and making it appropriate for green roof retrofits. The octagonal dimples give the layer a high compressive strength and can retain up to 22 fluid ounces of water per square foot, while allowing surplus water to drain out the bottom. www.cosella-dorken.com

3 **A DROP OF WATER**
BAS VAN DER VEER

Young Dutch designer Bas van der Veer designed A Drop of Water as a prototype, but expects to soon put the rainwater collection pod into production. The raindrop-shaped barrel integrates a watering can, which is filled by a drainage pipe attached to any exterior structure. Once the can is filled, surplus water overflows into the rest of the reservoir and can be used to refill the can via a tap in the barrel's base. www.basvanderveer.nl

4 **WATERPROOFING ADMIXTURES**
HYCRETE

Hycrete waterproofing admixtures make concrete hydrophobic, greatly reducing its water absorption. The integral waterproofing system can work in conjunction with membrane waterproofing systems, adding protection to vegetated roofs. The Cradle to Cradle-certified material can make membrane installation easier by reducing concrete's drying time after rainfall. For applications like plazas and podium decks, the admixture can eliminate the need for a membrane system altogether, lowering installation costs by more than 30 percent. www.hycrete.com

5 **EXTENSIVE GARDEN ROOFS, SLOPED**
AMERICAN HYDROTECH

Hydrotech's sloped garden roof soil stabilizer allows a green roof to be installed with a pitch up to 45 degrees, not only permitting vegetation to be installed on a broader range of rooftops, but also increasing visibility of the roof from below. The company's Extensive systems are designed for safe installation where structural capabilities are a concern, incorporating low-maintenance plants in as little as 3 inches of soil. www.hydrotechusa.com

6 **GROUND HOG RAINWATER HOG**

Another use has been found for the award-winning Rainwater HOG. For several years the modular tanks have been used to harvest rainwater for irrigation, household use, and emergency water supplies, reducing a building's city water use up to 50 percent. Now, under the name Ground HOG, the tanks can be used as a thermal mass unit, outperforming concrete of the same area. Individual Ground Hogs, six feet tall and one-and-a-half feet wide, cost \$250 each. For orders of 20 or more, the units can be produced in any color. www.rainwaterhog.com

IMAGES COURTESY RESPECTIVE MANUFACTURERS



DENNIS GILBERT/VIEWSTO

RAIMUND ABRAHAM, 1922-2010 continued from front page Musikerhaus in Hombroich, Germany, now nearing completion. As a teacher, he profoundly influenced several generations of colleagues and students, primarily at The Cooper Union, where he was a major intellectual force for 30 years. Born on July 23, 1933, in Lienz, Tyrol, Austria, he died in a car crash in Los Angeles on March 4, 2010.

Lebbeus Woods
Professor

The Cooper Union School of Architecture
Let us not eulogize Raimund Abraham too quickly or too glibly. He was a deeply complex man, alive with struggles within and without, who cannot be summarized or comfortably contained in a few paragraphs. He affected the lives of many around him—students, colleagues, friends, a former wife, a companion, lovers, and his children—with the power of his vision, his work, and his presence. His charisma was not of any ordinary kind—that is, of the glossy sort that accompanies today's ubiquitous celebrities. Rather, it was at once frightening and inspiring, heavy with moral weight, yet uplifting and liberating as an example of the creative potential of an individual.

"I'm a fundamentalist," he liked to say, distancing himself from all transient forms of fashionable post-modern layering, allusion, and superficial complexity, in order to align himself with a mythic realm of origins. For him, "breaking the earth with a plow was the first act of architecture." At other times, the implement was a shovel, or a stick. In the same way that such a supposedly simple act was originally accompanied with rituals, prayers, and deep feelings about the troubled bond between the human and the natural, making architecture was, for him, always sacred. Building, he believed, necessarily violates nature's wholeness, and must be done with a full awareness of consequences. Working with a consciousness of origins endows architecture with a sense of those consequences, but also with an enduring meaning, and a certain kind of severe beauty characteristic of all his work. Knowing the origins is not, however, a matter of scientific or scholarly study, but rather of poetic imagination, the basis of all mythic worlds, shaped by long and deep reflection on the nature of things. His life was devoted to originality and its inherent authenticity.

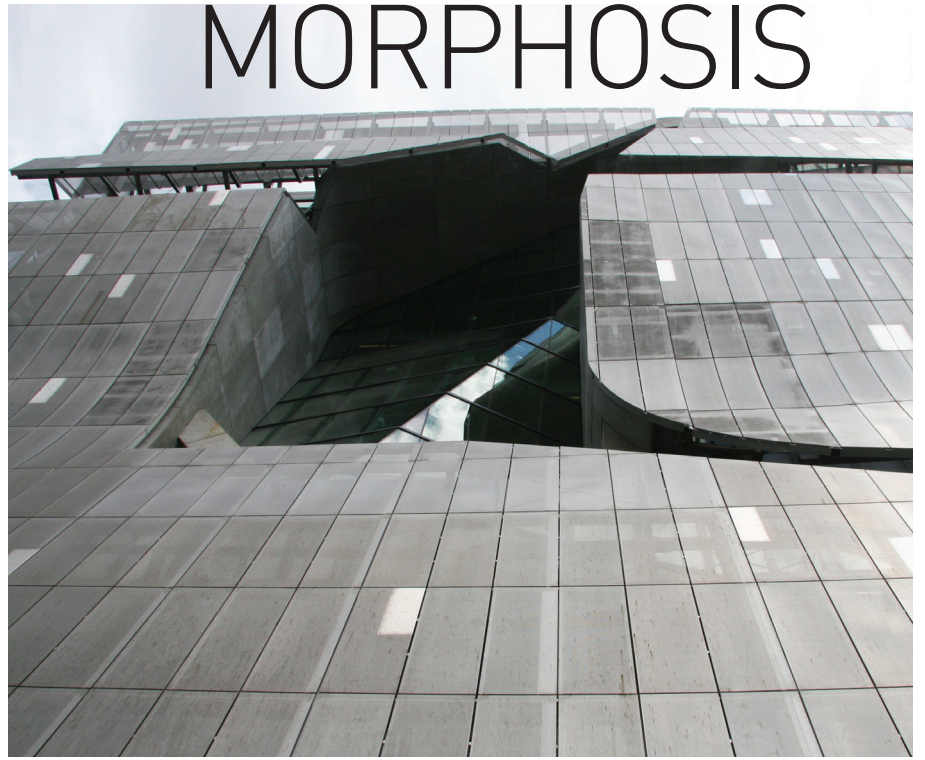
Raimund's creative output was not vast. In a published interview, he was once asked what he was working

on. "Nothing," he said, "I spend a lot of time sitting in cafes, reading the newspapers." This was not altogether untrue. He worked when he had a project, or an idea, worth working on. He liked to read, talk with friends, cook, and watch baseball. He never ran a corporate office that he would have to support by chasing after building commissions. When he did work on a building project, a well-chosen competition, or a series of drawings, it was with great intensity and focus. If he needed help he would enlist the most talented and dedicated of his students, scrupulously paying them but also embracing them as members of his extended architecture family. Those periods of intensity were glorious for him and he would invite colleagues to his studio, excitedly showing them the latest work. It never disappointed in its originality, precision, and visual power.

"Architecture," he said, "must always confront a program," by which he meant particulars of the human condition, from the project site, to the prescribed uses of space, to the nature of the materials for building. "Confront" was the keyword in this statement, because he believed that architecture was not merely the attempt to satisfy people's desires or needs, nor the conventions imposed by history and culture, but what he sometimes called "a collision" between these and the architect's worldview and poetic vision. None should be compromised; rather, they should coexist in a state of creative tension. "Architecture is not a profession," he would say, "it is a discipline." He knew that in the crisis of creative work, it is discipline alone—an adherence to hard-won personal principles—that guides the architect through uncertainties and doubts to a decisive conclusion.

Raimund's was a life exemplary in its integrity, its commitment to architecture, and its extraordinary achievements, one that will resonate far into the future. His sudden death is tragic because he was in his prime, with much great work remaining to be done, and the resources to accomplish it fully at his command.

METAL-MORPHOSIS



The Cooper Union's new academic building by **Morphosis** architect **Thom Mayne** is not only rekindling the school's ability to inspire new generations of art, architecture and engineering students, its dynamic, shimmering form is igniting the imaginations of all who pass through Cooper Square as well. Much of this energy is owed to the unique transparency of the building's steel-and-glass double skin wall system, reducing solar gain while bringing to light the ability of architects, and of ornamental metal, to transform design aspirations into reality.

Transforming design into reality

For help achieving the goals of your next project, contact the Ornamental Metal Institute of New York.

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Architect: Morphosis
Associate Architect:
Gruzen Samton
Structural Engineers:
John A. Martin & Associates;
Goldstein Associates
Photo: © Joseph David

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WILLIAM RAWN
ASSOCIATES
WITH ARUP AND
JOSEF GARTNER



ALL PHOTOGRAPHS ROBERT BENSON PHOTOGRAPHY



Cambridge, Massachusetts is proud of its highbrow educational legacy. Even the local public library wears the scholastic mantle with honor, dubbing itself The People's University—a place where everyone, including the city's large immigrant community, can come to better his mind with an improving book or two. Many libraries these days function more like community centers—someplace to drop off the kids to use computers—than as places of intellectual pursuit, but not so here. In 2003, when

Head Librarian Susan Flannery commissioned William Rawn Associates to design a 72,000-square-foot expansion to the 27,000-square-foot heritage structure, she had a very clear mandate: As soon as you enter, you should know it's a building about books and reading.

In addition to the expansion, the overall project included a renovation by Ann Beha Architects of the library's existing facility, which was designed by Van Brundt and Howe in 1889, and an adjacent landscaped park

atop an underground parking facility designed by Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates. Along with the librarian's mandate, Rawn considered both of these elements when developing his addition. To contrast the heavy stone nature of the older structure and open the expansion to the park, the firm decided their building should incorporate a transparent facade that would both allow visitors to enjoy the open space of the park and welcome passersby with a vision of the accessibility of knowledge.

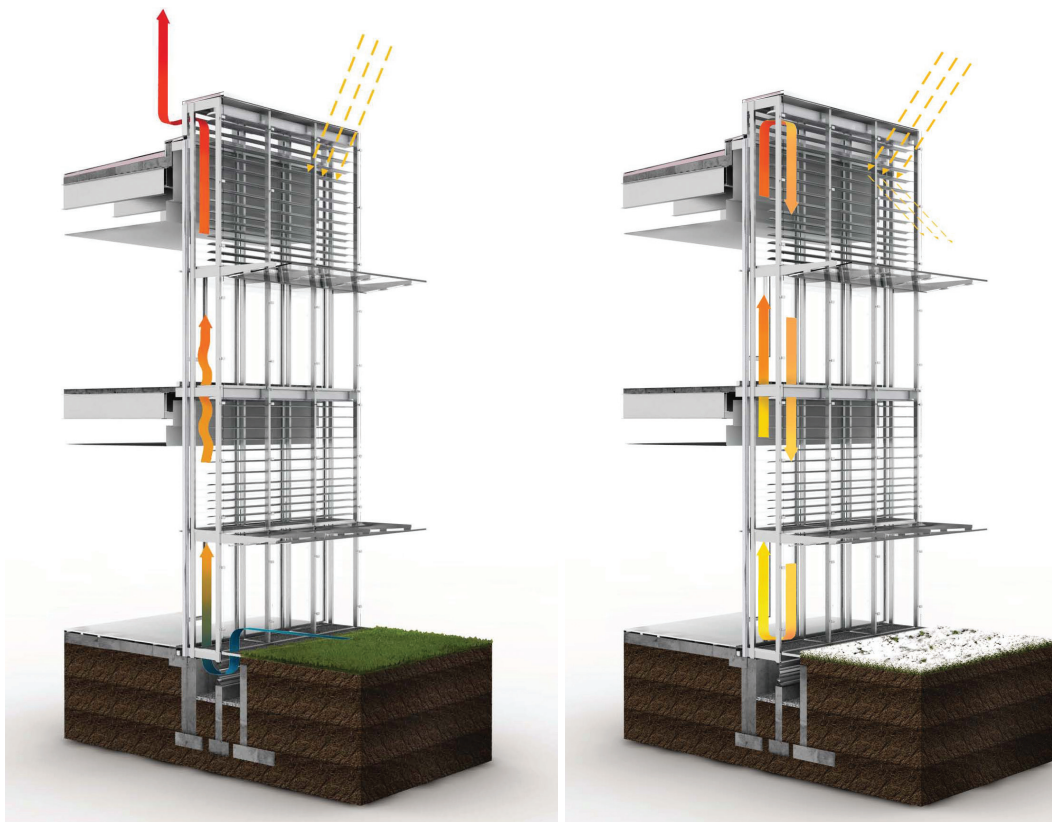
In a cold climate such as Cambridge's, a transparent building skin involves serious challenges in terms of comfort and sustainability. To manage these, the architects clad the addition with a double curtain wall. Very few examples of this exterior treatment existed in the United States, so Rawn and his team had to tour Europe to really see what possibilities the system offered. They took in many variations, some very simple—just a yawning cavity—others replete with bells and whistles like moving shades and interfaces with the HVAC system. Since the Cambridge Public Library is a municipal institution with a minimal maintenance budget, the architects decided on as few fussy features as possible.

Rawn worked with the engineers at Arup and the German exterior systems manufacturer Josef Gartner to tailor a double wall that fit the library's needs. The basic makeup is one layer of glass, a 3-foot air space, then a second layer of glass in an assembly 42 feet high and 180 feet long. The outer layer of glass consists of half-inch-thick monolithic tempered low-iron panels either 8 or 12 feet high. The inner layer is composed of insulated glass units with a quarter-inch outer lite, a half-inch air space, and another quarter-inch of glass, all in thermally broken aluminum

Day and night, the transparency of the library's double glass wall puts books on display (above) and allows daylight to pass deep into the interior (below). The wall is externally vented in summer, keeping things cool, while in the winter it traps an insulating pocket of air (diagrams). External shades and internal louvers help to mitigate glare (facing page).

frames that go from floor to floor, a distance of 17 or 20 feet, depending. The wall's gravity load is entirely supported by a ladder truss of 3-inch-by-5-inch tube steel sunk into concrete footings, though the truss ties back to the building's floor plates for lateral stability. In the summer, the cavity between these layers of glass is opened at the bottom and top for a natural chimney effect, allowing air to flow in below, where it is heated by the sun, and then vent out the top. In winter the vents are closed, holding in air, where it absorbs the sun's warmth and acts like a blanket around the building.

The architects pulled the building's columns 15 feet back from the perimeter, leaving a cantilevered slab to meet the wall and provide ample unobstructed space for seating. This also takes advantage of the high degree of transparency afforded by the double wall. Something had to be done about the glare, however,



but without hampering views. The answer was a combined system of internal horizontal louvers that shade the top half of the wall, and an external fin of tinted glass that shades the lower half. The louvers are 12 inches deep, one-sixteenth-inch thick, and include microperforations. These leave them 20 percent

open, allowing some dappled light through and bouncing the rest off the ceiling to cast light further into the interior. The louvers are always down, though they can be lifted for maintenance and window washing. They can also be tilted to optimize performance from zero degrees on a horizontal plane to 33 degrees

down and forward. During the winter when the sun is low on the horizon, they are always tilted. In the summer, the louvers are horizontal in the morning until two o'clock, tilt from two until six, and then return to horizontal for the remainder of the evening. **AS**

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ANIMAL SHELTER



James Garrison looks for “mutually reinforcing ideas” in his projects, meaning that program and environmental systems are highly coordinated in order to drive the form-making. But his firm’s projects don’t look overly diagrammatic or weighted with gadgets—these clean, modern buildings are of their time without looking overly trendy, something Garrison prizes.

His mid-sized, Dumbo-based firm works at a variety of scales, including institutional work like the recently completed renovation of the Syracuse University School of Architecture (Garrison’s alma mater) and residence halls at Bard College, as well as private residential work, both houses and apartments. The firm has also become known for sustainability and for prefabricated and modular construction. But Garrison is not doctrinaire in applying any one principle or building technique. His interest is in problem-solving and building as intelligently as possible. At Syracuse, Garrison analyzed the Beaux Arts building and uncovered a natural ventilation system already built into the structure that made air conditioning largely unnecessary. His work was as much about peeling away obstructions as it was about inserting new spaces inside.

In recent years, and especially through the recession, the firm has worked for the General Services Administration, on a border-crossing station along with other current projects, as well as for New York City’s Department of Design and Construction (DDC) and a variety of nonprofit organizations. “They are very committed to making architecture,” he said of the DDC. The same could be said of Garrison, an uncommonly thoughtful architect.

ALAN G. BRAKE

ANIMAL SHELTER
STATEN ISLAND

This animal shelter, commissioned by the DDC, is a simple building with a versatile polycarbonate skin. The goal of the shelter is to prepare animals for adoption, and the architects put a “cat wall,” at the entrance to act as a visible invitation from the outside. The skin, while it admits light and therefore some heat, has an R-value twice that of glass. The doughnut-shaped building has a heat-exchange system and the generous ventilation required for animal shelters.

KOBÉ COTTAGE
ALBION,
MICHIGAN

This house may look like an expensive second home, but in fact is a guesthouse for families of children enrolled in a nonprofit boarding school for troubled youth. The house plan, two bars that meet in the center, allow two bedrooms to be at opposite ends of the very small building. The modular house cantilevers over a hillside, offering privacy and dramatic views of the site. With a warm wood interior and a Cor-Ten exterior, the cottage blends in with its forested surroundings.

AMBASSADOR’S
RESIDENCE
SAMOA

Simple materials of concrete, steel, stucco, and wood contrast with generous spaces in this residence made for diplomatic entertaining. The rippled roofline, which Garrison said was inspired by vernacular boat design, accommodates heavy downpours and allows for ample ventilation. Three gardens of various sizes are integrated into the plan, and roomy porches, accessible by vast glazed sliding doors, help knit the five-bedroom house into the landscape.

NET ZERO HOUSE
BROOKLYN

This house in Red Hook, for an environmentally committed client, is expected to generate more electricity than it uses. The modular house is heavily insulated and has a solar array on the roof, solar hot water heaters, and a green roof over the garage. Its verticality allows for views of New York Harbor. The shifted boxes break up the massing, while also creating outdoor spaces that include a large covered porch at the top level.

RESTORATION PLAZA
BROOKLYN

Founded as a community development and social services organization in the 1960s, Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration occupied a 1970s-era courtyard plaza that needed a facelift. Garrison began by removing a preserved facade, which unfortunately looked like an abandoned building, to open up the courtyard space to the street. They wrapped the courtyard in glazed panels to create a “Walk of Fame” honoring the organization’s activities and founders. New lighting, a video projection screen, and new signage complete the outreach design program.

KOBE COTTAGE



AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE



NET ZERO HOUSE



RESTORATION PLAZA



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SAFE HARBOR continued from front page

would hand over full control of the park to the city, with a similar move in the works for Governors Island. When both deals are complete, it will give the Bloomberg administration sole authority over hundreds of acres of burgeoning public parkland.

The end of the city-state power-sharing arrangement has been more than a year in the making, and will release both projects from the contentious politics of Albany. In exchange, the city is expected to relinquish its stake in the downsized expansion of the Javits Convention Center, which is currently underway. Roughly \$50 million in city money dedicated to that project will shift to Brooklyn Bridge Park, while \$30 million will go toward completing the plans for Governors Island.

"Now everything can fall into place much more quickly," Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg said at the ribbon-cutting for Brooklyn Bridge Park. "This agreement streamlines oversight of planning, maintenance, and operations." Regarding the handoff of Governors Island, he added that discussions were making progress. "We're working on a deal, and I'm optimistic it will be reached soon," Bloomberg said.

The biggest issue still facing the parks is financing. Even when the economy was good, both Brooklyn Bridge Park and Governors Island were proposed with the expectation that they would be self-sustaining. The city and state would put up most of the money for construction, but finding a way to fund regular maintenance was up to the state authorities charged with creating the parks.

The Brooklyn Bridge Park Development Corporation came up with an innovative if controversial approach. A handful of sites along the park's six piers would be given over to residential or commercial development, and payments in lieu of taxes would be made to the park conservancy to cover maintenance.



Brooklyn Bridge Park's Pier 1.

Because a few acres of the 85-acre park would be used for private development, it drew outcry from many locals and was a leading issue in a 2008 state senate race. The Bloomberg administration has now promised to set up a commission to look at alternative funding streams, which could include a tax on local homeowners, fees from vendors, and a ticketed ice rink and floating pool.

Governors Island has similar proposals in the works to develop a portion of its 150 acres, but due to an agreement with the federal government, which sold the park to the state for \$1 in 2003, these cannot be profit-making institutions. Ideas such as dorms and a bioscience park have been floated as alternatives.

Pier 1 has opened at Brooklyn Bridge Park, and Pier 6, which is largely a playground, is only a few weeks away. Michael Van Valkenburgh, the park's designer, said he expected "to just keep on building" now that governance issues have been solved. Phase two is scheduled to begin this summer.

The plans for Governors Island remain less clear, though a model of the park has been under lock and key on the island for almost a year. One of the designers said that because the city approved the plans, which then got bogged down in Albany, they could possibly be unveiled as soon as an announcement is made.

MC

AT DEADLINE

NOUVEL SHRINKING

When Jean Nouvel proposed his 1,250-foot *Torre de Verre* next to MoMA, the French architect was eager to create the next landmark on the city's skyline. When the City Planning Commission instead limited the tower's height to 1,050 feet, some feared the project might be abandoned. Nouvel confirmed to CultureGrrl blogger Lee Rosenbaum on March 24, at a luncheon for his National Museum of Qatar, that he was still working on the project but it would probably be "not months" (presumably years) before new designs are released, pending satisfactory plans and economic conditions. And there is the small matter of a lawsuit filed by disgruntled neighbors that must be attended to, filed on February 25 and alleging the tower violated certain laws in acquiring its permits. Their main concern, however, is about density. About that, Nouvel told Rosenbaum, "We have to stay with the same volume. But the proportions will not be the same. It will be shorter. It will not be like a spire. It will be more like a skyscraper." In other words, as big as ever.

ALWAYS ON THE BRIGHT SIDE

As a jarring reminder of the two deadly crane accidents two springs ago, a smaller mobile crane toppled onto 80 Maiden Lane in the Financial District on the evening of March 27, luckily causing little damage and no fatalities. The exact cause of this latest accident remains unknown as of press time, but it was believed to be a combination of human error (the boom was not sufficiently lowered) and mechanical failure (faulty hydraulics). Two days later, a Brooklyn condo under construction collapsed, injuring three workers. Last year, there were three construction fatalities, down from 19 in 2008, partly because of stricter safety standards, but also due to less construction work. While such construction accidents are unacceptable, they are also, to quote the mayor, the cost of doing business. In that sense, the pick-up in accidents might be seen as an indicator that construction is back in action.

HUDSON YARDS HOLD-UP

Related Companies has again pushed back its deadline to close on the Hudson Yards mega-development to April 31 due to snags in drafting the legal documents, according to the *Observer*.

BRIDGES, ROADS, AND TUNNELS—WHAT WE KNOW AS HARD INFRASTRUCTURE—ARE EASY TO GRASP AS THE BACKBONE OF THE CITY. SOFT INFRASTRUCTURE IS SOMETHING ELSE ALTOGETHER. IMMATERIAL, EXPANSIVELY INFORMATIONAL, AND SLIPPERY, SOFT INFRASTRUCTURE IS NOW MORE THAN EVER THE KEY TO SHAPING A MORE DYNAMIC FUTURE FOR ARCHITECTURE.

Opening day on March 27, 2008 at Heathrow Airport's Terminal 5—designed by Rogers Stirk Harbour + Partners to radiate confident, high-tech bravura—was a complete disaster. Instead of the planned celebration, mayhem ensued when airport personnel failed at working key networking infrastructure, from following directions to their work stations to operating their hand-held computers. At the end of the day, 23,205 suitcases had gone astray, and most had to be hand sorted in Milan. National embarrassment was complete, according to Donald McNeil of the Urban Research Center at the University of Western Sydney, who has written a paper about the increasingly complex intersection of hard and soft infrastructure at airports, when Naomi Campbell pitched a fit and *The Daily Mail* called the supermodel “a martyr to the Terminal 5 fiasco.”

Tunnels, bridges, highways, and airports have traditionally been both the backbone of organized societies and the way they dig out of economic ruts and push on to higher standards of living. Yet events such as those at Heathrow have drawn attention to another, emerging infrastructure, one with none of the steel beams, soaring trusses, and hulking pipes we associate with the hard underpinnings that make cities work.

This so-called soft infrastructure tends to be invisible or disembodied, organic in behavior, and powered by data networks, not engines. But when the world's financial systems—soft infrastructure of an especially indecipherable kind—collapsed in 2009, the reverberations felt every bit as shocking as the collapse of a four-span suspension bridge. As with the disastrous opening day at Terminal 5, hard infrastructure—no matter how brilliantly designed—cannot triumph without effective soft infrastructure.

The need to pay equal attention to both is fast becoming apparent across

many professions, from education, healthcare, and government to architecture and urban design. Key areas of interest especially for designers include water management, layering social networks over transportation, and programming public spaces. In fact, finding ways to integrate soft solutions into building projects could be the opportunity that architects have been seeking to show how design thinking is an essential tool for building not only offices, schools, and museums, but also more smoothly functioning societies.

Efforts to explore this largely uncharted territory are well underway. Last fall the Architectural League did so with its exhibition *Toward*

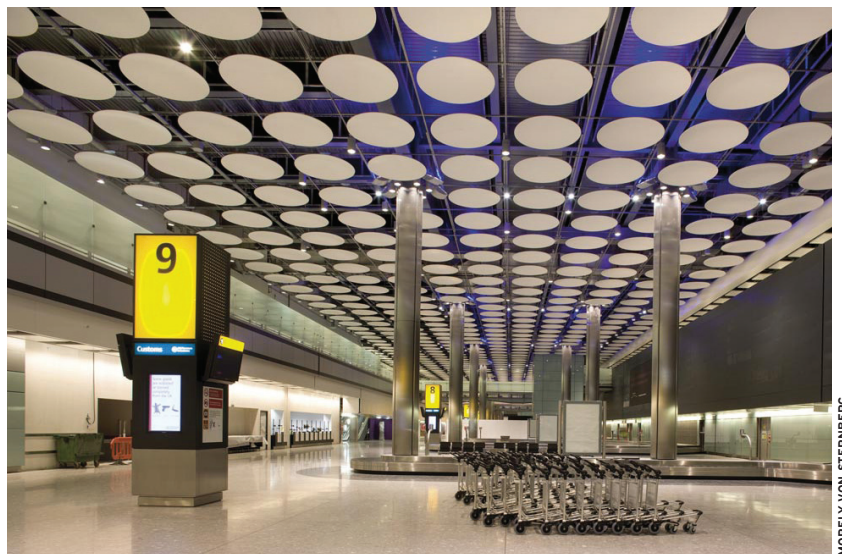
the Sentient City, based on the premise that we “are now on the cusp of a fundamental reconfiguration of physical space, one in which a vast and mostly invisible layer of technology is being embedded into the world around us,” according to exhibitions director Gregory Wessner. Installations included LED sensors measuring and reporting on water quality in real time from the Bronx and East rivers, and mobilizing opportunities for office work in public places through social software.

In February, Parsons launched a new graduate program in transdisciplinary design to engender fresh thinking about what constitutes design in a

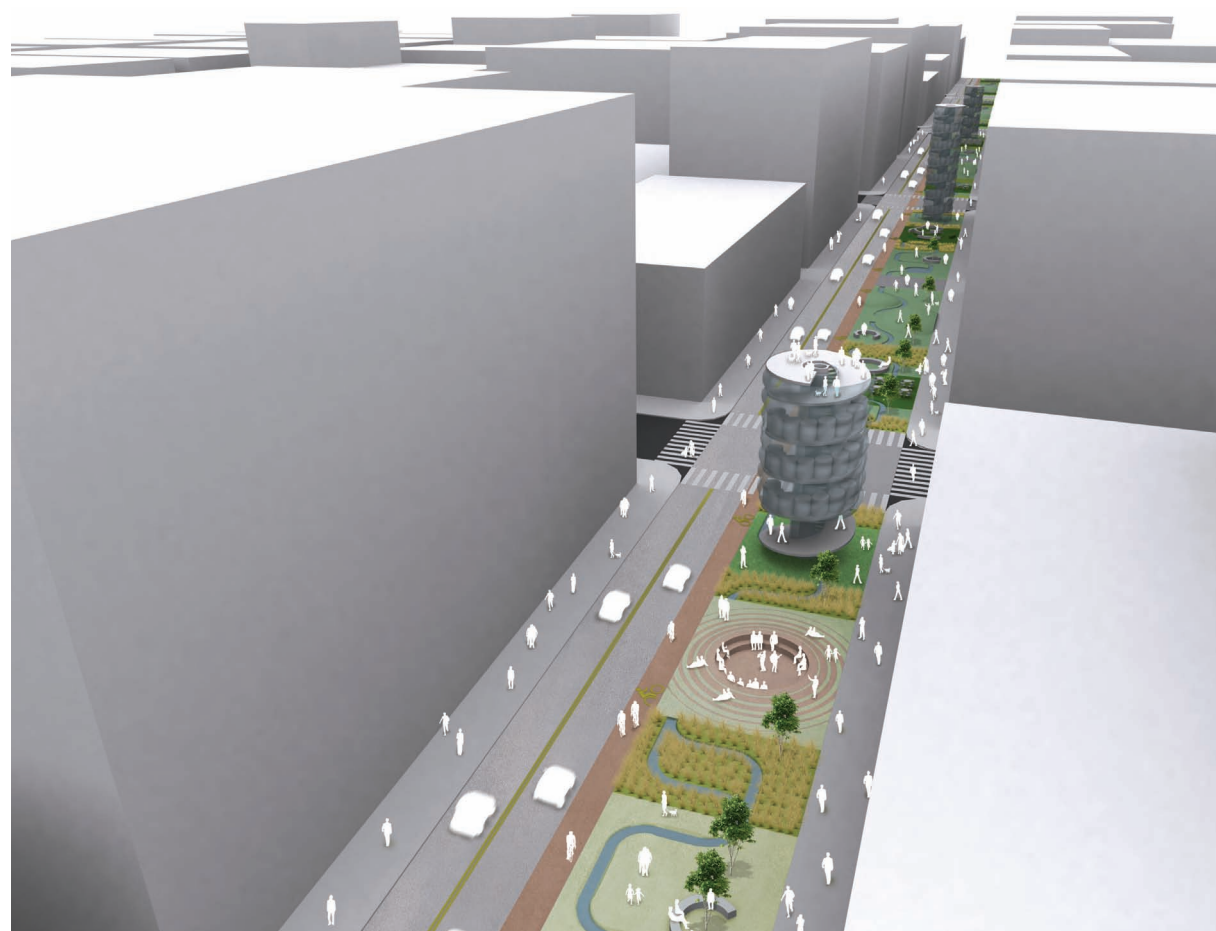
JULIE V. IOVINE SURVEYS THE FAST-EMERGING FIELD, WHILE ALAN G. BRAKE DELVES INTO THE RISE CURRENTS EXHIBITION AT THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART.



COURTESY URBANLAB



MORELY VON STERNBERG

**Previous page, above:**

For Aurora, the second-largest city in Illinois, Chicago architects UrbanLab developed guidelines for organizing the industrial city's downtown into an "urban ecosystem" with networks of pedestrian, bicycle, and mass transit alongside new high-density development and re-programmed landscapes along the Fox River.

Below:

Inside Heathrow Airport's Terminal 5, designed by Rogers Stirk Harbour + Partners, hard and soft infrastructure meet in a confrontation between complex spaces, digital information, and the human factor.

This page, above:

Eco-boulevards, also envisioned by UrbanLab, would harvest and treat Chicago's wastewater before returning to Lake Michigan.

Below:

Bike It by Jake Barton of Local Projects is an iPhone application that shares encouraging words to motivate urban bicyclists and activate the city's bike lanes.

world where, according to TransDesign program director Jamer Hunt, "Designers are increasingly designing businesses, services, experiences, policies, and even emergent social forms; and along the way they are inventing new methods, new tools, and new ways of conceiving design."

But what soft infrastructure—if that's the operable word—exactly is remains frustratingly vague. As he prepares a new curriculum at Parsons in large part focused on it, Hunt said, "We are all struggling to understand what we mean when not talking about the old infrastructure. Is it whatever is systems-based, sentient, dynamic, or wetware and squishy?" Barry Bergdoll, chief curator of architecture and design at the Museum of

Modern Art, finds the roots of soft infrastructure in the traditions of 18th-century landscape design, where complex systems of land management sometimes manifested themselves in stunning visual and architectural effects. And while the formation of any network of exchange might qualify as a type of soft infrastructure, Bergdoll considers the adaptive networks engendered by meshing the demands of landscape, urbanism, and sustainability—especially as they relate to changing coastlines and water levels—to be at the most compelling frontiers of the subject. (See "In the Swim," page 17, on the exhibition *Rising Currents* now at MoMA.)

From the University of Pennsylvania, architect and landscape architect

Anuradha Mathur, together with Dilip da Cunha, a planner and architect, have also been exploring new frameworks and modes of representation for ecological issues, from monsoons in India to Mississippi River floods. They are investigating historical maps and how the hard lines drawn to indicate solid divisions between land and water both misrepresent and prevent understanding—and appropriate response to—a landscape that in reality is in flux depending on the season, the climate, and agricultural uses. "The time is past for measuring performance according to probabilities. Architects, engineers, and landscape designers need to build in resiliency," said Mathur.

Last summer, they presented the exhibition *SOAK: Mumbai in an Estuary* at the National Gallery of Modern Art in Mumbai. The show and accompanying book have inspired subsequent studies of coastal conditions, with its conclusion that hard walls and defined borders must be replaced with more flexible terrains that can absorb and recirculate water as needed. "It's not rocket science," said Mathur. "Why push water out? Why don't we imagine ways to hold it and to think of water conditions over time, not

only at one moment, or season? Boundaries need to be negotiated, not made permanent." (The couple were consultants for nArchitects' entry into MoMA's *Rising Currents* exhibition.)

Closer to home, UrbanLab in Chicago has been concentrating on further developing a concept that architects Sarah Dunn and Mark Felsen proposed theoretically in 2006 when they won History Channel's *City of the Future* competition in Chicago, a city where one billion gallons of fresh lake water are consumed each day. Functioning as a gigantic recycling machine, a citywide network of so-called eco-boulevards would treat all of Chicago's wastewater—passing it along greenways and through vertical nodes, or living machines stocked with microorganisms, small invertebrates, scrubber fish, and plants—and returning it to Lake Michigan. As with *SOAK*, a key to the plan hinges on reprogramming existing hard infrastructure (around playing fields, parking lots, and airport runways) to double up as part of a flexible water-collecting network. Through swales, swamps, blue belts, and vegetation corridors instead of tunnels and pipes, water could thus be treated and absorbed back into the

ecosystem rather than blocked and channeled out of sight as sewage. More recently, the architects have worked with Mayor Daley's office to develop an "eco-boulevard toolbox," including recommendations for improving ongoing and upcoming road renovations. The ideas are robustly doable and include both point- and linear-based solutions for water absorption, including swales along median strips and planter boxes next to sewer points.

While much of the current thinking about soft infrastructure is focused on storm water, a second front is networking, especially as it applies to social and civic space. In a series of talks, and notably in a review of *Sentient City* on the Architectural League's blog, the Sydney-based Arup designer and urbanist Dan Hill describes soft infrastructure as a way to "bend the physical city" and rescale it to what he calls "walkable urbanism." Hill could have been referring to Bike It, an initiative by Jake Barton of Local Projects, a design firm focused on public space. Bike It takes advantage of underused infrastructure—in this case, New York's bike lanes—by layering them with an interactive network. In brief, said Barton, Bike It

is a "super-charged iPhone app that calculates time and money saved, as well as calories burned plus locations of other cyclists" that could be broadcast on LED panels already embedded in bus shelters around the city.

Barton sees soft infrastructure as a powerful planning and advocacy tool that promises to change people's behavior. And while Bike It could be a model for encouraging bicycle commuters, Barton realizes there is a cultural component to soft infrastructure that could thwart the best-laid plans: People don't like to arrive at work in sweaty clothes. And so there is Cool Biz, a governmental initiative from Japan that recommends minimal air-conditioning at work and a greater tolerance for casual clothing. Intended to lower energy costs but equally focused on office culture, pilot programs are already in place in California and Colorado.

Unintended consequences are a constant where soft infrastructure and humans meet. During a recent lecture for the New School's Design and Social Science Committee Seminar—whose theme this year is "Infrastructure: Complexity, Risk, and Design"—McNeil of Sydney's Urban Research Center described the collision of privatized interests, political will, digital interfaces, and human error at Heathrow, where hard and soft infrastructure are intimately entwined. Soaring spaces buttressed by structural derring-do may impress, but the real business of getting around depends on information in digital code, from e-tickets to LED announcement boards. The subtitle of McNeil's paper is "The Heathrow Hassle," and in it he detailed the Terminal 5 catastrophe to underscore the new reality that without complete integration, neither hard nor soft infrastructure is going to work.

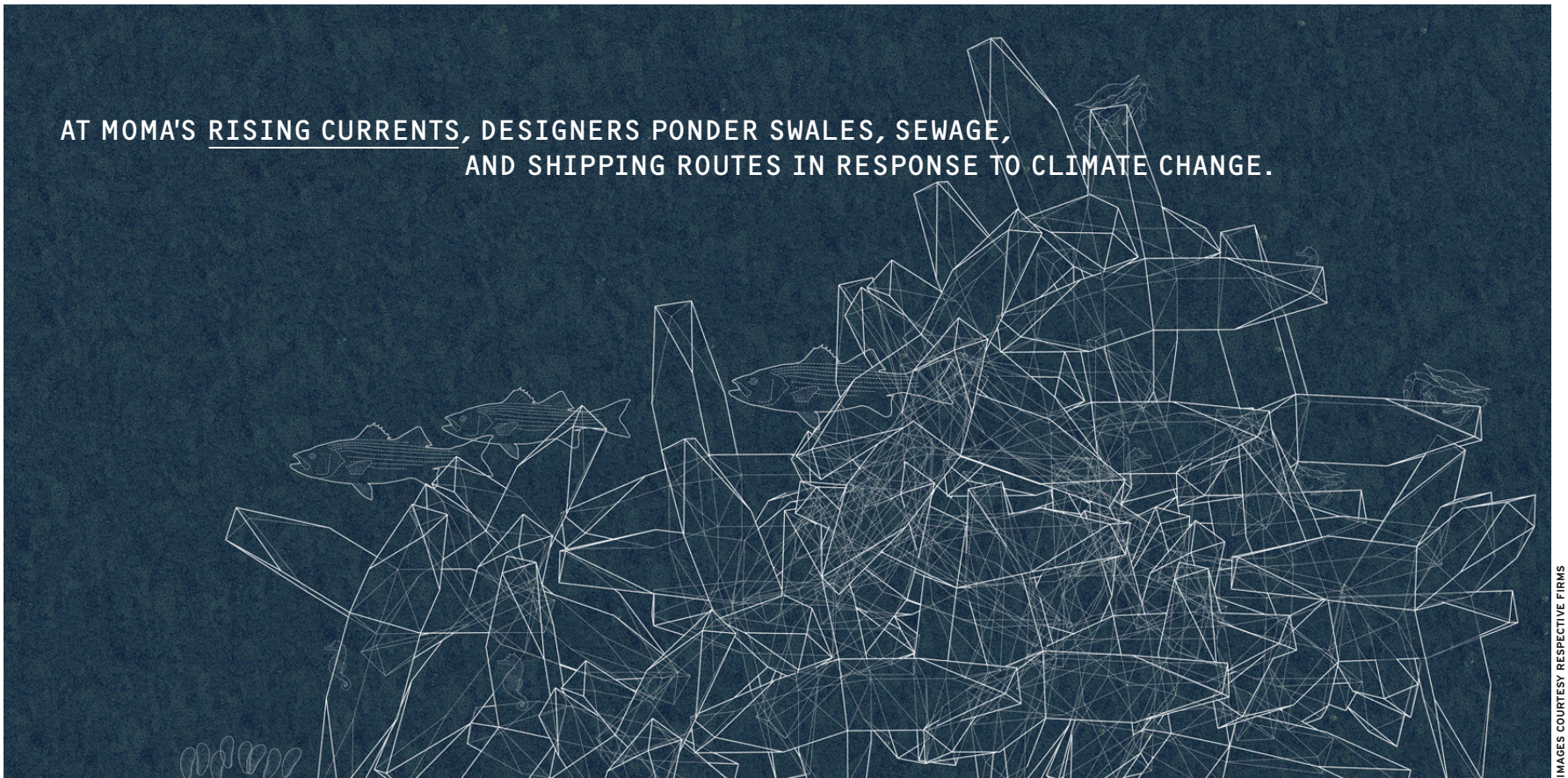
"The way we build has to be rethought, as the old ways don't cut it," said Hunt of Parsons' TransDesign program. "The real opportunity for designers is to have a voice. We bring the right capabilities to this kind of problem." And better understanding may offer the sturdiest bridge to get there.

JULIE V. IOVINE IS EXECUTIVE EDITOR AT AN.



IN THE SWIM

AT MOMA'S RIISING CURRENTS, DESIGNERS PONDER SWALES, SEWAGE,
AND SHIPPING ROUTES IN RESPONSE TO CLIMATE CHANGE.



IMAGES COURTESY RESPECTIVE FIRMS

Above:
A reef of recycled glass in
Matthew Baird Architects'
Working Waterline

Regional planning, urban design, and landscape architecture don't often get prominent exposure at the Museum of Modern Art. *Rising Currents: Projects for New York's Waterfront* draws on all these disciplines, often in combination, and puts them front and center in an exhibition that posits a transformative role for design professionals in the face of climate change. In the show, startling statistics abound: In 90 years, sea levels are expected to rise 6 feet, leaving 20 percent of Lower Manhattan submerged; Ellis Island would be underwater, and the Statue of Liberty wading in her robes; contaminated industrial sites could be inundated with floodwater; Category Three storm surges could reach 20 feet. The tone of the exhibition, however, is upbeat, suggesting that designers have the means and vision to mitigate events by altering both our hard-edged tradition of sea walls and sewage pipes, and our physical and psychological relationship to the archipelagos of New York.

Architectural responses to climate change typically focus on reducing carbon emissions through energy-efficient building, increasing density and walkability, and integrating renewable energy technologies on a site. *Rising Currents* takes higher sea levels as a given, and its focus is on water, in particular on the area that engineer and exhibition consultants

(Guy Nordenson, Catherine Seavitt, and Adam Yarinsky whose independent research informed the project overall) named Palisade Bay, the 20-square-mile Upper New York Bay. It includes five proposals for five sites by ARO with dlandstudio, Lewis.Tsurumaki.Lewis, nArchitects, Matthew Baird Architects, and SCAPE. The teams had an eight-week "residency" at P.S.1, where they could share ideas or work independently, holding two public workshops that drew hundreds. They now are displaying their ideas on walls of the second floor architecture gallery more often dedicated to works from the Modern's permanent collection.

For all the diversity in the proposals, they are not easily apparent upon viewing. There are fuzzy-edged, greened coastlines; murky water; and gray skylines. The installation is dense and requires time to read and, as it were, absorb the wall texts, scrutinize the often-tiny renderings, charts, and diagrams, and watch brief videos in which team leaders present their projects. The teams have investigated their varied sites in depth, and analysis seems to have trumped aesthetics.

Working on Lower Manhattan, ARO calls for a permeable, planted streetscape from the Battery to Canal Street. The addition of a permeable surface, the architects suggest, would

prevent combined sewage overflows, a chronic New York problem (now and even more so in the future), where rainstorms overtax antique infrastructure, causing raw sewage to spill directly into waterways. ARO's plan is among the most easily understood, and given DOT's recent reworking of the city's streetscapes, seems feasible. They also propose a layered salt marsh to form a grassy edge around the island and absorb storm surges.

Matthew Baird Architects were given the oil tanks and piers in Bayonne, N.J., along with Northern Staten Island and the Kill van Kull. The Baird team proposed dredging and capping contaminated soils into raised berms, and turning oil tanks into sewage storage and "biogas" plants. They also suggested reactivating the shipping piers (which, they argue, will be of greater importance once the complete melt of the North Pole opens new navigation routes), and a recycling plant. Using all local glass, the plant would manufacture glass jacks that would be piled into the bay to create artificial, wave-dampening reefs. The artist Matthew Ritchie collaborated on the creation of the prototype jacks, which are stacked around the gallery's central table.

The Lewis.Tsurumaki.Lewis (LTL) plan calls for a radical reworking of the New Jersey shoreline near Ellis and



Top:
Lewis.Tsurumaki.Lewis'
Water Proving Ground
Middle:
nArchitects' *New Aqueous City*
Below, left:
ARO and dlandstudio's
A New Urban Ground
Below, right:
SCAPE's *Oyster-tecture*

Liberty islands. This area, which is mostly 19th-century landfill, will disappear according to estimates, so LTL proposed a "cut and fill" plan, in which large trenches would cut into the land, bring water in, and the fill would raise blocks of usable land. Across these zones, they proposed a patchwork of new uses, including remediation and research centers, aquaculture, farm markets, and leisure. They also proposed a series of buildings-as-landscape along the spits of land, including an amphitheater with a floating stage, a research center, and a lodge.

nArchitects imagined Sunset Park and Southern Brooklyn's waterfront as a "New Aqueous City." In fact, they rewrote the zoning for the area to allow for new structures hanging over the water. The city would build the frames, and developers would complete the units, which would have accessible green roofs (handy to helicopters in case of calamitous flooding). A network of floating paths would connect buildings, which would be equipped with wastewater and storm-water filtration swales. "Biogas" systems for digesting sewage solids would power new ferry lines.

The digestive powers of the oyster inspired SCAPE's proposal for the Gowanus Canal, Governor's Island, Buttermilk Channel, and Red Hook. Looking to local industries of the past for ideas suited to the future, principal Kate Orff proposed making the Gowanus Canal an oyster hatchery, the seeds from which would be used to populate a series of rope-net reefs in the bay. Orff believes the oysters could clean the canal and the bay, though the recent EPA designation of the canal as a Superfund site casts serious doubt on the efficacy of this plan, in spite of its seeming the most readily doable among the projects.

Historically, MoMA has extolled the universal virtues of modern architecture and, to a lesser extent, planning around the world. Typically, architectural objects have been displayed as works of art, disengaged from any site. With *Rising Currents*, MoMA has asked these designers to get their hands dirty. Barry Bergdoll, MoMA's chief curator of architecture and design, argues that the exhibition is an investigation of local solutions to global problems—solutions, in turn, with global implications. The exhibition capitalizes on the thinking of a younger generation of designers who merge architecture with landscape, and infrastructure with public space. Let's hope some of their ideas make it off the museum's walls and into the real world.

ALAN G. BRAKE IS AN'S MIDWEST EDITOR.

APRIL

WEDNESDAY 7
LECTURES

Gil Schafer, Sarah Horton, Richard Marks, and Eve Kahn
Adventures in Restoration: The Rebirth of a Classic Charleston House
6:30 p.m.
Institute of Classical Architecture & Classical America
20 West 44th St.
www.classicist.org

Margaretta Lovell
Thinking About Things: Studying Material Culture and Reading Objects
6:00 p.m.
Bard Graduate Center
38 West 86th St.
www.bgc.bard.edu

Kiren Aziz Chaudhry, Mishaal Al Gergawi, and Saskia Sassen
Fortune-teller: Reflections on the Future of Arts, Education, and Economy in the Middle East
6:30 p.m.
NYU Abu Dhabi
19 Washington Square North
nyuad.nyu.edu

EXHIBITION OPENING
Lost and Found: The Work of Bern Porter
Museum of Modern Art
11 West 53rd St.
www.moma.org

EVENT
Not Business As Usual
12:00 p.m.
Center for Architecture
536 LaGuardia Pl.
www.aiany.org

THURSDAY 8
LECTURE
Jimmy Wales
7:00 p.m.
New Museum
235 Bowery
www.newmuseum.org

EXHIBITION OPENINGS
Grace Yung Ting Teng
Liberty or Death
Kumble Gallery
1 University Plaza
www.brooklyn.liu.edu

Roy Lichtenstein:
Homage to Monet
Benrimon Contemporary
514 West 24th St.
www.bcontemporary.com

FRIDAY 9
LECTURE
Angela Garcia
Abstract Expressionism: The New York School
1:30 p.m.
Museum of Modern Art
11 West 53rd St.
www.moma.org

SATURDAY 10
LECTURE
Thomas K. Shor
A Crack in the World: The Alternate Universe of the Beyul
2:00 p.m.
Rubin Museum of Art
150 West 17th St.
www.rmanyc.org

WITH THE KIDS

Design Kids: Design Your Own Alphabet
1:00 p.m.
Cooper-Hewitt,
National Design Museum
2 East 91st St.
www.cooperhewitt.org

Family Program 2010
Pop-Up Architecture
10:00 a.m.
National Building Museum
401 F St. NW,
Washington, D.C.
www.nbm.org

SUNDAY 11
EXHIBITION OPENING
Henri-Cartier Bresson
The Modern Century
Museum of Modern Art
11 West 53rd St.
www.moma.org

WITH THE KIDS
Setting the Scene
10:20 a.m.
Museum of Modern Art
11 West 53rd St.
www.moma.org

MONDAY 12
LECTURES
Alejandro Aravena
Architectural Agency: The Case of Elemental
6:30 p.m.
Harvard Graduate School of Design
48 Quincy St., Cambridge
www.gsd.harvard.edu

Lynn Saville
Night/Shift: Book Talk
6:00 p.m.
Center for Architecture
536 LaGuardia Pl.
www.aiany.org

TUESDAY 13
LECTURES
Luis Jacob
6:30 p.m.
Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum
1071 5th Ave.
www.guggenheim.org

Gary Hustwit
On the Design of Certain Films about Design
6:00 p.m.
School of Visual Arts
136 West 21st St.
dcrit.sva.edu

SYMPOSIA
Light Fight: What's Effective, Sustainable, and Affordable?
Howard Brandston, Denise Fong, Peter Morante, and Margaret Newman
6:30 p.m.
French Institute
22 East 60th St.
www.mas.org

The Return of Nature: The Nature of Architecture
Peter Eisenman, Jorge Silvetti, and Sarah Whiting
6:30 p.m.
Harvard Graduate School of Design
48 Quincy St., Cambridge
www.gsd.harvard.edu

EXHIBITION OPENING

Vienna Circa 1780: An Imperial Silver Service Rediscovered
Metropolitan Museum of Art
1000 5th Ave.
www.metmuseum.org

WEDNESDAY 14
LECTURES
EverGreene Artisans and Frank J. Priol Jr.
Art Deco Ceiling Murals of the Empire State Building
6:30 p.m.
Institute of Classical Architecture & Classical America
20 West 44th St.
www.classicist.org

John Margolies
Roadside America
6:00 p.m.
Taschen
107 Greene St.
www.archleague.org

Jaime Lerner
Sustainable City
6:30 p.m.
Columbia GSAPP
Wood Auditorium
113 Avery Hall
www.arch.columbia.edu

SYMPOSIUM
Access Restricted: Intellectual Property in the Age of Digital Reproduction
Sonia Katyal, Alfred Steiner, Andrew Ross, and Virginia Rutledge
6:30 p.m.
Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton
1 Liberty Plaza
www.lmcc.net

THURSDAY 15
LECTURE
Barry Lewis
London: Template for the Yankee City
6:30 p.m.
New-York Historical Society
170 Central Park West
www.nyhistory.org

SYMPOSIA
Inside/Out: Exploring Gender and Space in Life, Culture, and Art
Simon Leung, Judith Donath, Janine Antoni, et al.
4:00 p.m.
Harvard Graduate School of Design
48 Quincy St., Cambridge
www.gsd.harvard.edu

Secondhand Culture: Waste, Value, and Materiality
5:00 p.m.
Bard Graduate Center
38 West 86th St.
www.bgc.bard.edu

EXHIBITION OPENING
Jon Kessler
Predators
Pace Prints Chelsea
521 West 26th St.
www.paceprints.com

EVENT
SOFA New York 2010 Preview Gala
6:00 p.m.
Park Avenue Armory
643 Park Ave.
www.madmuseum.org

FRIDAY 16
SYMPOSIUM
Buell Conference in the History of Architecture: In Print
Larry Busbea, Jennifer Light, Tom McDonough, et al.
2:00 p.m.
Columbia GSAPP
Wood Auditorium
113 Avery Hall
www.arch.columbia.edu

SATURDAY 17
LECTURES
Delphine Fawundu
Surviving the Affordable Housing Struggle in Brooklyn
2:00 p.m.
Brooklyn Historical Society
128 Pierrepont St., Brooklyn
www.brooklynhistory.org

Ed Abel
Persuading Your Way to the Project You Want
10:00 a.m.
NY Designs
45-50 30th St.
Long Island City
www.nydesigns.org

SYMPOSIA
Graphic Heroes, Magic Monsters: Japanese Prints by Utagawa Kuniyoshi
Timothy Clark, Sarah Thompson, and Edward Kamens
1:00 p.m.
Japan Society
333 East 47th St.
www.japansociety.org

Seven on Seven
2:30 p.m.
New Museum
235 Bowery
www.newmuseum.org

ConvergenceNYC 2010
9:00 a.m.
Center for Architecture
536 LaGuardia Pl.
www.aiany.org

SUNDAY 18
LECTURE
Sherrie Baver
Ciudad y Suburbia
2:00 p.m.
Museum of the City of New York
1220 5th Ave.
www.mcny.org

MONDAY 19
LECTURE
Dave Hickey
Ugly in America
6:00 p.m.
Princeton School of Architecture
Betts Auditorium, Princeton
www.princeton.edu

EXHIBITION OPENING
Chris Chong Chan Fui
Black Box
Hirshhorn Museum
Independence Ave.
and 7th St., Washington, D.C.
www.hirshhorn.si.edu

TUESDAY 20
LECTURE
Phil Patton
Speed and Glamour
6:30 p.m.
Museum of the City of New York
1220 5th Ave.
www.mcny.org



COURTESY WEATHERS

ENVELOPES
Pratt Manhattan Gallery
144 West 14th Street
Through May 5

Human, animal, and plant skins serve as inspiration for new building prototypes by eight international firms in Pratt Manhattan Gallery's *Envelopes*. The show is guest-curated by Rice University architecture professor Christopher Hight, who reports being inspired by early 20th-century biologist Jacob von Uexkull's research on the ways in which animals subjectively experience their environments. Some of the envelopes on view are as natural as a wall thick with plants; others are as technological as Future Cities Lab's prototype for desert living, which uses robotics and interactive controls to register energy cycles over time. The envelopes also respond to their environments, often with climatic adjustments: Philippe Rahm's project *Terroirs Deterritorialises* impacts the humidity, temperature, and airflow within its walls, while Weathers' infrastructure for parks, gardens, and landscapes, *Climate Design* (2009, above), doubles as outdoor furniture while controlling a site's microclimates.



KATIE HOLTEN



EMILIANO GRADANO

LANDSCAPES OF QUARANTINE
Storefront for Art and Architecture
97 Kenmare Street
Through April 17

Global pandemics and threats of bioterrorism have made quarantine a hot topic, but the exhibit *Landscapes of Quarantine* moves the discussion well beyond disease control. "What we call landscapes of quarantine can be found everywhere—in the heart of cities, in the countryside, in hospitals and jails, and around national borders," said Geoff Manaugh, curator and founder of BLDGBLOG. Probing the subject's architectural dimensions, Manaugh and co-curator Nicola Twilley invited 18 artists, architects, and designers for an eight-week workshop last fall to "investigate what it means to create separated spaces," according to Twilley. The resulting works on view include quarantine ruins in the New York archipelago—among them Katie Holten's explorations of North Brother Island, home to Typhoid Mary for more than 20 years (2009, top)—and Jeffrey Inaba/C-Lab's site-specific work *Suck* (2010, above), a Tyvek tribute to quarantine's limbo-like condition.

ARTIFICIAL KUBRICK

AI: Artificial Intelligence: From Stanley Kubrick to Steven Spielberg
Edited by Jan Harlan and Jane M. Struthers
Thames & Hudson, \$60.00



Chris Baker's concept for the Rouge City tollgates.

COURTESY THAMES & HUDSON

As a longtime subscriber to *Cinefex*, the special-effects-must-have-monthly-for-up-to-the-minute-behind-the-scenes-tricks-of-the-special-effects-trade-secrets (which, by the way, is all it claims to be), I waited for the review copy of *Artificial Intelligence* with not too artfully hidden anticipation. The book was rumored to contain the ultimate revelations about the making of the Kubrick-inspired, Spielberg-written-and-directed science fiction epic. That is, the Pinocchio story, give or take a millennium or two, and insert *robot* for *puppet*, oops, *marionette*. Two tees.

An irony of the so-called digital era is the proliferation of what may come to be known as “legacy volumes.” These are different from the coffee-table books of bygone

times, which sought to catalogue in print what was by and large inaccessible by any other means. And they are different in other ways as well, in that they purport to disclose behind-the-scenes stories, and to present a composite view of process as well as product.

Artificial Intelligence is such a book. An *important* one.

It is immediately evident from the ballistic-grade paper, majestic proportions, and Mil-Spec binding that no expense was spared to create a book worthy of the motion picture, and that the authors and publisher prayed that Kubrick's spirit would favor them with a smile in recognition of their dedication.

AI was born of a short story that caught Kubrick's fancy during the making of *Eyes Wide Shut*, sometime before

the worldwide glut of science-fiction films, and a decent interval after *2001* had kicked off the genre. Clearly a parable, and imbued with a then-prescient insight into the apocalyptic nature of a global computer network (see Jaron Lanier's *You Are Not a Gadget* for confirmation), *AI* posited a robotic boy yearning to be flesh and blood in a world gradually turning from the organic to biomimicry. The book reveals, through facsimile, sketches, and oral history, the turmoil surrounding Kubrick's struggle to reconcile his own darker emotional tendencies with what he felt the story deserved. It details with production photographs, interviews, and models the making of the film itself, a more “entertaining” Steven Spielberg at the helm.

Kubrick's penchant for expanding upon the nooks and crannies of existing genres, particularly those involving technology, is well known. After eviscerating Mission Control's black box in *Dr. Strangelove*, and de-romanticizing space travel in *2001*, the path from HAL to *Artificial Intelligence* was, in a sense, preordained. In fact the progress in real time from the disembodied vowels of your friendly '90s-era, computer-assisted 411 operator to the syrupy tones of a late-model GPS tracks seamlessly with the evolution of Kubrick's sensibility, and parallels the linear extrapolation of progress found in the digital realm. But what began as a potentially corrosive adventure into the underbelly of computer legerdemain vaulted backwards to another

time and market venture when the project was handed off to Steven Spielberg. From then on, the vision established by the master of iconic storytelling was inexplicably diluted with equal parts *Back to the Future* and *E.T.*, creating a brew the filmmakers hoped would be a futuristic Pinocchio story, but which in reality became an all-too-earnest story of nice guys with chips for brains.

Nor was the film propelled by a disciplined visual aesthetic. In fact, comparing the visual concepts advanced by conceptual artist Chris Baker to the obsessively detailed and technologically advanced images created by Doug Trumbull for *2001*, or the concise storyboards drawn by Ken Adam for *Strangelove*, is a bit like comparing ABBA to U2. Yes, they are drawn

with a sure hand, and yes, they faithfully register light and space, but as they ricochet from the maudlin to the soft-core cityscape of a venal emporium, the visual allusions become trite, and the swooning décolletage of the buildings begins to take on the sagging countenance of an over-the-hill streetwalker. It isn't until Baker drops the architectural/anatomical references and goes for pure fantasy that his illustrator's mojo finally kicks in, transporting us with deft gestures and a gift for atmosphere to environments that Lebbeus Woods might have imagined.

What is curious, and what may interest readers of *The Architect's Newspaper*, is that the only through-line—connective tissue between an unlikely Kubrick/Spielberg collaboration—seems to be centered in Baker's graphic visualizations of the film's settings. Baker's role, in the parlance of motion picture production, was to provide “visual concepts” that would then serve as the basis for the production designer and a staff of art directors and special effects technicians to realize, using models, full-size environments, and then-nascent “Blue Screen” technology. And it is true that significant new ground was broken, particularly in the expansion of the virtual studio technologies that had enabled Spielberg's startlingly vivid effects in *Jurassic Park*.

But in the end, the story bats last. Even the famous “Deep Throat” bridges, which adorn both the cover and a double centerfold (68 inches!) in the book, played only a bit part in the picture's final cut, leaving those who hungered for Kubrick's last take wanting more.

CRAIG HODGETTS IS A PRINCIPAL AT HODGETTS + FUNG DESIGN AND ARCHITECTURE IN CULVER CITY, CALIFORNIA.

Paint By Numbers

The Architectonic Colour: Polychromy in the Purist Architecture of Le Corbusier
Jan de Heer
010 Publishers
\$55.00

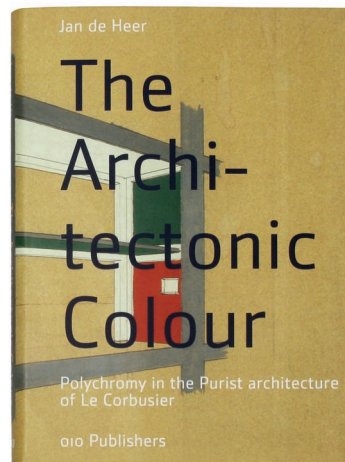
Although extensive attention to the subject of color in the work of Le Corbusier has been explored since the early 1980s, a practical analysis of related source texts concerning the architect's method of the application of a theory of color has only now been summarized.

Jan de Heer's *The Architectonic Colour: Polychromy in the Purist Architecture of Le Corbusier* answers the call to uncover the origins of Le Corbusier's mystical system, and examines the architect's speculations on polychromy as they appear in writing, painting, and architecture. Le Corbusier's

collection for the Salubra Company (1931), composed of color “keyboards,” wallpaper samples, and a brief explanation, is the artifact from which the issues regarding form, color, volume, contrast, and beauty extend. The theories of Purism projected by Le Corbusier (under his actual name, Charles-Édouard Jeanneret) and Amédée Ozenfant in *L'Esprit Nouveau* offer insight into the architectural application of a system fundamentally associated with a style of painting that formalized Cubism in combining it with the French tradition of grand painting. With Le Corbusier's develop-

ment of the free floor plan, the relationship between painting and architecture, de Heer asserts, becomes more complicated.

The organization of the book is codified through the use of color. The cover exhibits a cutaway section looking into a painted loggia from Le Corbusier's Unité d'habitation in Marseille (1951). The image is significant because it represents colored surfaces existing on the boundary between interior and exterior in a semi-enclosed space. Le Corbusier's theory of polychromy is often restricted to the interior and **continued on page 21**



PAINT BY NUMBERS continued from page 20 directly tied to standpoints along the “promenade architectural.” With this choice of image, de Heer clearly acknowledges variances within Le Corbusier’s prescription for the application of color. The terms of the system are introduced through a philosophy of form and color that opposes De Stijl. And they are expanded by Le Corbusier into a process of assignment post-construction, when the interior “layout of forms” can be studied on site from strategic positions where views can be evaluated and corrected as required through the ranking of colors. The range of applied colors is ultimately sibling to red and blue (and subordinate to white), two colors that form an integral dialectic in the Purist poetics of architectonic polychromy.

De Heer’s graphic layout of the book is partially derived from the logic of the Salubra collection. Pages within each chapter are color-coded across the gutter of each spread. Even the colored end papers recall the values contained within the Salubra collection, ultimately a collection of acceptable palettes designed to aid and limit the client’s selection. Graphics aside, the appendices contain a catalog of essential items that include a list of pseudonyms, variant paintings with corresponding thumbnails, a selection of drawings of realized

projects related to the subject of architectonic polychromy, and fragments from central texts written by Jeanneret and Ozenfant.

The chapters themselves are steeped in scholarship and concisely summarized. While all of them contribute to de Heer’s ultimate purpose—to establish a philosophy of Purism, then illustrate how the paintings of Jeanneret inform the architectural development of Le Corbusier in the context of legitimizing color—Chapter 2, “Disegno and Experimental Aesthetics,” provides the overarching ideological framework. This chapter concerns Jeanneret and Ozenfant’s insistence on the relevance of proportion, light-dark relations, and the economic use of color in painting.

To say that color is *always* subordinate to form for Le Corbusier is problematic. It is clear that de Heer wants us to realize that color is used subjectively in Le Corbusier’s early projects to classify, rectify, intensify, weaken, or provide an accent to the composition of the interior, which is delineated by the wall. In spite of this, Le Corbusier’s development of the “Five Points” scheme *liberates* wall from plan, and by doing so, the resultant sectional qualities of a building’s primary volumes precipitate a “mathematical” apprehension of beauty that no longer needs color to harmonize it. Form is given a monochromatic value and

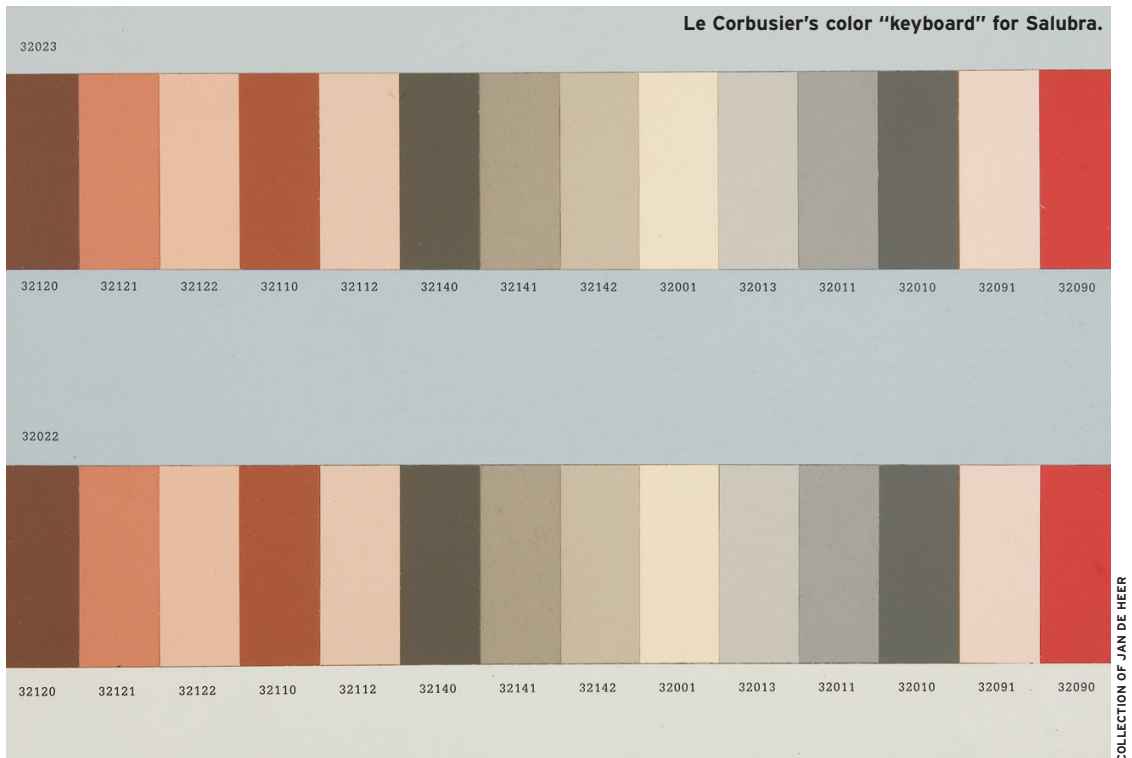
emerges through degrees of illumination and shadow. For this reason, the Purist conception of form is most commonly associated with what de Heer refers to as the “constructive” property of white.

There are “associative” aspects to Le Corbusier’s method of application that call into question the objectivity of the system. De Heer provides us with evidence of a

theory of painting that initially translates into a method for organizing the architectonic form of an interior bound by plan and facade, but the ordering of the emphasized elements is conveyed as a hermetic process with its own set of rules. When the plan and facade are liberated by Le Corbusier, he adapts the theory of architectonic polychromy by dissolving it into the pure expres-

sion of materials and monochromatic form. De Heer’s honest ability to define the tenets of Le Corbusier’s imperfect system that ironically ends in the purification of architecture through the absence of color is nonetheless immensely revealing. This book is a critical read for any serious architect or interior designer.

T.A. HORTON IS A DESIGNER AT KOHN PEDERSEN FOX ASSOCIATES.



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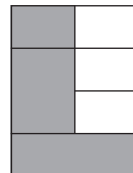
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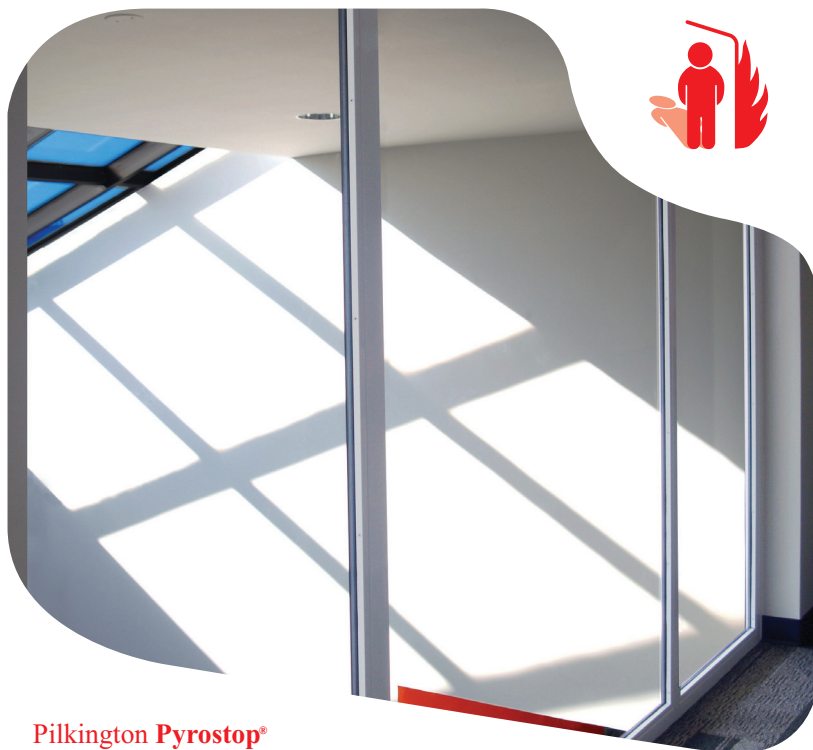
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Last August, the New York City Department of Transportation and the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey launched a competition for a mural to adorn the construction fence around Ground Zero. The brief called for “bold, colorful imagery reflecting the vibrancy of the downtown commercial and residential neighborhood.” The winning design, by New York-based Sage and Coombe Architects, was a chlorophyll wonderland of flora and fauna to be printed on vinyl mesh and

installed on Church Street between Liberty and Vesey streets. “The design is in the spirit of embracing the cityscape with an eye toward greening it,” said principal Jennifer Sage. “The idea was to make a garden hedge that you could peel back and look into.”

But the original completion date in December came and went with no mural installed. In January, the competition sponsors announced that none of the entries (including the winner) were “extraordi-

nary enough” for Ground Zero. Sage and Coombe’s work, it was decided, would meanwhile be installed at another Lower Manhattan construction site, Peter Minuit Plaza near the Whitehall Ferry Terminal, which is being overhauled as an intermodal transportation hub.

The mural’s design, shown here with some tweaks to reflect its new location, pays homage to the city’s heritage as well as its icons. Topiary windmills and a wooden shoe nod to New Amsterdam,

Coney Island’s Parachute Jump and Wonder Wheel make an appearance, and the Brooklyn Bridge and Guggenheim Museum get the topiary treatment as well. A cast of historical characters also inhabits the hedge: Henry Hudson winks through a keyhole, while the ghosts of Jane Jacobs and Frederick Law Olmsted float in the clouds. Civic leaders like Peter Stuyvesant and Mayor John Lindsay also get their due. “It’s a puzzle of disparate New York components, but all of

the entities are the icons you think of when you think about New York,” Sage said.

The greening concept goes beyond the literal idea of the hedge to encompass other modes of sustainability. Sage and partner Peter Coombe have long pursued strategies that incorporate new technologies and green features, and the mural includes alternate means of transportation such as cyclists and skateboarders that navigate the hedge. City officials also intend to reuse the mural if possible.

As for the project’s new home, near UNStudio’s New Amsterdam Pavilion at the entrance to the Staten Island Ferry, Sage remains enthusiastic. “It’s

a point of arrival, historically and today,” she said. “So many people trudging by every day are going to see it.” The firm has fine-tuned the mural for the site at Manhattan’s tip, embellishing the Dutch imagery and adjusting details like labels on subway cars to reflect the new surroundings. While the Ground Zero construction fence will now remain as is—a Port Authority spokesman said the agency will periodically update individual panels with images that reflect new construction on the site—Sage and Coombe’s mural is expected to plant a splash of color in Peter Minuit Plaza by mid-April.

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