

THE MIDWEST ARCHITECTS NEWSPAPER

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FIVE TEAMS COMPETING TO REMAKE HISTORIC AMUSEMENT DISTRICT



COURTESY AECOM/BIG

Five proposals to rethink the public spaces at Navy Pier have gone on view at the Chicago Architecture Foundation. The finalist teams—AECOM/BIG, Aedas/Davis Brody Bond/Martha

Schwartz Partners, James Corner Field Operations, Imelk/HOK/UrbanLab, and Xavier Vendrell Studio/Grimshaw Architects—use a variety of approaches to revitalize the historic pier,

AECOM/BIG's proposal

which has long been a favored destination for tourists. Organizers hope revitalizing the pier's public **continued on page 6**



LUMIERE FL/PICKER

CHICAGO REVISING CULTURAL STRATEGY

Planning for Art

Mayor Rahm Emanuel, himself a one-time ballet dancer, has long been a vocal supporter of the arts. Now City Hall is coordinating an extensive outreach effort to check Chicago's creative pulse, seeking comment on the city's first new cultural plan in more than 25 years.

After his election in February 2011, Emanuel directed the Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE) to revamp the Chicago Cultural Plan, which was created in 1986 under Mayor Harold Washington. DCASE launched a website

in January to coordinate its efforts. They are expected to produce a draft plan by early summer.

"The arts are political," said attorney Michael Dorf, who directed the process that created Mayor Washington's plan. "They enrich us, they enrage us, they move us to action. And anything that does that is political."

Formerly special counsel to Sidney R. Yates, chairman of the congressional appropriations committee, Dorf wanted to democratize cultural planning with the 1986 planning process. Instead of press conferences and backrooms, he said, the city should borrow from the basics of grassroots organizing.

It's an approach Chicago's current cultural commissioner, Michelle Boone, has revived for the 2012 plan. With the help of social media, Boone **continued on page 9**

The 33-acre Pruitt-Igoe site.



MICHAEL R. ALLEN/FICKR

DEVELOPER TO BUY HUNDREDS OF LOTS INCLUDING PRUITT-IGOE

Rumble in the Rubble

In an effort to advance his redevelopment plans for north St. Louis, developer Paul McKee is pursuing the purchase of more than 1,200 city-owned properties, including the **continued on page 5**

WHO YOU GONNA CALL?
AN'S ANNUAL LIST OF BEST RESOURCES FOR CONTRACTORS, CONSULTANTS, FAVORITE SUPPLIERS, AND MORE.
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View from BP Bridge looking east.



COURTESY MVVA

VAN VALKENBURGH DESIGNS FOR ACTIVE LAKEFRONT RECREATION

ROCK AND RIBBON

Located just east of Millennium Park, and connected by Frank Gehry's serpentine BP Bridge, Grant Park North is getting a dramatic makeover by Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates (MVVA). **continued on page 7**



JOHN J. MACAULAY

THE WHO AND WHAT BEHIND THE REGION'S BEST NEW BUILDINGS. **SEE PAGE 10**

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TRACK RECORD

In "Destined to fail: Rust Belt cities without rail," the influential blog Rustwire argued that recent funding decisions by the Federal Department of Transportation have effectively condemned many struggling Midwest and Northeast Cities to a slow death. Rail, the piece said, is essential to the revitalization of these cities. And yet, the Feds recently dashed Detroit's dreams of a 3.4-mile light rail line, indicating lower-cost bus rapid transit (BRT) was more feasible in the cash-strapped Motor City. Chicago, too, is going for BRT rather than expanding the L system (though that was the project for which the Chicago Transit Authority was seeking funding). "While better than nothing, BRT's do not have the 'wow' factor of rail," the editorial declared.

Rail is costly to build and operate, but it has a well-documented track record as an economic development tool, even if it is not a cure-all. In St. Louis, the population is still falling, down 30,000 people according to the last census. Along the city's decade old light rail lines, however, neighborhoods are gaining density and economic vitality, according to analysis from NextSTL. So the question becomes, how serious is the federal government about investing in struggling urban centers?

Like countless other political questions, the two parties seem to be on completely different planets on this issue. The transportation bill recently passed by the majority Republican House would have decimated funding for transit (it has stalled in the Democrat-controlled Senate), and Republican governors in Ohio and Florida scuttled the Obama administration's high-speed rail plans in those states. In California, high-speed rail is on the chopping block.

The rail picture is not entirely gloomy for the Midwest. Cincinnati recently broke ground on a new streetcar line, and high-speed upgrades are underway on existing passenger lines in Missouri, Illinois, and Michigan. When the economy collapsed in 2008, some argued the big three auto companies should be partially retooled to build rail cars as part of a new green collar economy. That idea seems almost laughable now.

It is all even more dispiriting given steadily rising gas prices, which are expected to climb to record levels this summer. The Obama administration has failed to articulate the necessity for a more balanced, diversified transportation policy in face of soaring prices at the pump. As a result, the road to economic recovery could be bumpy, or even impassable. **ALAN G. BRAKE**

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China Academy of Art (2007) in Hangzhou.

WANG SHU NABS ARCHITECTURE'S
HIGHEST HONOR

Pritzker Surprise

Chinese architect Wang Shu has been awarded architecture's top prize, the 2012 Pritzker Architecture Prize, marking the first time the \$100,000 prize has selected a Chinese laureate. Wang Shu is known for

combining traditional Chinese materials and building techniques with modern forms and sensibilities, often recycling bricks and tiles to form a patchwork mosaic in his building facades.

Wang Shu founded Amateur Architecture Studio (AAS) with his wife Lu Wenyu in 1998 where he has taken an outspoken stance against architecture that he perceives as destroying vast urban and rural landscapes

across China. The firm derives its name from the traditional building approaches of Chinese craftsman who Wang Shu spent several years studying under. "For myself, being an artisan or a craftsman, is an amateur or almost the same thing," Wang Shu said in a statement. He is also professor and head of architecture at the China Academy of Art in Hangzhou, China where in 2007 he designed the Xiangshan Campus to incorporate millions of roof tiles from destroyed traditional houses.

"The fact that an architect from China has been selected by the jury, represents a significant step in acknowledging the role that China will play in the development of architectural ideals," said Thomas J. Pritzker, chairman of the Hyatt Foundation which sponsors the prize, in a statement. "China's success at urbanization will be important to China and to the world." The formal awards ceremony for the Pritzker Prize will take place in Beijing on May 25. **BRANDEN KLAYKO**

OPEN> SHOP



> HERITAGE BICYCLES
GENERAL STORE

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Tel: 773-245-3005
Designers: Michael Salvatore
with Suzy Genzler Tomcho,
Interior Designer

After spending three years helping to launch the retro-chic bike label Bowery Lane Bicycles in New York, Michael Salvatore has returned to his Chicago roots to open Heritage Bicycles General Store, combining his bike manufacturing business with the city's first Stumptown coffee shop. Salvatore is bringing boutique bike fabrication back to the city after a more than 30-year absence once Schwinn left town. The Lincoln Avenue store reflects the classic design of Salvatore's Heritage Bicycles line with wood-paneled walls and reclaimed wood tables and coffee bar. Bikes are clearly present in the design, including a chandelier built of bicycle rims, but Salvatore wanted the overall effect to be understated. "It's not as obvious as a bike shop. We tried to bring bikes into the store in a subtle way," he said.

Working with New York-based interior designer Suzy Genzler Tomcho, Salvatore brought a vintage aesthetic to the shop. The fifth-generation Chicagoan filled the shop with finds from his family's basements, bringing a turn-of-the-century feel to the sunny storefront on a major bike-commuting artery. Tomcho said the design was meant to evoke a sense of neighborhood culture, creating a place where cyclists could meet around a cup of coffee and begin their rides across the city. **BK**

MELISSA SALVATORE

EAVESDROP> THE EDITORS

COLOSSUS OF ROADS

Following a brief motor tour of New York, the giant replica of **Michelangelo's David** is due to roll into Louisville, Kentucky on a flatbed truck later in March. The statue is an exact copy of the original in Florence. Except at 30 feet tall (not counting the 15 foot pedestal) it's double the size. And, oh yes—it's gold. Turkish artist **Serkan Ozkaya** created the piece in foam using a 3-D printer, and stated "I wanted to use the potential of the 3D model to recreate the most precious man-made object, one which I had never seen for myself." The blinged-out statue will be erected in a park just across the street from its new owner, the **Deborah Berke**-designed 21c Museum. Our question: will the citizens of Louisville stay true to Ozkaya's vision and leave XL David as is—sans fig leaf?

A BOY NAMED LYNN

We heard a rumor that a female architect had been chosen to design the new Detroit MOCAD. But it turns out that the winner really just has a lady-like name. We'd like to congratulate the definitively male **Lynn Rice**, whose firm **Rice + Lipka** is collaborating on the project with **Field Operations**, and take this opportunity to salute **Evelyn Waugh**, **Carol O'Connor**, and **Holly White**!

FRANK-O-PHONE

But wait! **Frank** (Francis?) **Arvan**, is calling for MOCAD to buy local. The Detroit-based architect and President of AIA Detroit, disputed MOCAD's choice stepped up on his Facebook soapbox to write: "I am very disappointed the MOCAD Board could not find a Detroit Area architect for their upcoming renovation...At a time when our local economy has devastated architectural firms I would hope local organizations and business would look to local talent for their projects."

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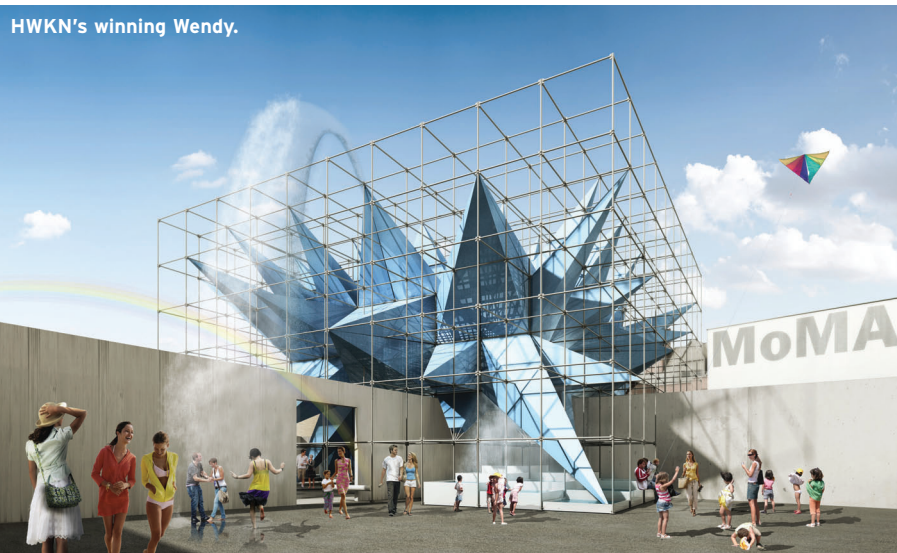
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MOMA PS 1 PICKS HWKN FOR ANNUAL PAVILION

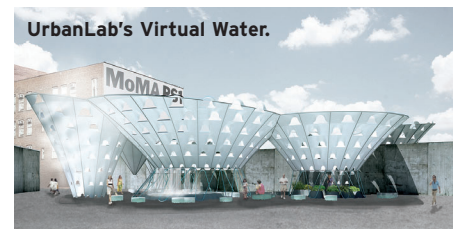
A BURST OF BLUE

New York-based HollwichKushner (HWKN) has been selected for this year's MoMA PS 1 Young Architects Program. Their proposal, called Wendy, uses standard scaffolding to create a visually arresting object that straddles the three outdoor rooms of the PS 1 courtyard. Tensioned fabric coated in smog-eating paint provides shelter and programming areas, including a stage, shower, and misters. "Their proposal is quite attractive in a number of ways. It's very economical in terms of design," said Pedro Gadanho, the curator of contemporary architecture at the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA). "One object creates a variety of programmatic and ecological conditions and its scale rivals the height of the PS 1 building."

All the materials can be disassembled and reused, and, according to Gadanho, the jury was particularly impressed with the combination of standardized parts (the scaffolding) and cutting-edge technology

(the smog-eating coating). "It's proactive, not apologetic," he said. "It begins to point to a new way to think about sustainability." The designers, led by principals Matthias Hollwich and Marc Kushner and project architect Robert May, estimate the fabric will remove as much smog as taking 250 cars off the road. The pavilion will open in late June.

Among the five finalists were Chicago-based UrbanLab with Virtual Water, a proposal to collect, clean and recycle rain water on the site, that will be exhibited at MoMA in time for the opening of the HWKN's pavilion in June 2012. **AGB**



COURTESY HWKN

COURTESY URBANLAB



BRIAN NEWMAN

RUMBLE IN THE RUBBLE

continued from front page
long-abandoned Pruitt-Igoue site. If the Northside Regeneration organization, which is run by McKee's McEagle Properties, is successful in this bid, almost 165 acres will be acquired for just over \$3.2 million, which will more than double the organization's current holdings in the district.

Most of the properties are now empty. The area is sparsely populated and primarily offers barren lots and crumbling structures, but McKee ultimately plans to transform 1,500 acres of the neighborhood into a highly sustainable, mixed-use model of urban renewal.

Announced in 2009, the scope of this planned redevelopment was made public only after McEagle had already secured an initial 800-acre foothold in the area.

McKee's proposal includes infrastructure, up to 10,000 residential units, 5.5 million

square feet of retail and office space, and multi-modal transit options like 20 miles of bike and pedestrian paths and a trolley system.

Shepherding this endeavor has proven to be arduous and is increasingly fraught with complex issues, including the potential displacement of remaining residents.

Further, a critical 33-acre grouping of parcels for the redevelopment district is the location on which the Pruitt-Igoue housing project once stood. Abandoned for more than 30 years, the site was home to one of the country's most notorious modernist experiments. It is now a dense forest surrounded only by the sprawling empty lots and underused buildings that have come to define much of St. Louis' north side.

This nationally important site, which serves as a poignant reminder of both the promise and the failings of large-scale urban renewal and architectural theory,

Above: Abandoned lots in north St. Louis.

will likely be purchased by the Northside Regeneration organization for less than \$1 million. McKee plans to locate the retail core of his redeveloped district on these parcels.

Despite the cool reception McKee has received from some of the public and local media, the City of St. Louis sees no mismanagement or misleading intentions on the part of McEagle or the Northside Regeneration organization as they continue to purchase large swaths of land. Jeff Rainford, who serves as chief of staff for St. Louis mayor Francis Slay, recently told the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, "We're not giving him these properties. We're not selling them at a discount. McKee is buying them for what we think these properties are worth."

BRIAN NEWMAN

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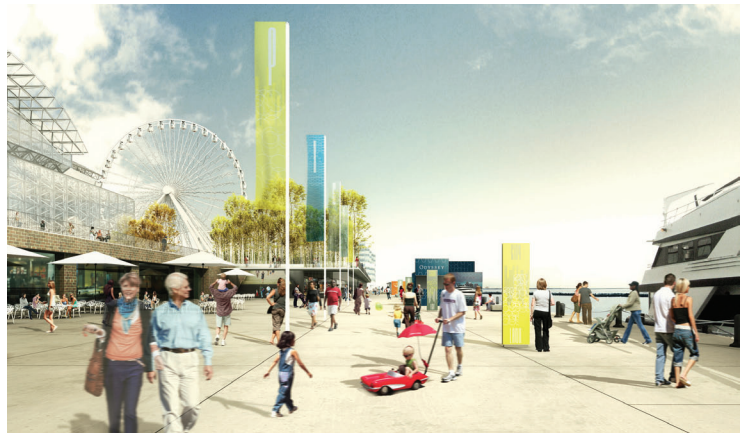
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Clockwise from top left: Aedas; !melk; Xavier Vendrell; James Corner Field Operations.



COURTESY RESPECTIVE FIRMS

PIER REVIEW continued from front page spaces will make it a world-class destination for residents as well as visitors, much like Millennium Park and the rest of the lakefront.

All the teams are working under the framework of a new master plan, called "The Centennial Vision," developed by the newly constituted nonprofit Navy Pier, Inc.

The Pier had previously been operated by McPier, the exposition company that also operates McCormick Place.

AECOM/BIG's proposal calls for a

series of undulating ramp/bleachers that form a new landscape over much of the pier's midsection, culminating in a new park at the tip. The Aedas-led team calls for a

All the proposals are on view at the Chicago Architecture Foundation through mid-May. Announcement of the winner is expected to follow soon after. **AGB**

UNVEILED

DEEP SPACE AUDITORIUM

On an 800-acre site in verdant rural Wisconsin, Epic Systems, a healthcare records management company, has been growing by leaps and bounds over the past 13 years. The latest addition to Epic's corporate and conference center headquarters will be a 600,000-square-foot underground auditorium with 14,300

seats. In keeping with a mission to leave much of the former farmstead untouched, the new auditorium features a six-acre green roof that blends into the rolling landscape, with bridle and walking paths, and water features doubling as geothermal heat sinks, part of an overall sustainability strategy that includes 3,576 geothermal wells.

Structurally, the auditorium employs 4,000 tons of steel (from Belgium and the United States) spanning 270

feet and supported by one transfer truss. The column-free auditorium will thus have clear sightlines to a large 45-foot-by-80-foot LED screen. Dedicated primarily to annual conferences and staff corporate meetings, the screen works interactively for audience members with personal tablets.

JULIE V. IOVINE

Architect: Cunningham Group
Client: Epic Systems
Location: Verona, Wisconsin
Completion: Fall 2013



COURTESY CUNNINGHAM GROUP

AT DEADLINE

FLW 2.0

The Frank Lloyd Wright Historic District in Oak Park expanded its boundaries to encompass another 444 homes, bringing the total number in the district to 1,728. According to a report on TribLocal.com, the proposal for redistricting was put forth in 2005 because the original 1970s districting didn't include many structures now considered historic. There has been a bit of pushback from residents concerned about the cost of maintaining a historic structure and a tepid reception to dealing with the Historic Preservation Commission for changes or additions.

PLAN FOR TRANSFORMATION 2.0

The new crew at the Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) is set to revamp the original Plan for Transformation for public housing, which has been slowed by the soft real estate market. The CHA will be joined in the effort by the city, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, and the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation. In a statement the authority said that it was about to enter an "intense information gathering and input process," in other words, a series of meetings with the community to gather new ideas to complete the plan. They even adopted a wordy moniker that sounds more like an app: Plan for Transformation 2.0 Resident Input Sessions.

CINCY STREET CAR 1.0

The ground was broken for the Cincinnati Street Car on February 24. The Queen City is revamping the underground utilities and replacing the antiquated water main before laying the tracks that will link Downtown to Findlay Market and the trendy Over-the-Rhine neighborhood. It will eventually link to the University of Cincinnati, and the zoo. Late last year, the \$95 million project got a \$10.5 million infusion from TIGER III funds allocated by the U.S. Department of Transportation.

PEVELY COMPLEX 0.0

The Pevely Complex in St. Louis is about to face the wrecking ball after the Planning Commission voted to approve plans by St. Louis University to build a new medical facility on the site. Preservationists' voices were heard, but with the exception of one lone voter representing Mayor Francis Slay, the rest of the commissioners were not moved by arguments that the former dairy factory, listed on the National Register of Historic Places, was worth saving. With SLU threatening to leave for the suburbs, the commission caved and allowed a newer design to land on the urban site. The four factory buildings and one iconic smokestack will fall once the university receives approval for one final permit.



FORMER SOM PARTNER STARTS INTERNATIONAL CITY PRACTICE

ON HIS OWN

With much of the world urbanizing at an unprecedented rate, Chicago architect

Peter Ellis sensed an opportunity. "There is, I believe, a gaping need for a practice



Left: Peter Ellis. Right: The plan for Jaypee Sports City in India, developed while Ellis was at SOM.

those plans through to the design and construction of its architecture and infrastructure sets his practice apart. "An urban master plan begins to die the moment it hits the shelf," he said. "There is the need for a few hundred new cities in the developing world."

India has proven to be fertile ground for Ellis, both in terms of building out Jaypee Sports City, but also in attracting talent. "There are tremendous amounts of U.S. and European-trained Indian architects who are returning for new opportunities," he said. Staff members rotate through both offices, so they stay connected both to the project on the ground as well as to U.S. design culture.

Ellis hopes to reshape existing cities in the U.S. as well. The firm is currently pursuing planning commissions in Los Angeles and Memphis, TN. In Los Angeles, the firm is submitting a proposal for a sustainability plan for Downtown, while in Memphis, Ellis and his team are responding to a call for a new airport city. "It's

really exciting to see cities across the country embracing smarter, more sustainable planning," he said.

Ellis is at least the third senior SOM architect to leave and start a Chicago-based practice in recent years: Adrian Smith left in 2006; Thomas Kerwin in 2010. SOM has a mandatory retirement age of 60. "SOM is committed to advancing the firm generation to generation," and that's a laudable goal, he said, noting that many architects "don't really become fluent as a designer until [their] fifties". An early retirement age may have made sense for the previous generation, but less so now. Ellis is quick to express his admiration for SOM. "It's such an amazing organization full of brilliant individuals."

Ellis is focused on the environmental and demographic challenges we face in the present and near future. He believes purpose-built cities are key to sustainable growth. "We can build cities so they use 30 to 50 percent less energy and water than existing cities," he said. "The technology is there. It's about harnessing it and integrating into coherent systems."

AGB

devoted to the planning and design of new cities," Ellis said. A longtime veteran of SOM, Ellis recently left the firm where he was a consulting partner to found Peter Ellis New Cities, a 20-person architecture/planning/urban design practice with offices in New

Delhi and Chicago.

While at SOM, Ellis planned Jaypee Sports City in India, and he is overseeing its construction in his new practice. "Not many people can say they planned and then built a city for a million people," he said. Focusing on planning new cities and carrying



ROCK AND RIBBON continued from front page While Millennium Park draws on Beaux Arts planning, the Van Valkenburg design follows the curving lines established by Gehry's footbridge. "You can fold more program into curving geometries," said Matthew Urbanski, a principal at MVVA.

The park is being rebuilt following the repair of a below-grade waterproof membrane, which protects an underground parking garage. Grant Park North will emphasize active year-round recreation, with a "skating ribbon," an ice path that threads throughout

the landscape, as well as an artificial climbing mountain. "You'll have a very different experience from a conventional skating rink," he said. "We're planting evergreens that can be interspersed along folds of the ribbon." The climbing mountain will also add to the variety of activities along the lakefront. "Vigorous activity makes parks usable in cold weather."

While much of the lakefront parklands is flat, MVVA's design calls for an undulating topography, with bowl-shaped hills to create more intimate gathering spaces within the



park. And while most of the Grant Park North's lines will be curvilinear, the design subtly refers to the city grid as well, with a regular matrix of high light poles that will bathe the entire park in an even "moonlight," Urbanski said. "In the summer, nighttime is the best time to be outside, especially with the breezes coming off the lake," he explained. Urbanski hopes the park will be a draw for tourists and visitors, but also serve as a local park for the growing number of residents in the Loop and Lakeshore East. "We believe there is a middle ground between a destina-

Left: Skating ribbon and climbing park. Right: Play garden, looking southeast.

tion park like Millennium and a neighborhood park," he said.

The Chicago Children's Museum had previously been eyeing the site for a new home, which would have been built largely underground. Facing public opposition, the museum has opted to stay at Navy Pier.

AGB

COVER-UPS

NEW CEILINGS THAT DON'T JUST HIDE THE WORKS, BUT ALSO ADD ACOUSTICS AND EASY RECONFIGURATION TO HIGH PERFORMANCE. BY JENNIFER K. GORSCHÉ



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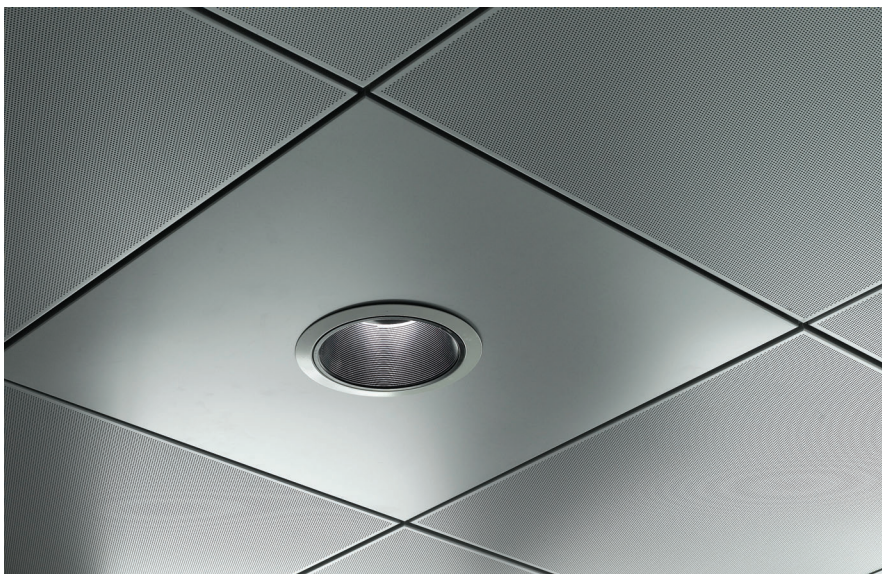
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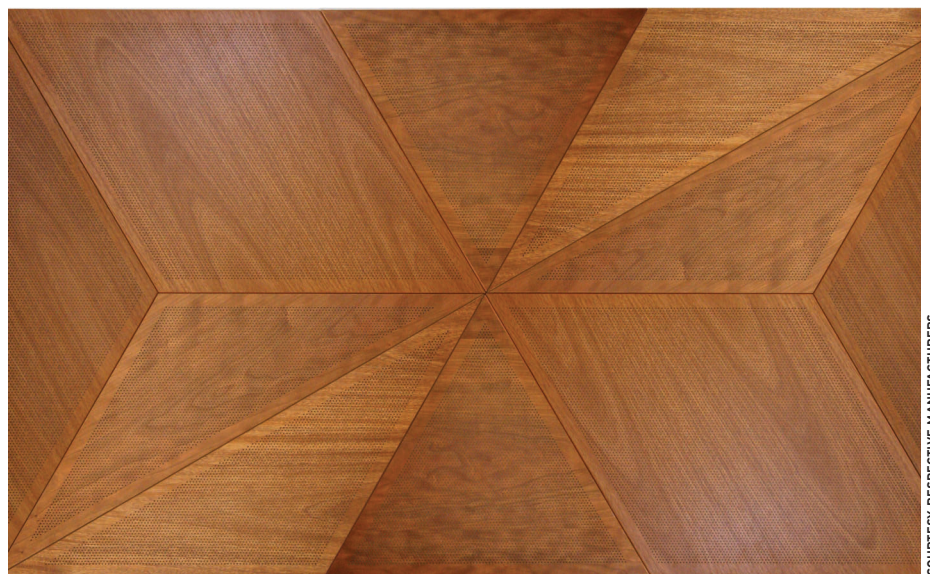
3



4



6



5

COURTESY RESPECTIVE MANUFACTURERS

1 SONO PANEL HIGHTOWER GROUP

Designed by Swedish design firm Claesson Koivisto Rune, HighTower's Sono panel is manufactured from bentwood birch profiles (available finished or unfinished) over a black stained wood frame and recyclable polyester fiber. Rated for Class C sound absorption, the 24-by-48-inch panels are typically used for vertical applications but can be attached to suspended ceilings with additional hardware. www.hightoweraccess.com

2 WOVIN WALL ACOUSTIC MOOV ACOUSTIC

Ideal for covering ceilings and walls, Wovin Wall Acoustic's modular construction allows colors and configurations to be changed frequently. The system is available in the United States through 3form with a range of resin and wood veneer finishes. Its woven construction allows it to absorb mid-range acoustic frequencies. The new felt-covered system, Moov Acoustic, offers even higher sound absorption. www.wovinwall.com

3 INTEGRATED CEILINGS AND WALLS ARMSTRONG

Armstrong now offers ceiling and wall systems with continuous transitions between vertical and horizontal components. The new options allow designers to create 90-degree and curved designs with ten of the company's product lines, including SoundScapes Shapes and Soundsoak walls. The new transitional elements enable enhanced acoustical performance while concealing acoustical infill material behind panels. www.armstrong.com/wallsandceilings

4 ECOPHON MASTER SOLO S CERTAINTEED

CertainTeed's new Ecophon Master Solo S suspended ceiling panel is manufactured from 75 percent recycled high-density fiberglass. Rated for Class A sound absorption, the panels can be suspended in a variety of configurations and easily integrated with light fixtures. The visible surface is finished with Akutex FT, a finish offering 85 percent light reflectivity and 99 percent light diffusion for more natural light distribution throughout interiors. www.certainteed.com

5 MICROPERF PANELS CEILINGS PLUS

Ceilings Plus recently introduced its new Microperf capabilities thanks to BIM-driven fabrication equipment that can perforate more than 7,000 holes per minute in a customizable range of sizes, shapes, and patterns. When installed on ceilings, micro-perforations appear almost invisible but provide enough open area to work effectively with acoustical insulation. Pictured: Tessellations panel with Microperf. www.ceilingplus.com

6 GLADIUS PANEL HUNTER DOUGLAS CONTRACT

The Hunter Douglas Gladius panel-and-grid system is designed to create an extremely flat ceiling surface with an installation system that allows panels to "stab" into the grid and snap into place. Panels are made with more than 70 percent recycled content and are available in a number of finishes and perforation patterns to meet various noise reduction coefficients. www.hunterdouglascontract.com

PLANNING FOR ART continued from front page said her department is taking stock of the city's existing cultural assets, identifying opportunities for "cultural hubs."

Criteria for defining cultural hubs are also up for discussion. The city could follow the 1986 plan, which suggested the city establish cultural enterprise zones through tax incentives and subsidies. Mayor Emanuel has often mentioned that Uptown could rival downtown as the city's preeminent theater district, hinting at plans to revive the Northside neighborhood's eponymous 1920s-era theater, which has been closed to the public for decades.

"What ends up in the plan," Commissioner Boone said at a recent meeting in Edgewater's Nicholas Senn High School, "will depend upon what you come up with." That meeting was one of four town-hall-style gatherings held in February to kick off the planning process. The city will also host 19 "neighborhood cultural conversations" and ten "cultural sector focus groups" in the coming months.


Dan McArdle manages two theater companies in Chicago. He said small theater companies are often forced to shoulder the costs of building renovations—a cost many of them can't afford on top of rent that can be 80 percent of production costs. And the performers get squeezed hardest. "Unfortunately what a lot of small theater companies do is they just don't pay their people," McArdle said. "Pay for artists is the first to get cut, because there's so much supply."

That artistic supply will be a resource for input to the 2012 plan. But Boone said the discussions will go beyond the studio. "My hope is to get people who don't normally think about the arts to engage with our planning process," she said. Zoning is at the heart of many proposals, like promoting live-work space for artists or community culture centers. That means aldermanic support could be key. Potential storefront venues still feel the pressure of citywide fire and safety codes designed with downtown in mind.

Chicago's original cultural plan led to the creation of the North Loop Theatre District, to which Mayor Richard M. Daley owes a good portion of his legacy. Although revitalization plans predate even Mayor Washington's 1986 cultural plan, the rejuvenated district is now a major tourist attraction. Daley drew criticism for devoting public money to the formerly dilapidated downtown venues like the Chicago Theatre. Today, Chicago has the third largest creative economy in the United States, boasting more than 650 nonprofit arts organizations and churning out more than \$2 billion each year. The 1986 plan also cleared the way for the renovation of Navy Pier.

But so far in 2012, local participants have sounded a common refrain in Chicago politics: Focus on the neighborhoods. Many hope the new plan will decentralize the city's economic development, nourishing the artistic communities of Chicago's more than 200 neighborhoods. The groundwork has already been laid, said 1986-plan veteran Michael Dorf: "It's taken as a given now that the arts are an economic engine."

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Sculpture: Gyre, Thomas H. Sayre, N.C. Museum of Art

COURTESY MARSHALL BROWN PROJECTS

THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER MARCH 7, 2012

THE INNER CIRCLE

AN's annual resource list may be published every year but it is never the same. Painstakingly drawn from extensive interviews by our editors with the architects and builders of the best architecture of 2011, these names are the too-often unacknowledged cornerstones that guarantee the quality and excellence of today's architecture. We both herald and share them with you.

Compiled by
Alan G. Brake and
Tyler Silvestro

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COURTESY PERKINS + WILL

"We worked with **Tuschall Engineering** on the Poetry Foundation from the beginning. They were very helpful with the customized perforation of the zinc cladding."

John Ronan,
John Ronan Architects

"One of things that made the Warroad land port so successful was that we got the entire team together at the beginning. The civil and transportation engineers, **Jacobs Engineering**, understood that we wanted to reduce as much pavement as possible and eliminate curbs so we could keep the stormwater on site."

Shane Coen,
Coen + Partners

"The systems at the Champaign Public Library work very well together. **Henneman Engineering**, the MEP, made sure everything was well integrated, including an underfloor air system and day light harvesting, so the project is quite sustainable."

Carol Ross Barney,
Ross Barney Architects

TOP:
WARROAD US
PORT OF ENTRY
JACOBS ENGINEERING
COEN + PARTNERS
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

ABOVE:
COLUMBUS, INDIANA
CENTRAL MIDDLE SCHOOL
CSO ARCHITECTS AND
ENGINEERS
PERKINS + WILL

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COURTESY SUSAN CONGER ARCHITECTS

ABOVE:
FLOATING WORLD GALLERY
VERMONT STRUCTURAL
SLATE
SUSAN CONGER ARCHITECTS

BELOW LEFT:
WEST LOOP LAW OFFICE
ACCURATE PERFORATING
4240 ARCHITETURE

BELOW RIGHT:
FLOATING WORLD GALLERY
GREAT LAKES
ARCHITECTURAL
WOODWORKING
SUSAN CONGER ARCHITECTS

“Vermont Structural

Slate really was the key to the Floating World Gallery project. It’s a very simple palette so that you go from a busy commercial street into the quiet of the gallery. The client asked for something very simple, very serene, so the choice of materials was very important.”

Susan Conger-Austin,
Susan Conger Architects

“The end result

of the perforated screen on the West Loop Law Office was precise. **Accurate Perforating** was fantastic to work with. We resolved a lot of details on the fly.”

Robert Benson,
4240 Architecture



COURTESY SUSAN CONGER ARCHITECTS; LEFT: 4240

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COURTESY LA DALLMAN

TOP:
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN
MILWAUKEE HILLEL CENTER
NEWMANN BROTHERS
LA DALLMAN ARCHITECTS

RIGHT:
HON HEADQUARTERS
BENTLEY PRINCE STREET
SMITHGROUP

BELOW:
URBAN PENTHOUSE
BULTHAUP KITCHEN
VJAA

"We used very simple furniture from **Blu Dot** in the gallery and offices. It keeps the focus on the art."

Susan Conger-Austin,
Susan Conger Architects

"The **Bulthaup** kitchen system is very flexible. We were able to integrate it into the architecture in a very seamless and elegant way."

Vincent James, VJAA



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James Dallman,
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THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER MARCH 7, 2012

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MARCH

WEDNESDAY 7
LECTURES
Robert Bruegmann
AIA St. Louis Scholarship Trust Lecture
6:30 p.m.
Steinberg Auditorium
Sam Fox School of Design and Visual Arts
1 Brookings Dr., St. Louis
samfoxschool.wustl.edu

Lucy Dunne
Building Intelligence and Interactivity into Everyday Artifacts
6:00 p.m.
Rapson Hall
University of Minnesota
89 Church St. SE
Minneapolis, MN
design.umn.edu

THURSDAY 8
LECTURES
Ken Tracy
Sampling Devices
12:30 p.m.
Rapson Hall
University of Minnesota
89 Church St. SE
Minneapolis, MN
design.umn.edu

Sheila Kennedy and Frano Violich
Light/ Information/ Energy
6:00 p.m.
Rapson Hall
University of Minnesota
89 Church St. SE
Minneapolis, MN
design.umn.edu

FRIDAY 9
LECTURE
Salvador Salort-Pons
A New Painting by Juan Valdés Leal at the DIA
6:30 p.m.
The Detroit Institute of Arts
5200 Woodward Ave.
Detroit
dia.org

SATURDAY 10
EVENT
Keith Fullerton Whitman
8:00 p.m.
Madlener House
Graham Foundation
4 West Burton Pl.
Chicago
grahamfoundation.org

SUNDAY 11
LECTURE
Freida Tesfagiorgis
Expanding the Field of Vision: Modern Art in Nigeria and Cultural Diplomacy in the Mid-Twentieth Century
2:00 p.m.
The Detroit Institute of Arts
5200 Woodward Ave.
Detroit
dia.org

MONDAY 12
LECTURE
Marilyn Minter
6:00 p.m.
Rubloff Auditorium
The Art Institute of Chicago
230 South Columbus Dr.
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artic.edu

WWW.ARCHPAPER.COM

WEDNESDAY 14
LECTURE
Sarah Burns
Better for Haunts—Victorian Houses and the Modern Imagination
6:00 p.m.
Fullerton Hall
The Art Institute of Chicago
111 South Michigan Ave.
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artic.edu

THURSDAY 15
LECTURES
Barbara Barletta
The Parthenon—How Innovative is it?
Classical Art Society
The Art Institute of Chicago
111 South Michigan Ave.
Chicago
www.artic.edu

FILM
Conversations at the Edge: A Space In-Between
(Sara Ludy, 2010–12)
75 min.
6:00 p.m.
Gene Siskel Film Center
164 North State St.
Chicago
www.artic.edu

EVENT
Aaron Hinde and Tom Waterloo
Structural Insulated Panels, Design and Application
12:00 p.m.
AIA Chicago
35 East Wacker Dr., Chicago
www.aiachicago.org

FRIDAY 16
LECTURE
Carlos Leite
Sao Paulo Sustainability Indicators: from informal territories to the intimacy of architecture praxis
12:00 p.m.
AIA Chicago
35 East Wacker Dr.
Chicago, IL
aiachicago.org

SYMPOSIUM
Perspectives on Photography Detroit: Panel Discussion
Nancy Barr, Michelle Andonian, Carlos Diaz, et al.
7:00 p.m.
The Detroit Institute of Arts
5200 Woodward Ave.
Detroit
www.dia.org

SATURDAY 17
SYMPOSIUM
Working with a Green Architect
1:00 p.m.
Center for Green Technology
445 North Sacramento Blvd.
Chicago
chicagogreentech.org

MONDAY 19
SYMPOSIUM
Detroit Revealed: Conversations on Art, Culture and Community
Swarupa Anila, Terry Blackhawk, Vievee Francis, et al.
10:30 a.m.
The Detroit Institute of Arts
5200 Woodward Ave.
Detroit
www.dia.org

EXHIBITION OPENING
Wing Young Huie
Identity and the American Landscape
100 Rapson Hall
University of Minnesota
89 Church St. SE
Minneapolis, MN
www.design.umn.edu

TUESDAY 20
LECTURE
Mark Miller and Tom Basset-Dilley
The Passive House Standard: History, Techniques, and Case Studies
6:00 p.m.
AIA Chicago
35 East Wacker Dr.
Chicago
www.aiachicago.org

WEDNESDAY 21
LECTURE
Claudia Bernardi
School of Art and Open Studio of Perquin, El Salvador
6:30 p.m.
Steinberg Auditorium
Sam Fox School of Design and Visual Arts
1 Brookings Dr.
St. Louis
www.samfoxschool.wustl.edu

THURSDAY 22
EVENT
Lira Luis, AIA, RIBA
How to Benefit from Social Media within the Architecture & Design Community
5:30 p.m.
Porcelanosa Showroom
149 Merchandise Mart Plaza
Chicago
www.aiachicago.org

FRIDAY 23
EVENT
Leonard Parker
An Architect's Architect
6:00 p.m.
Rapson Hall
University of Minnesota
89 Church St. SE
Minneapolis, MN
www.design.umn.edu

SUNDAY 25
EXHIBITION OPENING
Capturing the Sublime: Italian Drawings of the Renaissance and Baroque
The Art Institute of Chicago
111 South Michigan Ave.
Chicago
www.artic.edu

MONDAY 26
LECTURE
Adam Budak
6:30 p.m.
Steinberg Auditorium
Sam Fox School of Design and Visual Arts
1 Brookings Dr.
St. Louis
www.samfoxschool.wustl.edu

TUESDAY 27
LECTURE
Thomas Christoffersen
5:30 p.m.
Knowlton School of Architecture
Ohio State University
275 Woodruff Ave.
Columbus, OH
knowlton.osu.edu

FRIDAY 30
SYMPOSIUM
Digital Desires: Technology at the Intersection of Nature, Culture, and Meaning
Gregg Pasquarelli, Thomas Auer, et al.
6:00 p.m.
Steinberg Auditorium
Sam Fox School of Design and Visual Arts
1 Brookings Dr.
St. Louis, MO
samfoxschool.wustl.edu

EVENT
Unveiled: International Vintage Poster Fair: Seven Deadly Sins
Chicago Cultural Center
77 East Randolph St.
Chicago
www.artic.edu

APRIL
SATURDAY 1
LECTURE
Louise Cort
Painting with Pottery in the Peacock Room
2:00 p.m.
The Detroit Institute of Arts
5200 Woodward Ave., Detroit
www.dia.org

TUESDAY 4
LECTURES
Karen Lewis
5:30 p.m.
Knowlton School of Architecture
Ohio State University
275 Woodruff Ave.
Columbus, OH
knowlton.osu.edu

WEDNESDAY 5
FILM
Detroit Revealed on Film: Louder Than Love
(Tony D'Annunzio, 2011),
130 min.
7:00 p.m.
The Detroit Institute of Arts
5200 Woodward Ave., Detroit
www.dia.org

SUNDAY 9
LECTURE
Bernard Tschumi
Concept and Material
6:00 p.m.
MTCC Auditorium
Illinois Institute of Technology
3201 South State St., Chicago
iit.edu

TUESDAY 11
LECTURES
Jonathan Barnes
5:30 p.m.
Knowlton School of Architecture
Ohio State University
275 Woodruff Ave.
Columbus, OH
knowlton.osu.edu

Barbara Kasten
6:30 p.m.
Steinberg Auditorium
Sam Fox School of Design and Visual Arts
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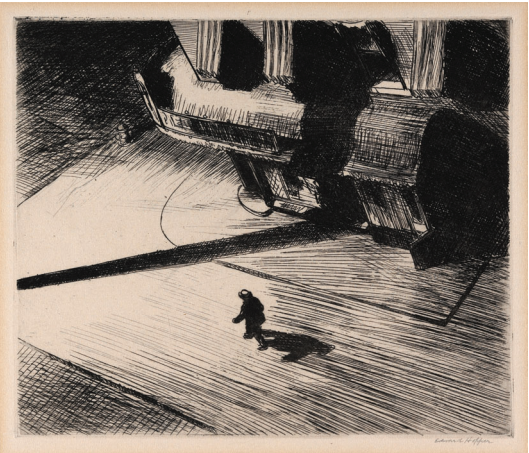
Hernan Bas
In Conversation
7:00 p.m.
The Detroit Institute of Arts
5200 Woodward Ave., Detroit
www.dia.org



SARAH MORRIS

SARAH MORRIS:
POINTS ON A LINE
The Wexner Center
1871 North High Street
Columbus, OH
Through April 15

Points On A Line, a 2010 film by artist Sarah Morris, takes two iconic buildings as its central characters, Mies van der Rohe's Farnsworth House in Illinois and Philip Johnson's Glass House in Connecticut. Commissioned by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, which owns both properties, the film is a meditation on the relationship between the buildings—Johnson, an acolyte of Mies and inspired by Farnsworth drawings, happened to complete his New Canaan house first—and the structures as they exist today. But it is the relationship of the architects themselves that becomes Morris' narrative thread, serving as a springboard to explore their other architectural overlap: Johnson's glamorized corporate interiors for the Four Seasons, the power-broker restaurant in the base of the Mies-designed Seagram building in Manhattan. *Points on Line* underscores how our perception of a space is affected not just by its design but also its mythology.



COURTESY IMA

URBAN VISION:
AMERICAN WORKS ON PAPER, 1900–1950
Indianapolis Museum of Art
4000 Michigan Road
Indianapolis, IN
March 30–September 30

An upcoming exhibition at The Indianapolis Museum of Art's Alliance Gallery will explore the ways in which artists dealt with the rise of industrial modernization and urbanity. In the first half of the 20th century, rapidly changing cities served as inspiration for new portrayals of human expression within these new environments. "The spectacle of metropolitan life" is presented through 25 works from IMA's print collection, including lithographs, etchings, and engravings from well-known artists such as George Bellows, Childe Hassam, Edward Hopper, Reginald Marsh, and Isabel Bishop. The exhibition will display the art alongside vintage construction photos from the Chicago and New York skyscraper boom, providing context for these early interpretations of the city. Pieces from lesser-known artist and architect Gerald Kenneth Geerlings, whose aquatinted technical drawings of the emerging cityscape highlight the juxtaposition of emotional romanticism and technological progress, will be on display at IMA for the first time since 1970.

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THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER MARCH 7, 2012



JAMES EWING

HISSING ABOUT SUBURBAN LAWNS

Foreclosed: Rehousing the American Dream
The Museum of Modern Art
11 West 53rd St.
Through July 30

Foreclosed: Rehousing the American Dream is an ambitious and significant attempt to rethink the design of American suburbs. Positing that academic and intellectual leaders in architecture have played a too-small role in the recent production of suburbia, the show's curators, Barry Bergdoll, the Philip Johnson Chief Curator of Architecture and Design, and Reinhold Martin, Director of the Temple Hoyne Buell Center for the Study of American Architecture at Columbia University, offer a high-profile forum for the architectural practices MOS, Visible Weather, Studio Gang, WORKac, and Zago Architecture to

demonstrate their capacity to imagine another future in five economically-challenged American suburbs.

At the heart of the show is *The Buell Hypothesis*, a booklet written by Martin with the Buell Center's program director Anna Kenoff and research associate Leah Meisterlin, which serves as a provocation and source of knowledge for the show's architects. The booklet's core is an imaginary Socratic dialogue between two philosophers trapped on Interstate 95, a form that allows the authors to summarize current research on housing by architectural and urban historians, cultural critics, urban

planners, and economic theorists. The dialogue traces how our most important private national dream—owning the single-family house—is actually made possible by public policy and infrastructure. Rather than separating us into private realms, the *Hypothesis* argues, housing forcefully connects us to each other through mechanisms of finance and governance.

Translating the insights of *Hypothesis* into built form was the challenge given to *Foreclosed*'s architects. They were encouraged to make politics, the economy, philosophy, and dreams part of architectural form-making, and to rethink the divide between public and private space in American suburbs. The show also asked architects to engage with community activists, economists, urban planners, ecologists, and experts from other fields, suggesting that architecture does best when it can manage complex input from a wide variety of professionals. To complicate things further, the design process itself became public through a series of charettes, presentations, conferences, and blog posts, all of which are archived—and worth looking through—on the *Foreclosed* web site.

One of the strongest projects was New York firm WORKac's "nature city" in Keizer, Oregon, which packed offices, food processing businesses, productive landscapes, a giant compost pile, and play spaces for both people and animals into a landscape of towers, trees, and townhomes. Wielding both program and form, the stunningly detailed model of the Nature City captivated viewers. A series of brief video advertisements by the advertising firm Weiden & Kennedy accompanied the model. The irony of the ads kept them from seeming market-ready, but WORKac nonethe-

less showed how much images and media must be mastered to construct desire for new suburban prototypes.

Chicago-based Studio Gang admirably generated new spatial forms for suburbia and integrated these with financial mechanisms for making them affordable. Gang proposed restructuring the single-family house to accommodate a wider variety of family structures emerging in Cicero, Illinois, a diverse inner-ring suburb whose use is poorly aligned with its design. Studio Gang's diagram rewriting zoning code for Cicero is one of the strongest statements in the show, demonstrating the degree to which legal changes are necessary for architects to do innovative work in the suburbs. Other parts of the proposal are more challenging. Gang suggests that people who can't afford suburban single-family houses might instead occupy adaptively reused factories on remediated brownfields. It's one thing for artists to choose to occupy potentially noxious former factories, as they did in SoHo in the '70s, but another to imagine that Cicero's poorer residents trade health for square footage.

Health is the explicit theme of New York City-based MOS's proposal for a Walking City in The Oranges, New Jersey. Echoing ideas of the architectural avant-garde of the 1960s, MOS boldly suggests replacing all streets with buildings and walkways as a strategy to combat obesity, diabetes, and other bodily ailments associated with sedentary car-centered suburban lifestyles. But a latent theme of the project, made clear in a video rife with doubts about architecture's claims to power, seemed to be the challenge of using architectural techniques to resolve larger and more complex behavioral and biological problems. Could architecture really achieve all

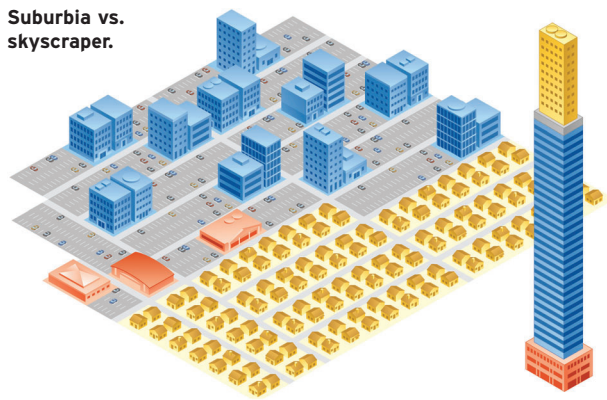
that was asked of it by the show? MOS's skepticism provided an important counterpoint to enthusiasm of the other projects.

Such an ambitious show is bound to have weaknesses. The most glaring for me is that the exhibition is not really about the foreclosure crisis; instead, the crisis acts as an opportunity for architects to reclaim disciplinary territory ceded to other professions. Given that speculation is at the core of so many suburban challenges, what if we had seen post-speculative cities? It also would have been wonderful to see more work by people tackling these problems already: designers like Interboro Partners, Damon Rich or Teddy Cruz come to mind. *Foreclosed* features a lovely project by Cruz showing a crazy-quilt exurban house "designed" from residents' dreams at the entrance of the show, but what would have happened if he'd been a sixth participant? And where were global suburbs? The projects produced for the show silently evoked China's new eco-cities and the dense, walkable, transit-connected suburbs built in Europe during the 1970s. It would have been fascinating to see these precedents taken on more explicitly.

Foreclosed's great achievement is the strong signal it sends to the culture-consuming public: in two of our most important architectural institutions, there's an ambition for architecture to take on a more socially and financially relevant role. This is exciting. It will be even more so if *Foreclosed* helps to create structures of legitimation and appreciation for much more ambitious attempts to take on these questions in practice.

MEREDITH TENHOOR TEACHES IN PRATT'S GRADUATE ARCHITECTURE AND URBAN DESIGN PROGRAM.

Suburbia vs. skyscraper.



COURTESY PENGUIN PRESS

TALL ORDERS

The Heights: Anatomy of a Skyscraper
Kate Ascher, Penguin Press, \$35

Ninety-nine years ago, Dr. Adolphus Knopf petitioned the Heights of Buildings Commission in New York City to ban "disease-breeding, death-trap sky-scrappers" south of 23rd Street. Today, fears about tall buildings persist, revolving less around

hygiene and more around exit strategies. Yet most city-dwellers are still comfortable enough with skyscraper technology to spend days and nights on high. Not content with urbanites' relatively passive—if better-informed, post 9/11—acceptance of

"ever taller buildings, Kate Ascher, author of *The Works: Anatomy of a City* (2005), has written *The Heights: Anatomy of a Skyscraper*, "an illustrated guide to everything you wanted to know about skyscrapers."

Ascher's short introduction to the history of tall buildings covers the New York/Chicago rivalry, the impact of New York's groundbreaking 1916 Zoning Resolution, the glass behemoths of the International Style, and the super-tall towers of Asia and the Middle East. Condensing such a rich history into the first four pages of the introduction is no easy task, yet Ascher does so with clarity, authority, and a commendable editorial eye for what to leave in and what to keep out.

From there, the author begins literally from the ground up, recounting the life of a skyscraper. Along the way, she peppers the 200-page text with anecdotes, some well-known in the architecture community but others sur-

prising pieces of tall building trivia: Though Disney's thrill ride "Tower of Terror" exploits an innate fear of uncontrolled descent, there are no cases of an elevator free fall causing death. Even when an elevator in the Empire State Building plunged over 75 stories in 1945, the elevator cab operator's life was spared thanks to the compressed air in the shaft beneath the cab, combined with a pile of severed cables, which cushioned the fall.

The Heights dispels myths and reveals unexpected but intriguing details—like the fact that operator booths of the cranes that build super-tall buildings are sometimes decked out with TVs and fridges. But one can't help but notice that in its dissection of scientific, sociological, and economic realities of building tall, the book, though never disparaging or inconsiderate of the architect, underscores the dominance of function and finance in the mainly

managerial effort of building a skyscraper. Ascher identifies the architect's contribution as the most visible part of the building, something that has historically correlated to a certain absolute ownership of a tower by an architect (Mies' Seagram Building, Norman Foster's Gherkin, etc.), but the author's approach also clearly exposes everything that architects can't and don't do.

Accessibly written and well illustrated with copious diagrams, *The Heights* pleasantly lends itself to being flipped through, like most publications in which text and image receive equal real estate. As an artifact, the book is reminiscent of a middle school textbook, with its glossy paper, bright, full-color images, and backpack-sized dimensions. The same goes for its content: A cover-to-cover reading emphasizes commonly used terms and ideas; it's outlined to the teeth with short didactic paragraphs

that explain diagrams, which in turn explain other paragraphs where one-sentence definitions explain "key concepts" that have been the sole subjects of dissertations. The goal here is basic understanding, and *The Heights*, like your middle school textbooks, makes it very hard to do anything but retain the presented information.

It's a level of handholding that will perfectly suit some but others may find overly pedantic. But Ascher did not intend to write a book for professional architects, and for what *The Heights* claims to be, it is decidedly successful. It's not marketed as a book for children, but it could be, and one that different ages could plug into at different levels. Like a good student of the school of skyscraper, Ascher knows the benefit of flexible programs.

BECKY QUINTAL IS A NEW YORK-BASED ARCHITECTURE EDITOR AND RESEARCHER.



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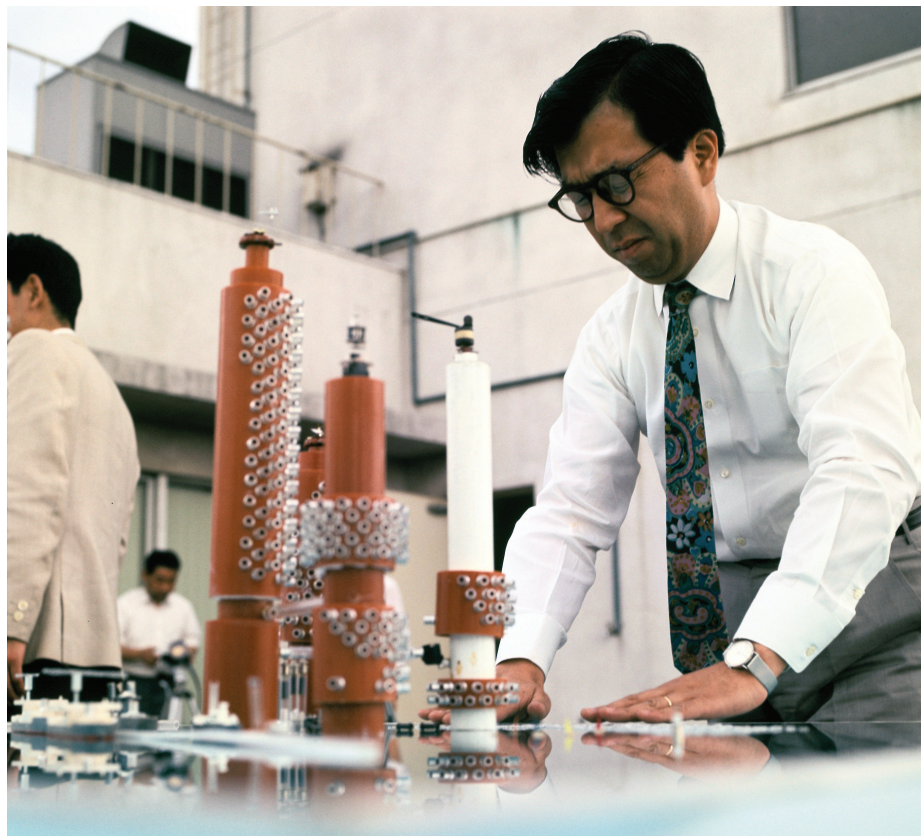
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Kiyonori Kikutake, 1928–2011

Sporting a floral necktie, Kiyonori Kikutake—the most inventive, dogged, and systematically intelligent member of the Metabolism movement, which flourished along with Japan's fortunes from 1960 to the 1970s—stands on a Tokyo rooftop in front of a model of his latest floating city. It is 1968 and Kikutake is 40. With his eyes squeezed shut and his hands spread out like a spiritual medium, he seems to be straining, desperately trying to conjure the project into reality: a colony on the sea that would accommodate Japan's burgeoning postwar population, free from overcrowded cities, safe from earthquakes, impossible to flood.

In the photo, Kikutake also looks rather mad. That reputation preceded him, though it grew out of the ferocity of his passion rather than a genuine diagnosis. Toyo Ito, whose first job was in Kikutake's office, tells us in *Project Japan*—the recently published book by Rem Koolhaas and curator Hans Ulrich Obrist that I co-edited with curator Kayoko Ota—that he used to hear “endless strange rumors about Kiyonori Kikutake: that he ran around the campus of his alma mater, Waseda University, barefoot and wearing a *hanten* jacket, that he made a living by frantically drawing up plans for the repair of wooden buildings ruined in World War II, that he was ferociously quick at drawing plans, and that they were preposterously beautiful.”

Kikutake was born in 1928 in Kurume; he was the 17th generation of a wealthy landowning family that used to farm the fertile planes. Part of their duty as landlords was to protect their tenants from the frequent flooding of the Chikugo River. That attitude of paternalistic noblesse oblige never left Kikutake, even when he was drawing radical schemes for ocean living or giant colonies in the air. He told Koolhaas and Obrist that everything began with the 1947 Nochi Kaiho (Agrarian Reform) law enacted by the occupying American General Headquarters, which dispossessed him of his inherited land: “My architecture was my protest, as a former landlord, against

the dismantling of the entire landowning system.” The surface of Japan is already maddeningly difficult to build on because of its tectonic instability, because it is 75 percent mountainous, and because the flat parts are prone to flooding and tsunamis; after the reform law, it became politically tainted as well. Kikutake would spend his life designing other surfaces upon which to build instead—on the land, on the sea, and in the air. He called these surfaces “artificial ground.” More than capsules or organic metaphors of regeneration for buildings and cities, it is the idea of artificial ground that binds together the disparate work of the Metabolists. And no one pursued that idea more vigorously than Kikutake.

After constructing housing for war widows and their families out of wood and brick salvaged from fire-bombed buildings, Kikutake completed his legendary Sky House in 1958. It became a laboratory for testing theories of artificial ground and adaptation on his own family. (Kazuyo Sejima has said that the Sky House was the reason she became an architect.) Raised on stilts 20 feet high, Sky House hovers above Japan's surface, metaphorically free of its dangers and its new rules. Sky House grew with Kikutake's family: in 1962, the first of three capsules—actually, he called them “move-nets,” differentiating them from Archigram's capsules—was plugged into the exposed underbelly of the house to accommodate new children. (Kikutake later reflected that the move-nets were too small and stifled the children's activity; when British architect James Stirling came to visit, he couldn't fit down the narrow stairway into the capsule.)

Sky House became a hub for various architectural milieu: a barbecue on the patio underneath the house in 1958 may well have been the moment when Kenzo Tange—architect of the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum and Japan's de facto architect laureate—first enlisted Kikutake to be a Metabolist, together with fellow architect



Left: Kikutake in 1968 with a model of Ocean City. Above left: Sky House (1958); Above top: The Miyakonojo Civic Center (1966); Above right: Stratiform Structure Module, 1972.

Kisho Kurokawa and critic Noboru Kawazoe, who were also at the party. In 1960, during the World Design Conference in Tokyo—where Metabolism made its international debut—Sky House hosted an impromptu all-night conversation between Louis Kahn and his Japanese counterparts. Kikutake told him about his three-step principle for architecture, inspired by nuclear physics: *ka* (essence), *kata* (substance), *katachi* (phenomenon). “Any educated person can grasp it,” he assured Koolhaas and Obrist in their interview.

Kikutake's high-tech projects looked utopian—just as their impulse looks democratic rather than feudal—but they were in fact dystopian preparations for worst-case scenarios. In *Metabolism 1960*, the group's manifesto, Kikutake wrote: “It is incorrect to say that the most sure means to live is to cling to the land.... The civilization of continents has accumulated bloody struggles in human relations established within the limited land.” Projects like Ocean City and Tower Shaped Community—tubular towers over 900 feet tall into which capsules plug “like leaves”—were, he thought, necessities for an overcrowded planet on the brink of disaster. In 1961, with Disaster Prevention City, Kikutake proposed a flood-prevention scheme for Tokyo's Koto Ward: a grid of 20-foot-high piers, safe from the waters of Tokyo Bay.

While plotting Metabolism and conducting unsolicited experiments with oceanic and aerial architecture, Kikutake built prolifically. In the 1960s, he completed the A-shaped Izumo Shrine Administrative Building; the Miyakonojo Civic Center (an auditorium that fanned out like a seashell, or an ear); and the Tokoen Hotel (a somehow delicate form of Brutalism, with a nod to tradition in its terraced form). At Expo '70, the apotheosis of Metabolism and the culmination of Japan's postwar economic and moral rehabilitation, Kikutake built the iconic Expo Tower, a skeletal framework with move-nets plugged in, from which the public could look out over the city of the future. Expos in 1970s Japan were true laboratories: at the Okinawa Ocean Expo in 1975, which celebrated the handing over of the islands from the United States to Japan, Kikutake was finally able to build on the sea. His Aquapolis, the Japanese “pavilion,” was a floating, oil-rig-like structure the size of a city block.

Meanwhile, Kikutake was also taking



on the land with his Stratiform Structure Module, a giant A-frame into which individual, American-style detached houses can be plugged. From 1972 to 1992, Kikutake collaged Stratiforms all over the Japanese archipelago: in the shadow of Mount Fuji, in the countryside, in dense cities, straddling highways, and finally, with the Ecopolis in the Amazon jungle. The Ministry of International Trade and Industry, willing to sponsor potential solutions to Japan's shortage of land and housing, paid for the construction of a 1:1 prototype, which Kikutake subjected to earthquake and fire tests. The real thing was never built.

When the oil crisis struck in 1973 and Japan's economy contracted for the first time since the war, Kikutake, like other Metabolists, looked to the Middle East for commissions. He proposed floating factories for the Tigris and Euphrates rivers in Iraq and for Libya's coast; for Jeddah and Abu Dhabi he designed, but never built, giant floating hotels. When Japan started booming again in the 1980s, Kikutake, now sponsored by a telecommunications company, was ready with another floating city, this time to accommodate one million people.

In 1996, when Rem Koolhaas designed the Hyperbuilding for Bangkok, he didn't realize that the project, originally initiated by Kikutake and his Hyperbuilding Research Committee, was in fact a direct continuation of the same Metabolist obsession with artificial ground that Kikutake had been pursuing since the late 1950s. For determination and longevity, Kikutake's had few equals.

Last fall at the Mori Museum in Tokyo, Kikutake took part in a symposium with his fellow surviving Metabolists Kenji Ekuan (the industrial designer responsible for the Kikkoman soy sauce bottle) and Fumihiko Maki (now building Tower 4 at the World Trade Center in New York). Kikutake, 83, had to leave early. He rose to his feet, shuffled to the front of the stage and wagged his finger playfully at the 1,000-strong audience. “You have come here today and listened to us talk about Metabolism,” he said. “But please don't think you have understood. Please don't think you have understood *anything*, ever.” It was his last appearance in public before returning to Hawaii; he passed away just before the New Year.

JAMES WESTCOTT WORKS AT AMO, THE THINK TANK AT OMA IN ROTTERDAM.

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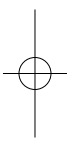
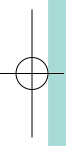
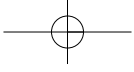


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