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Text set in Meta Serif and Slate.

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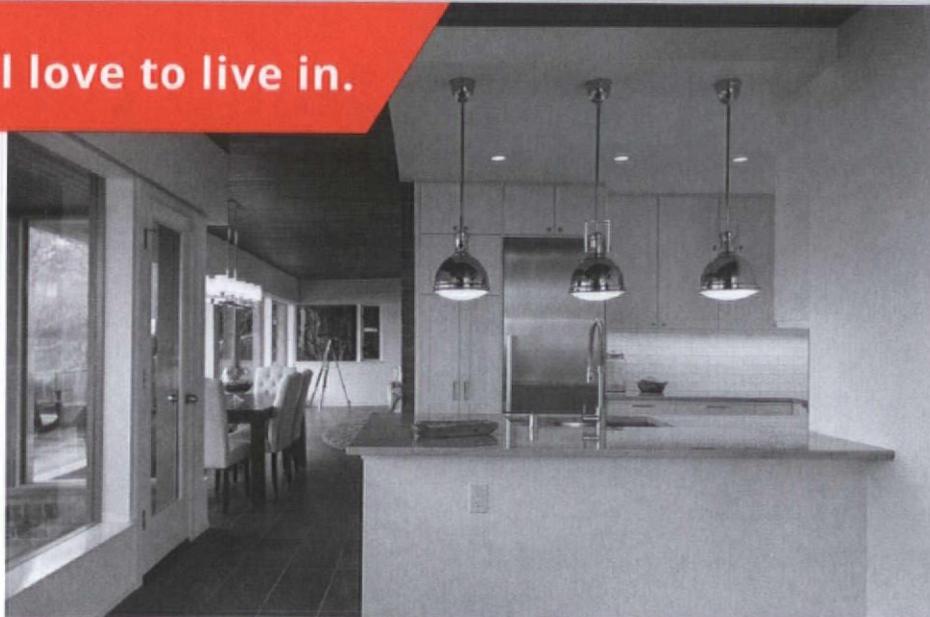
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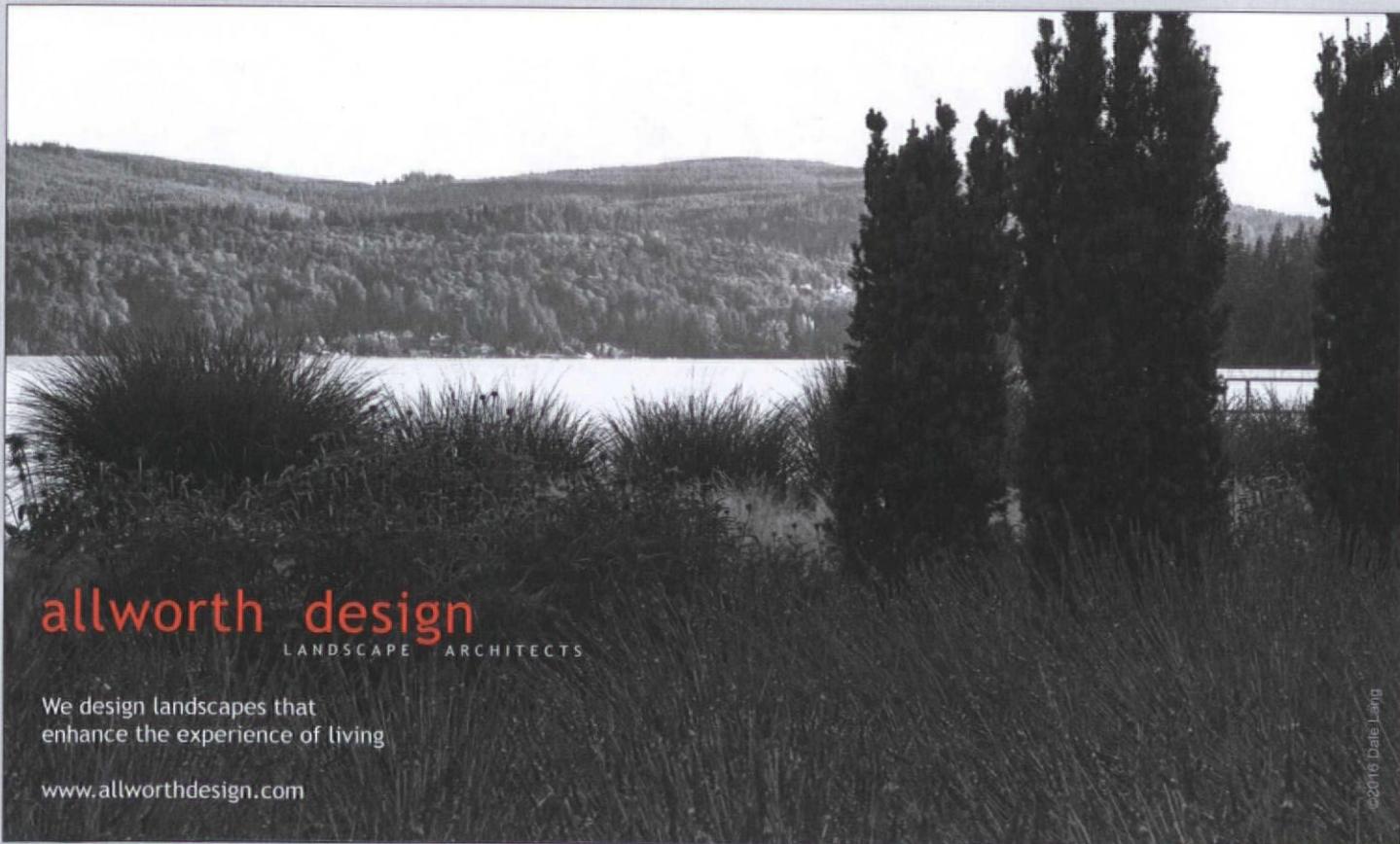
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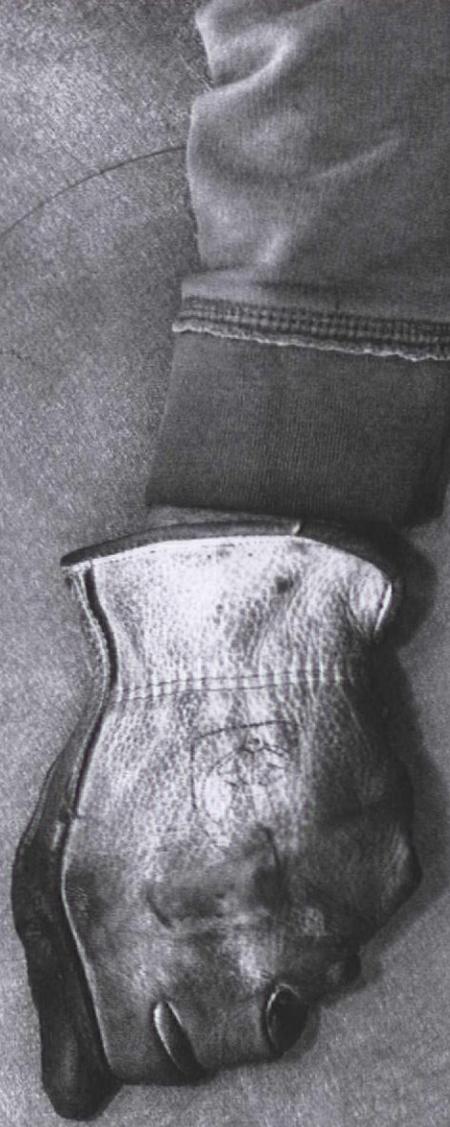
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Now Showing

Edible City: A Delicious Journey

Showing through 10 September 2017
at MOHAI (Museum of History & Industry)
860 Terry Avenue N., Seattle, WA 98109

NOW THROUGH NEXT SUMMER, Seattle's Museum of History & Industry presents *Edible City: A Delicious Journey*. Curated by Rebecca Denn, a two-time James Beard Award-winning food writer, the exhibition traces Seattle's unique culinary history, looking at its roots in the city and landscape. Throughout the course of the exhibition, MOHAI will also present programming including food tastings and cooking demonstrations with regional food experts. Learn more at www.mohai.org.

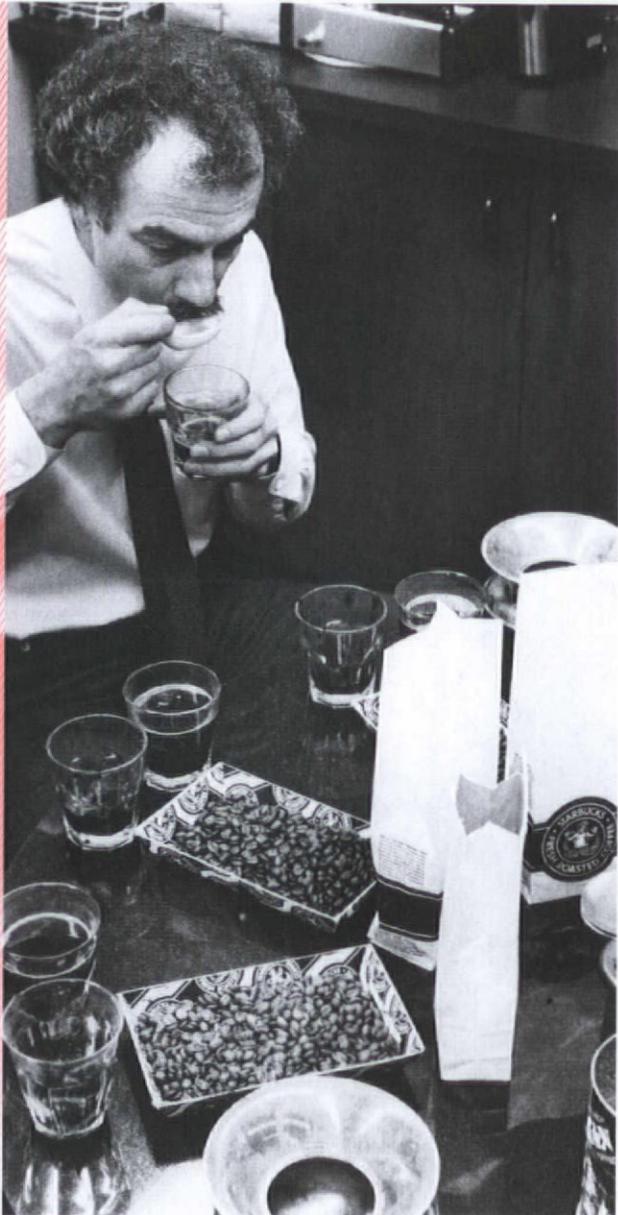


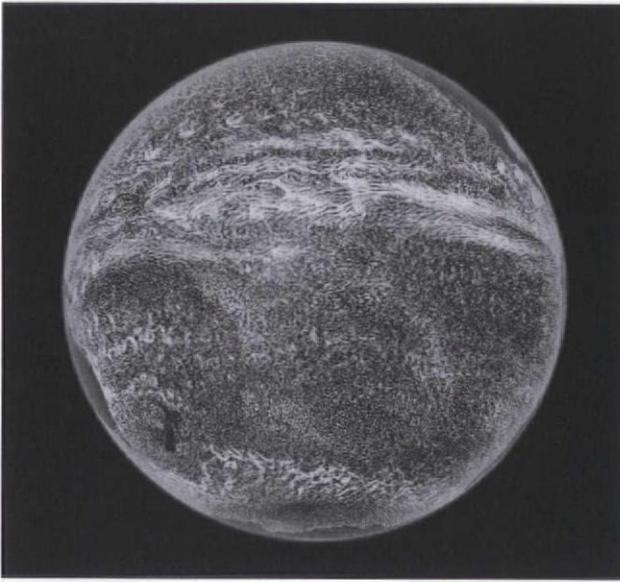
ABOVE

The Space Needle's SkyCity Restaurant, 1962.
Photo: MOHAI, Milkie Studio Collection

LEFT

Jim Reynolds tastes a sample roast at Starbucks in 1983. Reynolds, a leader in the specialty coffee industry, later became the roastmaster of Peet's Coffee. Photo: MOHAI, *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* Collection





ABOVE
Still from *Perpetual Ocean*, a visualization showing ocean surface currents from June 2005 through December 2007. Image: NASA/Goddard Space Flight Center Scientific Visualization Studio

Yves Saint Laurent: The Perfection of Style

Showing through 8 January 2017
at SAM (Seattle Art Museum)
1300 First Avenue, Seattle, WA 98101

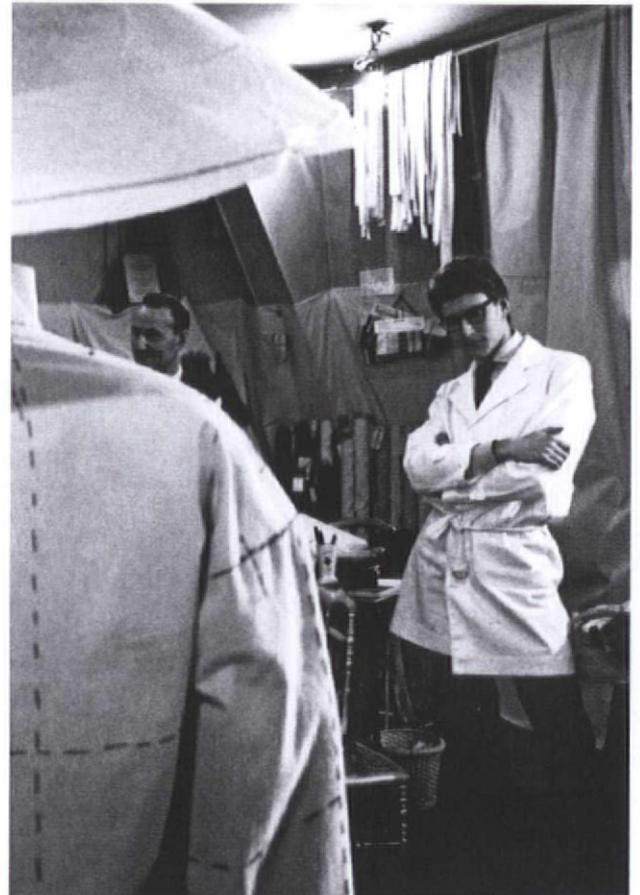
NOW SHOWING AT SAM, *Yves Saint Laurent: The Perfection of Style* traces the life and 44-year career of this highly influential fashion designer. The exhibition includes a wide array of Saint Laurent's iconic designs, including haute couture and ready-to-wear garments, providing a comprehensive look at his impressive oeuvre. In addition, this retrospective explores his atelier's creative process and the designer's private life, featuring drawings, production documents, fabric swatches and photographs. Drawn from the archives of the Fondation Pierre Bergé – Yves Saint Laurent and other private collections, the exhibition is curated by Florence Müller, guest curator from the Denver Art Museum, in collaboration with SAM's Chiyo Ishikawa. Learn more at www.seattleartmuseum.org.

RIGHT
Yves Saint Laurent judging a toile for his first haute couture collection, Rue Jean-Goujon, Paris, January 1962, © Pierre Boulat/Association Pierre and Alexandra Boulat.

We Are the Ocean: An Indigenous Response to Climate Change

Showing through 12 November 2017
Wing Luke Museum of the
Asian Pacific American Experience
719 South King Street, Seattle, WA 98104

THE EXHIBIT *We Are the Ocean: An Indigenous Response to Climate Change* features installation art, poetry, and oral history centering on the perspectives of indigenous communities of the Pacific impacted by climate change. As the exhibit's introductory text states, "No matter your thoughts on climate change, know that our oceans are hurting and our waters are changing. But also know that we all have an important role in caring for this place that has given us so much." Contributors include: Patricia Allen, Natalie Bruecher, Tiare Kaolelopono, Taylor Ahana-Jamile, Rachel Tamngin, Mario Teulilo, Shaylin Salas, Selena Velasco, Maika'i Tubbs, Yvonne Neth, Roquin Quichocho Siongco, Craig Santos Perez, and Selena Velasco. Learn more at www.wingluke.org.



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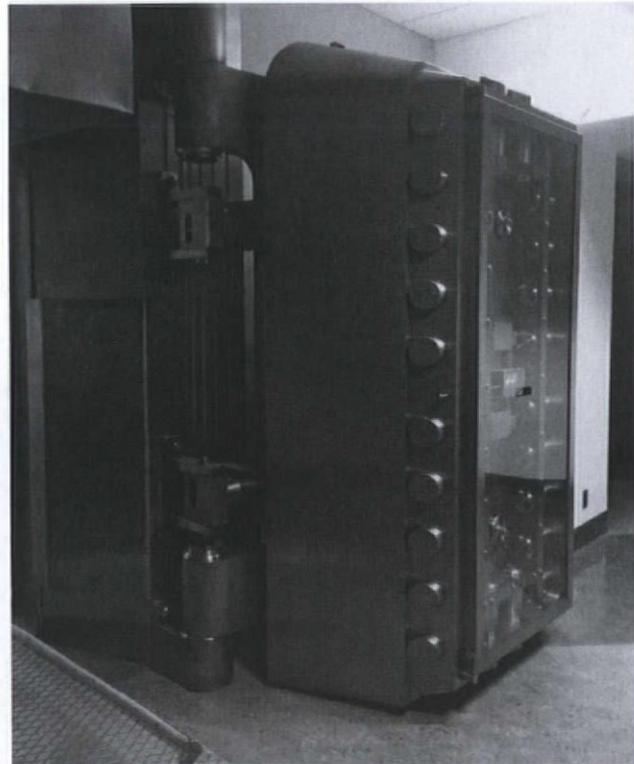
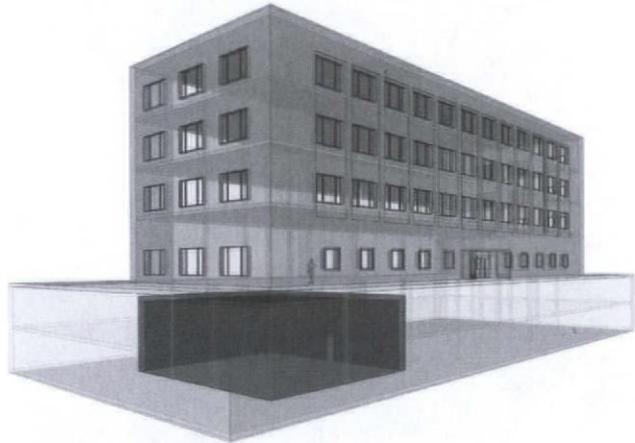
Try Cracking This One

Seattle's Federal Reserve Branch Bank

JEFFREY KARL OCHSNER

IN JULY 1949, when the *Seattle Times* published a photograph of the two-story vault in the basement of Seattle's new Federal Reserve Bank, the first words of the caption, "Try Cracking This One," called attention to its impenetrability. Providing 5,000 square-feet of secure space, the vault was enclosed by a thick layer of "steelcrete," concrete reinforced with steel mesh, strong enough to survive any disaster or attack. Although hidden from public view thereafter, the vault, and the building that houses it, remind us of the Federal Reserve's significance as one of the stabilizing institutions of the American economy in the early years of the Cold War. In fact, scholars have sometimes described the architecture projects from the period as "Cold War modernism," reflecting the anxieties of the time and America's wish to project an image of strength and stability. Although neither the architect nor the client described the building in precisely these terms, simplicity and solidity are primary visual characteristics of the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco, Seattle Branch Bank building.

When the bank's design began in 1947, its architect, the firm Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson (predecessor to today's NBBJ), was just over three years old but already rising to prominence. In fact, a rendering of the bank design appeared in the Western Edition of *Architectural Record* in December 1949. As one of the first new buildings constructed in downtown Seattle after 1945, the Federal Reserve Bank drew local attention as well, with multiple articles in the papers during design and construction. When the bank moved into its new home in



ABOVE RIGHT

Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson, Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco, Seattle Branch Bank building; diagram including basement levels and highlighting the location of the vault below the south end of the building. Drawing courtesy of atelierjones

RIGHT

Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco, Seattle Branch Bank building basement, vault door to the primary receiving vault. Photo courtesy of The Johnson Partnership, Seattle



Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson, Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco, Seattle Branch Bank building, Seattle, Washington, 1947–50. King County Assessor Property Record. Photo (perspective corrected): Washington State Archives, Puget Sound Branch, Bellevue; November 1950

January 1951, stories in the *Seattle Times* described it as “luxurious,” “handsome,” and “impressive.”

As seen from Second Avenue the building is a simple, four-story, rectangular mass clad in limestone and without decorative detail. The only break from the rectangular form is the treatment of the columns at the second, third and fourth floors. Recessing the bays between the projecting columns was intended as a means of structural expression. As described in

In the late 1940s, one approach many modern architects adopted was revealed or expressed structure.

a January 1949 story in the *Daily Journal of Commerce*: “The exterior is without ornamentation, depending upon the vertical structural lines and openings of windows and doors for its architectural style.”

Compared to the modern curtain wall office buildings constructed in downtown Seattle after 1955, the Federal Reserve Bank may appear conservative. However, the design reflects the state of American architecture in the late 1940s, when architects were still learning to use the modernist vocabulary. When Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson designed Seattle’s Federal Reserve Bank, none of the canonical modern curtain wall buildings of the 1950s had yet been realized; Pietro Beluschi’s Equitable Building, Portland; Mies van der Rohe’s 860 Lake Shore Drive, Chicago; and SOM’s Lever House, New York, were several years in the future. For architects in the late 1940s seeking precedents for modernist urban buildings, the best example was the widely published Philadelphia Savings

Fund Society Building (PSFS Building) by Howe & Lescaze, completed in 1932. This building prominently features narrow, projecting vertical columns on the outside office tower walls. Considering PSFS may help explain why the Public Safety Building, the Federal Reserve Bank, and the UW Medical Center hospital—all designed by Naramore, Bain, Brady & Johanson between 1945 and the early 1950s—shared the motif of relatively narrow projecting vertical columns. Modernism had eliminated the use of historical elements to organize the composition of large building elevations. In the late 1940s, one approach many modern architects adopted was revealed or expressed structure.

Today, the bank is the only surviving public building in downtown Seattle constructed between 1945 and 1965; the others—the Public Safety Building (1945–50), the downtown branch of the Seattle Public Library (1956–59), and the Seattle Municipal Building (1959–61)—have all been replaced. Although the exterior of the Federal Reserve Bank remained largely unchanged for 65 years, the stone became badly stained, making it difficult to perceive the virtues of the design. Fortunately, in 2015 the new building owner, Martin Selig Real Estate, cleaned the exterior; its quality is again apparent. Seattle’s Federal Reserve Bank has been listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is protected by designation as a Seattle landmark. It is expected to be adaptively reused in the future.

Jeffrey Karl Ochsner is a professor in the Department of Architecture who currently serves as associate dean in the College of Built Environments at the University of Washington. The information presented in this article draws on research carried out collaboratively with independent scholar David A. Rash, a building science consultant with the Seattle office of Morrison Hershfield; The Johnson Partnership and atelierjones both assisted by providing illustrations.

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Shaping a City Builder

James Cheng's Seattle Years

TREVOR BODDY

Like his classmate Steven Holl, Vancouver's James K. M. Cheng is one of the most influential and successful graduates of his generation from the University of Washington's Department of Architecture. With his designs for 888 Beach, Residences on Georgia, and Fairmont Pacific Rim, his firm is central to the city-building practices American architects started calling "Vancouverism" 15 years ago. The following is an adapted extract from a book by frequent ARCADE contributor Trevor Boddy describing Cheng's Seattle education and early design commissions. City Builder: The Architecture of James K. M. Cheng will be published in January by Images Publishing of Australia.

WHILE STILL A HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT in Hong Kong, James Cheng's choice of profession came through process of elimination. Though his academic achievements were sufficient for medical or dental school, he had no interest in those fields. Though numerically adept, he had no interest in so mathematically-focused a profession as engineering. Though he greatly enjoyed reading, the continuous writing of a legal or academic career was not for him. Instead, he chose architecture, building on his drawing and photography and a Hong-Konger's natural curiosity about urban life. At the time, the then Crown Colony's only school of architecture, at the University of Hong Kong, was very difficult to get into, and Cheng wanted an opportunity to travel. With a family friend in Washington State willing to sponsor him, James Cheng made his first trip outside of Hong Kong at age 17 and finished high school in Everett as a guest of the Maulsby family.

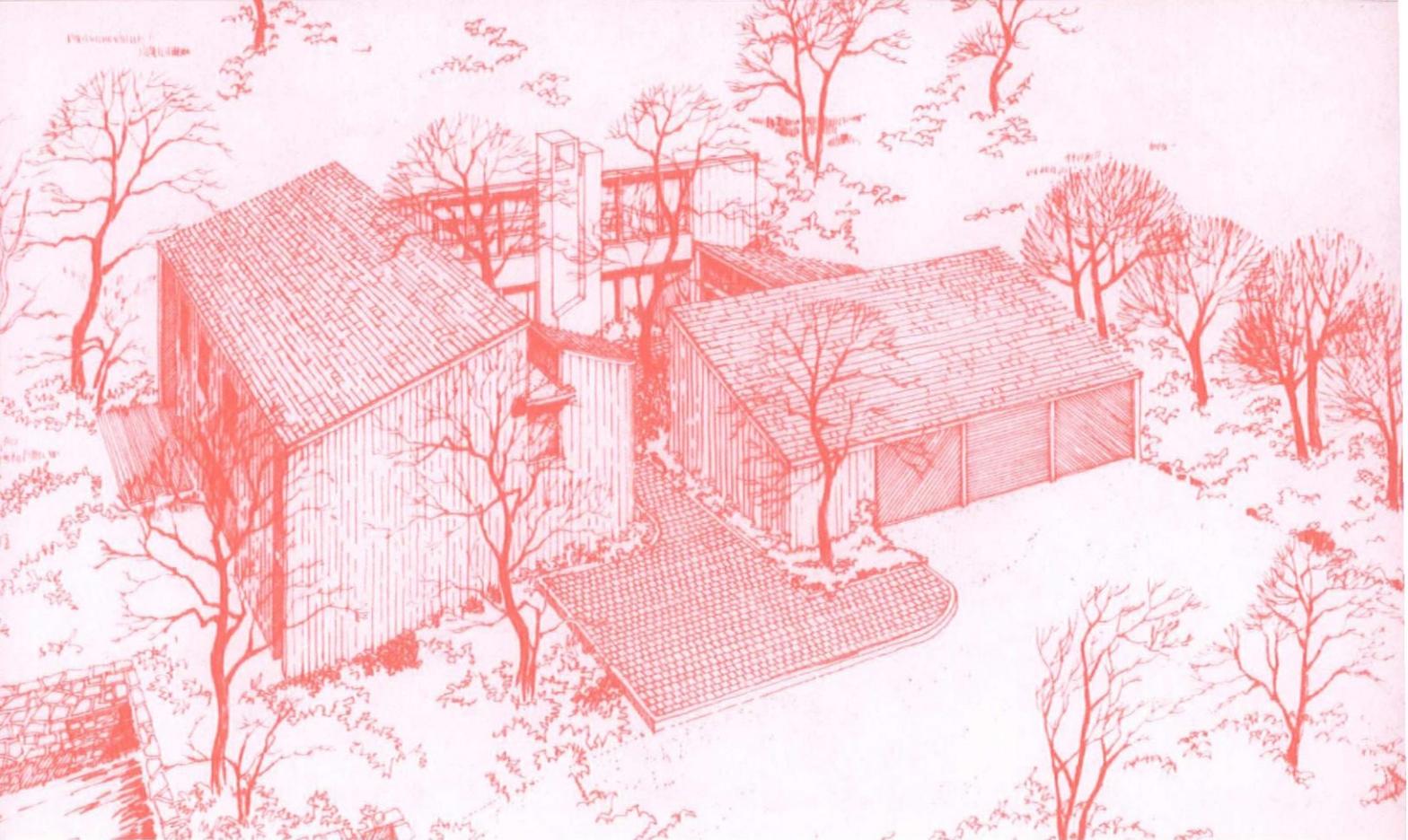
After high school, he spent the academic year of 1965–66 at Evergreen Community College to improve his English and prepare his portfolio for architecture school, taking courses in photography and the fine arts. While he decided

to pursue architecture in Hong Kong before ever meeting a practitioner, one of his art professors had an architecture background and further encouraged him in his choice. In 1966 Cheng applied to the University of Washington's Department of Architecture and was accepted. With this, James Cheng was among the first of a large number of university students, and then immigrants, who would come from Hong Kong and Taiwan to North America in the three decades that followed (and increasingly from Mainland China after 1997). Timing is everything in the life of an immigrant, and James Cheng arrived slightly ahead of most of his Asian cohort of future clients and associates, a group that was later crucial to building his practice.

In the mid-1960s Seattle was a Cold War city, with Boeing as its largest employer. Flanking the city to the north and south were expanded military bases (because of the Vietnam War), and the University of Washington was receiving high levels of

James K. M. Cheng. Photo: Tanya Goehring Post Photography





defense-related research funding, especially in computer science, laying the foundation for the region's future success. The UW had a solid, if somewhat conservative, architecture school with international faculty but a somewhat less diverse student body (Asians in general, and especially on visa, were a distinct minority, but ratios would change soon thereafter). The school was influenced by the environmental design ethos sparked by the interwar work of William Wurster at Berkeley and his col-

Cheng's considerable skills in freehand drawing, drafting, and photography were soon serving him well in architecture school.

league, Christopher Alexander, whose "Pattern Language" templates inspired young designers up the entire West Coast. The UW school of architecture remained relatively untouched by the postmodernist design emerging on the East Coast and in London at that time. The school prided itself on its community engagement, notably faculty members Victor Steinbrueck and Fred Bassetti's long fight to preserve the Pike Place Mar-

The KING-TV Demonstration Residence in Bellevue, WA, designed by Cheng in 1969 while at Mithun. Ink rendering by James K. M. Cheng (while a student at the University of Washington).

ket, which was slated for demolition. Cheng recalls that this debate about the role of institutions and citizens' access to shared amenities shaped his emerging notions of public space.

Cheng's considerable skills in freehand drawing, drafting, and photography were soon serving him well in architecture school. Unlike a number of his classmates, Cheng says he was "never that interested or that good at models" and instead "liked to draft and freehand draw" his ideas. His first brush with planning and urban design came through a design studio for a new civic centre for the suburb of Bothell, in which students developed a framework downtown plan and then designed a civic building. In another studio, he designed graphics for a mixed theatre and office project for the Pioneer Square historic district. Here, office floors are arrayed over the top of a thrust stage-style theatre, anticipating the almost continuous string of hybrid buildings (condo and hotel, condo and office, big-box retail and condo, department store and office, etc.) of his later architectural career. Cheng's elevations clearly demonstrate an affinity for a much-published project of the time, the 1968 Boston City Hall by Kallmann McKinnell and Knowles.



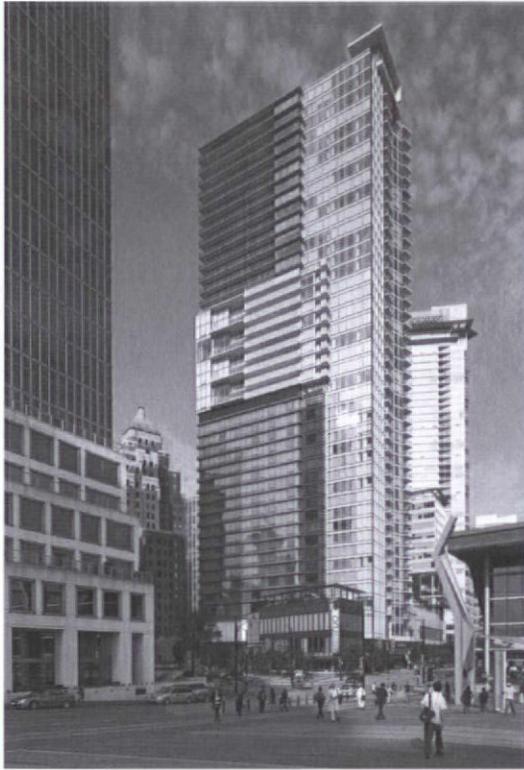
Cheng was enthralled by architectural history, with its glimpses of Europe and case-study narratives of how building plans, sections, and details could combine to define and enhance human activity. Bored with a student job in a restaurant, Cheng started to use his graphic abilities to fund his university studies. UW faculty member Hermann Pundt caught Cheng sketching during his history slide lectures, but was so impressed with Cheng's contour drawings that he commissioned him to draw a number of Karl Friedrich Schinkel's plans for a book he was preparing. Pundt's resulting volume, *Schinkel's Berlin: A Study in Environmental Planning*, explored the German city's urban projects and their surrounding public spaces. Cheng relished getting to know these key masterpieces of neoclassical architecture by drawing them. Moreover, the discipline of crafting these figure-ground drawings taught him much about the patterns of streets and public spaces in neoclassical Berlin.

Cheng gained his first architectural-office work experience while still in school and living in Seattle. In contrast to Vancouver, where small practices predominated, Seattle had the most corporate design scene on the continent, being home to huge firms such as NBBJ, Callison, Mithun, and Bassetti. Starting in the summer of 1967, Cheng ran prints, made tracings and did other low-level tasks at Bassetti. As with all of his subsequent employers, Bassetti recognized Cheng's skills as an architectural photographer, and soon he was shooting mod-

Sahalee Village Condominiums, designed by Cheng in 1970 while at Mithun. The project was featured in *Architectural Record* in December 1972, received a Seattle AIA Honor Award in 1973, and was published in *Record Houses* in 1974. Photo: James K. M. Cheng

els of a high-rise office proposal and helping the firm prepare awards submissions.

Cheng's strong portfolio next landed him a job at Mithun from the summer of 1968 through 1970. Founded in 1949, Omer Mithun's firm evolved from designing military bases to more general work, including housing and urban design at a large scale, and Omer was one of Cheng's professors at UW. In 1969, under the supervision of colleagues at Mithun, Cheng developed his skills by designing the single-family KING-TV Demonstration Residence, a show home sponsored by the local television station and constructed in the fast-growing suburb of Bellevue. For the Northwest, this is a rare type of house plan based on a courtyard layout, its textures and detailing being clearly inspired by the much-published condominiums at Sea Ranch in Northern California designed by Moore, Lyndon, Turnbull, and Whitaker of San Francisco. As a central motif, the KING house borrows an idea from Frank Lloyd Wright—a living tree set at mid-plan as an icon of family life—as in the architect's own residence in Oak Park, Illinois. James Cheng's photographs of the KING Residence are exceptional. These



LEFT
Fairmont Pacific Rim, Vancouver, BC, 2010.
Photo: James K. M. Cheng

BELOW
This evocative through-the-woods shot of the KING-TV Residence shows Cheng's adaptation of design ideas from Moore, Lyndon, Turnbull, and Whitaker's Sea Ranch development. Photo: James K. M. Cheng



bold, starkly contrasting images reveal the house's character in its lush forest setting, showing it to be an amenable space for living and an embodiment of disciplined architectural ideas.

Precociously, fifth-year architecture student Cheng was made responsible for the urban design and architectural detailing of a "planned unit development," or large townhouse development, also located in Bellevue. Sahalee Village Condominiums was completed in 1972, after Cheng's graduation. It was published in a special "Young Architects" feature in *Architectural Record* in December 1972, where an editor offered the first published critical assessment of his work, saying "[it] richly expresses its regional flavor and provides more than the ordinary architectural amenities. Cheng developed a basic plan and variations with unusual sensitivity and combined these comparatively intricate elements in a series of gentle offsets that give the site plan an appealing informality. His use of materials and sensitivity to detail mark him clearly as an emerging talent." Sahalee Village Condominiums went on to receive an AIA Seattle Honor Award for 1973 and was published again in the 1974 issue of *Record Houses*.

The Bellevue condo project displays many of the strengths of Cheng's later work. At the macro level the site plan is very clear and coherent, with housing units staggered (the "offsets" referred to above) so that each condominium has multiple orientations for breezes and views, a device Cheng uses in many later projects. Cladding the building in cedar and using pitched roofs, Cheng demonstrates easy facility with the material language of Pacific Northwest modernism, and the houses are nestled into their forested sites as if they had stood there for generations. Of particular note are Cheng's black and white photographs of this project, another example of superb documentation of architecture and a key reason for this project's subsequent awards and publications. By his mid-20s, James Cheng had been given responsibility for a large and complex project, designed and detailed it in a skilled manner, and then photographed and promoted the work to gain national publication and awards from peers.

Earlier this year **Trevor Boddy** was made a fellow by the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada. His next books to be published in 2017 are *MG6: The Architecture of Michael Green* followed by *Glacier Skywalk* and *Stantec Airports*.

AARON LEITZ PHOTOGRAPHY

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EDWARD BURTYNSKY'S PHOTOGRAPHS OF A CHANGING WORLD

ERIN LANGNER

The first time I saw one of Edward Burtynsky's images, I was certain it couldn't be true. I was in Montreal in 2005, and the work showed a thick, red river slicing through a landscape of black rock, like a wound. The river was too large to be contained by a single photographic frame. Instead, it slithered across two, forming a massive, menacing diptych that spanned around eight feet wide.

When I returned to my hotel, I was still thinking about that red river, determined to know more about what I'd seen. I quickly learned how real it was—that the title of the two photographs, *Nickel Tailings #34/#35, Sudbury, Ontario, 1996*, referenced the source of the color that haunted me: iron left behind from the nickel extraction process, oxidizing and dyeing the river in its vibrant hues.

Part of me still couldn't grasp the image's true weight. Seeing photographs from 1996 by a Canadian artist while visiting a foreign city made it easy to think of the image in isolation, as a vision of someone else's problem. But another, less conscious part of me recognized the harsher, larger truths embedded in *Nickel Tailings #34/#35* and wedged them in the back of my mind. Something about the urgency of those photographs stayed with me—something I now realize I was afraid to fully see.

Since the 1980s, Burtynsky has been documenting human impacts on the natural landscape, with a particular interest in the transformations brought by industry; indirectly he has also been photographing some of the contributing culprits of climate change. "What makes climate change difficult is that it is not an instantaneous catastrophic event. It's a slow-moving issue that, on a day-to-day basis, people don't experience and don't see," President Obama told the *New York Times* during an interview on September 8, 2016. Burtynsky has been taking his photos for over thirty years—ideal timing for portraying this seemingly elusive process whose physical evidence may require the span of a human lifetime to capture.

In his 2005 TED Talk, *My Wish: Manufactured Landscapes and Green Education*, Burtynsky explained how his early practice photographing "pristine landscapes" was holding him back as an artist. He mentioned being driven to create something more than nature photos for calendars

and a desire to rethink how landscapes are conceived. This led me to wonder about the truthfulness of the photographic style Burtynsky eschewed—images that appear to portray untouched landscapes. Why aren't we more skeptical of these images whose perfection must be false to some extent, given the way human impacts have come to bore so deeply into the environment? Do seemingly flawless landscapes still look beautiful if we know they're lying?

Yet, elements of the pristine inhabit Burtynsky's process. He documents places that have been disrupted and transformed by humans, but the images themselves are pristine—in the assertive thickness of their colors, in the tight control of their compositions, and in the stark clarity of their details. His approach began in the 1980s with three

series based in the United States and Canada: *Homesteads*, *Railcuts*, and *Mines*. *Homesteads* and *Railcuts* depict rural areas where houses and railroads interrupt vistas of mountains, valleys, and forests. *Mines* and his later *Quarries* series that was taken in Vermont during the early 1990s play more directly with the massive scale and razor-sharp details that define much of his later work. Layers of sublimely patterned strata fill the frames of these images, directing us to stare into the brink, but from a safe distance.

I knew that sense of distance was gone the moment I saw Burtynsky's *Shipbreaking* series on the big screen in 2007. By then, the artist was documenting sites of industry around the world, a process captured in the 2006 documentary on the artist's work, *Manufactured Landscapes*. The *Shipbreaking* photographs include images of old oil tankers being disassembled by laborers in Bangladesh—the toxic graveyards for vessels that reminded me of the ships that carry massive quantities of oil through Washington State every day. In Burtynsky's photos, the rusting, burning shards crouch along the shoreline like metal mammoths, dwarfing the oil-covered people working between them as if they're minor details. The visual conflict between this strangely beautiful world and the grotesque process that created it still disturbs me ten years later. When I see oil tankers drift through local waters now, my mind fills with visions of their flaming fates and clouds of chemical-filled smoke coat-

I WAS STILL THINKING ABOUT THAT RED RIVER, DETERMINED TO KNOW MORE ABOUT WHAT I'D SEEN. I QUICKLY LEARNED HOW REAL IT WAS.

ing the lungs of people disassembling them an ocean away. While the *Nickel Tailings* photographs had left me unsettled, *Shipbreaking* pierced my consciousness so deeply, I can't unsee the effects.

Shipbreaking was a pivotal moment for Burtynsky, too. In the *Telegraph*, he identified the location as one of the most powerful places he'd ever visited; "I felt as if I was stepping back in time to Dickens and the Satanic Mills," he told Alastair Sooke in mid-2016. If pressed to explain the differences I can find in his work after that juncture, I would have to point to their increasing beauty, particularly in *Water* (2007–2013). In his statement for the series, the artist explains that humans are "capable of engineering our own demise" and encourages contemplation of how humanity manipulates water on a large scale. An ancient stepwell he photographed in India mirrors the shapes in *Quarries* but also shows luscious purple and rust-colored streaks inside the centuries-old, sculptural void that had once been filled with water. The rooftops of the *Homesteads* also return, but now floating and flaring in orange along elegant, man-made waterways in Naples, Florida. It's as if Burtynsky's colors and compositions become more aggressively stunning as the human impact on the environment worsens.

This effect only increases when the artist turns his lens to some of the most damaging human activities: the Deepwater Horizon oil spill, water-draining agricultural

practices, and the construction of oversized dams in China. In these images, Burtynsky abstracts oil-covered oceans, sun-dried soil, and cloud-like blasts of water into color fields and forms so overwhelming for the eye that I found myself moving as close to them as possible in an attempt to discern the details. The jade tendrils of *Colorado River Delta #2, Near San Felipe, Baja, Mexico, 2011*—my own Colorado River, the one whose water bathed the strawberries sitting in my refrigerator—appear like cracks in the former wetland whose waters have been dammed and sediments dried into a desert. I found this image easier to look at than the *Nickel Tailings*, even though it shouldn't be; I knew I was implicated in this one from the title. But I found myself looking into it deeply, and then deeper still, before wanting to look away.

This process of wanting to look and then look away reminded me of a toxic lover—the person you're attracted to over and over again, in spite of knowing better. In the mesmerizing blues and greens of the oil spills photographed by the artist, I saw the person who draws you in with a swagger and a look so quickly that you forget to resist, that you forgo thoughts of the problems that you know you'll find later.

After you spend time immersed in Burtynsky's images, you take their beauty home with you. You stalk the places, the details, the processes, to figure out exactly how they were made. You eventually find the information you didn't want to know: that you made the photographs and the damage, along with everyone else. And then, you start to understand how the damage to these landscapes—so scarred with those rich colors and alluring patterns that are so unnatural—could be forever.

Burtynsky's latest project will look at the Anthropocene epoch, focusing on the lasting changes wrought by humans on a geologic scale through a multidisciplinary museum exhibition that includes new photographs, a book, and a feature length documentary film scheduled to be released in 2018. But, perhaps more surprisingly, some of his more recent work has also returned to the pristine. In 2012, he began photographing untouched wilderness for the first time in over three

decades. This section of the *Water* series, called *Source*, includes rivers in Iceland and provincial parks in British Columbia and references water's beginnings as glaciers and snow—elements whose roles in climate change have become so familiar we can now see them as precarious in this context. While the idea that they are truly pristine, unaffected by the rising temperatures and the weather patterns of climate change, would be naïve, not all is lost. If we try looking as long and as hard as Burtynsky's photographs teach us to look, we might have a chance to change our course before these pristine flickers disappear, too.

IT'S AS IF BURTYNSKY'S
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WORSENS.

Erin Langner is a writer based in Seattle. Her work has appeared in *Hyperallergic*, *ARTnews*, *the Stranger*, and *Entropy*. She is at work on a collection of personal essays inspired by her experiences visiting the Las Vegas Strip over the last decade. She is also program and events manager at the University of Washington's Simpson Center for the Humanities.









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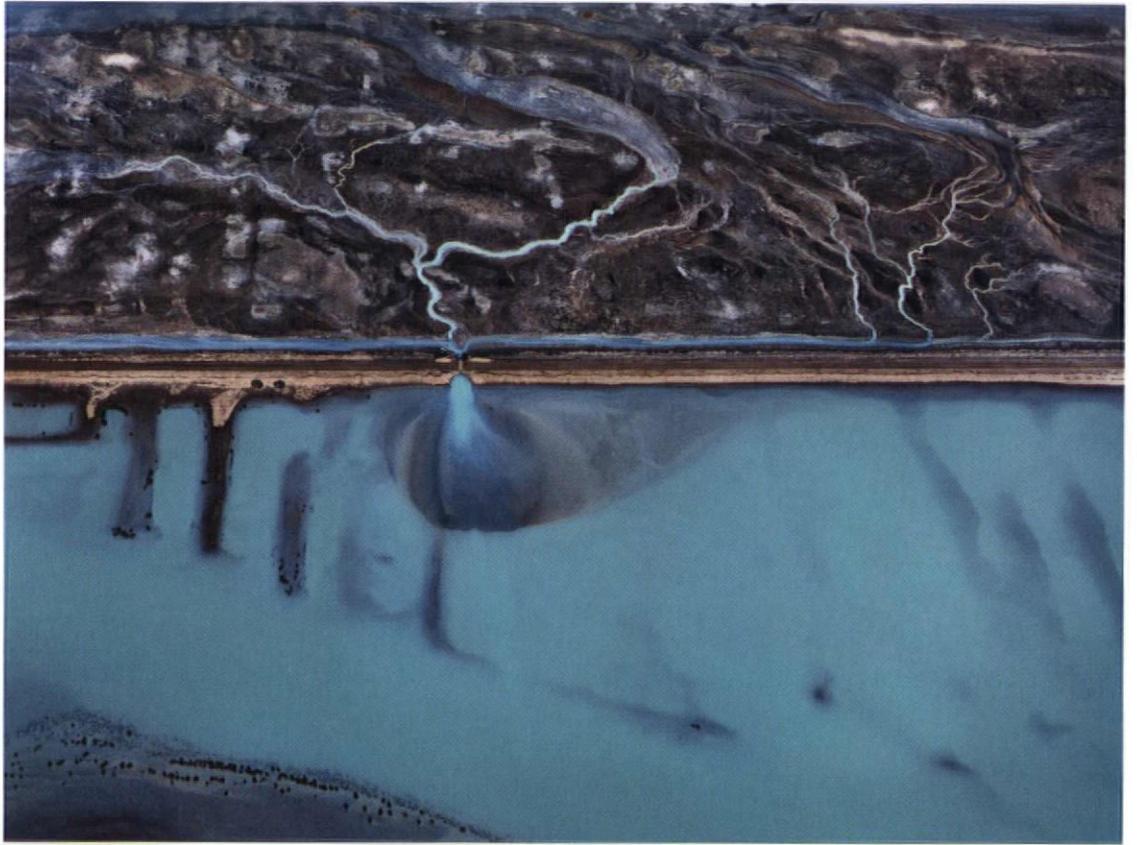
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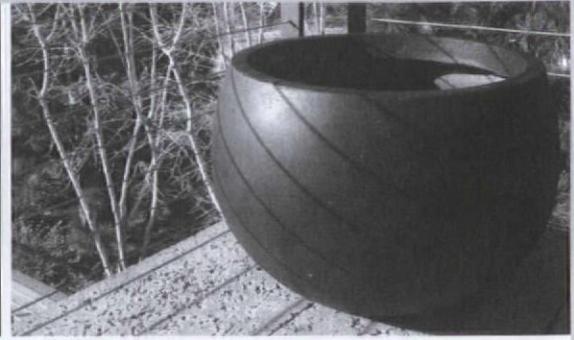
TITLES

1. *Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Reservation / Scottsdale, Arizona, USA, 2011*
2. *Nickel Tailings #34/35, Sudbury, Ontario, 1996*
3. *Rock of Ages #15, Active Section, E. L. Smith Quarry, Barre, Vermont, USA, 1992*
4. *Homesteads #27, Coleman, Crowsnest Pass, Alberta, 1985*
5. *Shipbreaking #11, Chittagong, Bangladesh, 2000*
6. *Xiaolangdi Dam #1, Yellow River, Henan Province, China, 2011*
7. *Oil Spill #10, Oil Slick at Rip Tide, Gulf of Mexico, June 24, 2010*
8. *Stepwell #4, Sagar Kund Baori, Bundi, Rajasthan, India, 2010*
(detail following page)
9. *Xiluodu Dam #1, Yangtze River, Yunnan Province, China, 2012*
10. *Manikarnika Ghat, Varanasi, India, 2013*
11. *Colorado River Delta #2, Near San Felipe, Baja, Mexico, 2011*
12. *VeronaWalk, Naples, Florida, USA, 2012*
13. *Pivot Irrigation / Suburb, South of Yuma, Arizona, USA, 2011*
14. *Mount Edziza Provincial Park #4, Northern British Columbia, Canada, 2012*
15. *Cerro Prieto Geothermal Power Station, Baja, Mexico, 2012*
16. *Dryland Farming #24, Monegros County, Aragon, Spain, 2010*
17. *Thjorsá River #1, Iceland, 2012*

Photo(s) © Edward Burtynsky, courtesy Nicholas Metivier Gallery, Toronto / Howard Greenberg gallery and Bryce Wolkowitz Gallery, New York

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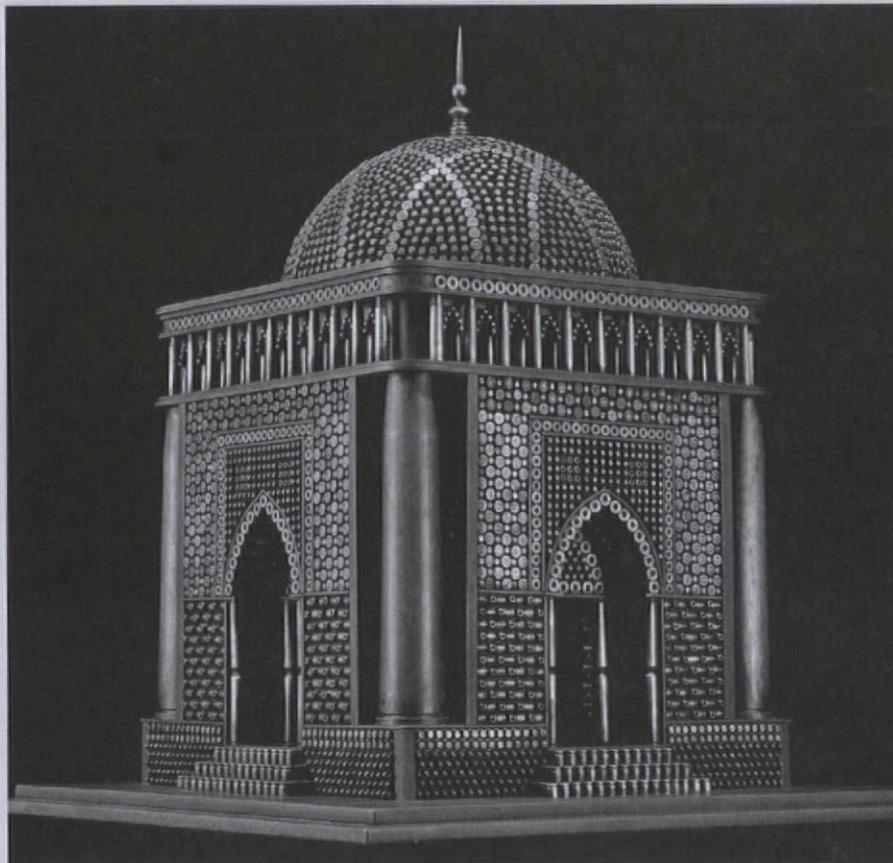


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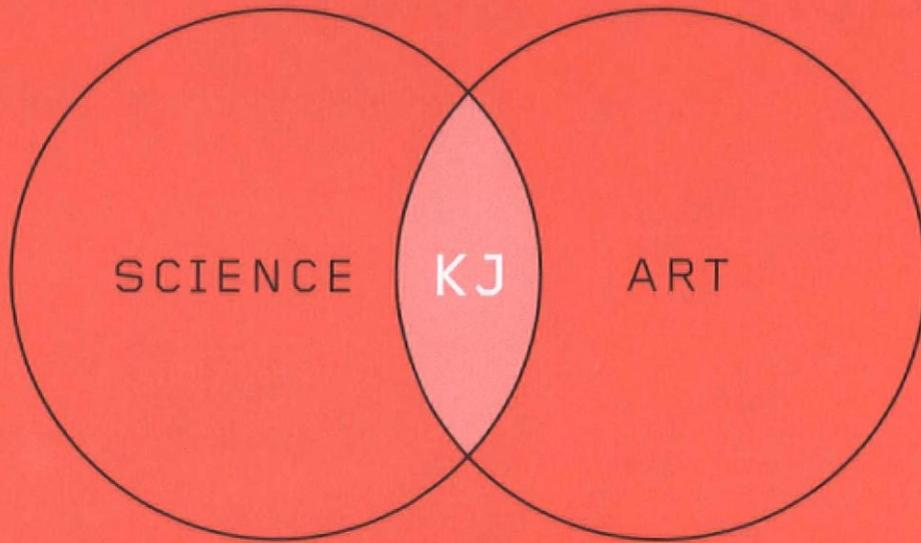
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Image: Al Farrow, Mausoleum II, Photo: Courtesy of Catharine Clark Gallery.
Photography by Jock McDonald, John Wilson White, and John Westhafer.

Divine Ammunition: The Sculpture of Al Farrow is organized by
Bellevue Arts Museum in collaboration with Catharine Clark
Gallery in San Francisco and Forum Gallery in New York
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Architecture and Agency

An Interview with Farshid Moussavi, FMA

BUILD LLC

Last spring, BUILD met with architect, author, and Harvard professor Farshid Moussavi at her office in London's tidy Pimlico neighborhood. They discussed her most recent book, *The Function of Style*, and how designing with a focus on a building's performance can lead to architecture that offers people a greater range of choice and possibility. They also explored her concept of agency that encourages architects to more deliberately consider how their design choices impact the day-to-day experiences of those who use their buildings.

BUILD: You advocate that style is not linked either to time, place, or author. What, if anything, is a constant of style in architecture?

Farshid Moussavi: I'm not sure if there is a constant. I'm talking about the style of a building, not the style of an architect—how the building manifests itself to the people who use it. What is its significance, how does it perform? What role does it play, what difference does it make?

Your most recent book, *The Function of Style*, proposes that the range of architectural styles we see in today's design world shouldn't be mistaken for eclecticism. How, instead, should it be viewed?

Historically, architects had shared concerns that expressed themselves in shared formal styles: modernism, postmodernism, deconstructivism, etc. But these shared concerns don't have to necessarily manifest in the same visual look. Instead, the responses to these concerns can be more experimental, producing different architectural forms and shapes. These different forms and shapes can influence the performance of a building, and the varying ways in which a building might perform makes a significant difference in people's everyday lives. Rather than a collection of different looks, the book illustrates that architecture can be an exploration of different performances.



Photo: Elizabeth Gear

If we focused less on the built environment's appearance and more on how it functions, how would that change things?

What does the built environment stand to gain if style is not a representation but, rather, a performance?

The role of design could be to inspire rather than represent. If different buildings performed differently, their effects would vary. If buildings were more often performance based, they would make you think.

How does crafting a building's performance change how people interact with it?

How an architect brings people into contact with a building is what we refer to as agency. In an art museum, for instance, this applies to how you bring people into contact with the art, and how you distribute the galleries across the building. For

example, at MOCA Cleveland we placed the paid gallery at the top of the building and the free galleries on the ground floor. While MOCA is privately funded, it is publicly accessible. This means that people can go to the museum and experience the art without paying. This also allows the museum to be a public space, unlike most museums, which are private from the moment you set foot inside. So, in this case, through our agency as architects we worked to make the museum's art and the design a greater part of people's everyday lives.

In housing, this agency is often present in how we choose to incorporate privacy. For instance, the inclusion of shorter corridors and vestibules produces a greater level of privacy, and various forms have different implications. It's important for architects to understand how these decisions affect people's activities and engagement.

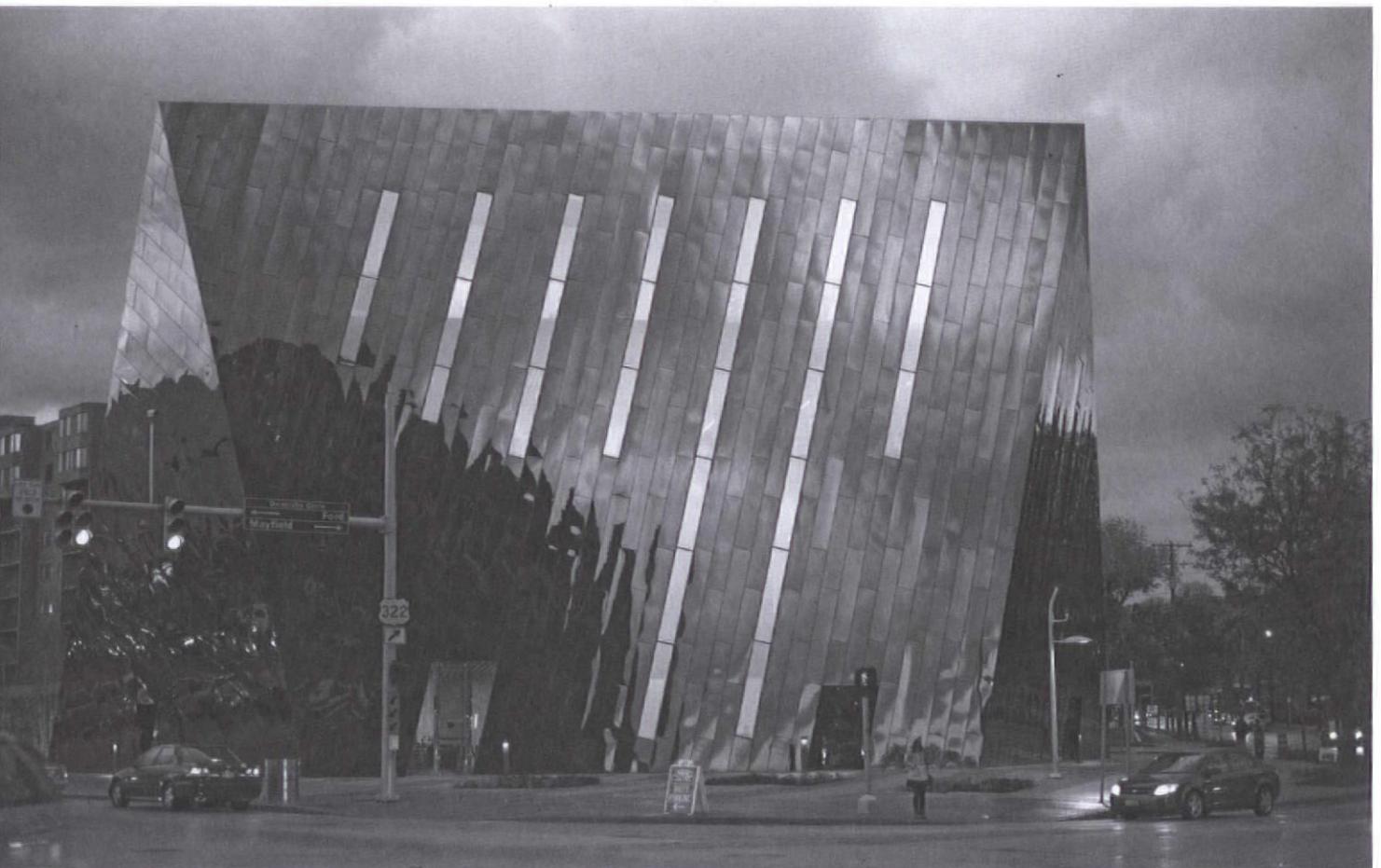
When I talk about agency, I'm using the concept in its literal sense—what a person is able to do under various circumstances. Due to a variety of reasons, architects are not free to do whatever they want. We have clients paying us, we design buildings for use by other people, there are building codes, etc. But despite all of this, architects have a lot of choice in how they assemble buildings. Because of that choice, I think

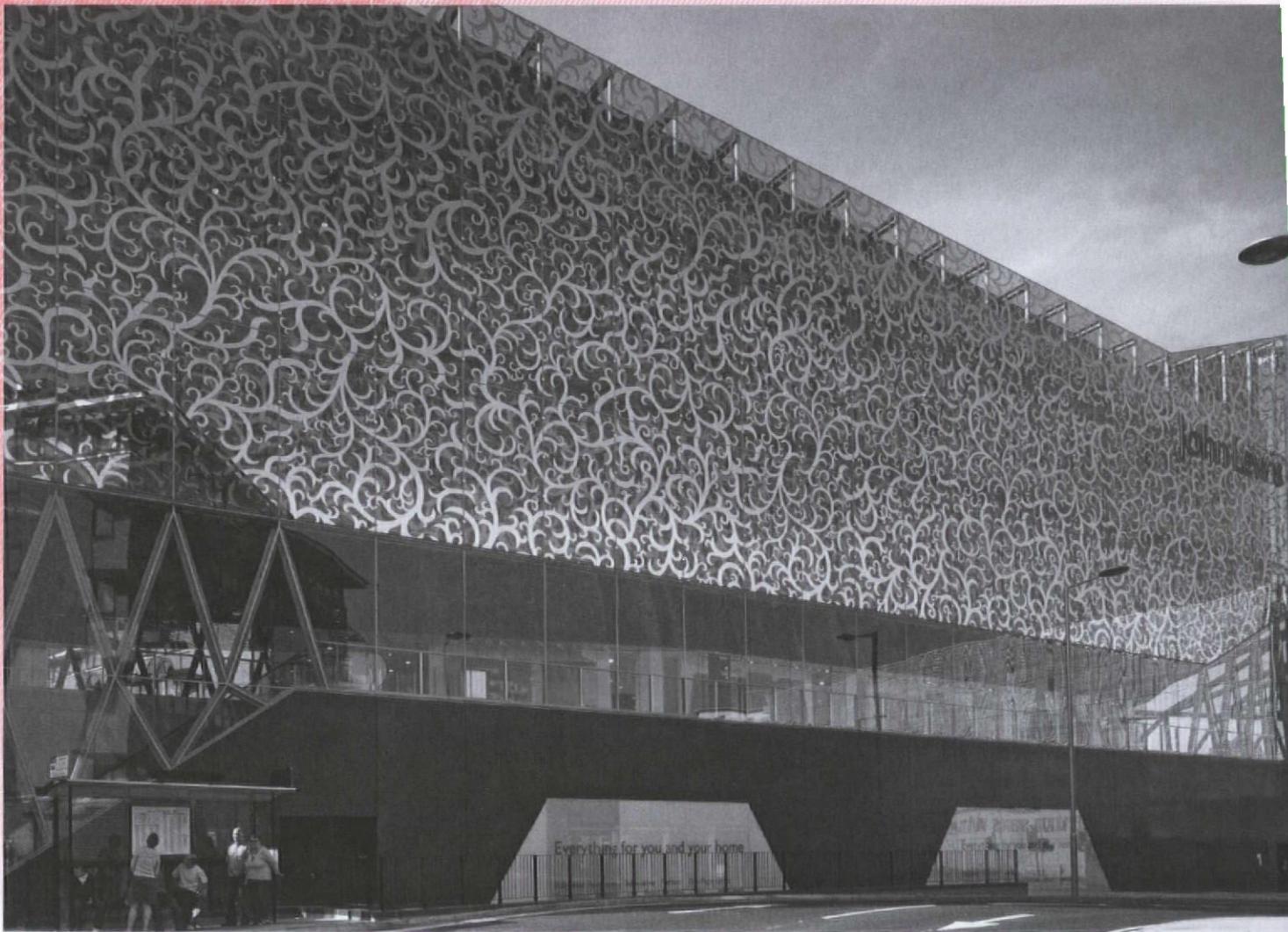
architects carry an agency, and it's up to architects to assume it. Architects provide freedoms to people outside of routine and banality. We can offer alternatives to the same experiences over and over again.

What is the end goal of assuming this agency?

Our aim is to develop spaces and buildings in which the relationships between people and their everyday activities are somehow loosened—to liberate people from routine. We succeed when people are presented with new decisions about how they engage with their environments. For example, the minute there are multiple entrances to a building like MOCA, you can't really tell people which to use and when. The goal is not to tell people what to do with architecture but to open up new possibilities, to loosen the bond between form and function. As architects we should put people in situations where they have new options, then they can decide what to do.

Museum of Contemporary Art, Cleveland, Ohio, 2008–2011. Photo: Stephen Gill





John Lewis Department Store and Cineplex, Leicester, UK, 2008. Photo: Saturo Mishima

Many of these ideas involving agency are focused on how people interact with each other and with buildings, producing highly unconventional forms. Are you working in a way that also focuses on certain construction methods or cost efficiencies?

These factors are always there, and every project has them. They are unavoidable. I think what we're trying to promote is that something else has to be on the agenda, too. Projects are discussed in terms of structure and service, deliverability, etc. But these alone are not architecture. Architecture is how you put all of these considerations together. Either you can freeze the design and address only the requirements or, if we are confident enough to keep the design open, you can allow these factors to bring other lives to the design.

Design that is focused on agency often produces unintended and poetic consequences, like the "theatrical curtain" of the John Lewis Department Store and Cineplex in Leicester. Can you speak a bit to this?

In order to keep natural light out of the theater, it's a blank envelope. We used a rain-screen system made from small pieces of stainless steel so that it could be thin and slightly warped. As a result the steel buckles, and it catches light and reflections of the sky at slightly different angles, fragmenting them into small, distorted imagery. In this way, the building generates imagery from its context.

There is a poetic analysis present in the Montpellier building; the balconies are shifted and rotated to enhance the privacy of each unit, and guardrail geometries change to open views or screen for privacy.

We analyze how different decisions can amplify one another. Function is always relative and has to do with the particular context. The function of something is always being questioned in our office. It's about asking how a particular building is going to perform or what kind of experience it is going to give its residents.

Your two previous books, *The Function of Ornament*, published in 2006, and *The Function of Form*, published in 2009, set up a nice trio along with *The Function of Style*. What is the significance of their order in relation to your own professional trajectory?

They allowed me to investigate issues that are practical rather than purely theoretical. Oftentimes our retail clients give us a program with the request that the end result be really interesting looking. It dawned on me that this applied not only to retail work but to other building types as well. We wanted to figure out a way to approach these projects so that they weren't just about decoration, and the books became a series of studies on how we wanted to look at buildings in the 21st century. We

wanted to establish that design was integral to the function of the building and that the aesthetic wasn't just decoration.

Different architects work with the same constraints and still come up with different designs. This shows that despite constraints, architects have quite a lot of choice. Being an architect is about bringing a certain sensibility to these decisions, and the books work through the sensibilities of our design process.

How is your firm changing the conventional perceptions of the design process?

I do think we work differently, and I'm very preoccupied with the need to articulate that. As an architect, you have to interrogate every element and you're not going to take it for granted that the issues you've dealt with before are inherent in all projects. At the same time, no client gives you extra time; there's always a deadline, there's always a budget. We live in a time where we share a lot of ideas. One of the reasons for the books is to show how much common ground there is.

The research and analysis involved in a project doesn't necessarily have an obvious end point. How do you know where to stop?

I wouldn't stop if it weren't for time.



Photos: Farshid Moussavi Architecture

Farshid Moussavi is an architect, principal of Farshid Moussavi Architecture (FMA) and professor in practice of architecture at Harvard Graduate School of Design. She was previously cofounder of the London-based Foreign Office Architects (FOA), recognized as one of the world's most creative design firms. Educated at Harvard's Graduate School of Design, University College London, and Dundee University, Moussavi has taught in academic institutions worldwide. She was a member of the Steering Committee of the Aga Khan Award for Architecture between 2004 and 2015 and has been a trustee of The Architecture Foundation and the Whitechapel Gallery in London since 2009. She was elected a Royal Academician in 2015 and has published three books.

BUILD llc is an industrious design-build firm in Seattle run by Kevin Eckert and Andrew van Leeuwen. The firm's work focuses on permanence, sustainability, and efficiency. BUILD llc maintains an architectural office and is most known for their cultural leadership on their blog (blog.buildllc.com), where you can find part 2 of this interview in January.

Resilient Design

Modeling Architecture's Future in the Face of Climate Change

THOMAS KNITTEL

THIS LAST OCTOBER, I was talking with one of my wife's colleagues at the Department of Bioethics and Humanities at the University of Washington. I was describing how in my architecture practice, for the last 10 years, I've worked in dialogue with biologists and scientists to apply lessons from nature to buildings and communities. I was discussing a current project I've been working on: designing an orphanage, clinic, and administrative center in Haiti. The center will be an island of resilience in Port-au-Prince, providing more energy and water than it uses, while serving as a place of refuge during crisis. I paused for a moment, and my wife's colleague said, "So what you are doing is modeling the future."

We know global warming is happening faster than our ability to react. Nature has areas of *climate refugia*: locations where biodiversity can retreat, persist, and possibly even thrive under changing climate conditions, and projects such as the Yale Data Basin are trying to identify and preserve them. At the same time, we humans will also need to create our own refuges. After all, cities are human-made ecosystems—complex,

rooted, yet changing. Everything we do should integrate thinking deeply about modeling the future for a rapidly changing world.

THE CHALLENGE

The design for the new building for Fondation Enfant Jesus, which lost an orphanage in the 2010 earthquake in Haiti, was initiated by the US Green Building Council. I had been leading the pro bono design work for the project at HOK and am now doing so at my new firm. The William Jefferson Clinton Children's Center is finally under construction, wholly funded through donations.

Our first priority was to provide a safe, nurturing place, as the youngest and most vulnerable infants begin life there. But we also wanted to design a model that gives hope.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE AND THE PAST

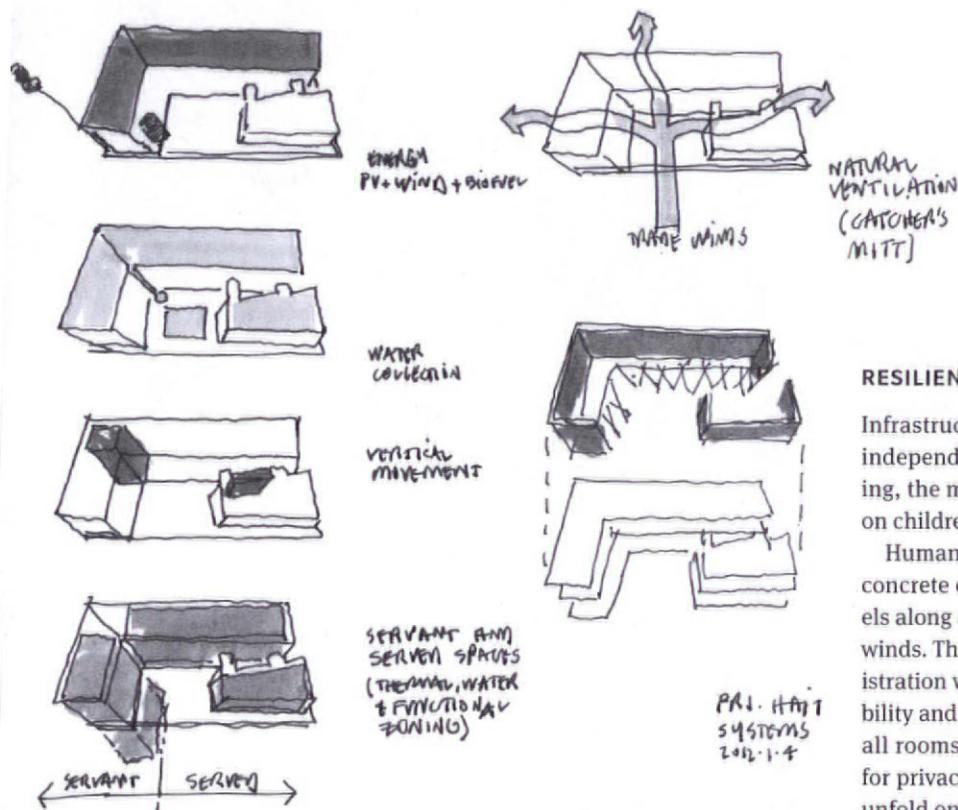
When we began designing, earthquake resiliency was foremost in our minds, followed by creating a safe haven during other disasters, such as hurricanes. It raised the question: How do we do this simply, durably?

We used an approach that prioritizes the principles of passive design and pushes them into a new context informed by nature, leading to innovations. In the past I've worked with Biomimicry 3.8 (cofounded by Janine Benyus), and the frequent goal of our collaborations was to understand complex systems and translate them to human-made problems.

In addition, we looked for patterns in the country's landscape and culture that could inform us. For instance,



Haiti earthquake refugee child playing with kite. Over tent city, Port-au-Prince, Haiti, 2010. Photo: CDC Global via flickr. Licensed under CC BY 2.0 (creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0)



LEFT
The William Jefferson Clinton Children's Center, Port-au-Prince, Haiti. Building strategies explained diagrammatically. Sketch: Thomas Knittel

BELOW
The William Jefferson Clinton Children's Center, Port-au-Prince, Haiti. Section through the information model showing the administration/training wing (left) and the orphanage wing (right). Image: McLennan Design

RESILIENCY WITH FEW MOVING PARTS

Infrastructure in Haiti ranges from brittle to none. The more independent and easy to maintain we could make the building, the more financial resources the foundation could focus on children and families.

Human comfort was paramount. Keeping the orphanage's concrete cool was critical. We arranged rooms over three levels along an exterior corridor facing the area's prevalent trade winds. These rooms embrace the two-story training and administration wing. Wood louvers, most of which are fixed for durability and predictable daylighting, provide ventilation through all rooms. At the vision line, they open for views and close for privacy. The deep-corridor approach, where living spaces unfold onto galleries facing a garden, enjoys a rich tradition.

In a disaster, the entire ground floor can be shuttered, supporting 50 people, with battery storage for three days and an emergency water mode that can provide drinking water to the larger community. Through a system designed by scientists at the Global Water Center, rainwater mixes with groundwater, reducing hardness and treatments required.

INSPIRATION FROM NATURE

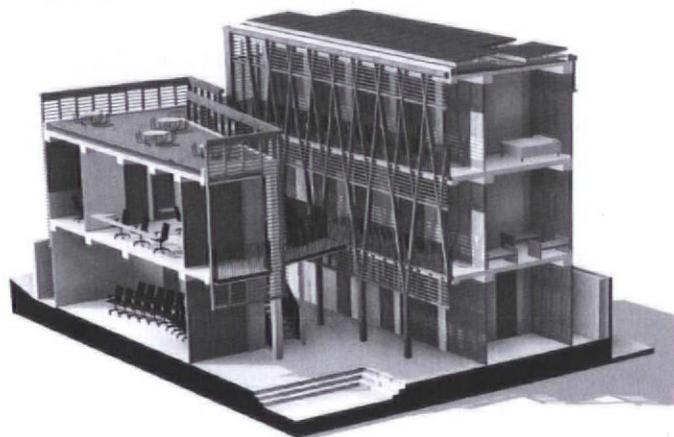
In December 2011 I was home for the holidays, and an NPR story on the 26th featured the resiliency of trees in hurricanes. The story described how trees do well in hurricanes by virtue of *mother-daughter branching*, in which the tree's mass is distributed vertically through a bifurcation at each branch,

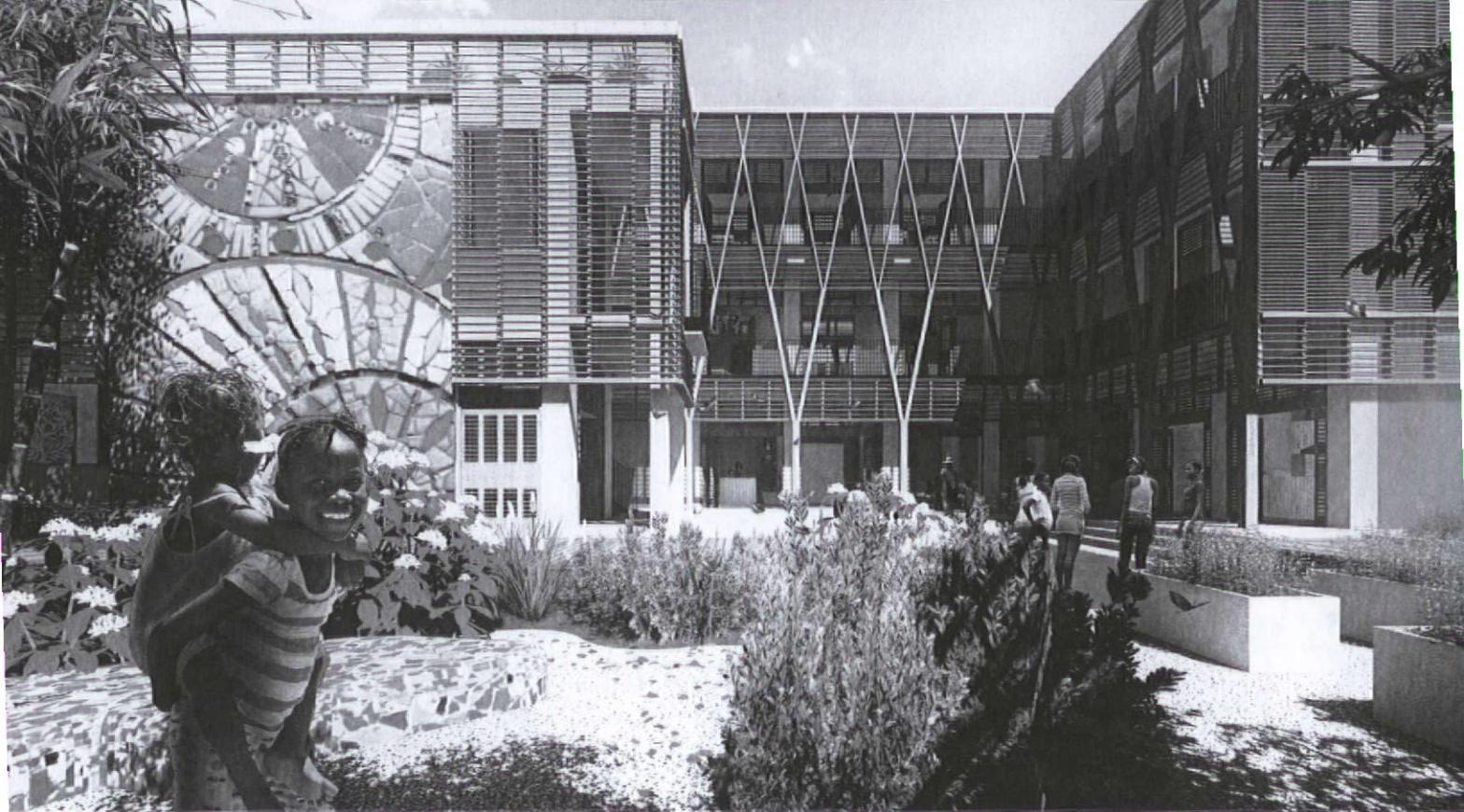
ecologically and culturally, trees are highly valued within Haitian culture. The kapok tree is revered, representing the intersection of the horizontal (the physical) and the vertical (the spiritual). Also, the historic wooden "gingerbread houses" in Haiti fared better in the 2010 earthquake than buildings made from concrete. Unfortunately, Haiti has been heavily deforested, and importing wood for building is not generally feasible. I thought trees—and thus wood—somehow needed to be part of

The more independent and easy to maintain we could make the building, the more financial resources the foundation could focus on children and families.

this building's resiliency story, even as we built with concrete, as Haitians typically do today. While Haiti was once the richest nation in the Caribbean, it's now the poorest in the Western Hemisphere, and the plight of trees and the human condition seem intertwined.

Also, as we continued our research, we learned that 98% of the rubble from the 2010 earthquake had still not been cleared away. We thought it would be practical and responsible to incorporate this into our new concrete mix as a building material.





providing the tree with flexibility as it reaches upward. Regarding the orphanage, mother-daughter branching seemed powerful symbolically and functionally—why not architecturally?

I brought this inspiration back to our team, and we explored how this simple empirical formula might unfold. The result—an architectural structure around the courtyard which draws inspiration from the mother-daughter pattern of mass distribution—symbolically represents what Fondation Enfant Jesus does in the rebuilding of children's and families' lives, with a strong cultural tie-in to trees.

Other things also started to come together. Weeks before, the database AskNature (www.asknature.org) provided insights into how tree bark selectively admits a beneficial spectrum of heat while rejecting the rest. We decided our goal was to reject heat and instead admit air. We translated this simply: low mass horizontal wood rods that reject high sun angles are spaced to allow airflow through. A rush of creativity resulted.

In the end, the building's design emerged from many sources, some from within the traditional domain of design and others from without. Fewer moving parts, more simplicity, and a building that tells a story were the results.

NOT FAST ENOUGH, YET

"So what you are doing is modeling the future."

Reflecting on the words of my wife's colleague makes me hopeful. They help me remember that even as scientists are also modeling the future—one in which climate change creates

The William Jefferson Clinton Children's Center, Port-au-Prince, Haiti. The richly landscaped children's play area will improve local air quality. Image: McLennan Design

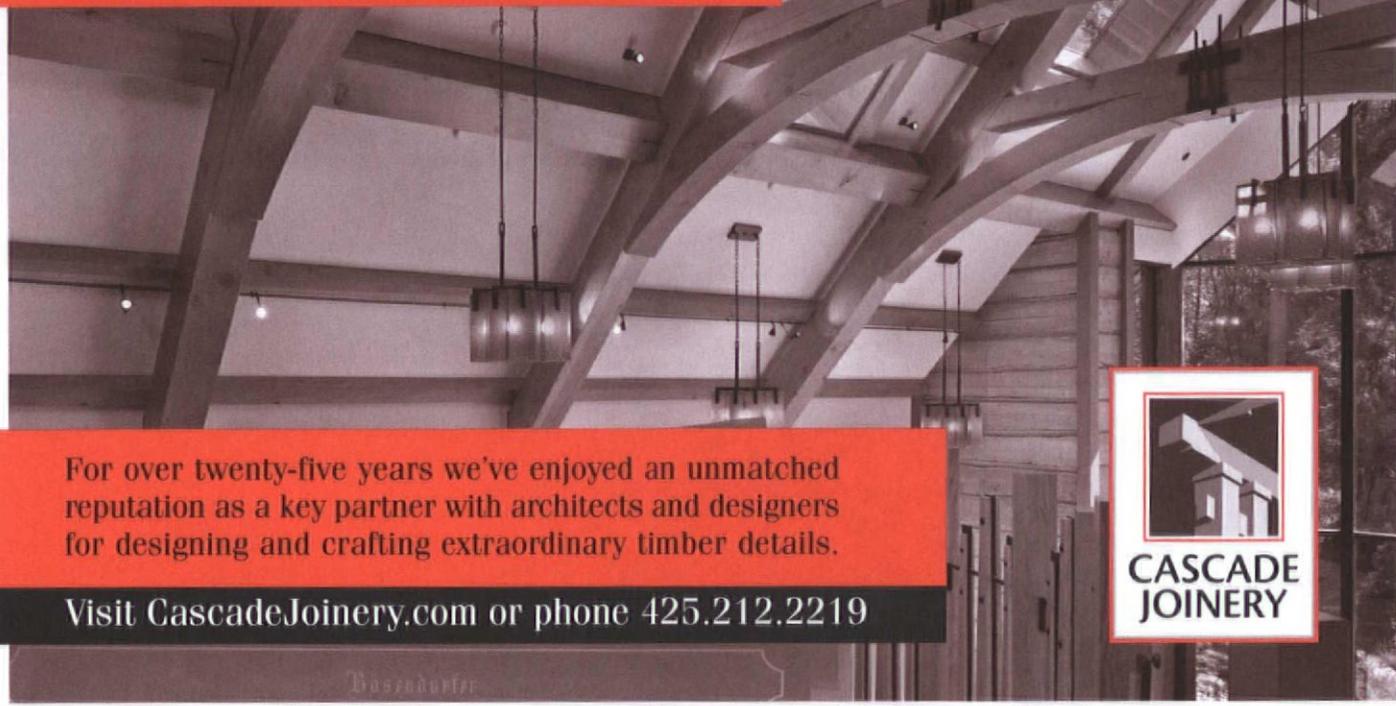
more and more damaging conditions—designers must work towards solutions to meet these challenges.

But as I write this, it's mid-October. Last week, Hurricane Matthew stormed through. The death toll in Haiti is 1,000 and rising. The aftermath from loss of crops, illness due to flooding, and unsanitary conditions will worsen. Our building wasn't finished soon enough to help.

We in Seattle live in a place where technology (Amazon/Microsoft); research (some of the world's greatest universities); global health, cultural, and environmental organizations (the Gates, Allen, and Bullitt Foundations); and the design fields have a rare opportunity to converge. Can the Puget Sound region become a place of climate refuge? If so, what would our buildings, landscapes, and communities look like? I think, and hope, a lot more like nature.

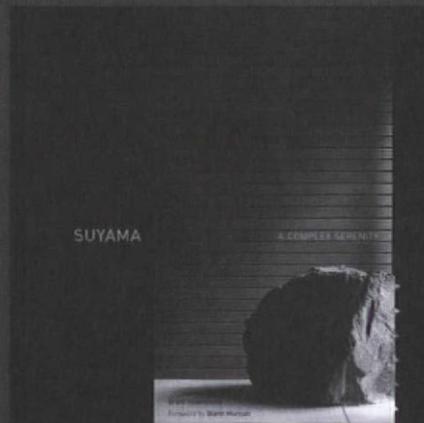
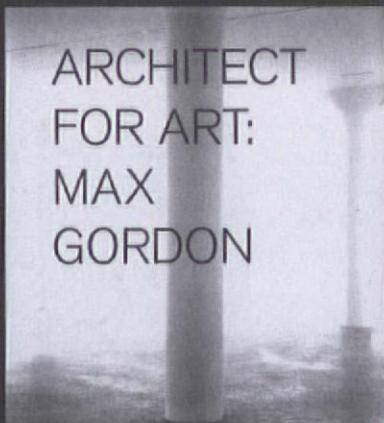
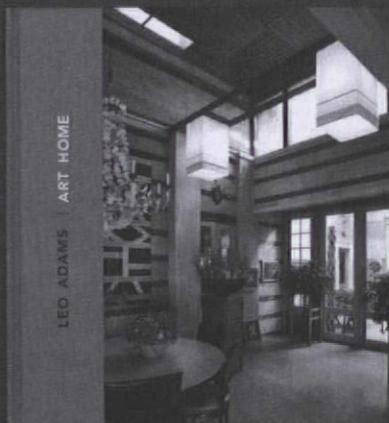
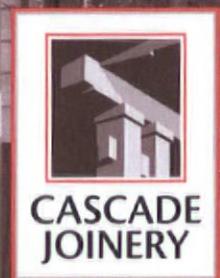
Thomas Knittel is an architect in Seattle and design partner at McLennan Design, a firm focusing on architecture, consulting, and research on living buildings, carbon neutrality, and ecological regeneration. Tom led the design for the Clinton Children's Center at HOK and now continues this effort at McLennan Design through their offices on Bainbridge Island.

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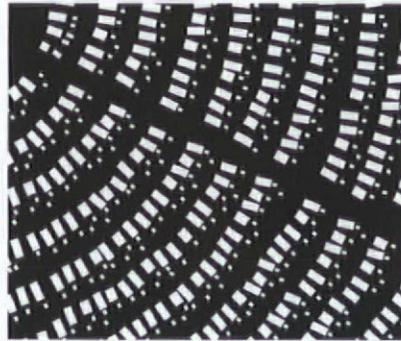
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Cities of Music

Mapping the Impermanent Communities of Festivals

WYATT O'DAY AND ADAM PAZAN

SINCE THE MONTEREY POP FESTIVAL in 1967, thousands of people all over the world have been journeying to music festivals every year. In part influenced by electronic music hitting the mainstage and the commercialization of underground rave culture at the turn of the millennium, festivals have become one of the fastest growing getaways for young adults. And while some large festivals are located in cities, others take place in sparsely populated, rural areas. The figure-ground diagrams shown here represent four such festivals,



largely built overnight, where attendees leave their permanent dwellings to take part in these impermanent communities.

To meet the sudden influx of thousands of temporary inhabitants, these rurally located festivals are equipped with bathrooms, showers, food vendors, medical aids, security, bars, Wi-Fi, and sometimes even airports—infrastructure found in modern day cities. And like our cities, each festival site is designed and affected by specific constraints. Features such as polo fields, farm irrigation, sun patterns, and forest groves shape their patterns and typologies. Even without knowing it, each festivalgoer becomes part of a larger, densified, urban community. The way these communities are designed not only affects the experience of each inhabitant, but also the way they interact with one another.

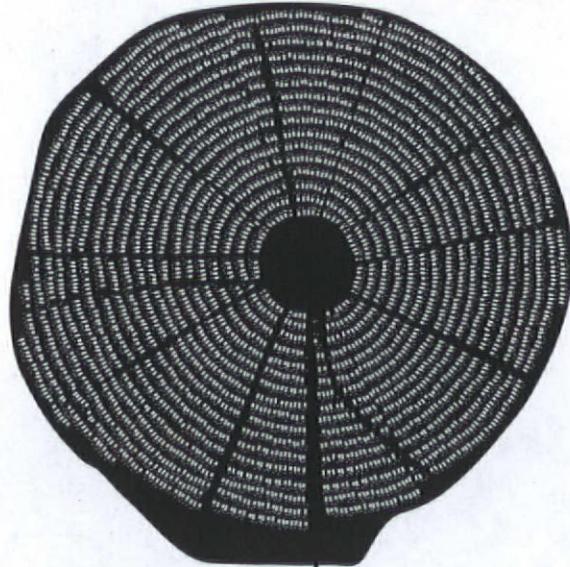
People attend these festivals for a variety of reasons—most importantly music, art, entertainment, and self-expression—but also for a sense of community, escape, and pleasure. Is there something these festivals provide that our cities lack? What can designers learn from these impermanent cities of music?

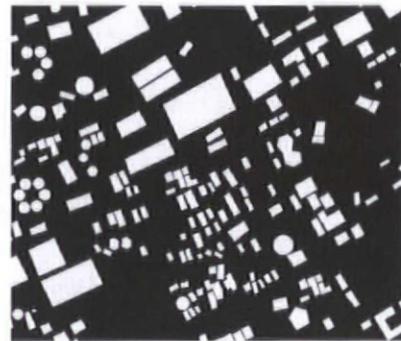
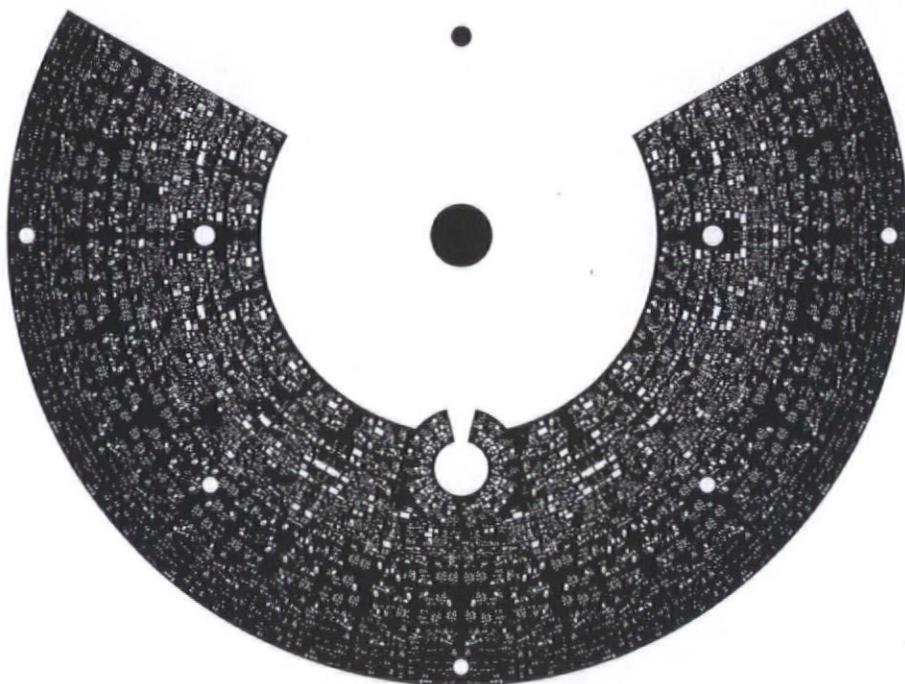
Sasquatch! Music Festival

GEORGE, WASHINGTON

25,000 attendees over four days

Sasquatch is situated along the picturesque Columbia River. Located on farmland, the “bull’s-eye” shaped camping area follows a pattern created by the center pivot irrigation system that waters the land year round.



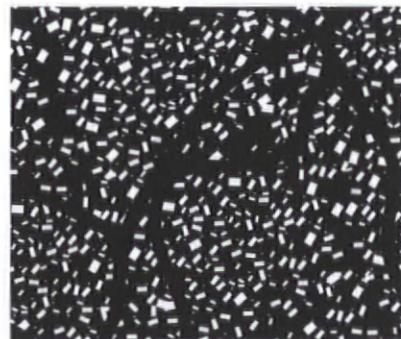
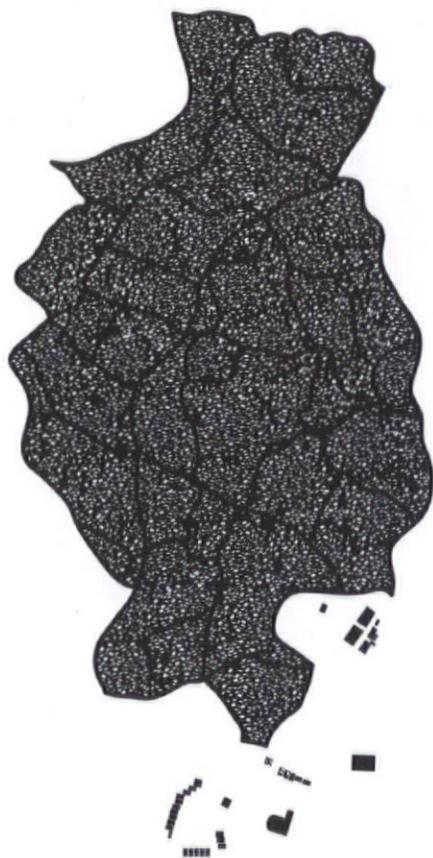


Burning Man

BLACK ROCK CITY, NEVADA

70,000 attendees over nine days

Burning Man takes place in Nevada's Black Rock Desert. When populated, "Black Rock City" becomes Nevada's fifth largest city. Organized around solar movement, the site's "streets" are named after times of day (2 a.m. to 10 p.m.). Unlike other festivals, Burning Man's music stages are created by attendees and dispersed around camping sites rather than distinct music zones.



Pickathon

HAPPY VALLEY, OREGON

3,500 attendees over three days

Pickathon is located 40 minutes outside of Portland at Pendarvis Farm, and Pickathoners camp under large tree canopies on a rolling hillside. Some music stages are inside the forest canopy, but most are on open farmland.

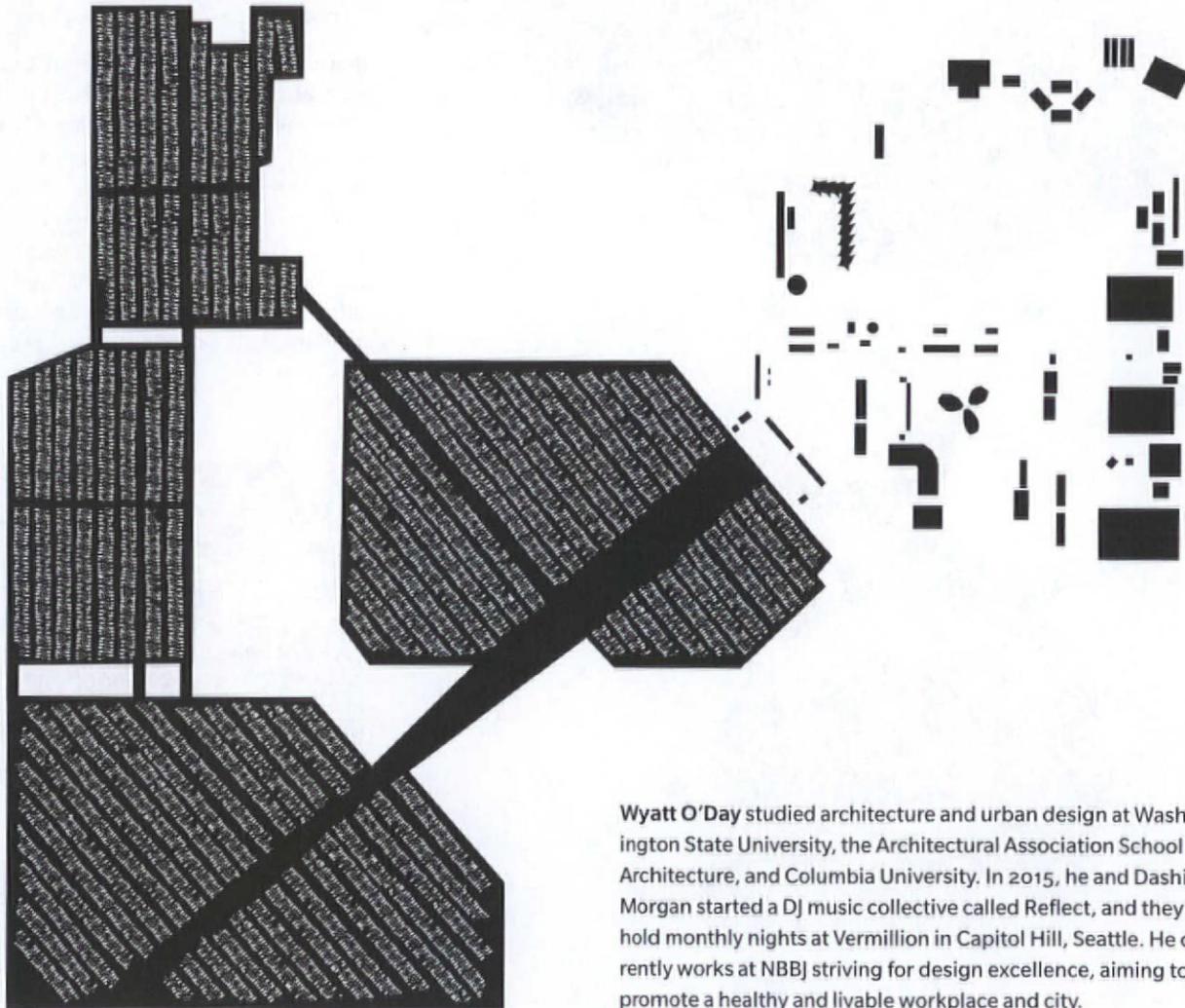


Coachella

INDIO, CALIFORNIA

99,000 attendees over three days

A fast growing festival, Coachella takes place in the California desert at the pristine Empire Polo Club. Camping areas take on the fields' large, rectangular shapes, while tents and cars occupy roads that filter into a street leading to the entrance.



Wyatt O'Day studied architecture and urban design at Washington State University, the Architectural Association School of Architecture, and Columbia University. In 2015, he and Dashiell Morgan started a DJ music collective called Reflect, and they hold monthly nights at Vermillion in Capitol Hill, Seattle. He currently works at NBBJ striving for design excellence, aiming to promote a healthy and livable workplace and city.

Adam Pazan grew up in the Pacific Northwest, and his interest in design comes from a curiosity about his surroundings. He studied architecture at Washington State University and currently works at Bohlin Cywinski Jackson. He is a member of the music project Orra: www.orra.bandcamp.com.

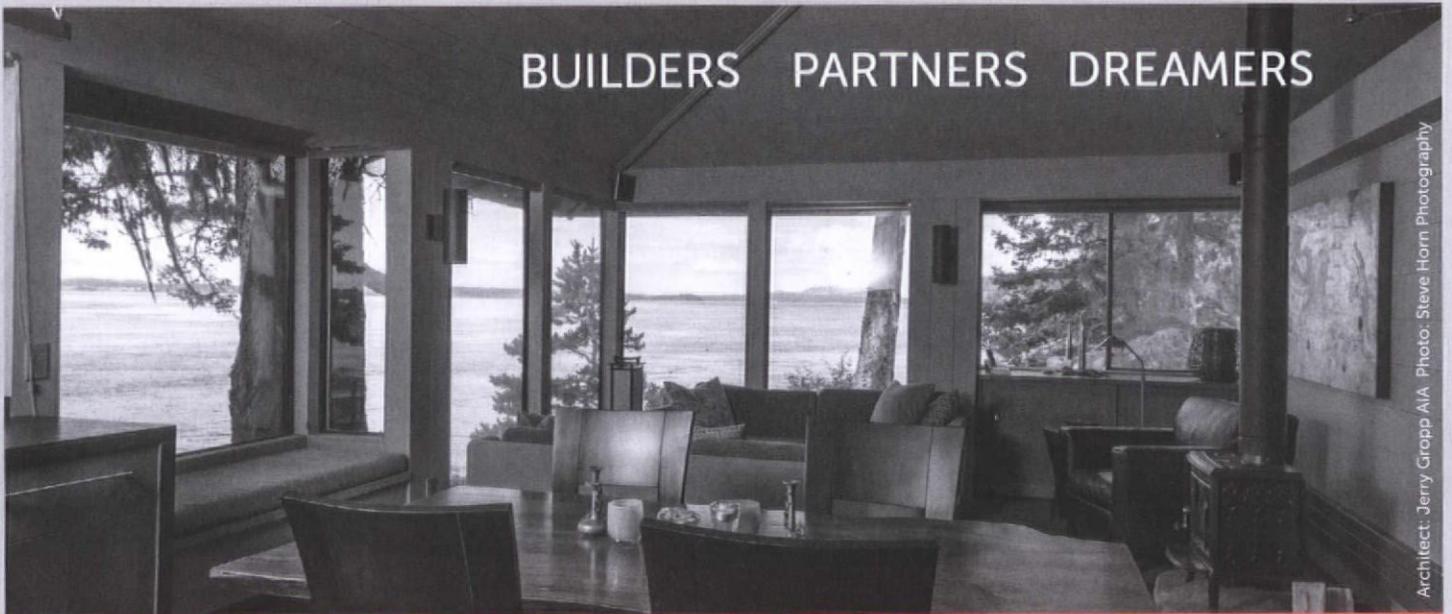
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How to Survive Critique (Part 2)*

KAREN CHENG

IN DESIGN SCHOOL, the core of any studio class is critique. Critique provides, of course, the opportunity for students to receive feedback that helps them improve. However, critique is also a challenging and complex learning event for novice designers.

In a three-year survey of 202 students enrolled in a design foundations course at the University of Washington, 45–53% identified critique as “the aspect that contributed most to their learning.” Students described critique as inspiring; it helped

During critique, students listen as reviewers analyze their work and provide feedback that may be accurate or inaccurate, clear or ambiguous, ample or sparse.

them see a range of solutions to the same design problem and hear multiple points of view that were surprising, enlightening, and different from their own.

On the other hand, in this same survey, 14–30% also identified critique as the course aspect that “most detracted from their learning.” Students described how they disagreed with feedback, felt discouraged by negative reactions to their work, lacked adequate input from reviewers, and were confused about how to interpret and implement suggestions, especially when they were vague or conflicting.

Clearly, navigating critique takes skill. During critique, students listen as reviewers analyze their work and provide feedback that may be accurate or inaccurate, clear or ambiguous, ample or sparse. If students accept input, identify accurate assessments, and address design weaknesses successfully, their work improves. If they implement “bad” suggestions—or fail to address weaknesses adequately—their work declines. If students reject input altogether, their designs remain the same.

Still, despite these challenges, certain students succeed in getting value from critique. What motivates these students—what are their strategies for success? The possible following answers are drawn from research on the psychology of feedback, as well as from surveys, course evaluations, and in-person interviews with design students.

*“How to Survive Critique: A Guide to Giving and Receiving Feedback” appeared in ARCADE Issue 30.3, Summer 2012. Find it online at www.arcadenw.org.

REJECTING VS. ACCEPTING FEEDBACK

According to research on feedback, people naturally avoid criticism because it's painful. Psychologists diagnose avoiding and rejecting criticism as "maladaptive responses" because these behaviors are counterproductive—they deflect the corrective information necessary for improving performance. (For more on this, see *Thanks for the Feedback* by Douglas Stone and Sheila Heen.)



REJECTING FEEDBACK

Successful design students don't avoid critique—they embrace and even actively seek out criticism that helps them learn. For example, when asked in a survey what advice they would give to future students, one student wrote: "If you hear someone complimenting your project, say 'Thank you' and [then] ask, 'What don't you like about it?'"

AVOIDING DISCOURAGEMENT

To lessen the sting of negative feedback, successful students focus on the work itself. Researchers believe that compartmentalizing feedback creates a mental shield, allowing people to take in criticism as just another point of neutral data. In an end-of-course interview, one student explained, "You make something, and immediately and automatically you care about



DISCOURAGED BY FEEDBACK

it because you made it. You have to learn to detach yourself from the idea that it's yours, so that you can objectively make it better."

This detachment—the distinction between "failure of work" vs. "failure of self"—can be developed over time. As one student said in her interview: "I started out taking critique a lot more personally. This made me less receptive to feedback. I would think, 'No, I'm a good person, my work's fine!' But during class, it was mentioned that critique isn't about you. It's about your work, just improving your work. After hearing that, I think I responded to feedback a lot better."

SOLICITING FEEDBACK

The best critiques occur in groups in which there is mutual trust and respect. In these safe social groups, conversations are robust and productive, as members equally participate in conversations that are sensitive to others' feelings.

Unfortunately, it's difficult to quickly foster social safety in a group of 20 strangers (i.e., in a classroom at the start of a course). In this setting, most students avoid offending others with negative feedback. Additionally, as novices, students are often insecure in their knowledge and hesitate to offer what might be uninformed opinions.

Successful students in the design foundations course recognized their peers' reluctance to speak, and described taking responsibility for stimulating discussion by coming prepared with specific queries about their work. Additionally, in a post-course interview, one student explained that critique is most lively when students come prepared with interesting and engaging work, saying, "you have to give people something to go on." Other students formed their own smaller, supportive study groups (one notably called "Whine and Design") that were alternate safe places to give and receive feedback.



SILENT REVIEWERS

Still other students focused on learning by giving feedback to others. In one survey, a student described performing a silent self-review during critique by "seeing if my personal critique lines up with the faculty's judgment." This is a classic example of how peer review can enable students to calibrate against experts. Studies show that a person giving a review often derives greater benefit than the receiver because reviewers improve their knowledge by having to explain their assessment to others.

Icons designed by Luis Prado

Photo: James Andrew Davidson
(www.jamesjad.com)

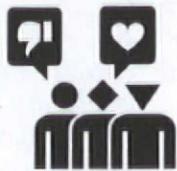
CONFLICTING FEEDBACK

Conflicting feedback occurs because design is subjective, and there are multiple paths to a good end product. To sift through conflicting feedback, successful design students employ a range of strategies. Surveys and interviews on the subject found that many students reasoned that feedback from faculty (who were, after all, responsible for grading) outranked their

peers'. While rational, this strategy relies on faculty being all-seeing and all-knowing—not always the case. More discerning students judged feedback using critical thinking (does the feedback make sense?). Other students evaluated feedback against a self-defined vision for their project, rejecting

input that failed to align and advance their concept (a reasonable approach, as long as the guiding idea is sound).

Perhaps the best insight on sorting feedback came from students who recognized that verbal communication is inherently imperfect, and what matters most is understanding the underlying rationale for a critique. As one student said in her inter-



CONFLICTING CRITICS

Design critiques—and project-based design studios—are environments that require a growth mindset.

view, “You have to deconstruct comments. It’s easy to take things at face value instead of thinking about what [reviewers] are really trying to say.”

With this advice in mind, it’s useful to examine the underlying mindset that drives students during critique. Stanford psychologist Carol Dweck has identified the “growth mindset,” in which students see their intelligence as a fluid capacity that grows in response to challenges and, in contrast, the “fixed mindset,” in which students see their intelligence as an unchangeable, absolute quantity.

Design critiques—and project-based design studios—are environments that require a growth mindset. To successfully create design work, students must self-direct their own inquiries and improve their work through knowledge acquired by making prototypes and seeking feedback. Unsuccessful variations and negative criticism are not cues to abandon the task, but useful advice for future refinement. One student succinctly summarized the essence of the growth mindset on a course evaluation, noting: “This class requires you to own the information, take initiative, and do it yourself!”



Photos: Katy Lee (www.katyleedesign.com)

Karen Cheng is a professor of visual communication design at the University of Washington.

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House of Mirrors

Claustrophobia in the New American City

RON VAN DER VEEN

I HAVE CLAUSTROPHOBIA, and as a kid, walking through the “house of mirrors” at amusement parks used to freak me out. The disorientation, the strange reflections, seeing hundreds of my pimpled face with braces and geeky glasses. It was terrifying!

In a weird kind of way, sometimes I still feel like that. For instance, recently I was walking to work on a typical grayish Seattle day. It's quite apparent that Seattle is experiencing a historic building boom that will forever transform the city. There must be well over 40 construction cranes dotting the skyline just in downtown. As I walked I noticed exterior cladding being installed on a residential high-rise, and I had a strange sense of déjà vu. Hadn't I just seen this building on the previous block? As I continued on my way, I became aware that the same tower kept popping up. First at Fifth and Stewart, then at First and Union, then again at First and Lenora, Fourth and Lenora, Fifth and Bell, Second and Virginia, Second and Pike ... I had become entranced and was walking in a giant urban spiral.

And with every step I took it felt more and more like I was trapped in a suffocating house of mirrors! Without the slightest hint of drugs in my system, before my very eyes the city became a colossal maze of the same thing: giant, glass-clad, residential Seattle high-rises!

For those who haven't travelled to downtown in the last decade, let me describe the architectural characteristics of these buildings:

1. Glass

Usually floor-to-ceiling with inexpensive and antiseptic window frame systems. A little bit of solid panel here, a bit of operable window there, throw in a few more window frames, and multiply that by 15, 20 or 30 stories. I know, I know, it's about the view, dummy.

2. A Slight Conical Shape

Most of these towers employ some vague geometry, usually curved, that detaches them from the city grid. Honestly though, the geometry is fairly arbitrary. What's important is that the building goes up and up.

3. A Minimal Base

I find the way these buildings touch the ground to be somewhat sterile. Concrete walls and panels, more glass with inexpensive window frames, and a lack of intimate detailing forces these buildings to rely on the interiors of their lobbies and commercial tenants to enrich the pedestrian experience.

4. Cost

Prices that only a software engineer can afford!

I can imagine what you're thinking right now: How can any architect or planner complain about an American city transforming into a world-class magnet for vibrant urban living? What right does this ARCADE columnist have to criticize these gloriously light- and sun-filled towers that are bringing thousands of people back into Seattle's downtown? And what about all the other evolving cities around the country invigorated by this new architecture?

What concerns me is I'm not sure which downtown I'm in anymore. Just like the sensation I get seeing the reflection of the same high-rise on every Seattle street, it's starting to feel like every US city is a copy of the next, filled with mirrored images of these high-rises.

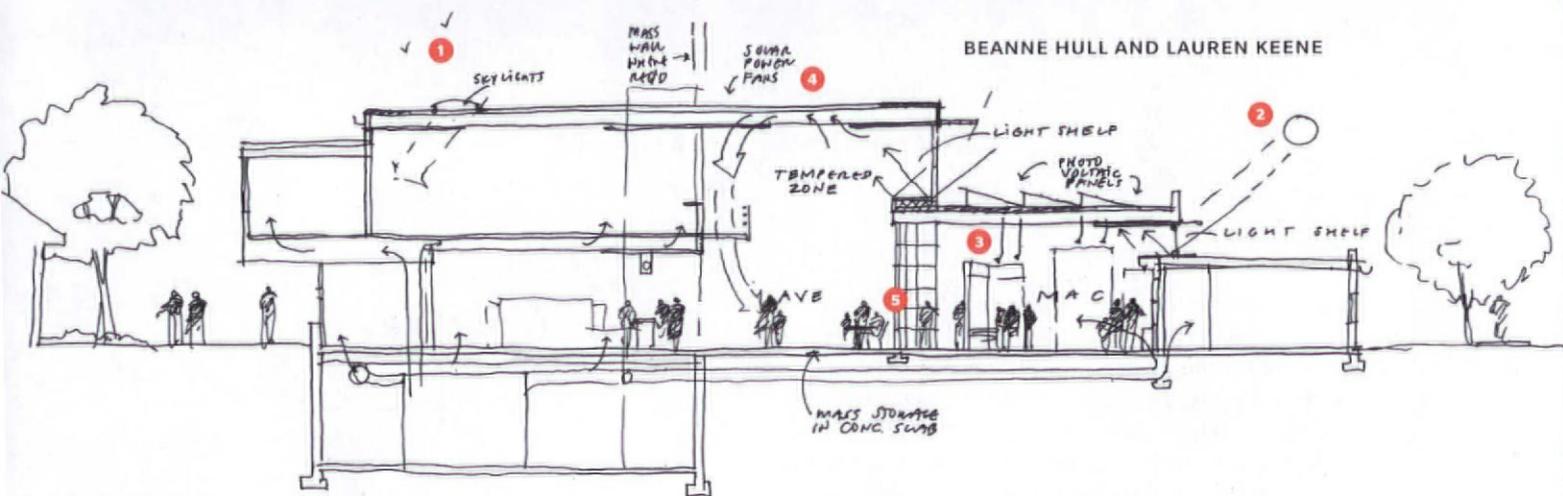
The most famous house of mirrors scene in film history is probably in *Enter the Dragon* starring Bruce Lee. In the finale, Bruce learns it's advantageous to smash the glass obstacles before him to solve his problem and defeat the villain. However, architects are mostly followers, not mirror smashers, so I don't anticipate much change in American residential high-rise design for quite some time. Soon some of our blocks will be filled with multiple glazed towers, all looking into each other, to an extent that everyone will have to permanently draw their curtains for privacy. Maybe all of downtown will look like a colossal Christo-wrapped city.

Though it doesn't address the above issue, I believe part of the solution is in richer materials at the pedestrian level. Go ahead and keep your semicircular plan from floor three and up. At the sake of sounding too 20th century, would it hurt to supplement the base with a bit of brick, steel, cast concrete, or—I say this with trepidation—a finely detailed punched window? The point is, I think these buildings need to sacrifice a bit of slick for the sake of the humane.

But for now, this doesn't really alleviate my house of mirrors hallucination as I circle the streets of downtown Seattle. I guess as long as I don't cock my head upward on my way to work, I shouldn't be too haunted by childhood claustrophobia.

Ron van der Veen, principal at NAC Architecture and our esteemed Side Yard columnist, has never designed a built residential high-rise, so his opinions on the subject are relatively uninformed and trite. Please help him by sending ideas and comments to rvanderveen@nacarchitecture.com.

The Anatomy of “a Bob Sketch”



BEANNE HULL AND LAUREN KEENE

“A perfect day for me would be ... I can just ... draw. To actually just sit there and design and draw and think.” —Robert Hull

ROBERT HULL, founding partner of The Miller Hull Partnership, was a curious and inventive architect, highly regarded for his creativity and approachable manner. Known for his elegant design sensibilities, Bob’s intuitive approach and amazing eye for composition helped bring Miller Hull national recognition and establish an architectural practice rooted in its Pacific Northwest context.

Hardly a day went by when Bob didn’t draw. He drew to make sense of things and for the sheer joy of making marks. In his hand, the pen became a medium for conversation; when someone couldn’t find the words to explain an idea, Bob would pass his pen—always a Niji Stylist—as an invitation to speak through sketching.

Bob expressed himself freely through drawing. In the Miller Hull office, “a Bob Sketch” referred to a drawing that conveyed the quintessential idea of a project in a single image—one that artfully balanced a level of imagination and reality accessible to both clients and architects. The sketch by Bob included above reveals the connection between mind and hand—a record of thought and process.

The exhibit *Anatomy of Sketch: The Thinking Hand of Bob Hull* will open January 2017 at Gould Gallery, University of Washington, Seattle. www.abobsketch.tumblr.com

1. Birds

Common in Bob’s drawings, the simple “bird” mark is easily recognizable and instantly creates scale within the sketch.

2. Sun

The sun’s direction was an important consideration for Bob from the start of the project. He’d often include the summer and winter sun to show how the design considered solar angles year round.

3. Lights

Bob always drew light fixtures. He was always thinking about how a building’s small parts would work together within the project’s larger idea.

4. Systems

Even at the earliest design stages, Bob always considered a building’s systems and drew gutters, fans, and ducts in even the quickest sketches. He constantly thought about the movement of light and air and how the architecture could support passive heating and cooling.

5. The People

Bob would add people last, often on a separate sheet of tracing paper and in a thicker pen so they would “punch,” as he’d say. He kept a folder of photocopies of magazines and photos, and in earlier presentation drawings, would collage them onto ink and Mylar.

Beanne Hull is an artist and educator in Seattle; she and her husband Bob Hull shared a love of drawing from the day they met and would often sketch together.

Lauren Keene is an architectural designer at the Miller Hull Partnership.



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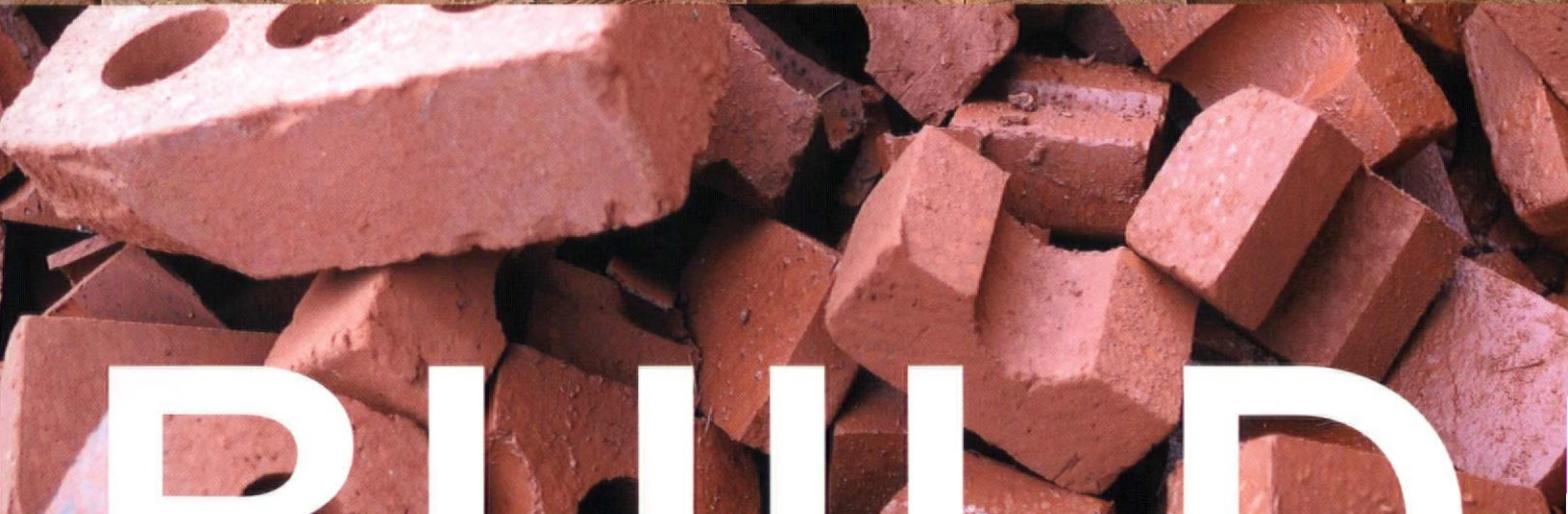
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