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WAKEFIELD MARKET HALL

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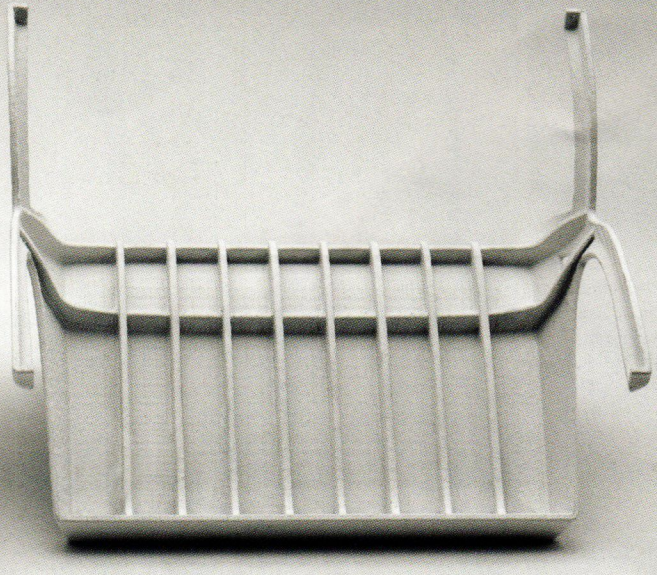

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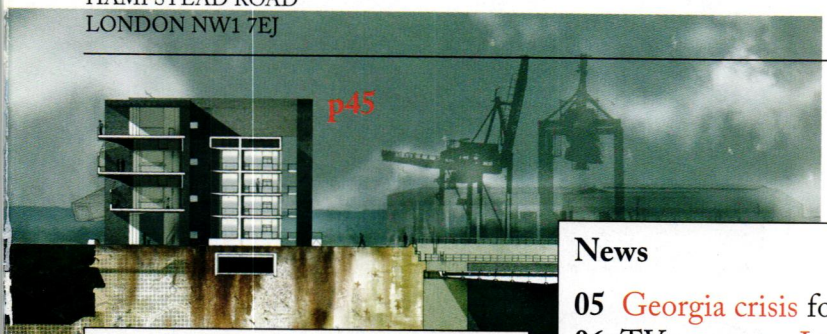

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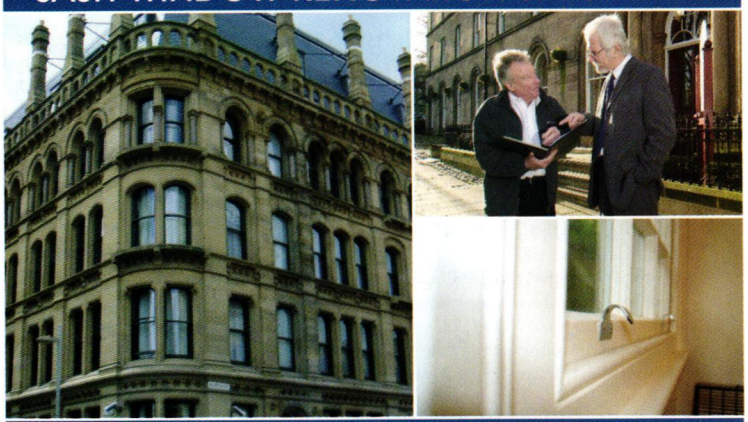

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Lauren Laverne quits Stirling Prize jury p6 | AHMM finishes headquarters for retail giant p8 | TV presenter-turned-housing developer Kevin McCloud talks to the AJ p12

Georgian troops in the town of Gori, 80km from the capital Tblisi

DAVID MDZINARISHVILI / REUTERS

GEORGIA CRISIS THROWS UK PRACTICES' WORK INTO LIMBO

Michael Wilford Architects, Chapman Taylor and BDP projects on hold after violence flares between Georgia and Russia

A host of projects led by UK architects in Georgia have been thrown into serious doubt following the brutal conflict between the former Soviet state and Russia.

Plans for a new British embassy on the outskirts of the Georgian capital of Tblisi, designed by Michael Wilford Architects, have been put on hold after Russian and Georgian troops went into combat over the breakaway Georgian regions of South Ossetia and Abkhazia.

Wilford, who previously worked with the late James Stirling, won a Foreign and Commonwealth Office competition in April last year, seeing off Jestico + Whiles Architects and Terry Pawson to secure the scheme.

Wilford told the AJ: 'We were hoping to start on site later in the year but we don't have a clue what will happen now. I don't think anyone does. The last meeting we had was to organise putting the project out for tender.'

The Foreign Office said it was advising British nationals to evacuate Georgia, and that it was too early to make any predictions as to when work could take place on the project.

A Foreign Office spokeswoman said: 'Obviously there is no point building something if there is a reasonable risk of it being razed to the ground before it is finished.'

Chapman Taylor Architects has also been hit by the conflict. The firm is working on a retail-led scheme in Tblisi for a Lithuanian client, which includes an 80,000m^2 two-level shopping and entertainment centre and two 20,000m^2 office towers.

Chapman Taylor says the client is still willing to proceed with the scheme but cannot predict when the project will restart. 'We have to wait until the situation calms down,' said a spokeswoman.

BDP, which is working on the early stages of a hospital in Georgia, said it is 'monitoring the situation carefully'.

A BDP statement said: 'We are in daily contact with the client, and we are working on the basis that diplomatic relations will be maintained. We hope the current situation won't affect the progress too much, and we are supporting the client in these difficult times.'

Richard Vaughan

LAUREN LAVERNE QUITS STIRLING JURY

Lauren Laverne, face of the BBC's *The Culture Show*, has pulled out from judging this year's Stirling Prize.

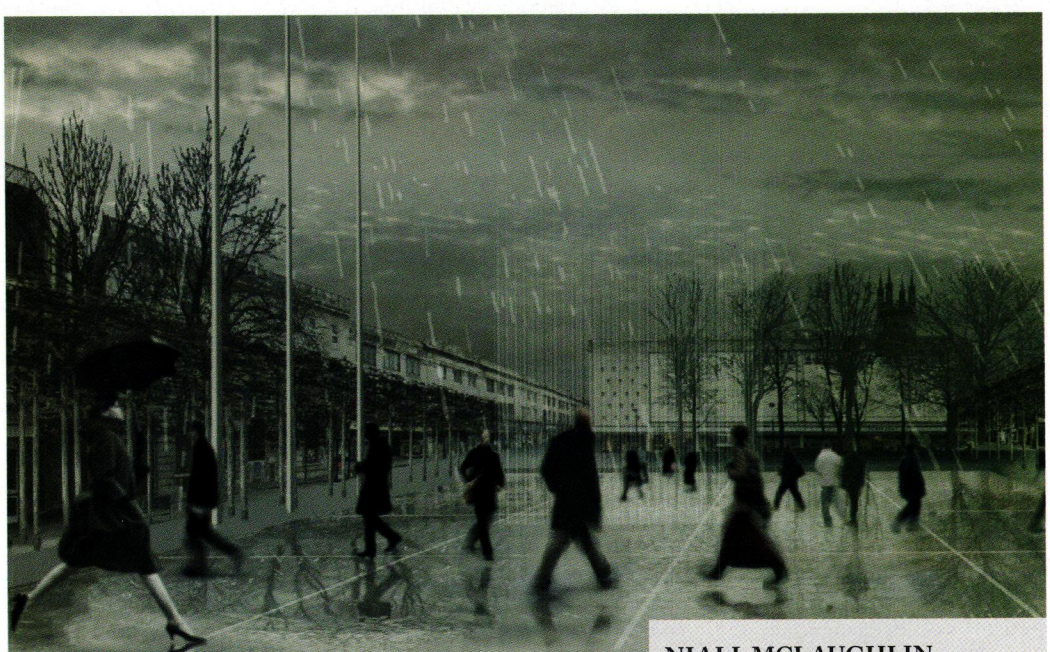
The 30-year-old TV presenter and former singer has cited problems with 'childcare' as the main reason behind her withdrawal. She will be replaced by Irish garden designer and TV presenter Diarmuid Gavin.

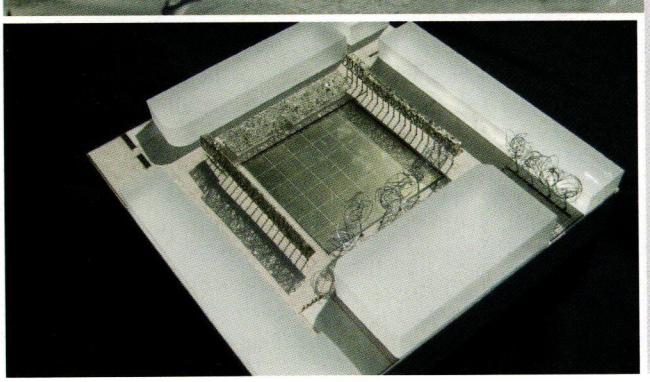
UN Studio's Ben van Berkel has also resigned from the jury due to a 'conflicting schedule', and will be replaced by Czech-born architect Eva Jiricna.

A RIBA spokeswoman said: 'Judging the Stirling Prize is a rigorous process, and requires judges to make a significant commitment of their time to take part in site visits and discussions.

'Although every effort is made to ensure the judges' availability well in advance of the site visits, clashes with schedules and other extenuating circumstances can arise.'

The jury now comprises Kieran Long, editor of *The Architects' Journal*; Shelley McNamara of Grafton Architects; Gordon Murray of Gordon Murray + Alan Dunlop Architects; Diarmuid Gavin; and Eva Jiricna. *Richard Vaughan*





NIALL MCLAUGHLIN DESIGNS WATERY SPACE FOR GLOUCESTER

This is Niall McLaughlin Architects' competition-winning King's Square scheme for Gloucester. The scheme is based on a 'square within a square' concept – a slate grid can be flooded independently or simultaneously using recycled rainwater to provide a changeable event space. *Richard Vaughan*

THIS WEEK ON THE WEB

CABE REVEALS OLYMPIC STADIUM CONCERNS

CABE has continuing concerns over certain design aspects of HOK Sport's 2012 Olympic Stadium, according to a design review released on Tuesday (26 August). Although the design watchdog praised the firm's 'elegant and efficient' approach to temporary seating, it has reservations over the external 'wrap' and public space around the stadium.

ENGLISH HERITAGE SEEKS STONEHENGE ARCHITECT – AGAIN

English Heritage has once again put the call out for an architect to design a visitor centre at Stonehenge. The move comes eight months after Denton Corker Marshall's £67 million scheme was ditched, following the abandonment of proposals for a bypass underneath the site.

SARAH ICHIOKA TO LEAD ARCHITECTURE FOUNDATION

The Architecture Foundation has appointed Sarah Ichioka as its new director. The 29-year-old was previously deputy director of the London Festival of Architecture (LFA) and is expected to take up her new role on 13 October. She succeeds previous director Rowan Moore, who resigned in May.

EH MAY CHALLENGE DOON STREET APPROVAL

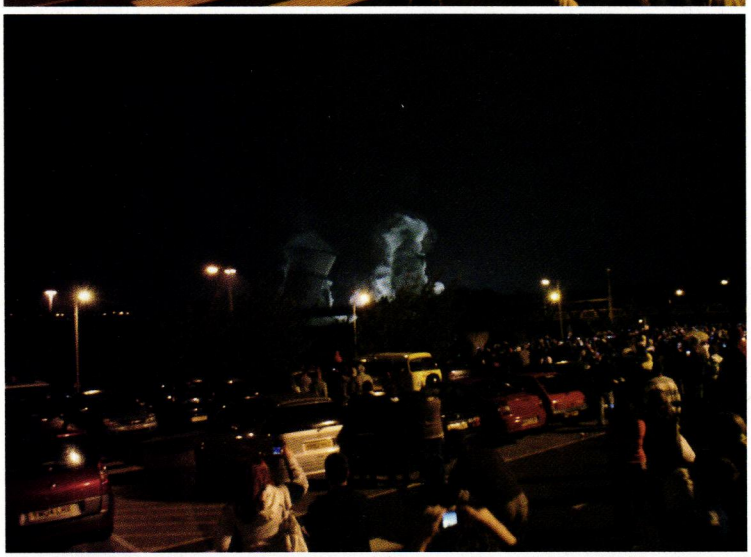
English Heritage (EH) has refused to rule out appealing against Communities Secretary Hazel Blears' decision to approve Lifschutz Davidson Sandilands' Doon Street tower on London's South Bank. EH said it was 'appalled' by Blears' decision to back the scheme and that it was 'considering its next steps'.

Read all of these news stories in full and more online at WWW.ARCHITECTSJOURNAL.CO.UK

AHMM'S DESIGNER HQ

This is Allford Hall Monaghan Morris' (AHMM's) new 25,000m² headquarters for clothing retailer Monsoon Accessorize. The seven-storey building near Notting Hill in west London will form part of a wider development called Notting Dale Village, and is due to complete in October this year. *Richard Vaughan*

ROB PARRISH



TUMBLING TOWERS This is the moment the iconic 70-year-old Tinsley Cooling Towers in Sheffield were demolished early on Sunday morning (24 August). The towers will be replaced by a £60 million biomass power station. *Kaye Alexander*

See the video at WWW.ARCHITECTSJOURNAL.CO.UK

MODERNIST CHURCH MAY BE SOLD OFF

The future of the last surviving Modernist church designed by Milton Keynes masterplanner Derek Walker, is hanging in the balance, the AJ has learned.

The Holy Family Church in Chequerfield, West Yorkshire (*pictured*), is at the centre of a showdown between the Catholic Church and its congregation after the Bishop of Leeds announced that he intends to sell the 1964 building.

The move has prompted furious locals to start a campaign, backed by Walker and Labour peer Lord Lofthouse, to keep the church open. English Heritage has now been brought in to assess the building for listing.

Walker said: 'The church is in the middle of a very close-knit community and remains a focal point for them. It is very disappointing that it will close. I have written to the Bishop of Leeds asking him to reconsider, but had no response.'

Speaking for the Church, Reverend Monsignor Michael McQuinn blamed the closure on the 'decline in the number of priests' and said the diocese intends to sell the building.

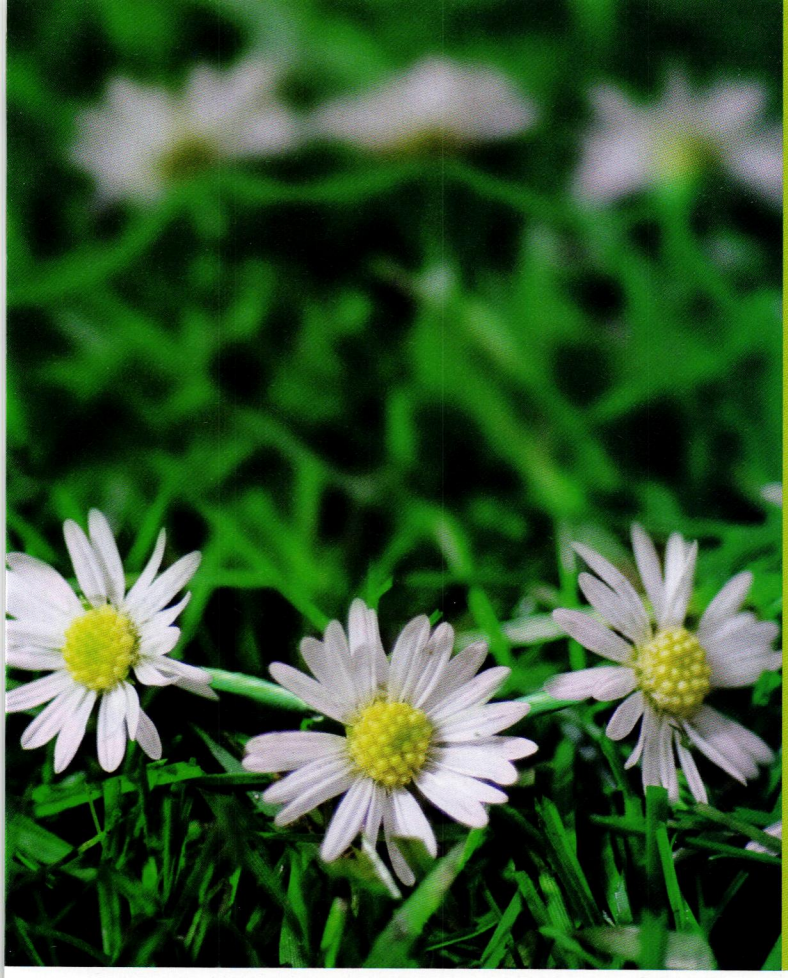
Campaigners are now claiming the interior is already being picked apart, with the pews on their way to a church in nearby Skipton.

According to Paul Walker, an architectural historian and expert on post-war churches, the Holy Family is 'a very strong statement architecturally'. He adds: 'Its layout challenged traditional notions of how a church was thought of. It should certainly be listed.'

The Holy Family church is the last of a trio designed by Walker, which included St Benedict's in Garforth (now demolished) and Sacred Heart in Hyde Park Road, Leeds, which is now a mosque.

The design was in keeping with the modernising Second Vatican Council movement. It featured a free-standing Portland Stone altar, intended to bring the priest closer to the people, and ceramics by artist Robert Brumby.
James McLachlan

The Holy Family Church, Chequerfield, by Derek Walker



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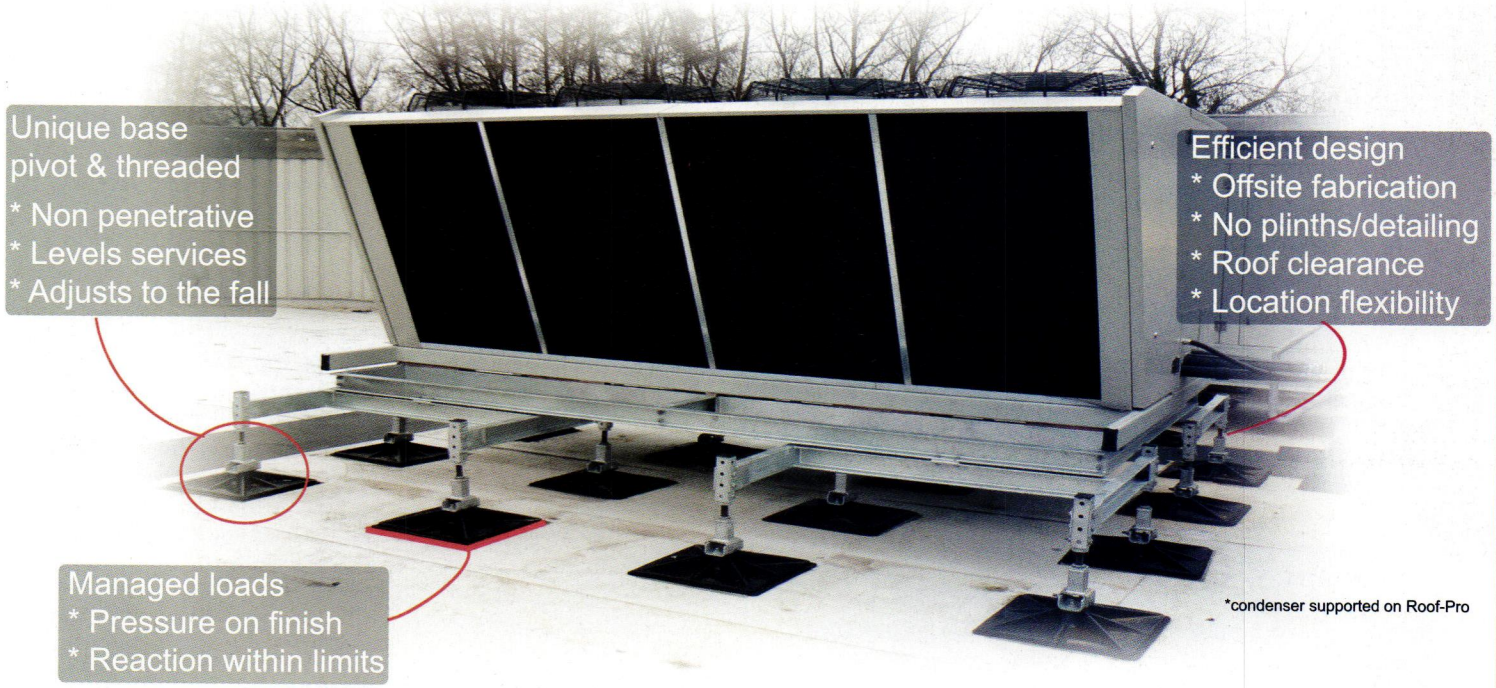

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'I'M THE GUY WHO APPARENTLY DOESN'T PAY ARCHITECTS'

Kevin McCloud talks to *Richard Vaughan* following accusations of tight-fistedness and commercial naïvety at his HAB housing project in Swindon

My encounter with Kevin McCloud starts at a private members' club off central London's Tottenham Court Road. The TV presenter is bring filmed by Channel 4 in the thick of a design meeting for his development company HAB's housing development in Swindon.

My arrival stops Glenn Howells, who has recently been appointed as lead architect, in his tracks. 'Should I carry on?' says Howells, agog at my presence. 'Of course,' says McCloud.

It is a public show of HAB's solidarity in the light of recent reports. After McCloud and original project architect Wright & Wright parted ways, there were claims that the scheme was in 'chaos'. There were even reports that Howells was working for free.

Howells jokingly says: 'I've had so many emails from clients who are disappointed about having paid us now! They're claiming it's clearly not the usual arrangement.'

He adds: 'This came from Kevin saying there will be public consultations on the scheme, which can take place outside of hours. All I said was that we won't expect to be getting paid for that.'

Although Howells and McCloud seem to be a close-knit team, Wright & Wright practice principal Sandy Wright said McCloud was 'commercially naïve' over his handling of the affair.

'I don't even know what that means,' McCloud says, while the Channel 4 cameras roll. 'It implies a lack of business acumen. Is that an allegation? I've been in business for 15 years so I'm not unacquainted with employing and working with people. The important thing is collaboration.'

According to McCloud, Wright & Wright's involvement came about when HAB was weighing up a partnership with another developer, Bioregional Quintain. It did not work out and instead HAB went into partnership with housing association Westlea, but retained the architect. But this arrangement fell apart, McCloud says, due to 'differences in working practices and business arrangements, and one or two personal issues'.

'Getting rid of a practice is difficult, but it's not naïve. It's what happens in business'

McCloud adds: 'You could argue that getting rid of a practice is difficult, but it's not naïve. It's what happens in business.'

For McCloud, this old news. His only concern with the issue now is that on 11 October he will be hosting the Stirling Prize in front of an audience of architects.

He says: 'I'm only going to have to stand in front of 500 architects and say: "Hello, I'm the guy who apparently doesn't pay architects!"'

McCloud is appearing on TV screens more than ever at the moment. As well as *Grand Designs* and the Stirling Prize, he fronts the weekly *Kevin McCloud and the Big Town Plan*, which focuses on the regeneration of Castleford, West Yorkshire (AJ 10.07.08).

'I wanted to see first-class design,' he says. 'I kept asking: "Who is the client here?"'

McCloud claims that in the early days the regeneration was too 'top-down', led by Yorkshire Forward and English Partnerships. This resulted in Martha Schwartz's 'village green' in New Fryston coming in for heavy criticism from locals.

'Martha came up with three proposals, which were put to the residents, who were asked to choose the least dislikeable,' he says. 'What they wanted was a community building. It wasn't so much regeneration as generation.'

The successful projects, according to McCloud, are the ones that are community-led. But the 'very best' schemes are the ones where there is a 'synergy between designer and client'.

This success, I suggest, must have something to do with it being captured by Channel 4. Perhaps people will go a little further than they normally would?

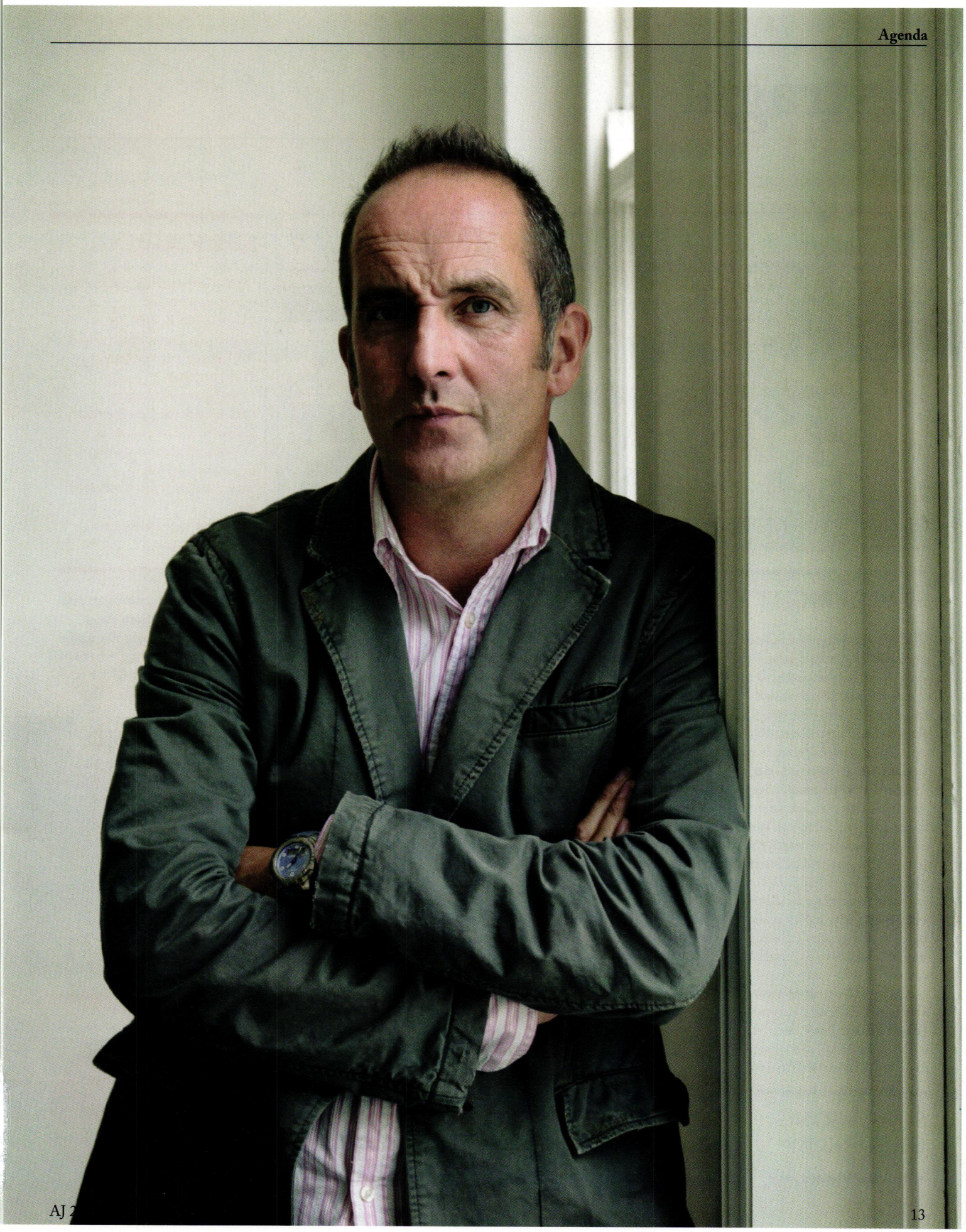
'Perhaps having the cameras was useful in terms of charging the process,' says McCloud. 'It was as much an experiment by Channel 4 to pump £100,000 into the programme. You could argue that without that the £6 million follow-up wouldn't have happened. Maybe the £60 million after that wouldn't have happened.'

The people of 'Cas' – as McCloud calls it – don't care about the cameras. They care about the success of their projects.

McCloud says: 'I remember asking Jon Rouse, when he was still running the Housing Corporation: "Do you believe design can change people's lives?" He said: "Yes, but there is something much more important and mundane – maintenance."'

The Castleford project has been, by McCloud's own admission, a five-year research project for his own Swindon scheme, which will be screened on Channel 4 in 2010.

McCloud is philosophical about Swindon's success. 'Look it's an adventure. It's ambitious. Who knows what will happen?'



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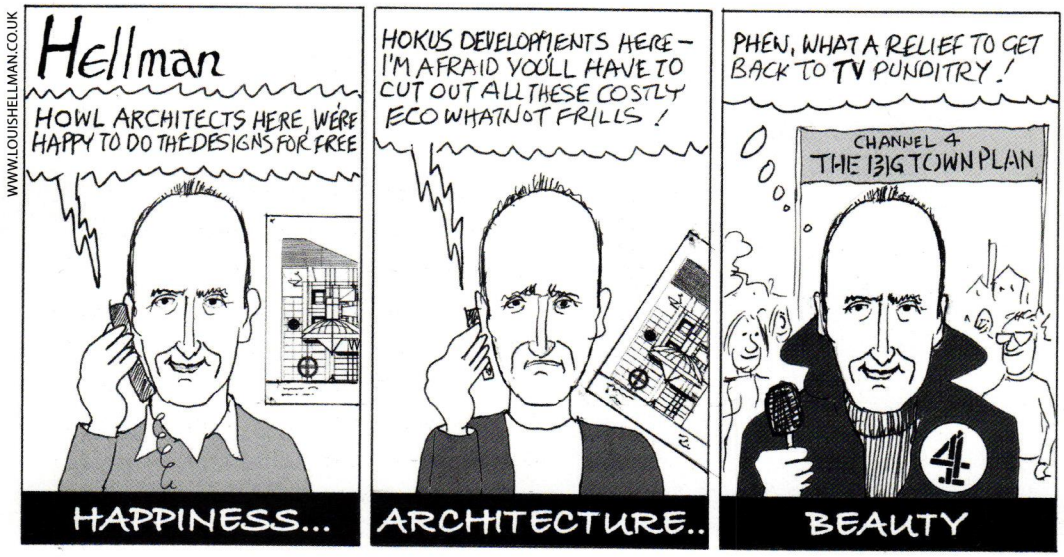
Astragal



STAGE FRIGHT

While **Tom 'Magnum' Selleck**'s portrayal of an architect in *Three Men and a Baby* was admirable, the profession doesn't always translate well into dramatic form. And when Astragal hears the term 'theatre pub', it sounds only half appealing. So it was with a mixture of trepidation, curiosity and thirst that Astragal ventured to the Hen and Chickens venue in north London to watch the provocatively named architectural play *Erect!* (*see 5 Things To Do, page 49*). Among many curious moments (including an erotic dance with a phallic architectural model), Astragal was puzzled to hear the play's anti-hero namecheck *Building Design* as the source of a damning story when the prop being used was a recent edition of the AJ's sister magazine, the *Architectural Review*.

SING A SONG OF SORROW

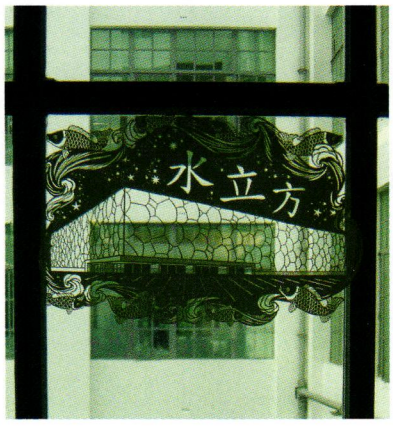
With **Tim Wheeler**, chief executive of property developer Brixton, unveiling his firm's pre-tax loss of £236.7 million by quoting extensively from **Bob Dylan**'s *All Along the Watchtower* ('If the "thieves" are the funded or equity-based opportunist buyers and the "jokers" are the owners who won't sell, there is no "way out" of this impasse yet'), Astragal's thoughts turned to other songs from the Dylan canon that might soundtrack the credit crunch. *Desolation Row* seems an adequate description of the many speculative developments that remain unoccupied; *Subterranean Homesick Blues* ('Ring bell, hard to tell, If anything is goin' to sell') is surely playing on repeat in all Foxtons branches; while developers up and down the country will be hoping that the times they will be a-changin'.

ACTING UP

Architect-turned-cabaret singer **Camille O'Sullivan** was the toast of the Edinburgh Festival this year, and is set to tour her act around the UK. O'Sullivan, who who was a practising architect in Dublin for seven years and won the Architectural Association of Ireland Award in 2000, is described by the *Scotsman* as 'a cross between **Sally Bowles**, **Patti Smith** and **PJ Harvey**'. She plays Salford, Nottingham, Leeds, London, Birmingham and Brighton. See www.camilleosullivan.com for details.

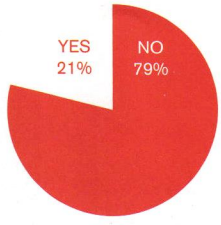
WINDOW DRESSING

Astragal was delighted to receive this beautiful *chuang hua* (*pictured right*), or 'window flower', picturing PTW Architects' 'Water Cube' Aquatics Centre in Beijing, which arrived through the post from Arup. Here it is brightening Astragal's previously uninspiring view of an internal courtyard at AJ towers. Thanks Arup!



THIS WEEK'S ONLINE POLL

Do you think London 2012 will measure up architecturally to the Beijing Olympics?



Next week's question: Who would you rather see judge the Stirling Prize? Lauren Laverne/Diarmuid Gavin/Alan Titchmarsh

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Leader & Comment

Leader Wakefield's designers must learn from Castleford and engage with the city, says *Kieran Long*

Kevin McCloud's tone on *Grand Designs* is more sceptical than genuinely critical. His taste is conventional, his position not very consistent – an eco house praised one week, a Modernist idyll the next. But with his programme about the regeneration of Castleford, *Kevin McCloud and the Big Town Plan* (AJ 10.07.08), he has come into his own as a commentator. His critique of Martha Schwartz's public realm project in New Fryston, on the outskirts of the West Yorkshire town, shows his ability to cut through the rhetoric. Schwartz's project, a vision in sandy stonework, was built for 'another time, another place' and was remote from the desires of the community, he said.

The tense scene of the episode when the Housing Minister and assorted English Partnerships mandarins gave speeches at the opening of Schwartz's park, while residents kept their distance and grumbled, was a moment that proved his point and showed how out of touch architects can still be.

This week, Kester Rattenbury travels to Wakefield for us, to look at another Northern regeneration effort that is reaching full swing, this time with more commercial muscle behind it (*see pages 22-29*). She describes Wakefield as a place that typifies contemporary approaches to regeneration, with the combination of cultural and retail-led regeneration, mostly funded by the private sector.

But the problems of the Castleford project can bring some important lessons for Wakefield. Last time I was in Wakefield, I met a representative of Modus, one of the developers behind the Timber Walk development zone, who was sincere about its commitment to quality in the public realm. But architecturally, the retail-led project leaves much to be desired. The efforts of Beam, Wakefield's architecture centre, which is involved in Trinity Walk as an art consultant, risk being the lipstick on the gorilla.

If Wakefield is to avoid the depressing denouement of the Castleford programme, there needs to be an honest conversation about what makes civic architecture. David Adjaye's market hall (*see pages 30-35*) is the benchmark. DLA Architecture must match that standard with its surrounding Trinity Wharf masterplan.

kieran.long@emap.com

Opinion Beijing's Olympics may have had all the icons, but at least London will have better signage, says *Jack Pringle*

I went to the Beijing Olympics with RIBA president Sunand Prasad and Lord Digby Jones as part of a UK government/RIBA initiative to promote UK professionals in China. You land at Beijing at Foster's stunning new airport, which frankly makes other recent attempts at airport terminals look a little jaded, swish into town on the new motorway system, often 16 lanes wide, past Paul Andreu's National Theatre and Rem Koolhaas' giant gravity-defying CCTV building. Beijing is built on a scale to rule the world.

The clean and modern Metro takes you to the Olympic Green due north of Tiananmen Square and the Forbidden City where Herzog & de Meuron's Bird's Nest National Stadium and PTW's Water Cube Aquatics Centre flank a grand central pedestrian boulevard. It's a chocolate box of superstar productions.

The Bird's Nest is fabulous by day and better by night, when it glows with colour and drama. It's a show-off superstar with no expense spared, which makes the perfect emblem for the games and backdrop for global TV coverage. The Aquatics Centre is a total contrast. It's elegant and light; a 'why didn't I think of that' building. The pair are yin and yang. The Chinese are to be congratulated for having the courage to hold competitions for both of them.

The queues to get in through the bomb scanners were terrible

So how can London compete? Well Beijing didn't get everything right. Signage, catering and merchandising were poor. The temporary facilities were tacky and the queues to get in through the bomb scanners were terrible. The music was naff and the Olympic Green was arid and sterile. They got the show right, but not the party that should have gone with it. It's still a military state with a smile on its face.

London 2012 has a different purpose. It will be the first legacy-based games. By definition it cannot compete on the icon stakes, although Zaha's Aquatic Centre and Hopkins' Velodrome should be pretty special. For the TV audience it will be a pity that the centre-piece, the athletics stadium, will be mainly temporary and can never have the power of the Bird's Nest. Here's hoping it looks like more than posh scaffolding.

Where we can excel is at the party. People will flock to London in their droves. We should give them a great time. Signage, security and catering are easy wins for us. Our Olympic Park will have great landscaping and should have lots for people to do, eat and drink. London's bit part in the closing ceremony may not have been that brilliant, so we need to up our game. We are a capital of the creative industries and have a street culture that Beijing's young people can only envy and mimic.

London's Olympics should be as much about software as hardware. We need to capture London's zeitgeist to give the world a welcome and a party in 2012 that it will not forget.

Jack Pringle is a partner in Pringle Brandon and former president of the RIBA

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Opinion The Venice Architecture Biennale is most successful when it widens discourse, says *Emily Campbell*

A crowd of architecture fans soaks up some rock 'n' roll at the British Pavilion in 2006

It's worth declaring up front that I don't experience the Venice Architecture Biennale as an architect, but as an administrator/commissioner/sometime critic, and for me it's all part of the glorious, expansive subject of design. This attitude makes it only partially satisfying. More of that later.

The British Pavilion, which I have had the privilege of commissioning since 2002, is important mostly because Britain has an expanding cast of architects held in high regard internationally by the media, city planners, cultural leaders and big businesses. That Britain breeds huge diversity in architecture and in general was the very point of Peter Cook's 9 Positions show in 2004: our national architecture refused to be distilled into a single style or tendency. So the pleasure in commissioning is the sheer range of possibilities.

Yokohama in 2002 honoured a young practice, Foreign Office Architects, pulling off a building in Japan of awesome scale and significance; 2004 was a group show synthesised by a single charismatic guru; Echo City in 2006 was a multidisciplinary evocation of place and identity; this year we have a semi-historical examination of the interdependence of architecture and social progress that is – or is the promise of – housing.

If the point of the biennale is to advance architecture, then the rest of the world would be shortchanged by not seeing what Britain has learned. This year biennale director Aaron Betsky has explicitly named Britain as a historical and spiritual home of the experimentation that is his theme, and several British architects have been recruited to animate Out There: Architecture Beyond Building. I don't deny that the threshold is high: the Dutch and Japanese always do a good show; the French have been outstanding but inconsistent, likewise Germany, and there are always surprises from leftfield, like the convergence of Hungarian folk vernacular and Chinese electronics in 2006 or the marvellous Estonian dry toilet 'pavilion' of 2004. Above all the Biennale is a fantastic opportunity to take the temperature of world architecture and, to an extent, of global social need, technology and taste, economic pressure and political tone.

These phenomena were explicit in Ricky Burdett's 2006 exhibition Architecture, Cities and Society, which yielded a terrific and elemental sense of urban society usurping the geographical sovereignty and scale of oceans and continents. Well, I was a fan, because I think the architecture biennale needs to admit more pluralistic criticism; not just stay within the tight and proprietary language of architecture. But beware of failing to serve up the discourse in the way architects are used to hearing it: some of them get quite upset. A shocking number of architects bellyached about Burdett's show not containing any architecture, as if it's our one chance to define the epoch. Relax, there'll be another in two years.

A shocking number of architects bellyached about Burdett's show not containing any architecture

Betsky's thesis possibly feeds the vanity of architects more readily by associating their expertise with that of artists; we'll see how that goes down. At any rate, it's a step in the right direction of inter-breeding architecture with everything else in the world. I wonder if design, as distinct from architecture, is more willing to be interbred; or perhaps design is simply more tractable, being more consumable.

Here's an illustration of the problem: as proof of Sheffield's appreciable-urban-character-notwithstanding-its-absence-of-architectural-scenography, we hired Sheffield band The Long Blondes to play on opening day in 2006. One architectural critic reported the band played to a 'baffled' audience. Anyone in the picture above look baffled to you? It was more rock 'n' roll than the architecture Biennale had ever seen; more perhaps than it deserves.

Emily Campbell is head of design and architecture at the British Council

The Venice Architecture Biennale runs from 14 September to 23 November

The Stirling shortlist, like the Oscars, reveals a fear of excellence, writes Patrick Lynch

Anybody who has seen the recent films *No Country For Old Men*, which won the 2007 Oscar for best picture, and *There Will Be Blood*, nominated for the same award, will surely concur that while the former is a wonderful example of genre fiction, a sort of brilliant example of television, the latter is an example of the true art of cinema. But it failed to win the best picture Oscar. Were the judges scared by its ambition? Scared that it sets standards others cannot match?

Is a similar fear of excellence behind the astonishingly poor quality of the Stirling Prize shortlist this year? Allford Hall Monaghan Morris (AHMM) created a loving homage to Louis Kahn a few years ago in the form of the Johnson Building at Hatton Garden. Kahn said in three words everything that I have to say about AHMM's Westminster Academy, shortlisted this year: 'Architecture ain't paint.' Similarly David Adjaye's obviously immature Whitechapel Idea Store was shortlisted in 2006, and yet his subtle Bernie Grant Arts Centre has been overlooked this year.

David Chipperfield similarly failed to get on the shortlist this year. His Empire Riverside Hotel in Hamburg puts a complicated programme on a tricky site. If the architectural cognoscenti of Europe are right, Chipperfield should be close to winning the Stirling Prize every year. If he did, perhaps this would challenge the rest of us to compete with his excellence, rather than accepting this pluralism.

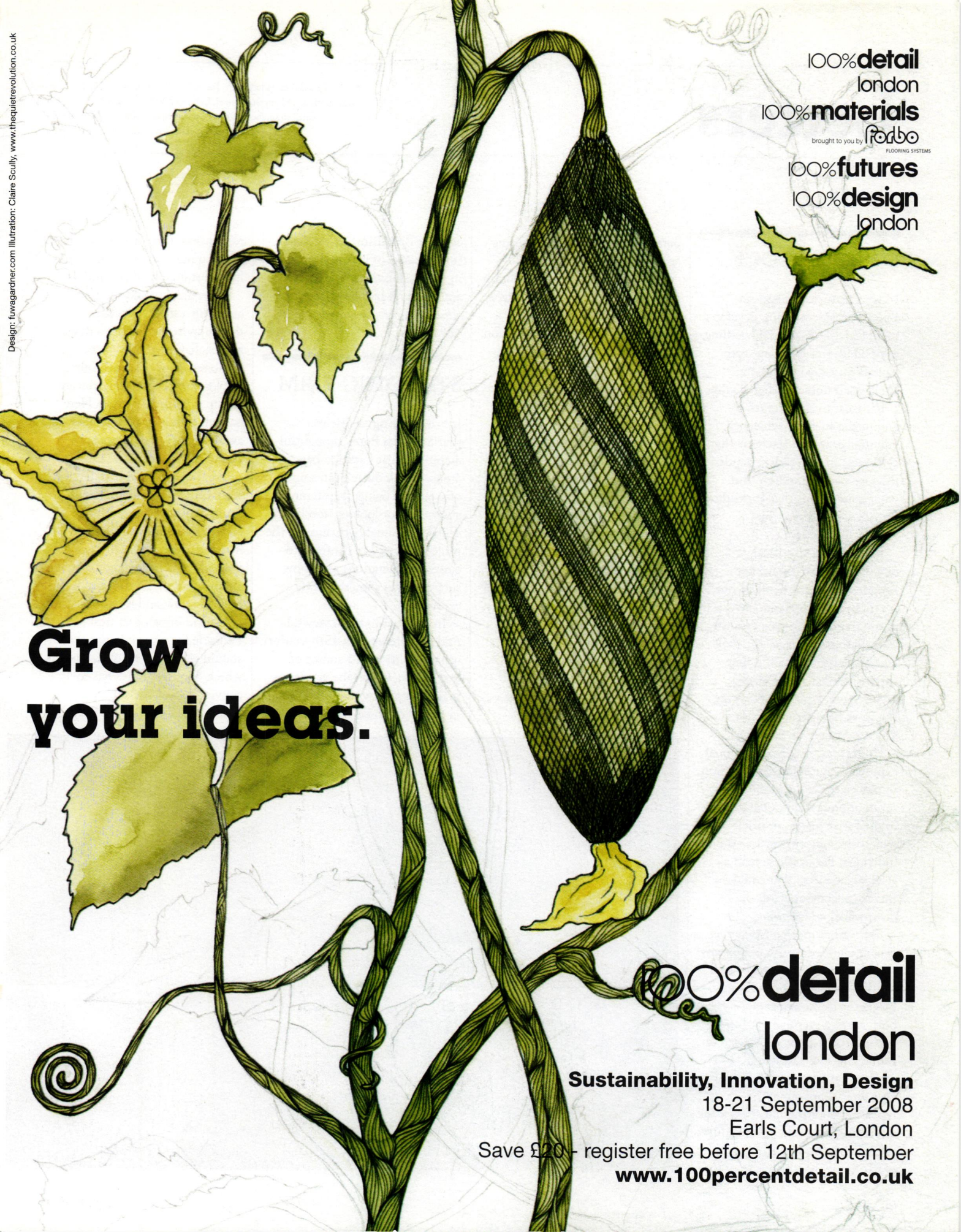
Zaha Hadid's use of CAD-CAM technology to disguise a lack of architectural judgement at her Nord Park Cable Railway has resulted in sickeningly inept globules of black silicone smeared over the white plastic panels of her station, and her work is swiftly approaching the bathetic and solipsistic caricature status of Libeskind's. The massive cast bronze cone of Allies and Morrison's Greenwich Observatory – which wasn't shortlisted – is a wonder. Its Royal Festival Hall refurbishment – which was – is contentious in many ways. Grimshaw has clearly benefited from an excellent collaboration with its Dutch friends Arcadis, and yet I fear that there should be a separate category for transport projects, since I'm not convinced that bridges and stations are really architecture, or at least, certainly not worthy of the prize for best building.

> Here for the first time in Britain we see post-Post-Modern architecture

Which leaves us with Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios, Alison Brooks Architects and Maccreanor Lavington, for whom Accordia offered a once-in-a-lifetime chance for an enlightened client to take a gamble that has clearly paid off, in every sense of the word. Here for the first time in Britain we see what Karsten Harries calls for in *Infinity and Perspective* (MIT, 2003), architecture of 'post-Post-Modernism'. Figurative silhouettes are combined with legible typologies. The Modernist problem of a common public ground plane is squared with the Post-Modern circle of individual house forms via a disengaged architectural trope – chimneys that float like stubborn signifiers in a field of referents, recalling and challenging convention. OK, it might not be *There Will Be Blood*, but in a year like this, surely good TV is preferable to bad art and competent advertising?

Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios' houses at Accordia in Cambridge

TIM CROCKER



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ON THE BLOCK

In your feature on Sergison Bates' Parkside housing development (AJ 14.08.08), the headline asks: 'Does this building scare you? If so, ask yourself why.' Well, yes it does, and here's why.

It's great to see a return to an interest in gutsy substance, endurance, and an aesthetic that celebrates mass, solidity, depth, thickness and simplicity. But what scares me is that Parkside (*pictured*) could give this approach a bad name.

I hesitate to be critical of architecture without first experiencing it in the flesh, but it's interesting that your cover photograph of the project is the most flattering image. The park landscape provides a foil that softens the harshness of the architecture. Up close, however, the work has a brutal, if not downright ugly, appearance.

Under analysis, the elevational expression stumbles. The decision to reduce the expression to a series of powerful floor slabs infilled with glazed or brick panels strongly emphasises the individual floors. These read as stacked-up layers that could, in theory, extrude upwards or downwards *ad infinitum*.

This rather mechanistic effect is compounded by the lack of any architectural recognition of key conditions where the building meets the ground and the sky – in both cases, a seemingly arbitrary cut-off. Indeed, the heavy slab roof seems like a desperate and crude attempt to terminate the ever upward march of the repeating floor module. Given the quoted reference to 19th-century precedents, this is surprising, particularly as architecture of that period is notable for recognising and celebrating 'conditions'.

Referring again to 19th-century precedents, articulation of surface and the use of artifice to create a pleasing architectural composition were, at that time, major preoccupations. An approach that recognised this might have offered the opportunity to consider Parkside's elevations as a whole rather than simply the sum of their parts. The use of less contrasting materials could have articulated the floor slabs, but less emphatically. Some artifice could have been used to articulate and vary the scale and weight of the ground and top floors. At the top, this might have removed the need for the crude slab roof.

All these are aesthetic judgements, but the lack of attention to conditions and composition in this project is either 'careful' (in the sense of deference/reference to 20th-century Brutalism) or 'careless' (in the sense of lacking interest in addressing these ever-present architectural problems).

Alison Blamire, Arcade Architects, Edinburgh

STANDING FIRM

It is interesting to discover that Sergison Bates' thoughtful architecture at Parkside has aroused such disquiet in some quarters for being 'frighteningly austere' or for looking 'too heavy', This is presumably because of the project's refusal to conform to current expectations as to how such housing should find its expression.

In contrast to these views, I find the reference to 19th-century urban tradition as a source of inspiration, which the architects make, coupled with a grounding in tectonics, to be a fitting response to the current climate of the quick and paper-thin that is, unfortunately, all around us.

There are, I would suggest, also 20th-century precedents that support the Sergison Bates approach. One thinks of the inhabited ruins of Louis Kahn, or, closer to home, the Barbican Estate in central London. Here an architecture of permanence and longevity gives support to everyday life and, as at Parkside, external spaces are integrated into the fabric of the building and similarly situated behind the concrete structure of the three housing towers. In both cases, the architects have sought a subtle architecture which transcends the here and now, and is built to last.

Instead of being critical of Parkside for what it is not, we should celebrate the quiet dignity which Sergison Bates has so convincingly achieved.

Christopher Hay, London EC2

Sergison Bates' Parkside housing development in Finsbury Park, north London


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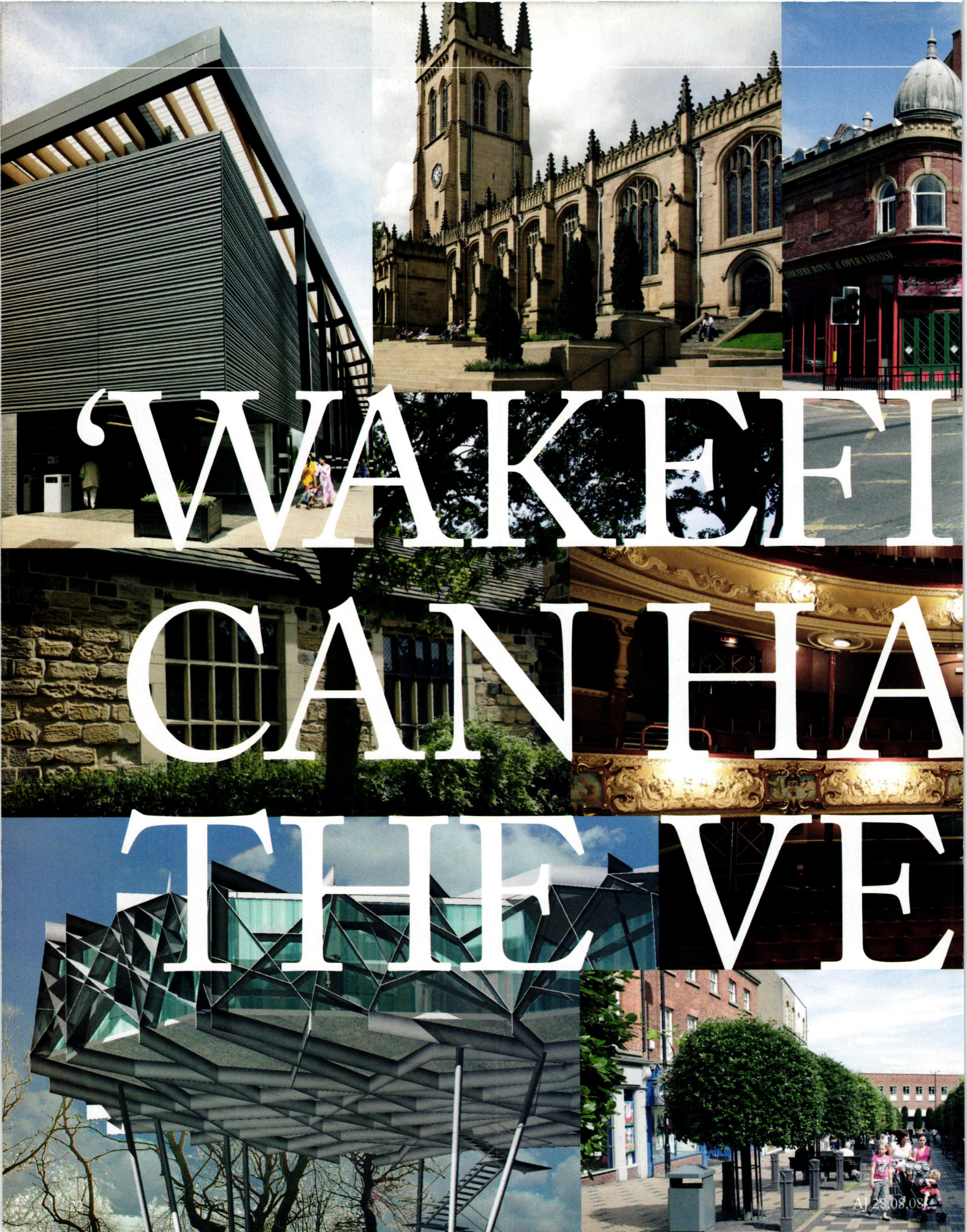
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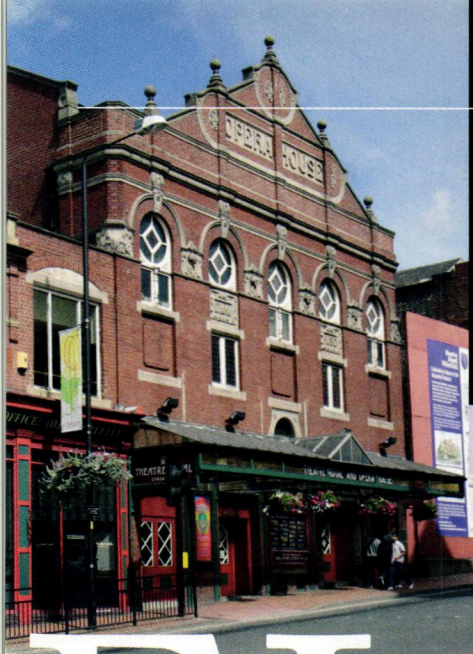
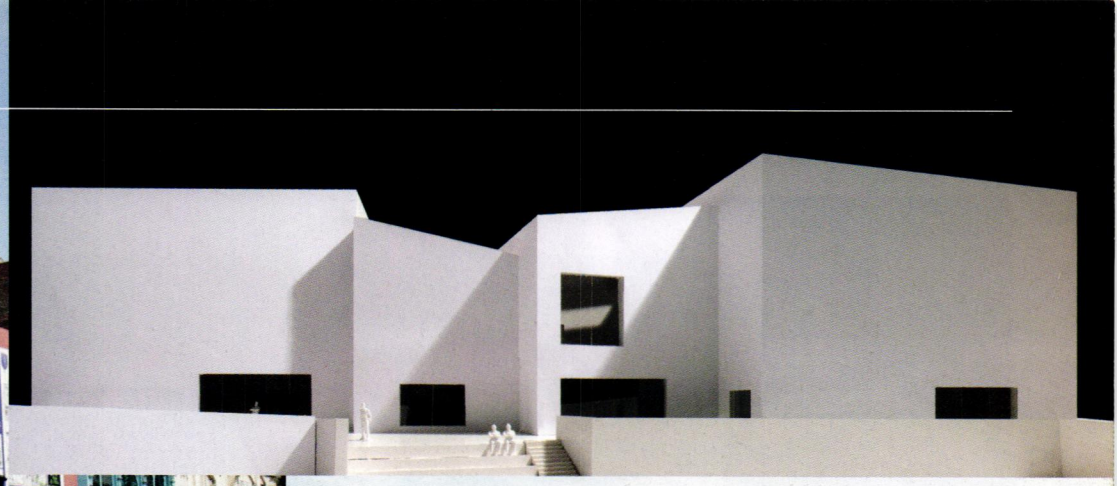
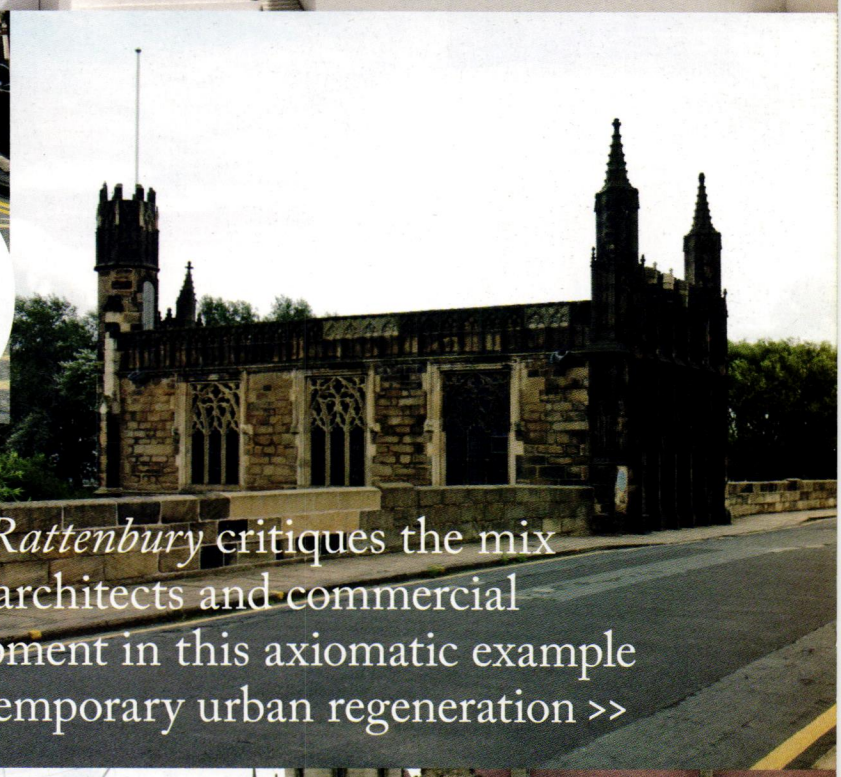
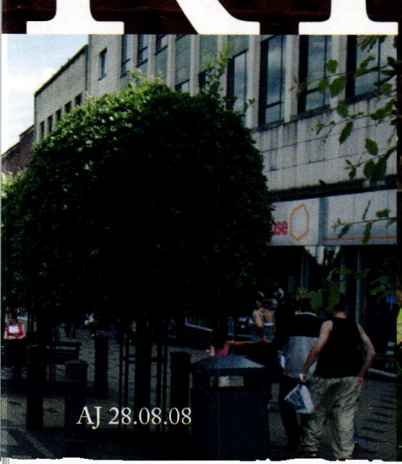


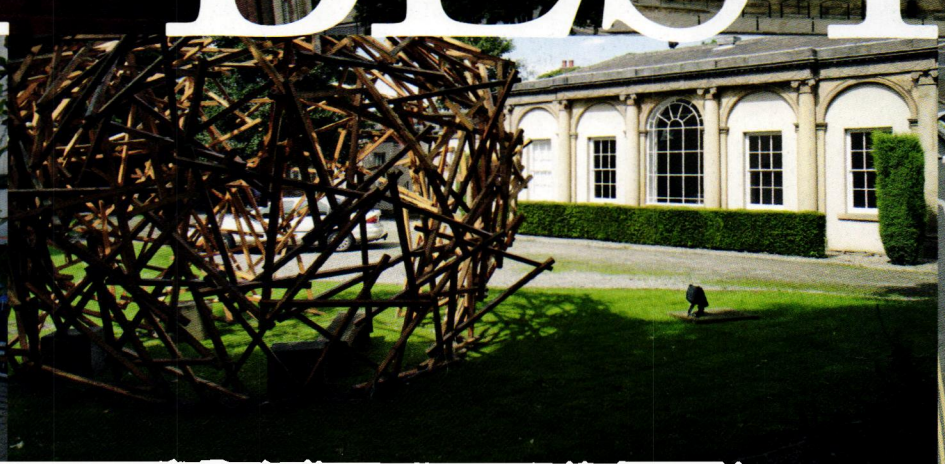


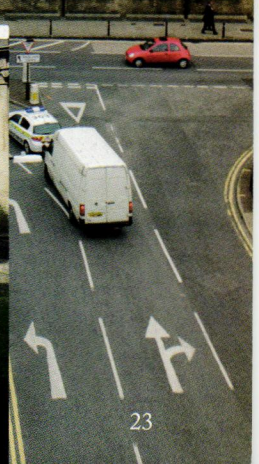


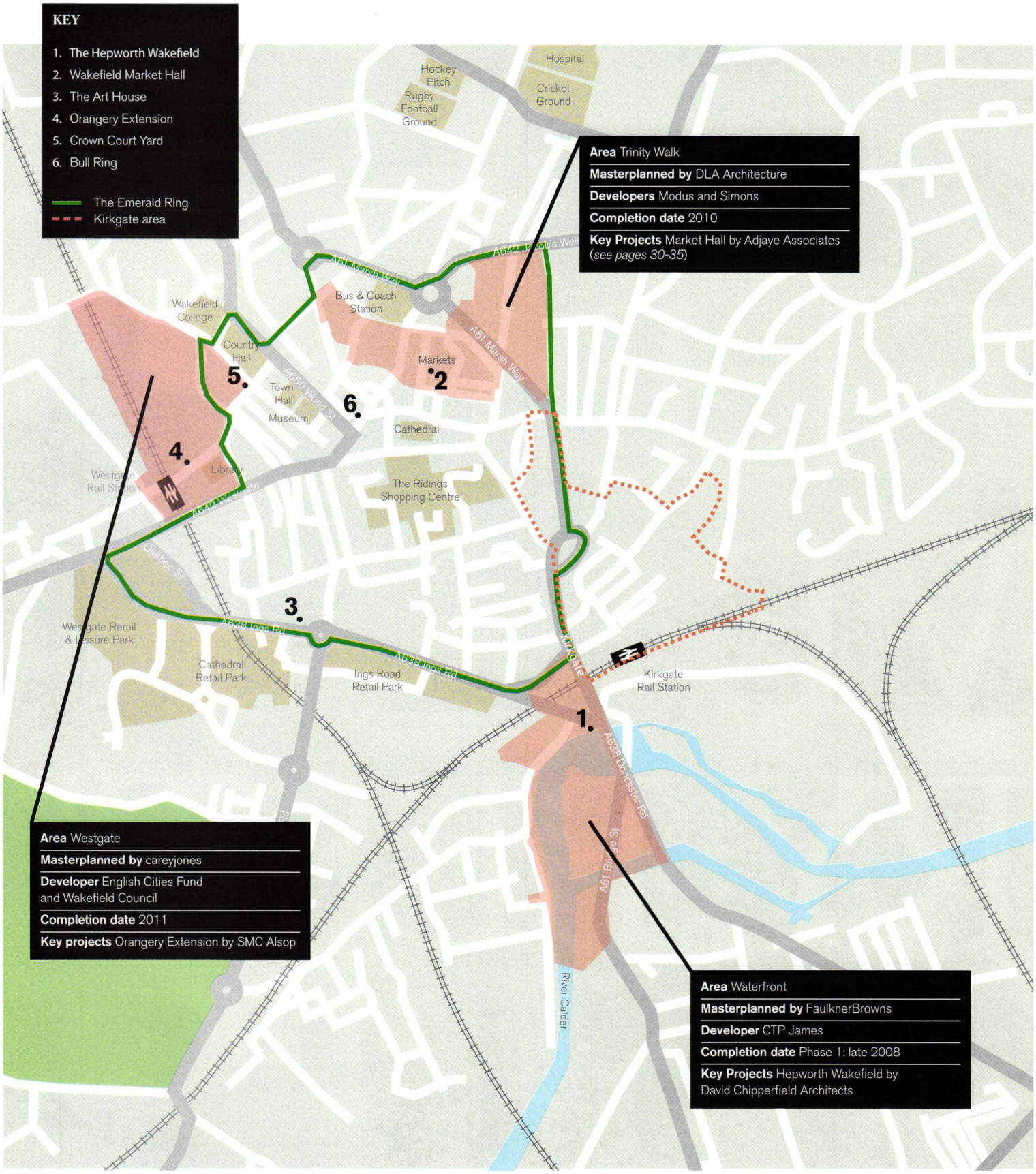
ELD VE RY BES T’

Kester Rattenbury critiques the mix of star architects and commercial development in this axiomatic example of contemporary urban regeneration >>








KEY
1. The Hepworth Wakefield
2. Wakefield Market Hall
3. The Art House
4. Orangery Extension
5. Crown Court Yard
6. Bull Ring
The Emerald Ring
Kirkgate area
Area Trinity Walk
Masterplanned by DLA Architecture
Developers Modus and Simons
Completion date 2010
Key Projects Market Hall by Adjaye Associates (see pages 30-35)
Area Westgate
Masterplanned by careyjones
Developer English Cities Fund and Wakefield Council
Completion date 2011
Key projects Orangery Extension by SMC Alsop
Area Waterfront
Masterplanned by FaulknerBrowns
Developer CTP James
Completion date Phase 1: late 2008
Key Projects Hepworth Wakefield by David Chipperfield Architects
Hockey Pitch
Rugby Football Ground
Hospital
Cricket Ground
A61 Marsh Way
Bus & Coach Station
Wakefield College
Country Hall
Markets
Town Hall
Museum
A650 Wood St
Cathedral
Westgate Rail Station
Library
The Ridings Shopping Centre
Quebec St
Westgate Rerail & Leisure Park
A638 Ings Rd
Cathedral Retail Park
Ings Road Retail Park
Kirkgate
Kirkgate Rail Station
A638 Doncaster Rd
River Calder

Trinity Walk


Westgate

The West Yorkshire city of Wakefield is a definitive example of our complicated, time-consuming replacement for tax-and-build public realm – a world where arts and community initiatives become key bits of strategy.

If the commercial market on which everything depends stands up, by 2010 the regeneration of Wakefield should be evident: David Adjaye's new market hall is already open (*see pages 30–35*); David Chipperfield's Hepworth gallery is midway through construction and includes a Rambøll Whitbybird footbridge; SMC Alsop's Orangery extension has planning permission and is currently raising funds. Each of these

Adjaye calls it 'a new stance for the city'

adjoins a new commercial development, in Trinity Walk, Waterfront and Westgate, respectively. Kirkgate, a further development area, has also been identified. 'We're digging up nearly half the city centre,' says James Stephenson, Wakefield Council's major projects manager.

A new landscaped ring road, the 'Emerald Ring', from a Koetter Kim masterplan of 2002, is being built to link the commercial developments, and a new library by DLA Architecture is planned for Trinity Walk, where Allen Tod's Art House – artists' studios with disabled access – is already complete. The city is in detailed negotiation with Network Rail for a new railway station for Westgate, designed by careyjones. There's also a very interesting public arts and participation programme, some planned restoration of the town's impressive built heritage, and new and upgraded public spaces.

Unlike nearby Castleford, whose TV-led regeneration, *Kevin McCloud and the Big Town Plan* is currently airing as a *Grand Designs*-style special (see AJ 10.07.08), Wakefield's 'renaissance' is led by more orthodox development forces. The regeneration was sparked by the arrival of John Foster as chief executive of Wakefield District Council in 2001, with a new management team and a policy of attracting 'name' architects.

The regeneration forms part of Yorkshire Forward's Renaissance Towns and Cities Programme. Public realm planning by >>

Jan Gehl and Koetter Kim's masterplan underpin the town's strategies, which serve the Renaissance Charter (developed in 2002) and the Central Wakefield Area Action Plan (2004). This commercially fuelled and city-centre-focused set-up, which has become the norm for urban redevelopment in Britain, defines the public/private development ideal; David Adjaye calls it 'a new stance for the city'.

Wakefield's thumping architectural heritage also sets it apart from Castleford. Amid the 1960's ring road and the scary, inward-looking, nightlife-bars are plenty of handsome civic buildings. There are confident Italianate Victorian town and county halls. The cathedral is medieval (although it was given a thorough going over in the 19th century by George Gilbert Scott). There's a rare 14th-century chantry on Wakefield bridge (also attacked by Gilbert Scott) and the Theatre Royal is by Frank Matcham, architect of London's Hackney Empire. This is a city whose mercantile traditions have always provided grand civic buildings.

It is a big, lushly austere palazzo of art in a dramatic location

But Wakefield was decimated by Margaret Thatcher's closure of the coal-mining industry in the 1980s. There's little in the way of standard-quality offices or shopping. Basic commerce and culture regeneration imperatives, which wealthier towns might turn their noses up at, are highly sought after here.

Such aspirations might not have been that promising as the basis of a renaissance. Indeed, the Waterfront redevelopment, first and least interesting of the three, has been ' on and off the cards for nearly 20 years,' says Stephenson. It only got going in 2001 when the council got Prince Charles involved in the restoration of the Grade II*-listed mill building.

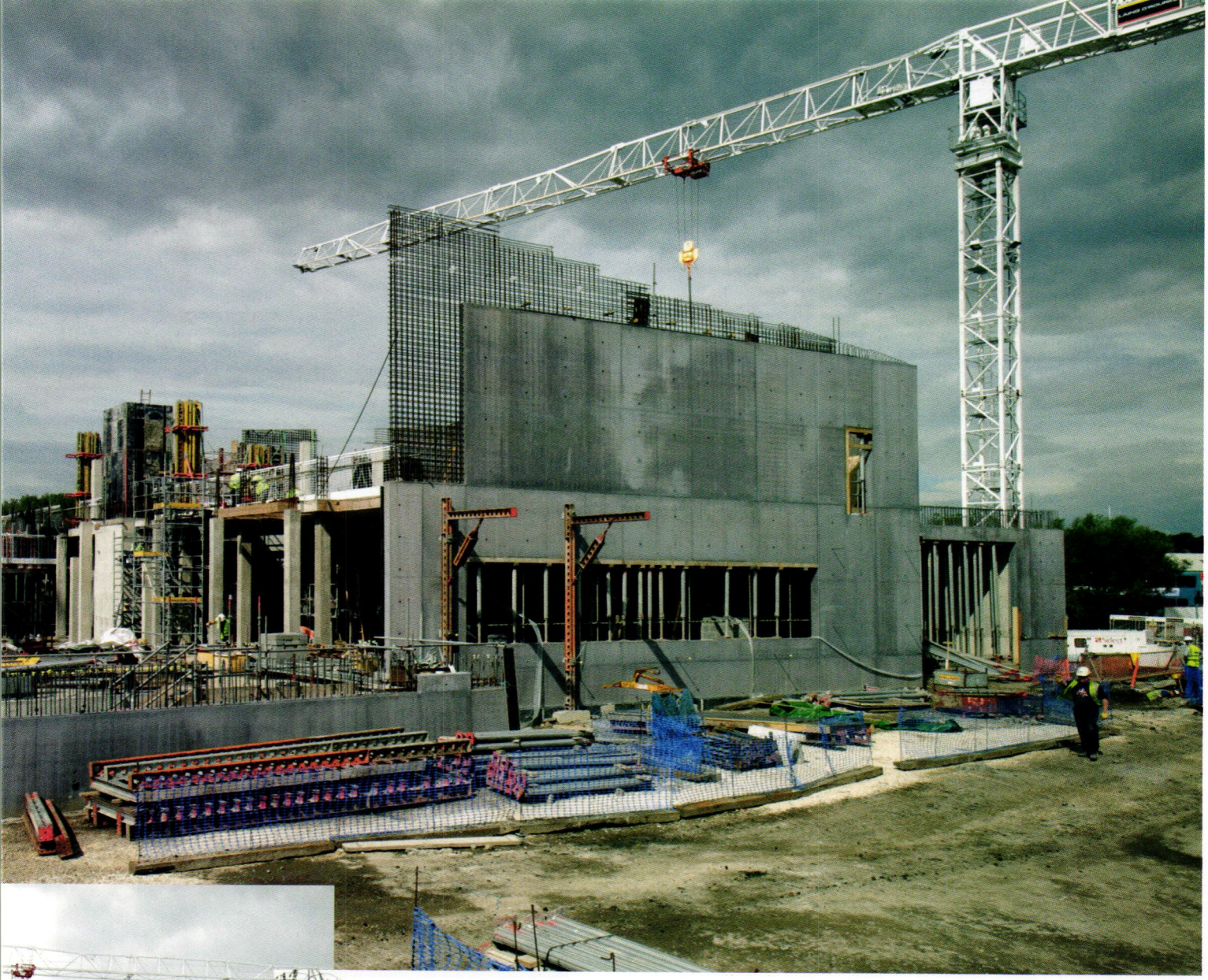
The launch of the Hepworth gallery – a substantial cultural project which will house works by Barbara Hepworth, a native of Wakefield – was a huge catalyst. Funded by the Arts Council, the Heritage Lottery Fund and EU regional awards, to the tune of £30 million, and with Chipperfield, Zaha Hadid, Norwegian firm Snøhetta and David Adjaye among the invited shortlist in 2003, it raised the stakes. 'Our rationale was raising community aspirations,' says Andy Wallhead, Wakefield Council's director of regeneration, culture and sport. 'We wanted to show that a small city like Wakefield can actually have the very best – something the Victorians were very good at. The Hepworth was about belief. Could we pull something of that scale off?'

Chipperfield has designed a big, lushly austere palazzo of art set in a dramatic location: on a bend where the River Calder drops over a weir. Its vast horizontal windows frame the cathedral spire and the chantry bridge – key views that reinforce Wakefield's heritage. It also looks towards the Yorkshire Sculpture Park, on Wakefield's outskirts. The gallery itself will house its own permanent collection of rarely-seen work.

'One is always nervous about things being designed as regeneration projects, but that is one of the concerns for Wakefield,' says Chipperfield. 'But there is a serious museum there – we've learnt from the Lottery that you can't just want a museum and build it.' As the building will be approached from all sides, Chipperfield says the scheme's various forms have a more 'animated' quality than their buildings normally do. 'But the volumes express spaces as well,' he adds. 'We wanted that sculptural quality to come from within.'

Perhaps inevitably, the £100 million Waterfront development behind it – FaulknerBrowns' residential and office scheme with bars, cafes and restoration for CTP St James – is far more depressing; a hangover from an era when civic aspirations were much lower. Trinity Walk, the £210 million town-centre retail development by developers Modus and Simons (finishing in 2010) is from a later generation; it's still essentially a developer-led project, with a Debenhams, a Next, a New Look and big Sainsbury's at its core, but it's livelier and more civic in nature.

Trinity Walk's main bit of planning gain – the new library – has been designed by DLA Architecture, which has offices in Leeds, Manchester and Wakefield. Its other significant building, the market hall, was also originally a DLA design, but at the council's insistence it was put out to competition. Won by Adjaye Associates, this was an unusual and clever bit of commissioning which reasserts the market as a high-quality public space. Adjaye says the Hepworth 'turned them on to what they could do'. Trinity Walk's >>



Building The Hepworth Wakefield

Area Waterfront

Architect David Chipperfield Architects

Contractor Laing O'Rourke Northern

Cost £26 million

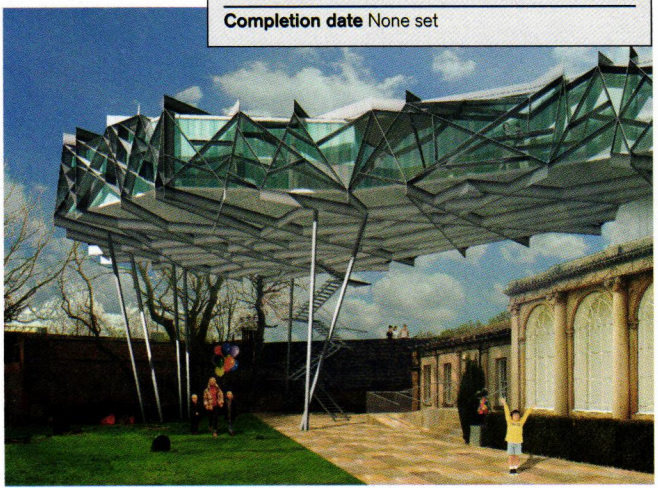
Completion date Late 2010

Wakefield Regeneration

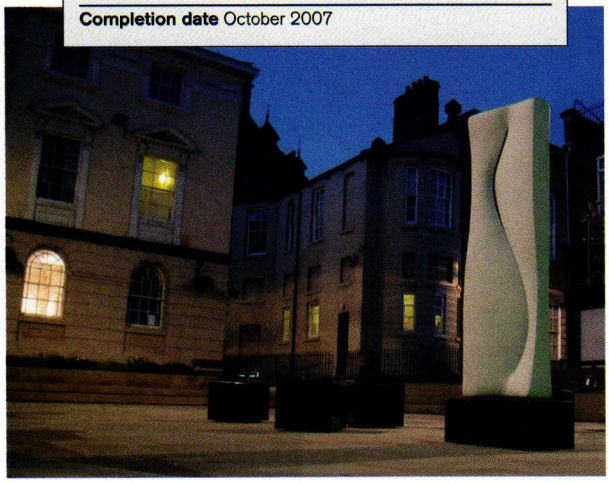
Building Wakefield Market Hall
Area Trinity Walk
Architect Adjaye Associates
Contractor Shepherd Construction
Cost £6,194,009
Completion date July 2007

Building The Art House
Area Trinity Walk
Architect Allen Tod Architecture
Contractor Ellmore Construction Group
Cost £1,894,000
Completion date June 2008

Building Orangery Extension
Area Westgate
Architect SMC Alsop
Contractor None appointed
Cost £5 million (estimate)
Completion date None set



Project Crown Court Yard
Architect Gillespies and Wakefield Council
Contractor Jackson Civil Engineering
Cost £503,000
Completion date October 2007



Project Bull Ring
Architect Estell Warren
Cost £7 million (estimate)
Completion date Not known

site is provided by the ring road's relocation and transformation into the 'Emerald Ring'. It adjoins smaller, revamped council-built public squares funded by Yorkshire Forward. Notable among these is the Bull Ring, by Leeds-based landscape architect Estell Warren who, like DLA and Allen Tod, also worked on the Castleford project. The first public space, Crown Court Yard, by Gillespies in partnership with the council, is finished, and Wallhead considers it a benchmark for public space design. But the design lags behind the strategy here – it feels a bit Chelsea Flower Show and its visible big spend on new stone seems excessive – but its generous makeover quality probably does the job.

Wakefield has forged an impressive result from a complex system

Much of Trinity Walk looks set to hit fairly generic norms, and Adjaye's market is by far its best building. In this development area Beam, Wakefield's own architecture and arts centre, has just begun a new role. It's running workshops in local schools and training for teachers, as well as commissioning artists to work on the development. 'We see artists as thinkers – we try to bring them in to thinking and scoping,' says Robert Powell, Beam's executive director.

Artists include Gordon Young, whose projects include signage and paving, Jo Fairfax, who works with lighting and new media, and Michael Pinsky, who is creating a temporary installation using artefacts removed from the old market hall, now demolished. This all sounds spot-on. Powell calls Trinity Walk 'a test case of the creative approach' and hopes to be able to influence strategically this commercially-driven regeneration project. 'Beam is a bright spot,' offers Will Alsop, 'Adjaye's market is another.'

In another role, Beam is Alsop's client at The Orangery, Beam's architecture centre. SMC Alsop's 'aerial pavilion', which bridges the Grade-II* building, is awaiting the £4 million needed to build it. Alsop says: 'Yorkshire Forward should be funding these smaller jewels in all the Renaissance towns. It sees the projects as far too risky but actually, its far too risky not to.' In contrast to the austere architecture that typifies the design vision for Wakefield, Alsop's pavilion is the only bit of new Wakefield to take up the exuberant, decorative confidence of the city's Victorian and medieval forebears.

Unsurprisingly, Alsop is critical of Westgate, the third regeneration zone, which adjoins his Orangery site ('More Peterborough in Wakefield,' he says). Developed by English Cities Partnership with careyjones, Westgate is actually the best-looking of the developments. careyjones' new station will emerge here too.

The regeneration of Wakefield is a project where the interwoven strands, forces and problems common to public-private development and planning gain diffuse into a Nile Delta of semi-public funding bodies, design policy documents, funding bids and market forces. It is dependent on a boom economy where speculative developers are willing and able to co-operate. What happens to this new design credo if the economy slumps is a whole new story.

Beam plans to put the whole thing up for discussion in a seminar this autumn. Alsop argues that it would have been better having a single vision with proper design control rather than carving it up for small local developers. But Wakefield has forged an impressive result from an extraordinarily complex system and Chipperfield's view, for instance, is the opposite. He cites the leadership provided by the council and John Foster in particular (who has since moved on) as inspirational.

Wakefield is – gradually – reasserting a mercantile architecture of commercial pride fused with generous public function. It's an impressive effort, but one that typifies, rather than reinvents, the cultural credo of our age. ■

ADJAYE SETS OUT HIS STALL

David Adjaye's minimalism goes head-to-head with Wakefield's architectural exuberance, says *Kester Rattenbury*. Photography by *Dominik Gigler*

Wakefield's best buildings, medieval, Elizabethan and Victorian, are exuberant and expressive. They have a cheerful, get-on-with-it commercial pragmatism, with styles appropriated through the ages specifically for their own enjoyment. In the new generation of civic buildings tastes are now austere, even for the most robust of building forms.

Not that I'm complaining. Choosing David Adjaye for a simple, inexpensive market building, as the first and most definitely 'public' bit of a new city-centre retail development, is a shrewd, well-informed, and unusual procurement. The result is a high-quality building and space where little might have been expected.

A market is an unusual – but well-timed – choice for a keynote public commission. As Carolyn Steel's book *Hungry City* (Chatto and Windus, 2008) argues, we urgently need to start thinking about food as the central service on which our cities are based. Wakefield Council, to its credit, has already begun to think along those lines.

Adjaye's Wakefield connection began when he was placed second in the competition for the Hepworth gallery (*see pages 22-29*), losing out to his old boss David Chipperfield. ('I always come second to David', Adjaye tells me). But the scheme brought him to the notice of the council, and when the planners stipulated a high-quality building for the >>

market hall he ended up winning the competition.

The £3 million Wakefield Market Hall is the key scheme in Modus and Simons' £200 million Trinity Walk redevelopment – essentially a shopping centre that includes a library, public squares and public art. Building a new high-quality market on the site of the old bus station was a prime strategic move.

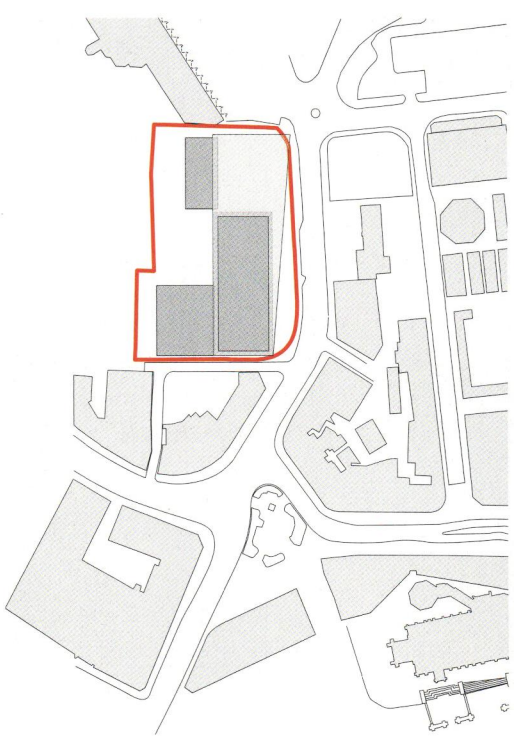
'The site is a portal to the city centre, which I really loved,' says Adjaye, who calls his design 'a grand, informal portico; an infrastructure junction that you ramble through'.

The project is simple: basically it is a great big roof, open at one end where it acts as canopy for the open market. Tucked under the roof are three enclosed boxes – the covered market, the food market and a storage building, accessed from a deliveries area at the back. It took just 34 weeks to build.

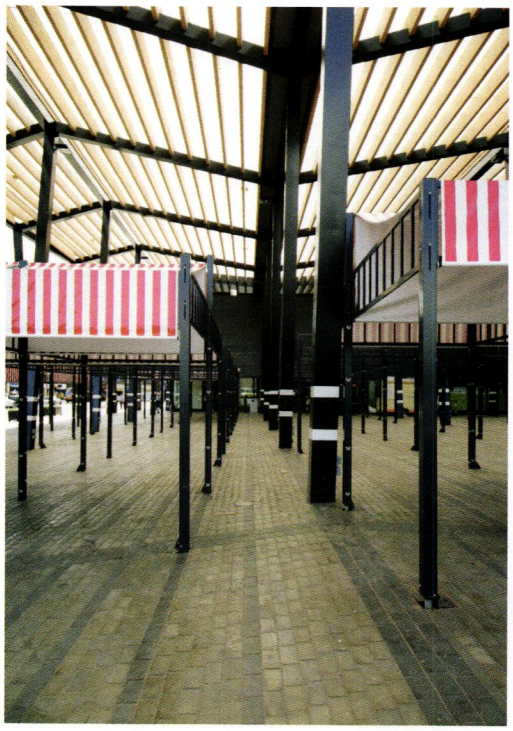
Markets are tough for minimalists to do, because what works is clutter, not austerity

It is an admirably well-made and beautifully-detailed building, defined with an expertly chosen palette of materials. The Glulam beams look great and are cut into the steel in a composition that mimics timberwork. The rough, rubber-formed-concrete ridged panels and the stained-cedar cladding are modest, strong and nicely made. Coloured stone banded walls wrap around the storage building. It's an impressive piece of design and build.

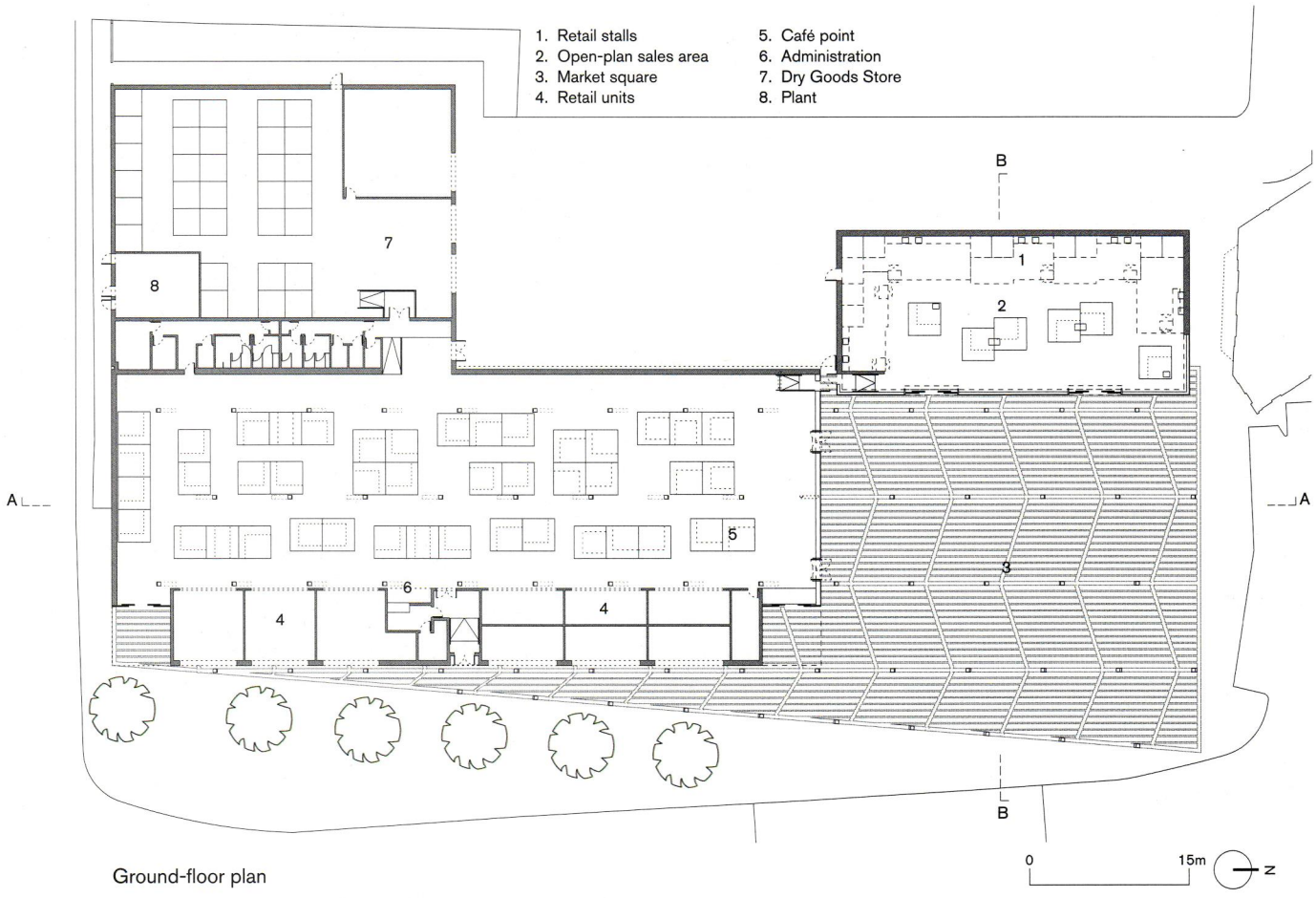
The columns are slightly cranked, the roof structure slightly herringboned and the paving underneath shadows the roof. And the irregular volume is not quite square. There's a game of perspective going on. The columns crank at 8° angles while the diminishing triangular porch picks up the spire of the cathedral – a key bit of city skyline. Adjaye adds that 'the twisting, playful structure' deliberately downplays the formality of a portico, which soars at 9.5m high. >>



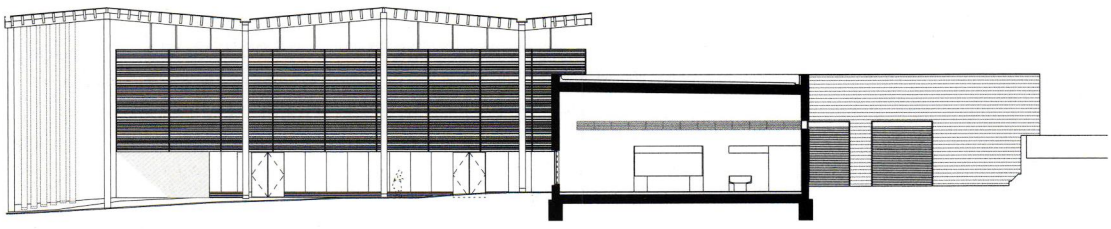
Far left and left The building has a modest pallete of stained-cedar cladding and Glulam beams
Below and below left Stalls shelter under the canopy
Below far left Site plan



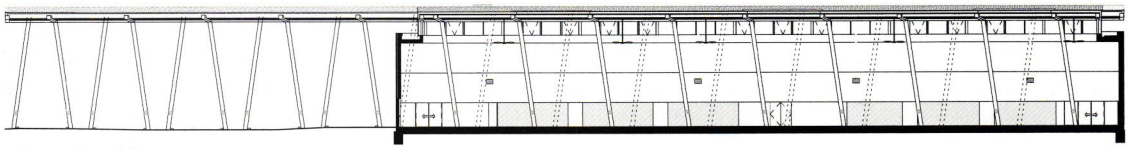
LYNDON DOUGLAS



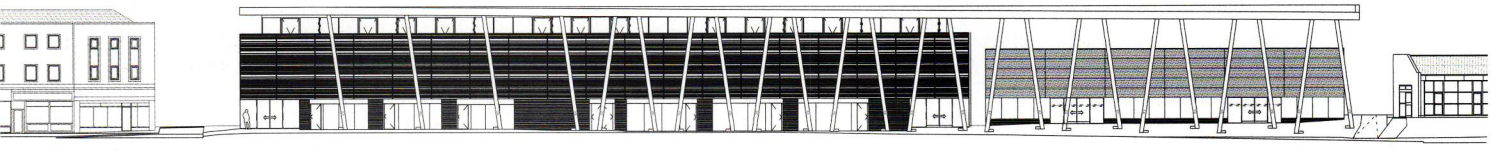
Ground-floor plan



Long section BB



Long section AA



East elevation

This page Traders are starting to bring their stalls (and clutter) to the market's interior

Adjaye's low-key design has, perhaps, been downplayed a little too much. It would be great to have just a bit more of the sense of a stoa suggested by the portico – Adjaye could be taking these overt Classical references in his stride. The plan is on the casual side: the distinction between the 'open buildings and the little pavilions littered underneath', as Adjaye describes them, is far less clear than he makes it sound, and the optical tricks are on the subtle side. A bit more grandeur, in place of the low-key, might well have been appreciated.

Markets are tough building types for minimalists to do, because what works is the atmosphere of clutter, not one of austerity. It's much easier to generate instant atmosphere if you're Studio EMBT, say, as with its Santa Caterina Market in Barcelona, however much more unnecessary architecture – and cost – that might require. 'Markets are explicitly about traders,' says Adjaye. 'Informal and formal – not just about the grand thing.' But his three-box plan doesn't allow quite the flow of public space one might hope.

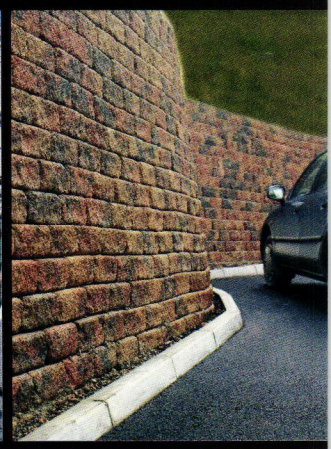
The building, as it should, depends for atmosphere on the natural exuberance of the market which, as yet, hasn't fully built up, and its dull signage and canopies don't provide the clutter one expects from a market experience. Michael Pinsky's proposed installation of artefacts saved from the old market, as yet unlocated, should be grabbed with both hands and set up here immediately.

Apart from the feeling that Adjaye could have taken more overt liberties with the Classical models he's abstracting, everything about this building is encouraging. It suggests councils, developers and planners who know what they want and can recognise good quality when they see it. Commissioning a building which is used everyday, all the time, and isn't glamorous, suggests a new approach to the idea of landmark architecture and regeneration.

While the market hall, with its restrained forms and fairly banal plan, is austere when brash might be what's needed, it's still a model commission and a strong building which is certainly fit to stand alongside Wakefield's impressive civic heritage, of George Gilbert Scott, Frank Matcham and the unnamed medievals. But it doesn't surpass them. ■

Tender date September 2006
Start on site date September 2007
Contract duration 34 weeks
Gross external floor area 6,390m²
Form of contract Before tender: RIBA SFA/99 with two-stage tender process; after tender: JCT Standard Form of Building Contract with Contractor's Design 1998 edition with further amendments agreed between the Employer and the Contractor
Total cost £6,194,009
Client Simons Developments/Modus Properties
Architect Adjaye Associates
Structural engineer Acuity Consulting Engineers
Services engineer Hannan Associates
Quantity surveyor/planning supervisor/ project manager Leslie Clark
Main contractor Shepherd Construction
Annual CO_2 emissions 59.3 Kg/m²

paving & walling



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Rules of Thumb #6

DAVID KEAN
CO-FOUNDER OF CAFFEINE
WISH TO ASK FOR MORE BUSINESS

Rules of Thumb is a monthly column where the AJ asks experts which one fact they wish architects knew.

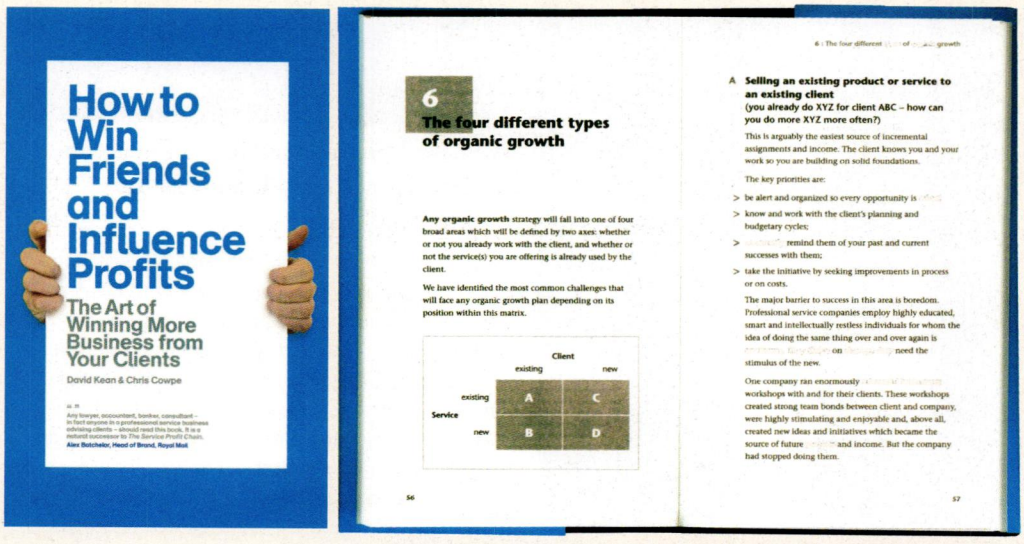
In the current economic climate, securing repeat business from existing clients is an essential strategy. If practices wish to maintain their turnover they need to know how and when to ask a client for more work.

Architects, like many creative-industry professionals, can be rather backwards in coming forwards. Their reticence perhaps stems from the perception of selling as being a bit vulgar. This is why additional pitches should be based on a genuine belief that you can help your clients. During initial consultations, clients tend to mention lots of things which, if you are listening properly, could form the basis for a future project.

Clients are always impressed when confronted with a well-considered initiative. They want to work with professionals who help them deliver what they need, not ones who ask them what they want. This forms part of the HEAT (Hit 'Em with Another Thought) strategy.

The best time to deploy the HEAT method is at the beginning or middle of an existing project, when there is a sense of anticipation and excitement. At this early stage, the client will be in the habit of making decisions, whereas at the end – when inevitably something has gone wrong – the client is less receptive to new ideas and the crucial momentum has disappeared.

David Kean is co-founder of business consultancy Caffeine (www.thecaffeinepartnership.com), and co-author of How to Win Friends and Influence Profits (Marshall Cavendish, 2008, pictured)



Big Fish Little Fish

Jonathan Hendry of Jonathan Hendry Architects fulfils his carbon-neutral ambitions

This week saw the arrival of a long-awaited wind turbine for a carbon-neutral barn conversion we are doing.

Our client ordered the turbine with a white hood and blades. After several months of waiting, and endless e-mails and telephone calls, we eventually witnessed the turbine being winched into place (even though the contractor managed to forget the white end-cap). To see the blades turn for the first time – knowing that free electricity is being generated – was a great moment for us all. Our client was like a child playing with his new toy and our frustration had disappeared.

We adopted an environmental approach on this project purely to convince the planners that being carbon neutral would make its rural location a more sustainable place to live and work. Having said that, since we started the client has become extremely excited by the whole process.

This barn conversion has given our practice the opportunity to test, develop and implement ideas using renewable energy from wind, solar, wood chip, water recycling, etc. Although it's been very time-consuming, with many frustrating moments, it's also been very enjoyable, rewarding and educational. At last we have a carbon-neutral project to go alongside our company's Toyota Prius.

Next issue: John Prevc of Make

CONCRETE LOOSENS UP

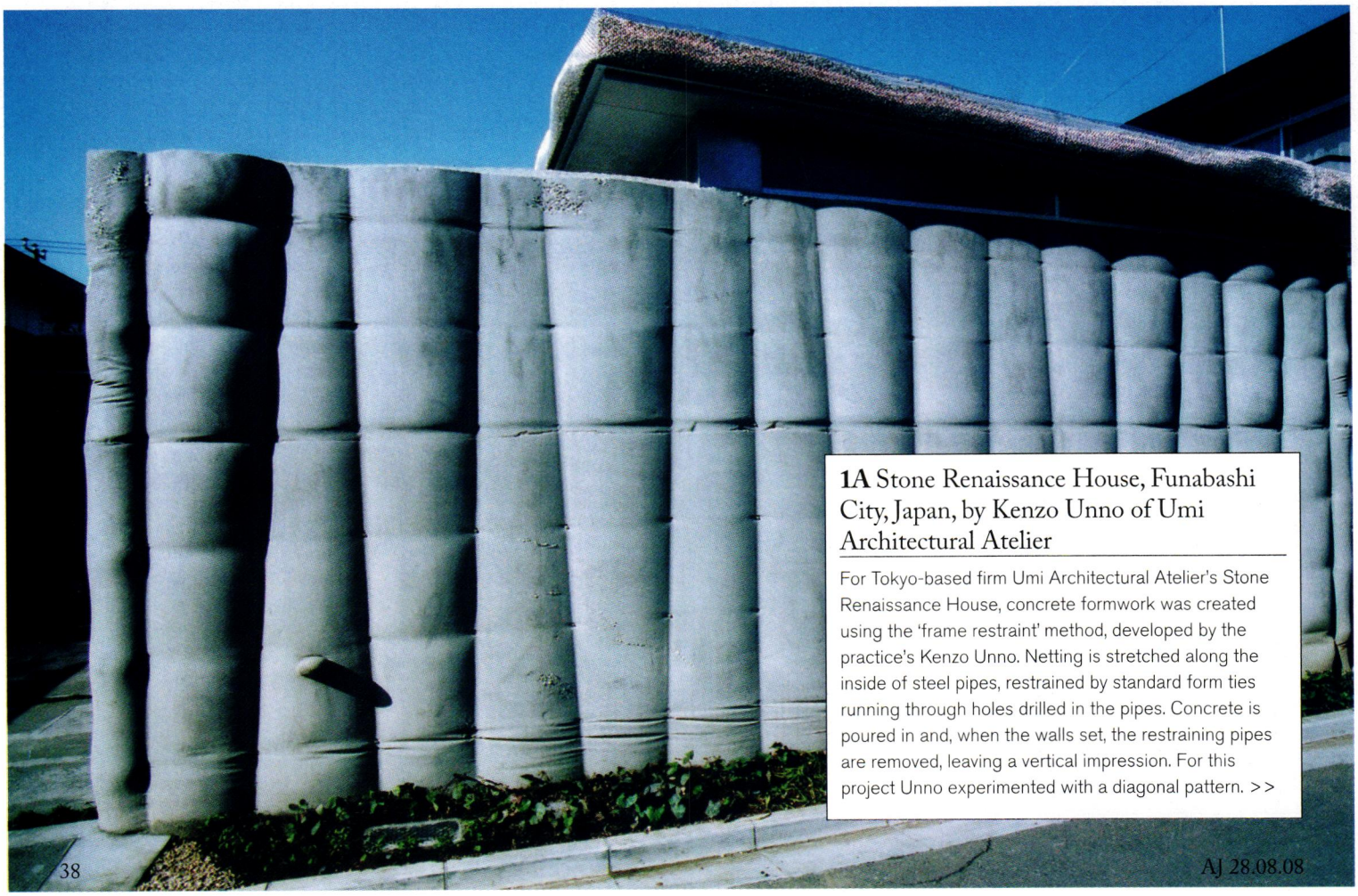
Fabric formwork releases structures from the rigidity of traditional concrete shuttering – and leaves less waste behind, says *Alan Chandler*

To build a simple concrete wall, make two complicated wooden walls, pour the heavy grey liquid in between, and throw the wooden walls in the skip. This construction method is so ingrained it is rarely questioned, but it doesn't make sense. It's wasteful, and restricts form-making because it's optimised for orthogonal design.

Sustainable design means thinking about how much control, or energy, we apply to material processes. The more control handed over to natural forces, the better. One way of achieving this is by casting concrete with fabric membranes – an alternative to traditional concrete shuttering that allows for more efficient and expressive structures.

Unlike traditional shuttering, fabric formwork uses tensile rather than compressive forces. Tensile structures weigh less and perform better than compressive equivalents, so the material required to resist tonnes of liquid concrete can weigh only kilos. And by utilising natural forces, material usage is minimised to form streamlined structural elements.

Interest in the technology is growing – a conference organised by the International Society of Fabric Formers was held in Manitoba, Canada, in May. Fabric formwork technology is actually very old – rammed earth within hessian sheets was first used 2,000 years ago. But a new generation of designers is reinventing it as a sustainable construction method for the 21st century – the work of three of them is introduced here. Alan Chandler is co-author of *Fabric Formwork*, shortlisted for the 2008 RIBA Research Award



1A Stone Renaissance House, Funabashi City, Japan, by Kenzo Unno of Umi Architectural Atelier

For Tokyo-based firm Umi Architectural Atelier's Stone Renaissance House, concrete formwork was created using the 'frame restraint' method, developed by the practice's Kenzo Unno. Netting is stretched along the inside of steel pipes, restrained by standard form ties running through holes drilled in the pipes. Concrete is poured in and, when the walls set, the restraining pipes are removed, leaving a vertical impression. For this project Unno experimented with a diagonal pattern. >>

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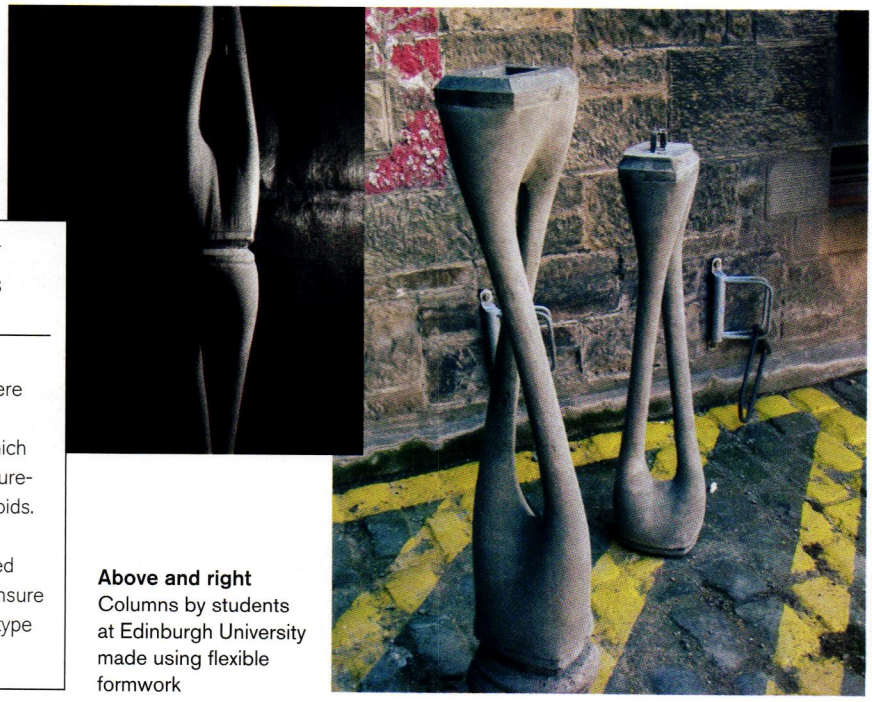
KENZO UNNO

1B Kenzo Unno's 'zero-waste' formwork

Unno's 'zero-waste' formwork uses a reinforcement cage to support the fabric, so bracing and propping elements are not required. For insulated construction, the fabric, together with rigid polystyrene insulation boards, forms the shuttering. Furring strips – long, thin strips of wood or metal – are used as support, and remain in place after the concrete is formed to provide fixing points for cladding. After use, the fabric, a woven polypropylene geotextile, can be washed and used again.

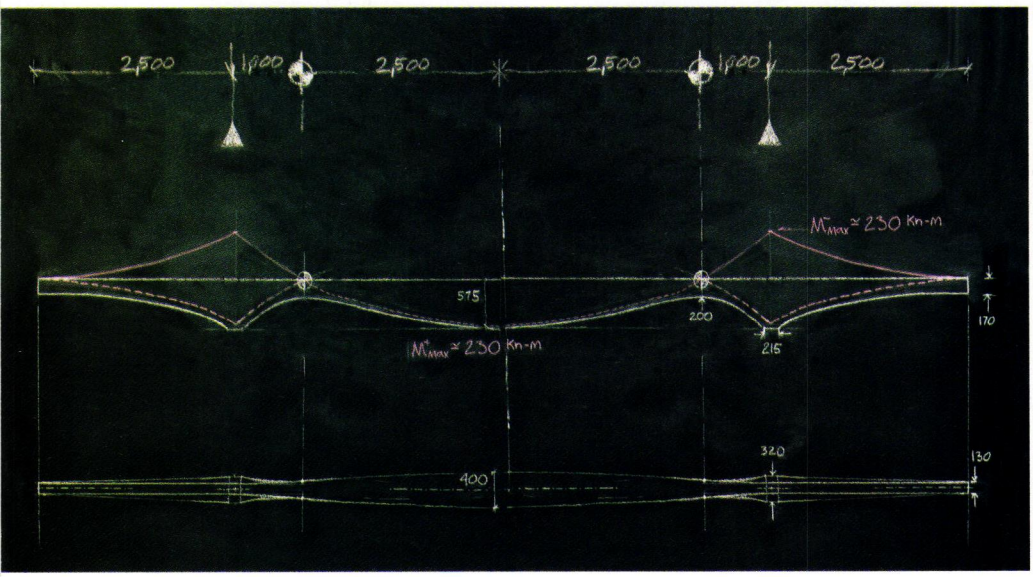


REMO PEDRESCHI

2 Remo Pedreschi has researched how a new architectural 'language' of sensual fluid forms could emerge from flexible formwork

The wide variety of column-section shapes produced in Remo Pedreschi's workshop at Edinburgh University, where he is an professor, is the result of manipulating the hydrostatic pressure of wet concrete. The formwork, which consists of stretched and twisted fabric tubes, produces figure-of-eight-shaped forms, hollow columns and columns with voids. To connect the various elements, Pedreschi developed interlocking male and female components. A vacuum-formed mould was incorporated into the ends of the formwork to ensure geometric accuracy. Independent of the columns, the prototype connection can be used in other components. >>

Above and right
Columns by students at Edinburgh University made using flexible formwork



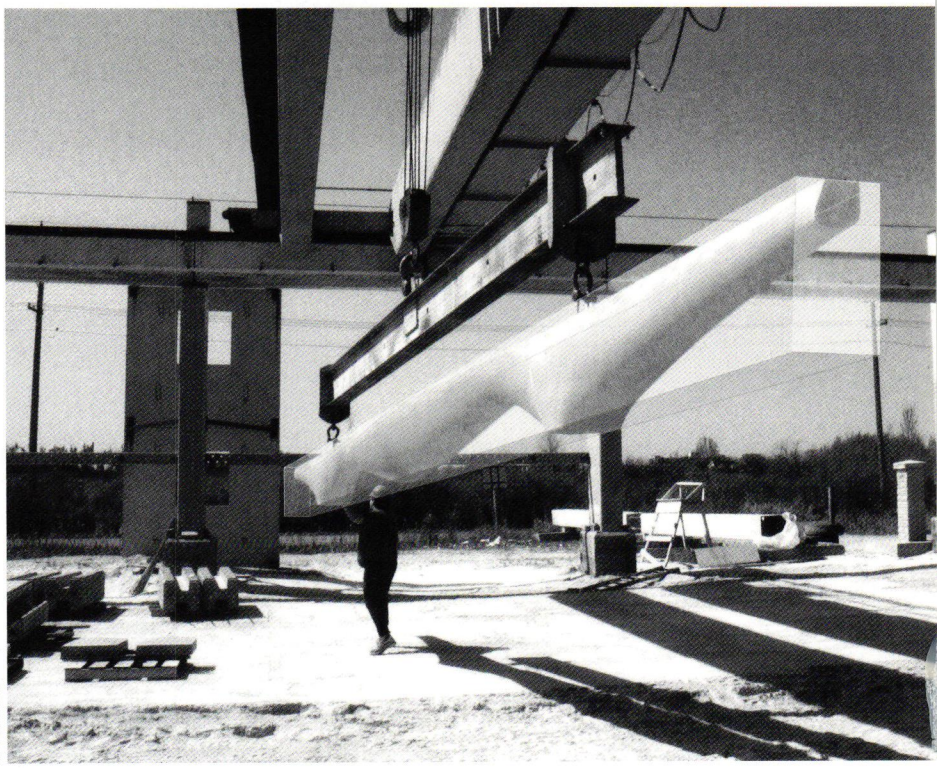
MARK WEST

DENNIS WRIGHT/FLICKR CREATIVE COMMONS

3 Mark West, founder and director of CAST, the Centre for Architectural Structures and Technology

Mark West, a fabric formwork researcher and inventor based at Canada's University of Manitoba, specialises in exploring how fabric provides simple ways of shaping efficiently curved structural members. He has designed a 12m-long double cantilever beam (*pictured right*) that uses 30 per cent less concrete than a rectangular concrete equivalent, and was made using a flat sheet of geotextile fabric. Once the bearing points and dimensional requirements of a beam are determined, the fabric naturally deflects under the wet load of concrete to create catenary geometries. Using this method, the formwork for a 10m-tall structural column can be carried within a small rucksack.

The term 'catenary' describes the pure tension form adopted by a chain under uniform load when fixed at either end. When flipped, the chain describes a curve under pure compression, a phenomena used by Antoni Gaudi to define the structure of the Guell Chapel near Barcelona. The 'natural' catenary curve describes the profile of any cross section taken through fabric-cast concrete. The hydrostatic pressure of wet concrete exerts a uniform load on the fabric, which is equivalent to gravity on the chain. The fabric 'naturally' forms a continuous fluid surface between fixed restraints. The undulations create a three-dimensional surface governed by catenary geometry. ■



MARK WEST

Top left and above Diagram and realisation of Mark West's double cantilever beam
Top right A new model showing Gaudi's catenary method

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The Critics

This image
War Games – Installation Study, by Richard Hamilton, 1991

EDINBURGH

Edinburgh Art Festival 2008

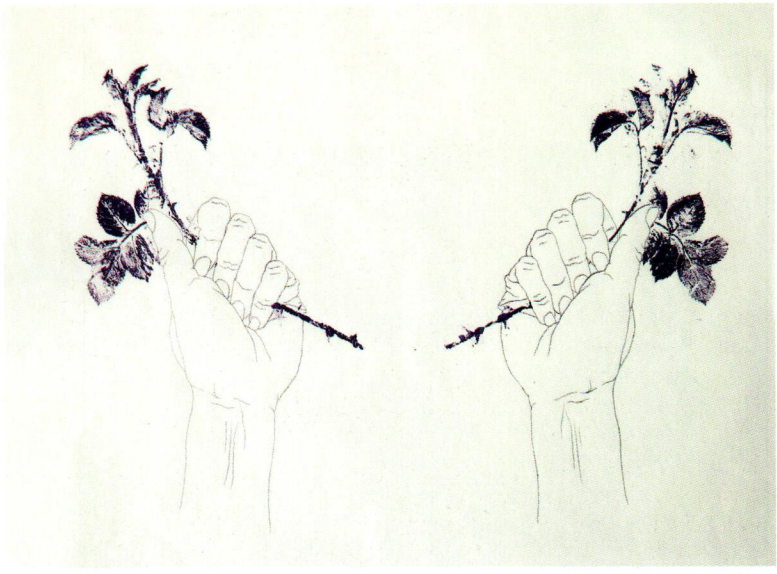
With the Edinburgh International Festival in full flow, Giles Sutherland *dodges the theatres and heads to the galleries for the city's art festival* >>

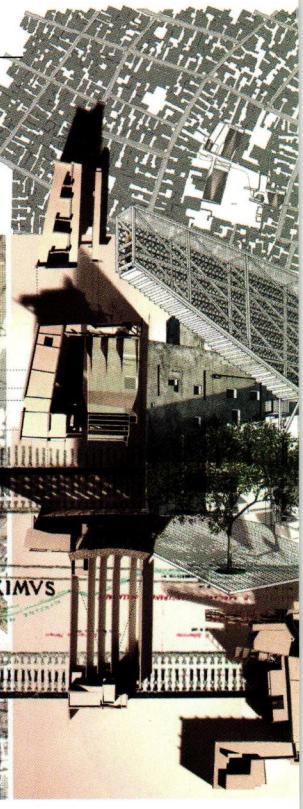
Edinburgh Art Festival. Until 31 August. www.edinburghartfestival.org

Richard Hamilton: Protest Pictures. Until 31 October. Inverleith House Royal Botanic Garden, EH3 5LR

Salt City – Cádiz: Field + Work. Until 29 August. Matthew Architecture Gallery, University of Edinburgh, 20 Chambers Street, EH1 1JZ

ReSeArch: RSA Residencies for Scotland. Until 21 September. RSA Finlay Room, Royal Scottish Academy, The Mound, EH2 2EL





Edinburgh Art Festival continued from p45

After several decades of taking a back seat to opera, theatre and music, visual art at the Edinburgh International Festival has come into its own with a lively, diverse and extensive selection of exhibitions and events presented under the aegis of the annual Edinburgh Art Festival, now in its fifth year. In a programme which includes over 40 shows and a range of talks and other events, there is much for the art-loving festival-goer to enjoy, from small exhibitions hosted in private temporary venues to large blockbusters such as Impressionism and Scotland, at the National Gallery, and Tracey Emin: 20 Years, at the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art.

Another big name to be found in Edinburgh is Richard Hamilton, whose show Protest Pictures can be seen in the Royal Botanic Garden at Inverleith House. Built in 1774 and designed by David Henderson, this elegant Georgian mansion was traditionally home to botany professors at the University of Edinburgh. Its unique setting and extensive use of natural light make it the Scottish venue par excellence for exhibiting art.

Hamilton was a founding father of Pop Art, whose iconic images, such as *Just What Is It That Makes Today's Homes So Different, So Appealing?*, now form part of the early history of the movement. Hamilton's often satirical and ironic works reflected the concerns of a generation, with takes on Labour politician Hugh Gaitskell, Northern Ireland, the 'rock-and-roll' generation as epitomised by the Rolling Stones, and student unrest in the 1960s. Hamilton's later works deal with British domestic politics and he has targeted Margaret Thatcher and Tony Blair with equal venom. International crises, such as the first Iraq war, also figure in his panoply of Pop imagery.

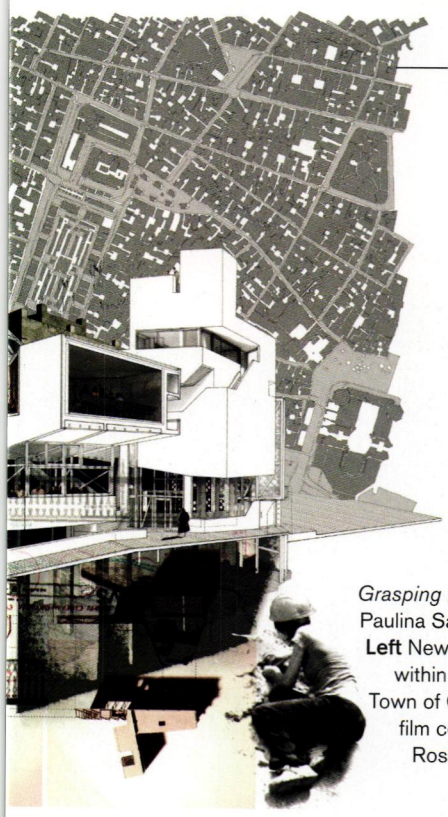
Although none of Hamilton's pieces are site-specific, the scale and form of *Treatment Room* (1983-84) works well in the space. This installation takes the form of a sinister medical treatment room, where an imagined patient is subjected to a looped video of Thatcher while imagined medical experts monitor their experience from behind a glass panel.

In Richard Hamilton's Treatment Room, an imagined patient is subjected to a looped video of Margaret Thatcher

Some of Hamilton's other work is less convincing – for example, the suite of drawings, prints and collages that comprise his treatment of the media's attitude to sex, drugs, and rock and roll in the '60s. Hamilton seems in thrall to Andy Warhol's techniques and concerns to such an extent that he appears derivative. His treatment of Northern Ireland is more successful, with his powerful 1980s series which conflates the Troubles with earlier mythological, cultural and tribal iconography, such as the striking 1983 heliogravure, aquatint and engraving, *Finn MacCool* (*pictured below right*).

Elsewhere in the city is the stimulating project Salt City – Cádiz: Field +Work. Curated by Suzanne Ewing of the University of Edinburgh's department of architecture, and on show at its Matthew Architecture Gallery, the project brings together a group of postgraduate students who have focused on the Spanish city of Cádiz as a site of investigation and architectural intervention. The result of this theoretical exercise is a series of linked models of the city which acknowledges its topography, history and culture, taking into account notions of urbanism and the kind of interpretation of space espoused by philosophers such as Gaston Bachelard in his book *The Poetics of Space* (1994). The city model, which is displayed at waist height on metal props, can be viewed not only in the conventional sense – as a series of scaled structures – but as a collaboratively made piece of installation art. Ewing's commentary on the project (found on a series of wall panels) is informative and intellectually seductive.

In recent years, the Royal Scottish Academy has endeavoured to support and encourage the work of emerging artists, and in so doing has initiated a series of residency programmes and scholarships. Some of these have been based at Hospitalfield House residential arts centre near Arbroath, and at Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, the Gaelic-speaking college on the Isle of Skye. One recipient was Paulina Sandberg, resident

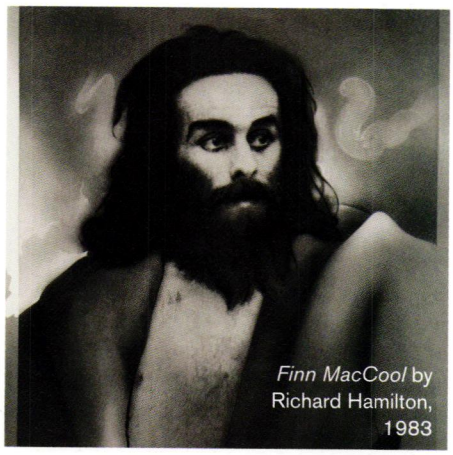


Far left *Grasping Rose* by Paulina Sandberg **Left** New Worlds within the Old Town of Cádiz: a film centre by Ross Perkin

at Hospitalfield in 2007. On view at the Royal Scottish Academy until 21 September, her drawings and soundworks reflect her experience of living and working in an isolated space. The *Grasping the Nettle* drawings (*pictured above left*) combine line drawings with contact prints made directly from the plant, but they lack real intellectual depth and rigour. Such observations can also be levelled at Colin Parker, whose three wooden sculptures *Scala*, *Intarsia I* and *Intarsia II*, pluck ideas from their original context and attempt to give them new meaning. It's a convenient, but pat, Post-Modern method, not helped by the artist's misquotation from Virgil. ■

Giles Sutherland is a writer and critic

Resume: In both venue and work, Richard Hamilton wins by a Royal Mile



Finn MacCool by Richard Hamilton, 1983

Back Issues

Unencumbered by professionalism, London's 1948 Olympic Games came in cheap, says Steve Parnell

The last time the Olympics came to London was the XIVth Olympiad in 1948. *Architect and Building News* from 14 May of that year alerted its readers to the fact that 'no architect had been appointed; no professional designer or group is responsible for the setting and the visual side of the games'. However, the AJ of 29.07.48 tells us that Owen Williams had been occupied for two years with 'the provision of dressing rooms, lavatories and press facilities' (*pictured top right*). The AJ published a picture taken the week before (*pictured centre right*) of the 'temporary structure of tubular scaffolding and unpainted wood whose untidiness reveals a lack of care and imagination'. Astragal bemoaned 'the rough boarded partitions of the changing rooms (six coat pegs each)'.

The Games were due to commence with the rubble of bombed buildings still very much London's backdrop. Wembley Stadium was to be used for the athletics programme, but still contained a greyhound-racing track three weeks prior to the opening, before it was transformed using 800 tonnes of cinders.

Athletes were housed in schools and barracks, and were more likely to be disqualified for being professional than for taking performance-enhancing substances. On 30 July, *Architect and Building News* reported: 'Time will not permit the pool being emptied before the boxing takes place, which necessitates a "bridge" consisting of tubular steel cages dropped to the bottom of the pool, covered with sections of timber.' The *Builder* of the same date was more upbeat, choosing to feature the design and construction of the flame bowl (*pictured bottom right*) and stating that 'the whole of the works have cost approximately £250,000'.

If ever an excuse were needed for the Olympics to regenerate a city, London's austerity years were surely it. Yet sport was the focus, the games costing less than £750,000 in total. And it made a profit.

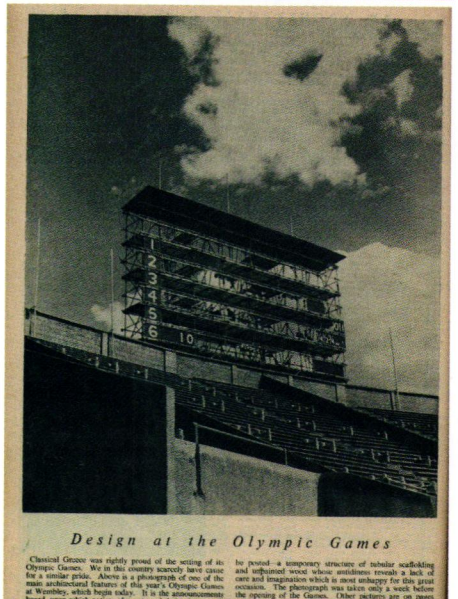
110 THE ARCHITECTS' JOURNAL for July 29, 1948

NEW WORKS FOR THE OLYMPIC GAMES

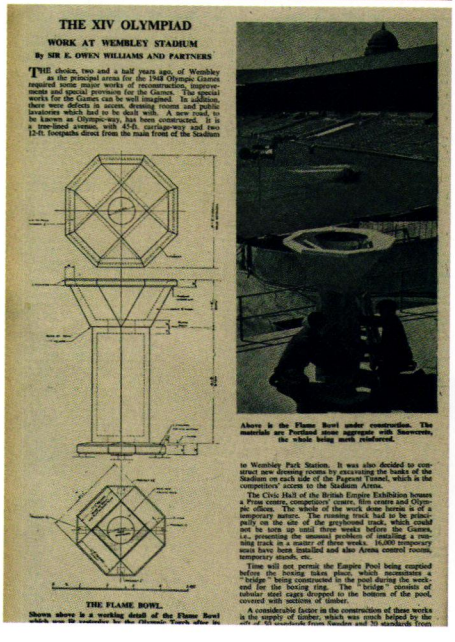
DESIGNED BY SIR OWEN WILLIAMS

Chromium Plate.

In Parliament



Design at the Olympic Games



THE XIV OLYMPIAD

WORK AT WEMBLEY STADIUM

By SIR E. OWEN WILLIAMS AND PARTNERS

THE FLAME BOWL.

Critic's Choice

Vaughan Hart's monograph on the 'colourful' John Vanbrugh impresses Andrew Mead

Ravaged by fire in 1822, a century after it was built to designs by John Vanbrugh, Seaton Delaval Hall (*pictured below*) is partly a shell but still an imposing presence in the Northumbrian landscape. With the succession of the latest heir, however, its future is uncertain and the National Trust is trying to raise £6.3 million to 'save' it.

The full significance of the house clearly emerges in a thorough and absorbing new monograph by Vaughan Hart, *Sir John Vanbrugh: Storyteller in Stone* (Yale University Press, £35). It has the same qualities as Hart's earlier study of Vanbrugh's colleague and contemporary, Nicholas Hawksmoor – highly praised in AJ 06.02.03 – and, indeed, it shares some of the pictures. As architects during the brief flowering of English Baroque, their careers were closely entwined, and attributions aren't always certain – in this book, a photo of Grimsthorpe Castle in Lincolnshire shows 'Vanbrugh's or Hawksmoor's fireplace'.

Playwright as well as architect, a visitor to Surat in India in 1683, and a prisoner in Calais a few years later, Vanbrugh had the kind of life usually called 'colourful'. Though his text is speculative at times ('Vanbrugh would certainly have been interested in Surat's fort'), Hart is an admirable guide to the disparate sources that Vanbrugh drew on and the 'stories' his buildings were meant to tell. Frequent quotations from the man himself (such as explaining why a column should be fluted) aren't just informative, but vivid. They anchor this rewarding book.

WARNER BROS ENTERTAINMENT

FILM

Gotham City has long been a lead character in Batman mythology. For all its chaos, the latest vision is sinisterly generic, says Chris Hall

The Dark Knight (12A) is on general release, and in Imax format at selected cinemas

The Dark Knight, the new Batman film directed by Christopher Nolan, begins with a wide city-shot focusing in on the dark facade of a skyscraper. A window is shattered and masked men abseil down into a bank. The gang is wearing rubbery Joker masks, and their clownishness owes something to Stanley Kubrick's heist-gone-wrong film *The Killing* (1956). One by one, the members of the gang kill each other until only the real Joker is left. Only here, nothing has gone wrong – the Joker has bent Gotham City's space-time to his own psychopathy.

This is the city as permanent chaos. Despite comic-book writer Frank Miller's definition of Gotham City as being New York at night, *The Dark Knight* largely takes place in the daytime. It's nowhere near as architecturally stylised as Tim Burton's *Batman* (1989), with its Gothic flying buttresses and Art Nouveau detailing. And for all its hyper-reality (Batman bending a gun, surviving skyscraper falls, etc.), it has a disturbingly naturalistic feel.

There is hardly anything iconically Gotham. While Tim Burton's vision evoked New York, Nolan's version is sinisterly generic – its skyline reads like a corporate histogram. And just like the real world, this Gotham is full of bland, context-free buildings dumped on rectilinear CCTV-patrolled streets, each of them designed to resist crime and terror.

There is as much respect for the fabric of the city as there is in present-day Baghdad. The Batmobile is a fantastically paranoid vehicle. Its multi-layered armour is strong enough to smash the hell out of a multi-storey car park. Later, the Batbike's grappling hooks use the city's street lamps and furniture to topple the Joker's marauding truck.

Batman's underground bunker is a far cry from the Batcave of the TV series, with its

This image The new Bat-symbol is more industrial and geometric than earlier incarnations

exposed-concrete aesthetic and recessed gadgetry. The ceiling is entirely composed of box lights, like a Martin Creed installation in a minimalist atelier. It's a long way from the Gothic, castellated Wayne Manor seen on television (though, reassuringly, the elevator is still disguised as a bookcase).

With talk of enemies at the gates and a reference to the Joker's 'terrorist's demands', the political allegory is clear. Later in the film, the whole city's mobile-phone usage is collated to build up a 4D picture of the city fed into Batman's glasses. Just as in Bruce Wayne's minimalist open-plan apartment (all wood, leather and glass), he can see the whole city from his privileged eyrie, but the city can't see him. This is Batman as the governor in the Panopticon of the city.

When a party guest sees Bruce Wayne escape the Joker's mayhem through a secret entrance, she exclaims brightly, 'Thank God, you've got a panic room!', without realising that there can be no panic rooms in this Gotham – nowhere in the city is safe.

Resume: Out with the Gothic, in with the generic – paranoid, chaotic and abused, Gotham City is back

EXHIBITION

James Pallister visits Jean Nouvel's César show

César: Anthologies par Jean Nouvel. Until 26 October. Fondation Cartier, 261 Boulevard Raspail, Paris 75014. fondation.cartier.com

Like Astérix, César Baldaccini is a Frenchman with no need for a surname. The sculptor's 50-year career included commissions for Classical sculpture and the crushed cars for which he became famous. For the first major retrospective since the sculptor's death in 1994, another indomitable Frenchman, architect Jean Nouvel, was called in as curator.

Nouvel is on familiar territory. Student, admirer and friend of César, he also designed the exhibition's venue, the Fondation Cartier in Paris. Since its completion in 1994, the luxury brand's Parisian headquarters has doubled up as an exhibition space. The ground-floor foyer's plate-glass windows can slide out of sight, transforming the building into a huge structure on stilts. It's some way from the white box of many contemporary galleries; more a well-lit foyer that doubles up as an art space.

As curator, Nouvel has run with this openness. Pieces are scattered around the ground floor, aping the apparent fluidity of César's polyurethane 'expressions'. These luxurious spillages come from mixing plastic with Freon gas. Some have the ultra-smooth finish of a boat's hull, others a rusty, crustacean look.

Amused by the gladiatorial connotations of his namesake, César chose his own thumb as a subject for his series of sculptures of scaled-up fragments of body parts. Disembodied breasts, hands and thumbs abound, every pore picked out in marble, resin and aluminium. These are laid out haphazardly on shallow plinths of the same texture as the polished concrete floor.

César discovered the hydraulic press, a machine capable of crushing cars, in the 1960s, results of which are displayed in the Fondation Cartier's basement. He mastered 'directed compressions', retaining an element of craftmanship and differentiating himself from sculptors working with 'ready-mades'.

Friendship aside, Nouvel and César make an odd pair. César's 2m-high thumb cast in bronze has a solidity which is at odds with the plate glass and steel of Nouvel's building. And where César disliked intellectualising his work, Nouvel relishes poetic noodling. But the loose informality of the curation works, and the design of the building does not frustrate the sculptures in the way it might have with two-dimensional work. Just don't try and find too many similarities between this duo.

Resume: César and Nouvel make an odd couple in Paris

5 THINGS TO DO THIS WEEK

1 *Vilhelm Hammershøi: The Poetry of Silence*
Last chance to catch the first UK retrospective of Danish artist Hammershøi's haunting paintings.
Until 7 September. The Sackler Wing, Royal Academy of Arts, Burlington House, Piccadilly, London W1J 0BD. www.royalacademy.org.uk

2 *Thinking Allowed: Imagination and the City*
Listen again to Laurie Taylor discussing literature and sociology of the city.
Until 3 September. BBC Radio 4 iPlayer. www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/radio/bbc_radio_four

3 *Mark Sinclair: Art on Site*
A rummage through the photographic archive of the construction of BDP's Shetland Museum and Archives.
Until 26 October. The Lighthouse, 11 Mitchell Lane, Glasgow G1 3NU. www.thelighthouse.co.uk

4 *The Rules of Regulations*
An exhibition on housing design by Finn Williams with David Knight.
Until 13 September. The Closet Gallery, 57 Ewer Street, London SE1 0NR. www.architecturefoundation.org.uk/closet

5 *Erect!*
Be prepared for blushes and belly laughs – this play is a sex-fuelled story of two architects who entice a student into their sordid world.
Until 6 September. Hen and Chickens Theatre, 109 St Paul's Road, London N1 2NA

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AJ ENQUIRY 201

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AJ ENQUIRY 205

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AJ ENQUIRY 207

Altro, leading manufacturer and supplier of interior surfaces, has pioneered the world's first safety-flooring recycling system. The new process, based at Altro's manufacturing plant in Hertfordshire, will divert waste from landfill and further increase the recycled content and sustainability of its flooring products.

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AJ ENQUIRY 202

How about this application of Kalwall at Gateshead College, Tyne and Wear? Architect Red Box Design Group has sculpted a stunning barrel vault with end walls to diffuse natural daylight evenly, without shadows or glare, creating the college's unique ambience. For more information visit **www.stoakes.co.uk**

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AJ ENQUIRY 204

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SAS

AJ ENQUIRY 206

Market leader SAS International has introduced a new comprehensive reference guide to specifying and installing metal ceilings in a range of different environments. It provides advice on how ceilings should be suspended, and shows the advantages of different ceiling types. The brochure can be requested at **www.sasint.co.uk/newbrochure**

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AJ ENQUIRY 208

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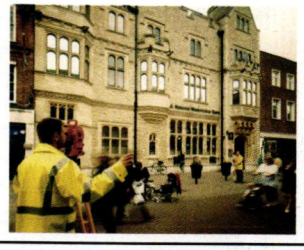

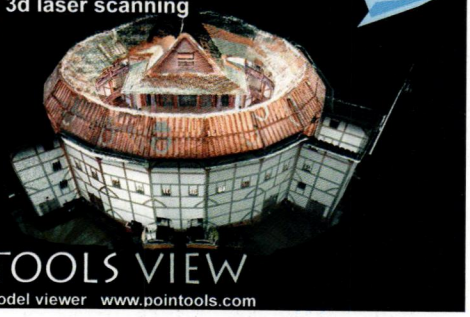

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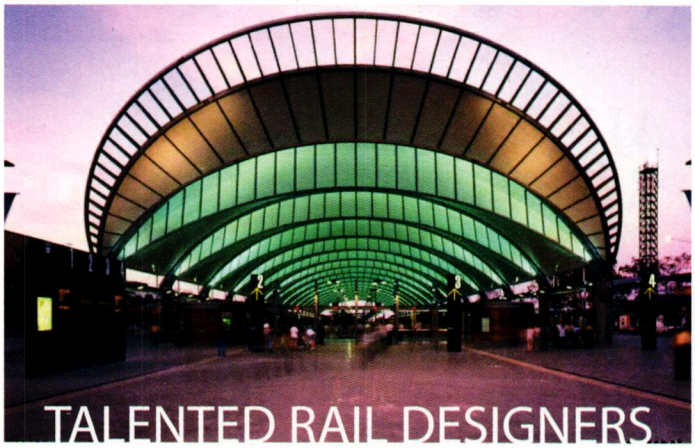

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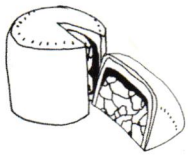

Ian Martin. A workshop in architectural criticism, a lesson in rough justice

MONDAY. I'm in a posh bit of Oxford with my friend Darcy and his trembling dachshund, Bauhau. We're here for the annual Graduate Summer School, a few days of intensive quaternary education at what we guest lecturers call the 'University of Life Choices'. The quad teems with a flapping, shiny haul of newly qualified architects, all twitchy and gasping for breath.

Every year Darcy and I look into the distance and proclaim that we should 'give something back' to the profession that has sustained us for so long, and then quietly forget about it. This year, however, we have both accidentally agreed to lead workshops.

Mine is about the lost art of Lunch, which has faded from memory along with measured drawing and Freemasons in the planning department. It's a shame. Lunch has much to teach us. Primarily, the true value of an afternoon.

Darcy boasts that his workshop is much more 'C21 alpha babymother'. The subject is How To Criticise Buildings – Suavely. 'As the widely-admired epic space correspondent for the *Creative on Sunday* I will explore the art of architectural criticism. Or ArchCrit, as we call it these days. Another?'

He's off to the bar. I'm left alone with the neurotic Bauhau, who's looking very aesthetic and emotional today, all done up like Zaha Hadid's Zaragoza bridge in a sinuous, sharky, diamond sheath. 'Arch!' he yaps. 'Crit!'

TUESDAY. Darcy and I argue over who'll get better feedback on those response forms they always hand out. You know, 'how clearly-spokenly did the speaker speak? Were issues around diversity and accessibility dealt with portably? If the workshop were an animal, would it have fur? Is there room in your toolbox for more of this sort of thing? To what extent were you awake?'

Idiots. I bet I win. All I have to do is teach them how to have lunch. His craft is a sacred mystery, and very difficult to communicate.

WEDNESDAY. There were about two-dozen young architects in my workshop group. A mixed bunch. Five or six women too, nearly as good a percentage as the Shadow Cabinet.

I started off as usual with Bloody Marys all round and winged it from there.

As far as I can remember, I included the lecture about not wasting lunches on clients, who are all shits anyway. If you want to suck up, send them a £50 carbon offset voucher, they don't care. And you'll still end up giving them a 10 per cent discount. Only have lunch with agreeable people. Don't have pudding or there'll be no room for Armagnac, that sort of thing.

Prudently, I left plenty of room for Armagnac. Now I suddenly collect my thoughts and realise I'm alone, surrounded by response forms. 6.3, 6.4, 6.6, excellent, oh wait. They're percentages.

THURSDAY. I sneak into Darcy's workshop. He's wearing his smart Goth boots/kilt/blouson/porkpie hat ensemble. Bauhau draws admiration by operating the slide carousel. Each yelping jump for a biscuit in his IT-interfaced miniature Team GB dobok brings up the next image.

'Criticising buildings in a suave manner takes more than just technique and pretension…' smarms Darcy. The stupid, stupid audience think he's being self-deprecating and bloody LOVE him. In a masterly performance he explains his 'tropes of the trade'. When announcing your architectural destination, recall at least two previous destinations that remind you of the new one, in order to validate your travel credentials. Arrive romantically, e.g. restored Trabant, rope ladder, horse, coracle, parachute, Philip Larkin's bike. Use 'of course…' a lot, so they know you've looked something up on Wikipedia.

'Above all, think of each new architectural experience as a lunch. Expect it to be delicious, but with one or two minor disappointments…' He leaves them all wanting to be architecture critics. His user feedback's a tsunami of love and respect. Bugger.

FRIDAY. Lunch with Darcy. I'm buying, and sulking. Bauhau clanks about our feet in his Jean Prouvé prefab outfit, yapping 'Arch! Crit!', engorged with confidence and dodging my cutlery.

SATURDAY. Home, to find a stack of emails from young architects either abusing me for hosting the most useless workshop they've ever attended, or asking for Darcy's phone number: 'So hot, and Bauhau's the CUTEST!'

SUNDAY. Sombre reflection in the recliner. I give in. It's time to get a dog.

ILLUSTRATION BY HANNA MELIN