

ar



tune the light



100% LED

Compact LED

Tomorrow's light for today's architecture – Compact LED, the new recessed luminaires from ERCO, deliver efficient visual comfort in projects such as offices, stores or hotels. The design gives expression to innovative lighting technology and is complemented by

ERCO's own LED lens system, developed and produced in-house, and packaged in an economical and efficient, space-saving, compact form. The beam characteristics wide flood and oval flood are specially designed for open plan areas, pathways and traffic zones. Compact LED is available in five

sizes with long-life, powerful LEDs in warm white or neutral white and with lab tested, pre-connected control gear for rapid installation – the easy way to general lighting with 100% LED.

www.erco.com

ERCO



The Architectural Review
Issue number 1394
April 2013
Volume CCXXXIII
Founded 1896
Sapere aude

Cover: God is in the detail
in Niall McLaughlin's
chapel at Ripon College
in Oxfordshire (see p32)

13	Editorial view
14	Overview Toyo Ito wins this year's Pritzker Prize; 3D printing; <i>Competitive Advantages</i> symposium
18	Interview Toyo Ito
20	Commonwealth Association of Architects Student competition
27	View from ... Dhaka, Bangladesh
29	Viewpoints Peter Cook
30	Your views
32	Niall McLaughlin Architects Ripon Chapel, Cuddesdon, Oxfordshire, UK
46	Kengo Kuma and Associates House, Hokkaido, Japan
54	Kengo Kuma and Associates School, Tama, Tokyo, Japan
62	Aires Mateus House, Alcobaça, Portugal
72	London Schools: Part Two Central St Martins, London, UK, by Stanton Williams
83	Theory Troubles in Theory IV: the social side
	Exploring Eye
88	Moisei Ginzburg's Narkomfin Building, Moscow, Russia
	Reviews
94	Feminist practices; Kengo Kuma monograph; Berlin 1880-1940; Corb's moment; White cube/Green maze
	Pedagogy
100	University of Johannesburg, South Africa
	Reputations
102	Herman Hertzberger
	Folio
106	Kengo Kuma

'Maybe Toyo Ito sometimes leaves the spiritual dimension and poetics at home when he builds abroad, or perhaps they get lost in translation in his luggage?'
William JR Curtis, p14

'That's the future of the city? That can't be true!'
Toyo Ito, p18

'Tower developers are reluctant to engage with architects who perform brilliantly with horizontality'
Peter Cook, p29

'The internal "street" of Central St Martins seems to be suffering from a deep recession, recalling the sterile world of the shopping mall, or even the corporate atrium'
Will Hunter, p72

'Modern architecture was not only dead, but deadly, representing a fundamental failure in its social utopian objectives'
Anthony Vidler, p83

'The erotic foundation of Le Corbusier's pictures was rarely transmitted to his architecture and never to his urbanism'
Rasmus Wærn, p99

CONTRIBUTORS

Xenia Adjoubei is the founding director of Alea Iacta Est, a London-based architecture and cultural consultancy. With co-writer Robert Mull she reports on the decrepitude of Moisei Ginzburg's Narkomfin Building in Moscow

Matthew Barac is a senior lecturer at London's South Bank University and also our regular *Pedagogy* correspondent. This month he visits the University of Johannesburg

Peter Cook is a long-time columnist of the AR. In *Viewpoints*, he wonders why the most inspirational architects do not put their talent to work in that blandest field of design, skyscrapers

William JR Curtis is a critic, historian of 20th-century architecture and author of such seminal texts as *Modern Architecture Since 1900* and *Le Corbusier: Ideas and Form*. In *Overview* this month he criticises, not for the first time, the Pritzker Prize. (See William JR Curtis, 'Matters of Opinion. The Pritzker Prize in Historical Perspective', editor Martha Thorne, *The Pritzker Architecture Prize, The First Twenty Years*, p26ff)

Dennis Gilbert is an architectural photographer and founding partner of View Pictures. A lasting and memorable portrait of each building is his aim: without superimposing an unrelated aesthetic on the picture, he enriches perceptions and the way buildings are seen. His photographs feature in the article on Niall McLaughlin's Ripon Chapel

Tony Godwin and George Henderson were in Bangladesh for the Commonwealth Association of Architects' triennial conference. They co-wrote this month's *View from Dhaka*

Rob Gregory is Programme Director of Bristol Architecture Centre, Associate Editor of this organ, and has a particular interest in Japanese architecture. In this issue he reports on Kengo Kuma's experimental house in Hokkaido

Claudia Hildner is a German architectural journalist with a focus on Japanese architecture. She talks to Toyo Ito in his office in Tokyo in *Interview* following his success in winning the Pritzker Prize

Will Hunter is the Deputy Editor of the AR. In last month's issue he reported on changes to the RCA; this month he follows up his survey of London art and design schools with Central St Martins. Next month he will cover London Metropolitan University

Hans Ibelings is a Dutch architecture critic, historian, writer and curator. He is also editor of *The Architecture Observer*, a multi-platform forum for architectural criticism. He looks back at the life and work of Herman Hertzberger in this month's *Reputations*

Sarah Ichioka is Director of the Architecture Foundation, before which she was Deputy Director of the London Festival of Architecture. She covers the *And the Winner Is?* series of discussions organised by the Architecture Foundation in media partnership with *The Architectural Review*

Ayla Lepine is an architectural historian and writer, and is currently a Fellow at the Yale University School of Sacred Music. Here she reviews the exhibition *White Cube, Green Maze: New Art Landscapes* at Yale School of Architecture Gallery

Will McLean is a senior lecturer in architecture at the University of Westminster. In 2008 he set up *Bibliothèque McLean* at bibliothequemclean.com – a publisher of architecture, art and technology books. He writes on the revolutionary technology of 3D printing in *Overview*

Andrew Mead is a London-based writer and former Reviews Editor of *The Architects' Journal*. He writes here on *Metropolis Berlin 1880-1940*, which charts six decades of the city as cultural crucible

Robert Mull is Dean of the Faculty of Art and Architecture at London Metropolitan University, which recently opened a school in Russia (AR June 2012). With co-writer Xenia Adjoubei he writes on Moisei Ginzburg's Narkomfin in Moscow

Richard Pare is a renowned architectural photographer known for his unprecedented documenting of Soviet masterpieces across the former USSR. His archive photographs of the Narkomfin Building appear in *Exploring Eye*

Mireille Roddier became a founding partner of Mitnick Roddier Hicks in 1995. She is also Associate Professor of Architecture at the University of Michigan. This month she reviews Lori A Brown's publication *Feminist Practices*

Peter Salter is a British architect and academic. He has been Head of the School of Architecture at the University of East London and since 2006 has been Professor of Architectural Design at the Welsh School of Architecture, Cardiff University. He reviews Niall McLaughlin's Ripon College Chapel

Jack Self is the founder of *Fulcrum*, the AA's weekly publication, and the Millennium People think tank. In this month's AR he reviews Kenneth Frampton's *Kengo Kuma: Complete Works*

Yuki Sumner is a journalist, critic, lecturer and curator with a special interest in contemporary Japanese architecture. Author of *New Architecture in Japan*, she reports on Kengo Kuma's Teikyo University Elementary School in Tokyo

Luis Tavares Pereira is an architect and curator in Porto. He is the founding partner of [A] ainda arquitectura (1998), an architecture studio with a strong interest in cultural institutions. He reports on Aires Mateus's house in Alcobaça, Portugal

Anthony Vidler is Dean of the Irwin S Chanin School of Architecture at New York's Cooper Union. A prolific author on architecture from the 18th century to the present, he contributes Part IV of *Troubles in Theory: The Social Side*

Rasmus Wærn is a Swedish architect, historian, lecturer, curator and critic. He appraises *Moment – Le Corbusier's Secret Laboratory* at Stockholm's Moderna Museet

THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW

EDITORIAL

Editor
Catherine Slessor
catherine.slessor@emap.com
Deputy Editor
Will Hunter
will.hunter@emap.com
Creative Director
Simon Esterson
Art Editor
Alexander Ecob
Editorial Assistant
Phineas Harper
phineas.harper@emap.com
+44 (0)20 3033 2740
Production Editors
Julia Dawson
Tom Wilkinson
Editorial Interns
Taylor Davey
Nick Pocock
US Contributing Editors
Michael Webb
Mark Lamster
Associate Editor
Rob Gregory
Editorial Director
Paul Finch

PUBLISHING

International Account Manager
Tom Rashid
+44 (0)20 3033 2942
tom.rashid@emap.com
UK Account Manager
Keshena Grieve
+44 (0)203 033 2947
keshena.grieve@emap.com
Group Advertising Manager
Amanda Pryde
+44 (0)20 3033 2945
amanda.pryde@emap.com
Business Development Manager
Nick Roberts
+44 (0)20 3033 2940
nick.roberts@emap.com
Business Development Manager
Ceri Evans
+44 (0)20 3033 2943
ceri.evans@emap.com
Commercial Director
James MacLeod
+44 (0)20 3033 2939
james.macleod@emap.com
Group Head of Marketing
James Merrington
Senior Marketing Executive
Anthea Antoniou
+44 (0)20 3033 2865
anthea.antoniou@emap.com
Marketing Executive
Alex Themistos
+44 (0)20 3033 4327
alex.themistos@emap.com
Italian Advertising Sales Milan
Carlo Fiorucci
+39 0362 23 22 10
carlo@fiorucci-international.com
US Advertising Sales New York
Kate Buckley
+1 845 266 4980
buckley@buckleypell.com
List Rental
Jonathan Burston
+44 (0)20 8995 1919
jburston@uni-marketing.com
Managing Director
Robert Brighouse
Emap Chief Executive
Natasha Christie-Miller

SUBSCRIPTION BASE RATES AND BACK ISSUES

Please visit architectural-review.com/ subscribe or call 0844 848 8859 (overseas +44 (0)1858 438 804) and quote priority code asem
UK direct debit £93
UK credit card £99
UK Student £55
Europe £138
Americas \$138
Americas Student \$89
Japan £115
Rest of World £115
Rest of World Student £65
American copies are air speeded to New York

Back issues
£12 in UK
0844 848 8859
£16 overseas
+44 (0)1858 438 804
are@subscription.co.uk

Non-delivery of issues and changes of address

AR Subscriptions
Tower Publishing
Tower House
Sovereign Park
Market Harborough
LE16 9EF, UK
+44 (0)1858 438 804
are@subscription.co.uk

US subscribers contact:
The Architectural Review
c/o PSMJ Resources
PO Box 95120, Newton
MA 02495, USA
+1 617 965 0055

The Architectural Review (ISSN 0003-861x) is published monthly for \$199 per year by Emap, Royal Mail International c/o Smartmail, 140 58th Street, Suite 2b, Brooklyn NY 11220-2521 USA
Periodicals postage paid at Brooklyn NY and additional mailing offices.
Postmaster: send address changes to The Architectural Review c/o PSMJ Resources PO Box 95120, Newton, MA 02495 USA

ABC average circulation for July 2011 – June 2012 11,089
© Emap Publishing 2013

The Architectural Review
69-77 Paul Street
London EC2A 4NW, UK
architectural-review.com
Twitter: @ArchReview



Evolution Communication is the basis for continued growth –
USM expands ideas to open up possibilities.

Visit our showroom or request detailed information.

USA: USM U. Schaerer Sons Inc., 28–30 Greene St., New York, NY 10013, Phone +1 212 371 1230

International: USM U. Schärer Söhne AG, 3110 Münsingen Switzerland, Phone +41 31 720 72 72

Showrooms: Berlin, Bern, Düsseldorf, Hamburg, Munich, New York, Paris, Tokyo

info@usm.com, www.usm.com

USM
Modular Furniture

CORE STABILITY

Our new freestanding cubicle unit has been developed specifically for leisure centres and changing rooms. The unique, patented anchor system provides the strength required for such a unit, whilst the typical Thrislington design provides the beauty. Simple, effective and ideal for any changing room.

Designed to compliment the rest of our leisure range of lockers, vanity units and seating, shown in our **icon** range, it's also available in our top of the range **oasis** system in both compact grade laminate and glass.



communication
design award

2013





thrislington cubicles

t +44 1244 520 677
e info@thrislingtonleisure.com
www.thrislingtonleisure.com



Patented anchor system ensures cubicles stay strong, secure and stable.



Available in **icon** and **oasis** systems in both compact grade laminate and glass.



Our **fusion** lockers are pre-assembled for super fast installation and rigidity.



Our leisure range of seating has a product ideal for any gym or leisure centre.

Off.



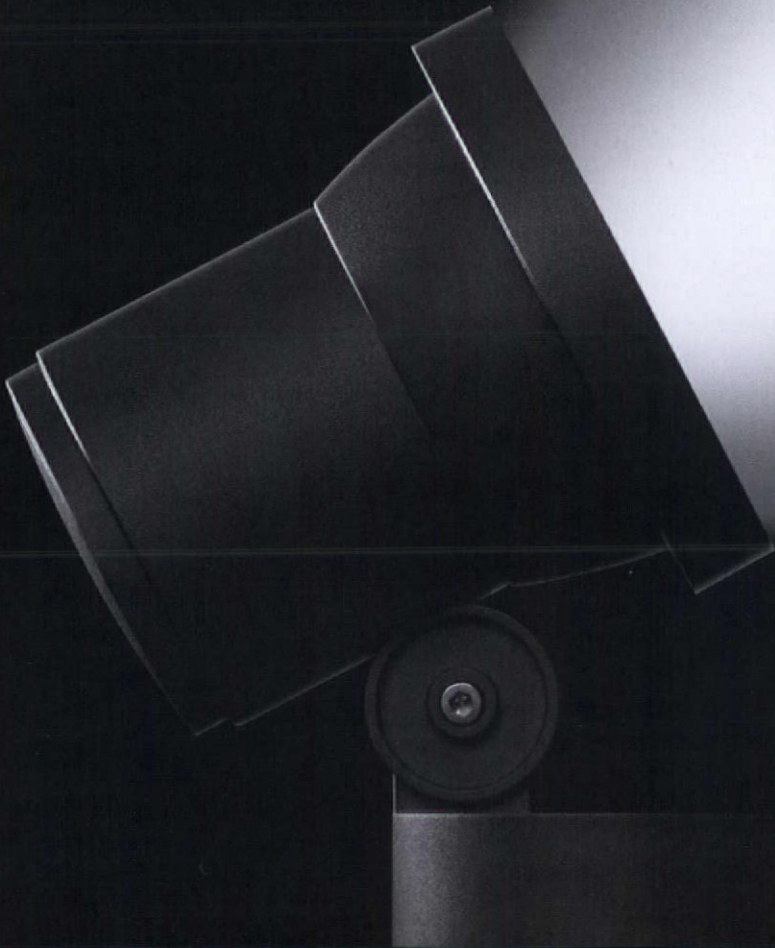
BEGA

BEGA – das gute Licht.

Distribution in the U.K.:
Zumtobel Lighting Ltd.
Chiltern Park
Chiltern Hill, Chalfont St Peter
Buckinghamshire SL9 9FG
Tel. +44 (0) 1753 482 650
Fax +44 (0) 1753 480 350
bega@zumtobel.com
www.bega.com

Compact floodlights
with LED or for halogen and
discharge lamps
Protection class IP 65
460 – 15000 Lumen

On.





AR HOUSE 2013
A £10,000 PRIZE
FOR THE DESIGN OF
A ONE-OFF HOUSE



The private house occupies a unique position both in the history of architecture and the human imagination. Beyond its core function of shelter, it is an object of fantasy, a source of delight, a talisman and a testing ground.

From Le Corbusier to Rem Koolhaas, the progress of modern architecture can be traced through a succession of pioneering houses. Regardless of scale, site or budget, the house offers the potential for genuine innovation and is critical to the ferment of architectural ideas.

AR House celebrates this wellspring of creativity with a major award of £10,000 for the design of the best one-off house. All projects must be built. There is no age limit. Entries will be judged by an international jury, chaired by AR Editor, Catherine Slessor.

For more information
samanta.eremciukate@emap.com
or call +44 (0)20 3033 2651

For sponsorship opportunities
nick.roberts@emap.com
or call +44 (0)20 3033 2940

ENTRY DEADLINE IS 26 APRIL
architectural-review.com/arhouse2013



LAUFEN

Bathroom Culture since 1892  www.laufen.com

HI-MACS® - THE NEW GENERATION. Inspired by Architecture.

HI-MACS® is ETA (European Technical Approval) certified.

BIG IDEAS BRING THEM OUT NOW!



INSIDE
AND
OUTSIDE

HI-MACS® - Alpine White

HI-MACS® is the material of the latest generation: the natural acrylic stone is visually seamless, hygienic, thermoformable, comes in a range of around 100 colours and offers a unique 15 year guarantee.



Information and samples can be obtained from:
Alex Gray,
phone 01892 704074
e-mail
ukoffice@himacs.eu

www.himacs.eu/arc

More projects and new ecological colours here.

HI-MACS®
Natural Acrylic Stone®

Editorial view

The ruins of Utopia eloquently testify to the impermanence of architecture

If the best kind of architecture is an armature for ideas, what happens when those ideas change or go out of fashion? Consider the plight of the Narkomfin Building in Moscow (p88), Moisei Ginzburg's Constructivist masterpiece built in 1929 to be a promulgator of a radical, communal, new way of living. Barely had the pioneering impetus of its creation subsided when Stalin denounced its Utopian principles as Trotskyite. A long, slow decline ensued, exacerbated by municipal neglect, squabbles over ownership, and stalled renovation plans, despite hand wringing by UNESCO and the World Monuments Fund. Narkomfin is now a decaying hulk fitfully inhabited by Muscovite hipsters, whose self-regarding forays into a different sort of communal living make good copy.

Narkomfin was a brave attempt to initiate and consolidate ideas about changing social structures but instead it became a political and physical pariah. Generally, as one form of architecture becomes unpopular with the constituency it was designed to serve, this presages a paradigm shift into something else. For all its promises of a brave new world, Modernism got inextricably bogged down in the swamp of mass housing, its 'inhumane' tendencies fomenting a sense of anomie and prompting an urgent reappraisal of the relationship between the forces of radical architecture and social progress. The photogenic demolition of Pruitt Igoe encapsulated this discredited marriage, becoming a convenient visual talisman for the end of Modernism.

The decline and fall of post-war housing estates is well-rehearsed, providing 'oft-cited proof that modern architecture was not only dead but deadly' writes Anthony Vidler (p83). Yet it could equally be argued that if the inhabitants chose to modify the 'rational' housing provided for them by Le Corbusier, it showed that the architectural armature was robust enough to assimilate change. And by 'demonstrating the nature of inhabiting', occupants had effectively created a new kind of 'socially differentiated space'.

Whether it's French families or Russian hipsters tactically appropriating and reframing their surroundings, it points up the incontrovertible fact that architecture is an inherently social art. How buildings engage with and are engaged by their users and wider society can enhance or derail the best intentions. Moreover, how they wear, weather and work forms a crucial coda to the self-justificatory fanfare of their completion.

Yet such potentially valuable lessons are not always heeded. 'Too little has been learnt from the architectural experiments of this century', wrote Peter Buchanan in October 2011 as the AR launched its new *Revisits* series. 'And failure is frequently more instructive than success.' Architects, however, are notorious neophiliacs and aren't in the business of looking back. But as history shows, they need to be able to honestly confront the past in order to cultivate a sense of future possibilities.

Catherine Slessor, Editor

Overview

PRITZKER PRIZE

Grade inflation

As Toyo Ito picks up the Pritzker Prize, *William JR Curtis* finds the ratcheting up of the award's rhetoric unmatched by the quality of its winners

The Pritzker Prize has been up and down from the beginning. It nearly committed suicide at the very start when its jury selected Philip Johnson as the first laureate, although things were quickly set on course when Luis Barragán was chosen, albeit for the wrong reasons. Since then, despite uneven choices, the prize has somehow managed to put itself across as a benchmark of indisputable architectural quality. Every year the press repeats the mantra that this is the 'Nobel Prize' for architecture. Here caution is required: not all Nobel Prizes in science and literature are beyond dispute and the Nobel Peace Prize is sometimes given to those who wage illegal wars.

This year the Pritzker jury selected the Japanese architect Toyo Ito, quite rightly identifying his conceptual ingenuity, his spatial imagination and his technical skill. A building like the Sendai Mediatheque (2001) – which withstood the recent earthquake in northern Japan – would seem to illustrate these qualities in its transparency, lightness and open frame structure of cantilevered slabs supported on wavy bundles of steel tubes. The building's generating ideas reveal Ito's interest in analogies between modern technology and natural forms (whether of trees or of waterweeds floating in an aquarium) as well as his aim of liberating interior nodes, focal points and social spaces.

The normally modest Ito likes to claim that some of his more recent, risky and frankly arbitrary designs (some of them looking like Minoru Yamasaki on a bad day) have 'liberated architecture from 100 years of Modernism', but part of the vitality of the building in Sendai resides precisely in the tension between the aspiration to new forms for a post-industrial, information society, and the inheritance of type solutions from earlier modern architecture such as Le Corbusier's Dom-Ino skeleton and Louis Kahn's

investigations of tubes of structure as voids containing light. The Sendai Mediatheque then seems to be a paradigmatic building which captures the contrasts of a period. But still I have not visited it and still wonder how well resolved really are the joints between the angled steel tubes and the slabs they carry. Do the details of the building really succeed in expressing the central ideas?

But Pritzker citations have no place for such architectural niceties, preferring swirling gases of high sounding rhetoric, and on this occasion they have unleashed quite a packet: 'Toyo Ito is a creator of timeless buildings, who at the same time boldly charts new paths. His architecture projects an air of optimism, lightness and joy, and is infused with a sense of uniqueness and universality. For these reasons and for his synthesis of structure, space and form that creates inviting places, for his sensitivity to landscape, for infusing his designs with a spiritual dimension and for the poetics that transcend all his works, Toyo Ito is awarded the 2013 Pritzker Architecture Prize.'

Maybe a reality check is in order? Maybe Toyo sometimes leaves the spiritual dimension and poetics at home when he builds abroad, or perhaps they get lost in translation in his luggage? Only recently I was in

Barcelona confronted by two architectural skyscraper horrors and a skin deep facade pastiche of Gaudí, all signed Toyo Ito. The former structures known as the Porta Fira towers rise alongside a no man's land charitably called Plaza Europa, one of them resembling a crimson sex toy gone viral, the other a sub-Miesian glass slab attacked by a throat cancer. The latter intervention is a wavy metallic facade attached as a marketing device to some fancy real estate operation on Paseo de Gracia and is an affront to the Casa Milà nearly opposite. To invoke Gaudí in these instances (as Ito has done), or to speak (as the Pritzker has done) of 'timelessness', is frankly absurd.

Has Ito ever matched the level of the majestic Olympic Stadium in Tokyo (1962) by Kenzo Tange (Pritzker 1987) or that of the Koshino House (1981) by Tadao Ando (Pritzker 1995)? I hardly think so. But then have Tange and Ando themselves ever reached this level again either? One of the risks of the whole Pritzker operation is that it issues a sort of blank cheque, a 'lifetime achievement award' or personalised Oscar, a passport into the land of elite stardom, without discriminating between the good, the bad and the indifferent in the production of each and every architect. By doing this, paradoxically,



The earthquake-surviving Sendai Mediatheque combines lightness with strength

the Pritzker Prize runs counter to the need for a critical assessment of quality in architecture.

Maybe the sweeping rhetoric and overall grade inflation should be countered by citing the best and the worst work of each recipient? Rafael Moneo would get A minus for his ever alluring Museum of Roman Art in Mérida and D minus for his hulk of an airport in Seville. Renzo Piano would get B plus for the Beyeler Museum near Basel and might be asked to return the medal for having wrecked the masterpiece of Le Corbusier's Ronchamp. James Stirling might get A minus for Leicester Engineering and D for his half-baked Sackler Museum at Harvard. Richard Meier might get B for the rather natty and elegant museum in Frankfurt and an E for his overblown sprawl of the Getty. No 'A's you notice except perhaps for Barragán's own House at Tacubaya (1947). What a pity that Kahn was not around to get a Pritzker, but that would have brought everyone else down a notch or two. Meanwhile the champagne has to flow and the bubbles of excessive superlatives must continue to cascade over the edges of the glasses.

🐘 For our interview with Toyo Ito following his success, see page 18

LONDON, UK

Printed matter

Will McLean

Three-D printing replacement parts for domestic appliances (or gonks, desk-tidies and flammable ashtrays) may be trending, but the digital print-your-own-artefacts world is not yet fully upon us. Surrounding the architectural equivalent of the miracle of the microwave oven, however, there is the suspicion that we might end up with some half-baked, tasteless and even toxic buildings ... anyone for a laser-sintered door handle?

Architects are continually in search of some astonishingly

versatile, isospacial, all-space-filling construction material that isn't going to kill you and won't be eaten by vermin. There remains the great promise of an all-purpose substrate that solves all your climatic enclosure needs and that will be delivered to site 'oeuvre complète', or autonomously fabricated in-situ by high-calibre industrial machine tools choreographed in a digitally scripted nirvana. In schools of architecture, these are persuasive narratives and, as a technology tutor, I feel it is my great duty to encourage them.

In the seminal book *Fantastic Architecture* published in 1969, artist Wolf Vostell advocated a kind of self-assembly housing / instant city construction system made of that ugly *wunder* material, expanded polyurethane foam. The lightweight (albeit scabby) brilliance of Vostell's polyurethane dwellings is indeed achievable, and much work in amorphous robotic construction uses portable canisters of the aforementioned hard-foamed loop as the miasma with which to collaboratively construct termite-mound complexities.

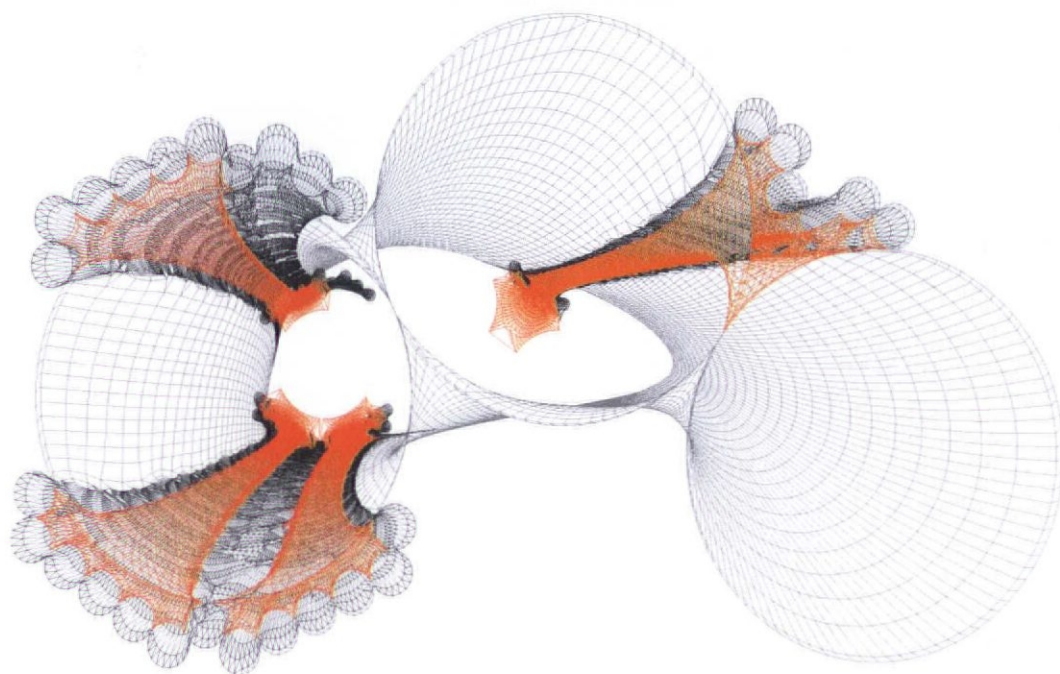
The dream of the printed building was galvanised a decade ago with the contour crafting of Behrokh Khoshnevis, which seemed to involve a massive three-axis printer that would pipe (an admittedly prosaic) house through a computer-controlled nozzle; so, no formwork, no material wastage, but some pretty hefty site plant.

At the recent *Prototyping Architecture* conference at The Building Centre, organiser Michael Stacey noted the ubiquity of the robot (or at least robot arm) in many of the presentations. So while the computer-controlled laser and plasma cutting of sheet materials is now normative, the promise of multi-axis robot limbs as workshop assistants and ergo building assembly operatives is fast becoming reality.

Prototyping Architecture highlighted a whole range of new digital fabrication techniques, some of which used construction automation of a known process, like the ICD/ITKE Research Pavilion at the University of Stuttgart, where 60km of glass and carbon fibres were robotically wound around a temporary

framework to create an 8m-diameter and 3.5m-high monocoque pavilion only 4mm thick. Sanhita Chaturvedi and Esteban Colmenares, formerly of the Architectural Association's Design Research Lab, gave a wonderful presentation about Knitectonics, where the transfer technology of knitting and circular knitting machines is digitally modelled (physical properties and all) and used to create large-scale knitted structural elements from pre-impregnated carbon fibres.

Witness also the much publicised plan by DUS Architects to build the first 3D-printed canal house in Amsterdam. They have set up KamerMaker (room maker), a public workshop pavilion where polypropylene building components are being printed using experimental plastic extrusion techniques in a collaborative project to promote the eventual use of bioplastics. Whether or not these components are useful building elements, the open source spirit of the venture has its own benefits. In the 'digital'



Plan drawing of Knitectonics' experimental large-scale knitted structural elements made from pre-impregnated carbon fibres

fabrication of a component-based construction system, it might be that printing may not be the best solution and perhaps more satisfying are the digitally-machined moulds for substances such as clay slip, fibre-reinforced polymers, or even concrete.

Perhaps the architect's fear of the builder also promotes the notion of printing buildings; where the complex territory between idea and physical actuality will be solved by a purchasable machine. More fool the designer who ignores the tacit intelligence of the specialist fabricator (see the skilled analogue and digital artistry of AB3 Workshops) and of the accumulated knowledge (albeit hard to find at times) of the expert builder. Facit Homes, established by artists and industrial designers, design and build timber houses directly from a digital model; using an on-site workshop equipped with CNC machine, they cut and assemble system components with the flatpack simplicity and minimised waste of product design. See also the integrated structural engineering, fabrication and assembly 'manuals' of Price & Myers' Tim Lucas, replacing proximal structural engineering data for complex projects that might have previously overlooked the construction process.

The structural engineer Tim Macfarlane is very clear about his pioneering work with structural glass, that the lack of precedent and associated engineering codes precipitated a great period of invention with the material, and that this flowering of a technology is threatened when material properties are codified and commercial efficiencies protected. So, while we should whole-heartedly embrace these new technologies (the weirder, the more diverse, the better), we should be sure to ask about the 'why' and 'where' for these digital fabrication processes and materials – not as justification but imperative, be that economy, lightness or performance.

EVENTS

Winning ideas

Sarah Ichioka

In the UK, as in other places still grappling with low-growth economies, a scarcity of work relative to the number of qualified architects has led many practices to devote more resources to entering design competitions, often with no guarantee of reward, even for proclaimed winners. Many have argued that, historically, economic downturns provide the best conditions for new architectural ideas to emerge. It might follow that exercises in speculative design that have little likelihood of producing built work have great merit as catalysts to architecture's evolving discourse. However, in my worryingly predictable private conversations with studio heads anxious about making payroll next month if they don't land that big competition soon – one that will generate real work – this argument doesn't go far.

Alongside the lure of competitions, recent years have seen the proliferation of prizes for architecture and urbanism as well as a growing number of festivals of architecture and design. These latter activities ostensibly seek to celebrate architectural ideas and projects, and – at their best – identify and reward excellence and raise client and consumer ambitions for architecture, but their underlying motivations and benefits are divergent, and some betray ulterior motives – profit, brand promotion, place-marketing, etc.

The Architecture Foundation has chosen this moment – of expanded opportunities for architecture to gain exposure through mediated competitions, awards and biennales, alongside a reduced landscape of opportunity in the sense of traditional architectural work – to look critically at certain mechanisms of architectural culture, and to



Jeremy Till with Paul Finch at the first of three AF/AR events at Central St Martins

ask the profession, its clients and the public, how these systems, which aim to generate good architecture and champion new ideas, can and should be improved. We are implicated as an institution in all three of the meta-systems we seek to scrutinise: competitions, awards and festivals, so there is an aspect of self-improvement (with a seasoning of self-critique) in our organising the series. We also intend that the debates contribute to the current strategic review of national architectural policy.

The series, 'And the winner is?', has the AR as media partner. The first event in March, *Competitive Advantages?*, set sparks flying, with keynote speaker Jeremy Till accusing clients, competition organisers, and architects of perpetuating an exploitative and wasteful system that privileges image over discourse, norms over progress. The event set British commentators in dialogue with peers from European countries whose competition systems are perceived more positively. What emerged was a rather complex picture of multiple systems and actors – some effective at crafting resilient briefs, supporting clients to raise their game, identifying design talent, and producing good architecture; others mired in bureaucracy and a stifling culture of risk-averse consultants.

The art world has seen the rise of a curatorial class and

a complex ecosystem of value creation and evaluation several steps removed from the production of the art itself. As economies seek new means of validation and employment for their 'creative classes' and as more young people choose to study architecture than there are traditional architectural jobs available, it is perhaps unsurprising that architecture too has seen a general proliferation of attendant meta-cultures and professional services. The question remains: how can we use this to our advantage, producing better buildings and spaces, rather than just more cultural noise?

➤ The next event in this AF/AR series is *Awards, What Are They Good For?* in May, followed in June by a debate on festivals of design and architecture. Full information, including a video of *Competitive Advantages?* is at architecturefoundation.org.uk

➤ The AR is also media partner for *Stylistic Dead-Ends? Fresh Perspectives on British Architecture Between the World Wars* at St John's College, Oxford. This two-day conference (20-21 June) brings together established scholars of 20th-century British architecture, as well as some of the best new graduate work from around the country. Full information can be found at architectural-review.com/dead-ends



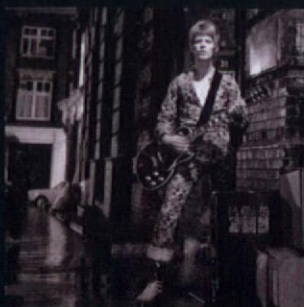
thrislington cubicles

t +44 1244 520 677
e info@thrislingtoncubicles.com
www.thrislingtoncubicles.com



1968

We opened our first office for business in Merseyside.



1973

Lots of changes were made to our products as they began to evolve.



1978

London called and we won our first major project outside the north-west.



1983

Our Combat cubicles were installed in Strangeways prison.



1988

Our first overseas order - in Dublin, Ireland.



1993

We won our first (of many) D&AD design awards.



1998

Our Oasis cubicle was launched, with little argument.



2003

We installed Icon cubicles in The Museum of Modern Art, New York.



2008

Our Flow cubicle was designed and installed in King Street, Manchester.



2013

We're somehow still going strong after 45 years of business.



Coming Soon

The release of our album brochure, which we hope will be another hit.

thrislington now and then

In over 40 years of business we've installed our products in 100's of award winning buildings throughout the world, and won a fair few awards ourselves.

We're pleased to announce that we'll soon be launching our new product brochure and website. This will have some fantastic new innovations and designs along with a few developments to old classics.

Please give us a call on +44 1244 520 677 for further information.

 @thrislington

Interview

Toyo Ito

This year's Pritzker laureate reflects on his success, telling *Claudia Hildner* about his early life under Kikutake and why architects must now pull together

As a young architect, what was the meaning of Metabolism for you?

My graduation thesis explored the topic. The Metabolist movement was developing around the time I started studying at the University of Tokyo. Kiyonori Kikutake, Kisho Kurokawa and other Metabolist architects were emerging with new projects. What they did was completely unheard of: projects for the city of the future. This was really amazing for me.

Why did you turn away from Metabolism in the 1970s?

When I was still studying, Kikutake was producing some really astonishing projects such as the Sky House, the administrative building for the Izumo-Taisha and his design for the International Conference Centre in Kyoto. I had an internship in Kikutake's office for about a month. On the last day he said: 'You can come back after your graduation.' While I was working there, Metabolist ideas for the city of the future were becoming more concrete, notably with the 1970 Expo in Osaka. I worked on this project but I was also thinking: 'That's the city of the future? That can't be true!' It was like waking up from a dream. I was quite disillusioned. Another factor was the student protest movement that emerged in the late '60s in both Europe and Japan. After that, the 'now' became more important – the Japan of the present. Those two influences might be the reason why I turned away from Metabolism. Back then, I was still in my 20s, but gradually I started to create my own designs.

The residential house White U is described as the most important of your early works. What was your state of mind when you designed it?

It can be read as a counter reaction to the tendencies of the 1960s. That's something that is not only visible in my architecture, but also in the work of others, for example Tadao Ando and Itsuko Hasegawa.

We turned our backs on the city and moved inwards. We weren't very interested in external conditions; we wanted to realise our own utopias on a small scale. In this respect the White U is very pure architecture. Though it's the sort of project that can only be realised at a young age.

Compared with the works of Kazuyo Sejima or Tadao Ando, your architecture is different because it's not defined by a signature style. Can you describe its evolution?

The White U emerged at a time when my work cultivated little contact with society. This changed in the 1980s when I became more interested in the context of architecture, specifically the city of Tokyo. In 1988, I designed my first public sector project, a museum in Kumamoto. After that, I had the chance to realise more public buildings, and in 1995 I won the competition for the Mediatheque in Sendai. When the building was completed, I realised for the first time that the public really liked my concept. I felt that I had finally arrived and was no longer an outsider. My current work emerges from that spirit.

You recently said you are no longer interested in transparency. Why?

Transparency was important for me in the 1990s. Back then, Tokyo was struggling with the impact of the bubble economy. Tangible realities suddenly seemed to dissolve and that influenced my architecture. I didn't want to design heavy and definitive buildings, but ones that somehow 'lacked reality'. That's where the notions of lightness and transparency came from.

Despite the diversity of your work, is there a constant that underpins it?

An observation by Kikutake is very important to me: 'Columns set off space, floor defines space'. The Sendai Mediatheque illustrates how these ideas can be made visible in architecture. The facade resembles a section line, which extracts the structure from

the continuum. The columns are like trees, which initiate space and emanate energy. There is also a parallel between Kikutake's observation and the 'Onbashira' – a festival celebrated in Nagano, where I grew up. There's a shrine called Suwa Taisha, and around it are four wooden pillars that define the sacred space. The Onbashira is a celebration that takes place every six years when those pillars are renewed. The people of the village go to the mountains and chop down four huge trees with traditional tools. According to traditional Japanese beliefs, deities reside in those four trees and in the pillars. The trunks are renewed to preserve the energy that emanates from them.

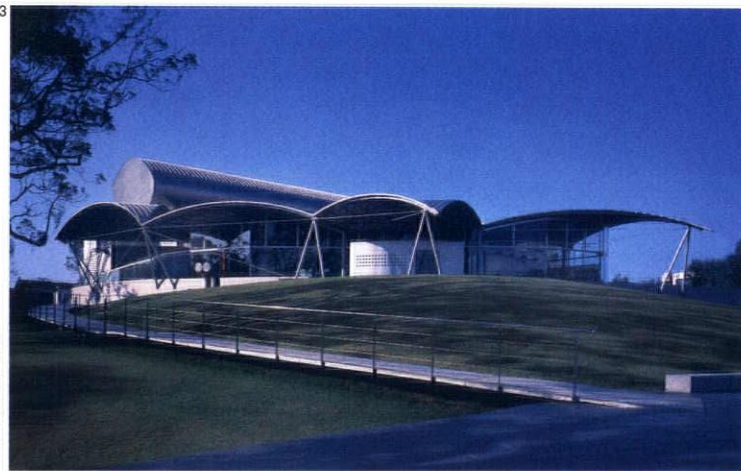
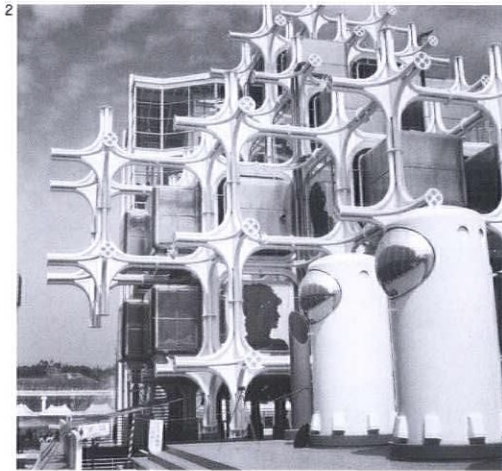
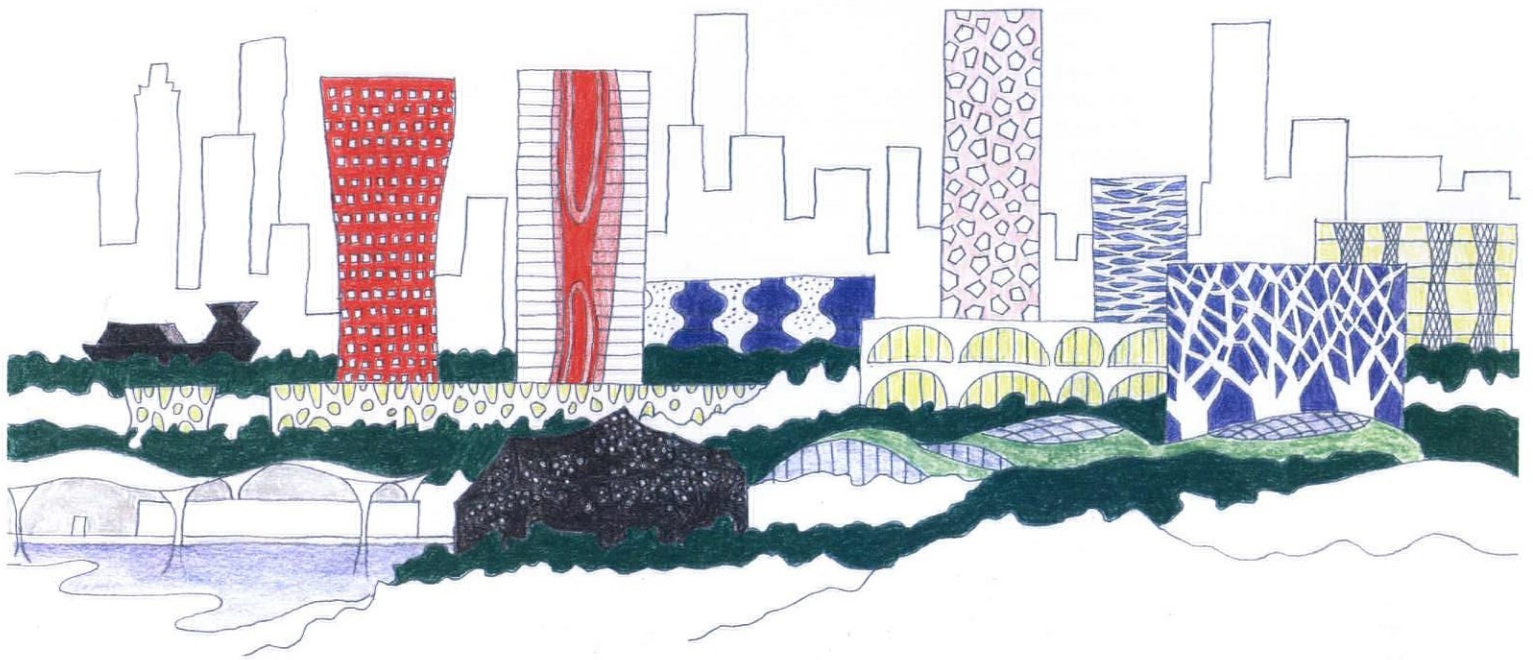
So do Japanese traditions influence your work?

I recall how Japanese people celebrated the cherry blossom season in former times. They went into a park, into nature, and separated a certain area underneath the trees with draperies. By doing nothing more than that, they created a special place. This way of thinking – that a simple drapery is enough to separate yourself from nature, is very Japanese and important in my work.

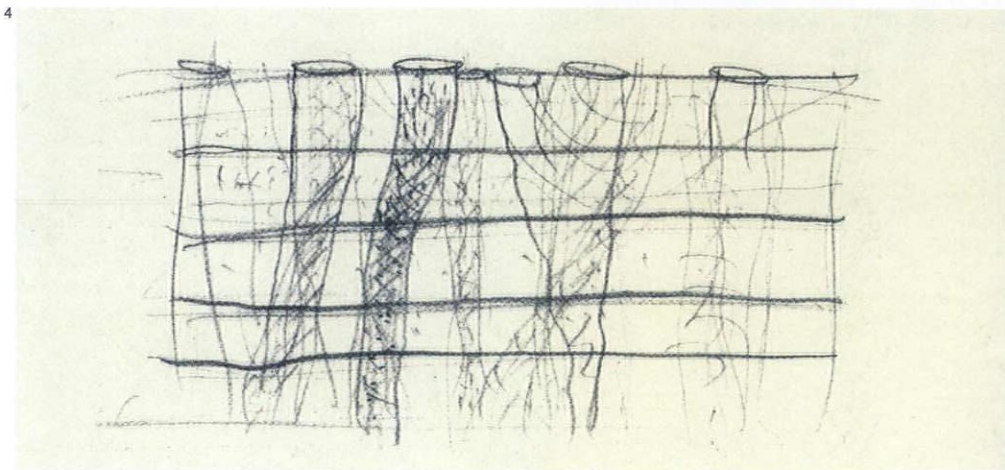
Directly after the earthquake and tsunami catastrophe of 2011, you founded the initiative *kishin no kai* with some of Japan's most well-known architects. Usually Japanese architects don't work together that often, but do you now think that such collaborations must become more important in future?

Something that concerns me more than that is the fact that many architects in my position do not consider themselves part of society. Instead, their work is often a criticism of it. The catastrophe in Tohoku presented an opportunity to overcome this attitude and to engage more directly with society.

William JR Curtis muses on Ito's recent Pritzker Prize win on page 14



1. A drawing by Toyo Ito transplanting his most noted buildings into a single skyline
2. Takara Pavilion at Expo '70 by Kisho Kurokawa, an early influence on Ito
3. Ito's Yatsushiro Municipal Museum, 1991
4. Sketch of the Sendai Mediatheque scheme
5. Onbashira Festival at the Suwa Taisha shrine in Nagano, where Ito grew up – every six years new pillars are erected where deities are believed to reside



Review

CAA student competition

The ninth CAA student competition considered how the world's growing ageing population will shift approaches to architecture, reports Catherine Slessor

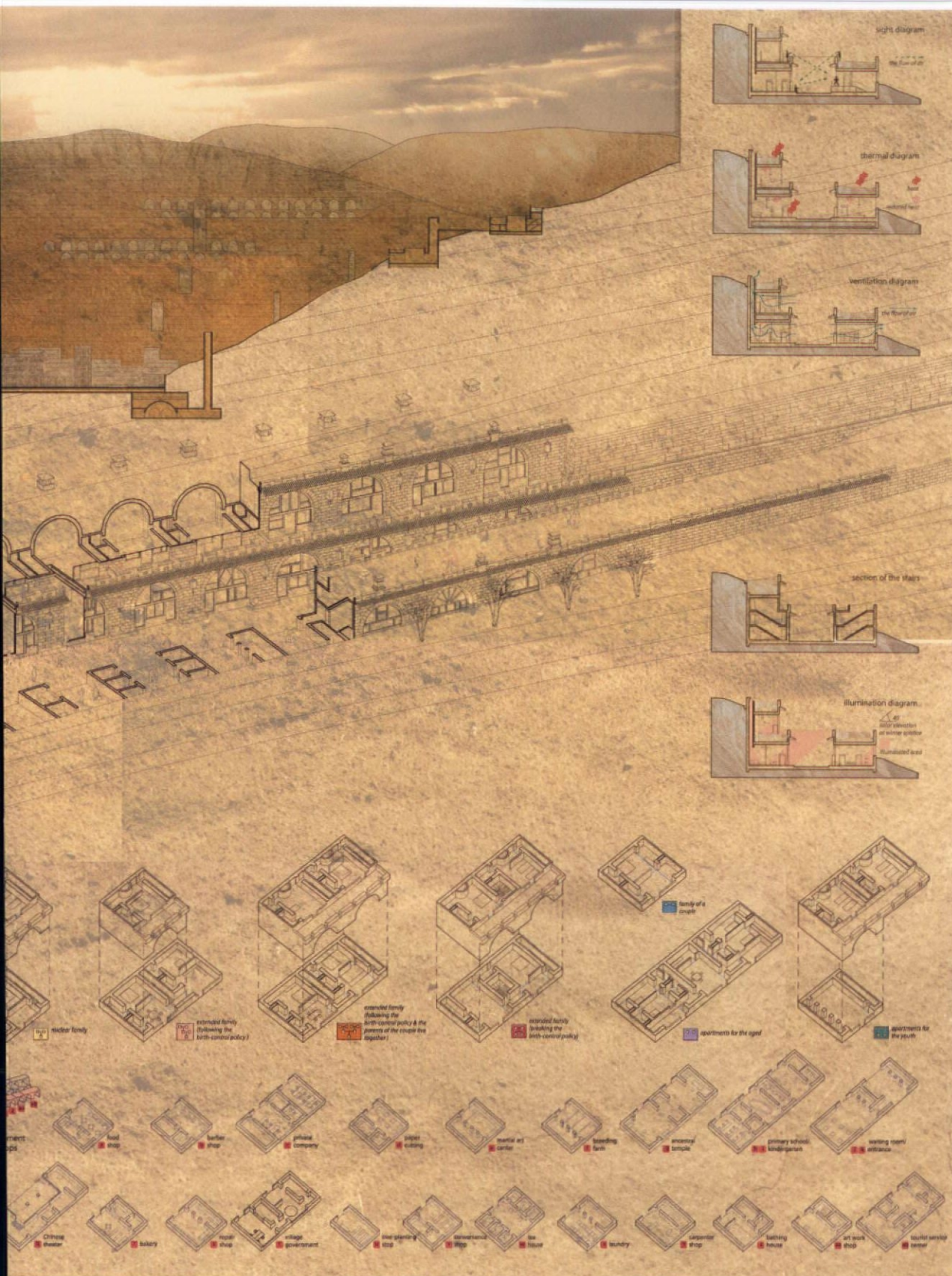
The world's population is ageing. According to the United Nations, this is without parallel in human history, precipitating a demographic shift that will have profound economic and cultural implications for society. Currently, the fastest growing age group in the world is those aged 80 or over, as advances in medicine and healthcare conspire to extend the limits of human mortality.

Yet architecture only fitfully addresses this changing landscape. Seen more as a chore than an opportunity, housing and other facilities for the elderly tend to suffer from lack of resources and lowest-common-denominator thinking. This only serves to ingrain a sense of marginalisation and isolation.

For the ninth Commonwealth Association of Architects (CAA) International Student Competition, students were asked to design an environment for an ageing population. Rather than focusing on conventional gated retirement communities or nursing homes, the aim of the brief was to consider the broader context of family and community, and how relationships between different age groups could be strengthened and enhanced. In physical terms, this could take the form of a house for an extended family, or a multi-generational precinct. It might also encompass planning strategies to accommodate changing family structures, or housing for unusual demographic mixes. Entrants were free to select their own site.

The jury met in Dhaka, Bangladesh prior to the opening of the triennial CAA Conference (p27). The jury comprised Ashvinkumar Kantial (architect, Ong & Ong, Singapore), Peter Rich (architect and educator, South Africa), Rachel Sayers (partner, Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios, UK), Shamsul Wares (Dean, School of Environment and Design, University of Asia Pacific, Dhaka, Bangladesh) and Catherine Slessor (AR Editor).





WINNER

TIANJUN XU
3RD YEAR, ZHEJIANG
UNIVERSITY, CHINA

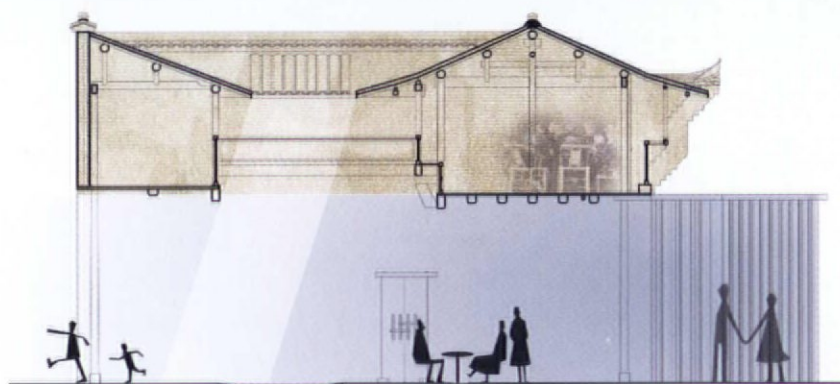
This scheme creatively confronts the challenges of demographic change and the pressures on rural life exerted by China's breakneck urbanisation. As young people leave for the rapidly-expanding cities, the elderly are left behind in decaying villages. This thoughtful and beautifully presented proposal aims to restore a sense of rural community life by creating a new village based on existing structures in the surrounding area. The hope is that a new settlement will attract people back to the countryside, reversing the population drain and reconnecting the marginalised elderly populace with a community of all ages. The jury especially admired its incisive analysis of the social, economic and demographic issues and its imaginative response to place, context and topography. Drawing on vernacular precedents, the proposal seeks to evolve an authentically regional yet modern architecture that sits lightly in its dramatic hillside setting. Moreover, through its resonant articulation of context and culture, and its potential for genuine social transformation, it also acts as a paradigm that can be imitated elsewhere.



SECOND PRIZE

LITING DU 3RD YEAR, ZHEJIANG UNIVERSITY, CHINA

In a similar vein, this project for Qingchuan village in rural China aims to improve the quality of public space and social life in a small rural settlement abandoned by the young and populated mainly by elderly people. The complete absence of street lighting inhibits the ageing residents' capacity to socialise and take an active part in the community, so the solution is to distribute a series of 'illumination cubes' around the village and along the surrounding valley floor. Within the village these light cubes are implanted in existing redundant buildings, coaxing them back to life. Thus abandoned spaces and structures are reinvigorated and the social fabric of the village reconstituted through a relatively simple and economic strategy. The jury thought this a highly impressive project that responded with great sensitivity to a complex and challenging set of social factors.





KNAUF

GIVE SPACE TO NEW CONVENTION

In terms of creativity, the sky's the limit

Defying what's possible with conventional bricks or blocks, Knauf Exterior Wall with AQUAPANEL® Technology Inside is lighter, thinner and more flexible, giving you more room to use your imagination. Perfect for new builds, these walls offer the same degree of insulation, better energy performance and a level of durability that will withstand the test of time.

Be certain, choose **AQUAPANEL®**

www.AQUAPANEL.com

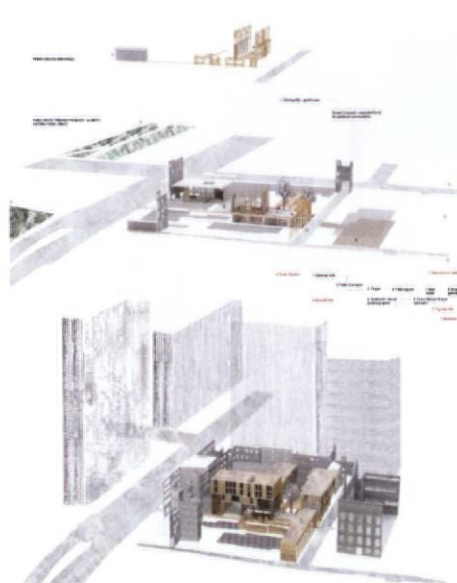


Thinner than bricks or blocks for more interior space

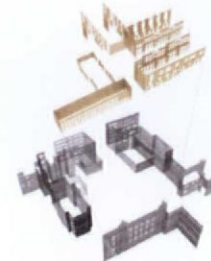
AQUAPANEL®



> PLAN LEVEL_0



> AXO IDENTIFYING ROUTES



A traditional Wayne brick composition carefully placed within the protective brick 'wings' of the city block.



Below the brick wing of the proposed housing towards the opening of the block, a public space is created, which serves the building as a buffer space to a public square. As the wing moves from a public space to a more private space, the building opens up and the spacing between brick blocks increases.



> SECTION B THROUGH UNDERCROFT SPACE LINKING TO EXISTING SCHOOL



> SECTION A THROUGH SHELTERED HOUSING AND COMMUNITY CAFE



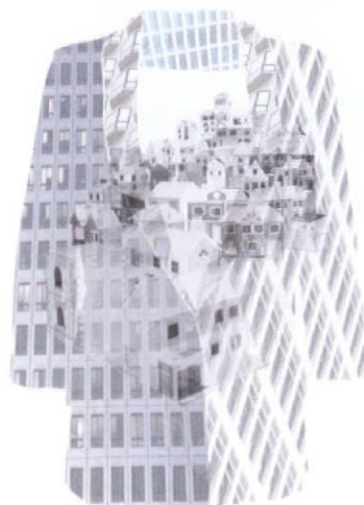
From existing with residents of one London block, many commented on the possibility of creating a small-scale, self-contained, and having someone who can assist for those in a problem, even as best as possible. It made the link about the 20th century release of care that surrounded the accident, from the neighbour who shows a hand close to the welfare and experience of local streets, to the wider community.

THIRD PRIZE

ROSIE HERVEY
5TH YEAR, LONDON
METROPOLITAN
UNIVERSITY,
UNITED KINGDOM

Set on a backland plot in London's Aldgate district on the edge of the City, this proposal explores an edgier and more expressive urban alternative to the default suburban lifestyle that tends to be foisted on people as they grow older. Colonising the voids between existing blocks, the idea of sheltered

housing is given a new twist, as the surrounding urban blocks provide a 'protective jacket' around housing, a chapel/gallery, shops and a public courtyard. Residents are within easy reach of amenities and the buildings and spaces are intended to create an informal network of care that encourages and sustains intergenerational interaction. The jury admired the scheme's evident social and urbanistic ambitions expressed through its beautifully sober, reticent architecture. The sophisticated presentation brought the proposal vividly to life.





washroom fittings

lovair

MORE BUILDINGS NEW PROJECTS NOW ON iPad

Get the latest news, comment, competitions and building studies delivered to you online daily and to your iPad weekly. Plus, use the iPad edition to experience interactive drawings and access bonus content.

Visit the App Store and download your free iPad edition today. Search 'Architects' Journal'

Subscribe and save 30% at
subscription.co.uk/ARAJO/MIPI

TheAJ.co.uk



**YOUR
FREE COPY**

Visit the App Store
today for this week's
free issue



The Architects' Journal



View from...



Dhaka's rapidly growing population has put the capital under immense pressure for more housing and infrastructure

MASUD R KHAN

Dhaka

The political unrest that recently engulfed Dhaka highlights some of the cultural tensions discussed at this year's CAA conference, report *Tony Godwin* and *George Henderson*

Earlier this year Dhaka hosted the triennial gathering of the Commonwealth Association of Architects (CAA). Bangladesh's Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina opened the conference, speaking passionately about the need for architects to address the problems of rapid and unplanned urbanisation. Dhaka's unofficial population is 22 million, generating pressure on housing and infrastructure. She urged the profession to widen its remit beyond the design of buildings in the pursuit of creating more environmentally-friendly and better-planned cities.

Though the CAA attracts international superstars, Bangladeshi architects were also well represented. Dhaka-based speakers included Shamsul Wares, Nahas Ahmed Khalil and Kashef Chowdhury, winner of the AR's Emerging Architecture Award last year. Wares introduced overseas delegates to the architecture of Muzharul Islam, Bangladesh's pioneer Modernist architect, who began his career in the 1950s. His Faculty of Fine Art building at Dhaka University (1956) is claimed to be the first modern building in Bangladesh. Its simple formal arrangement and honest expression shaped by programmatic, cultural and climatic concerns have an enduring resonance. Still in use, keeping alive Bangladeshi arts and craftwork, the building has

become a national cultural centre for Bengalis and remains an enduring master-class in climate-responsive architecture.

Bijoy Jain of Studio Mumbai and Kerry Hill from Singapore spoke of rooting architecture in context as well. Jain's local knowledge and craft skills invoked Soane, with his outdoor studio of full-scale assemblies, while Hill uses private house designs as a test bed for ideas.

From New Zealand, David Sheppard related a story of advocacy by local architects in post-earthquake Christchurch. Keen to be involved at an early stage with the city's future and faced with resistant business and political interests, they collaborated to prepare a strategy document, 'Visions of Opportunity'. Yet despite attracting the attention of national government, architects are still not part of the official rebuilding process.

Sophia van Greunen from Namibia discussed the challenges of developing a sustainable plan for Windhoek, capital of one of Africa's newest independent states (and one of the most arid). 'We have to get involved at a political level to change the context in which we create buildings', she exhorted.

Paul Pholeros argued for the need to rethink the traditional client base and redefine the scope of architecture to include health and well-being. He reminded the

audience that 'poor people have no choices and need our best designs'. Such is the transferable relevance of his work improving the living conditions of native Australian communities that this has led to consultations further afield, including with the office of the Mayor of New York.

The conference overlapped with Bangladesh's International Mother Language Day on 21 February. This annual national holiday is held in remembrance of those killed in 1952 fighting the imposition of Urdu as the national language. Hundreds of thousands of people took to the streets, many making their way to lay flowers and wreaths at Central Shaheed Minar. It was a privilege to be part of such a unifying national event and to witness a passionate celebration of culture. Yet passion also generates friction and, as the CAA left Dhaka, rallies triggered by the outcome of the trials for war crimes committed during the 1971 War of Liberation became violent. With elections due at the latest in January 2014, this is also a time of political change.

The conference was made possible by an organising committee of architects from the Institute of Architects Bangladesh (IAB), aided by student volunteers. Meeting this committed and intellectual group gives hope for the future of architecture and the country.



FROM SECURITY TO PROTECTION

One step further in access control.



Trust is good – control is better. With DORMA's premium solutions, you control the access to your building. From small enterprise solutions to maximum-security concepts. DORMA offers protection you can trust.

DORMA. THE ACCESS.

Viewpoints



PETER COOK

Why don't innovative architects build above a dozen storeys?

A whistle-stop tour of Melbourne, Hong Kong, Santiago, Buenos Aires, Tokyo, Frankfurt and the Gold Coast. Back in London it is not exhaustion and certainly not boredom that I am suffering from, but something far more intangible and worrisome in the long term. Asked to describe what I saw, I can wax endlessly on the dress here, the weird pockets there, the bustle, the traffic (or even, sometimes the well-managed lack of traffic or bustle along the shoreline in Hong Kong on a wet Thursday). But of the mass of building – there seems less and less to say.

At eye level, there is plenty to see and distract: the signage, the colour, the electrics, the digitalised moving images and, of course, real people. But look upwards and the amnesia begins. The generic glass slab might occasionally be challenged by a busy-ness or clever-ness, but not for long as it usually gives over to a neatly resolved horizontality at the top.

In some years there were attempts to change the formula: with three-storey gardens at nine-storey intervals in Foster's Commerzbank (for Frankfurt) of 1997 or the virtuoso twisting of the surfaces at Gehry's Spruce Street housing towers (for Lower Manhattan) of 2011. Yet there has been precious little else that matched the audacity of BBPR's Torre Velasca (for Milan) of 1956, which some might find questionable as mimicry of a historical model, while at the same time celebrating the abilities of mid-20th-century concrete technique.

As time goes on, it seems that some rather good architects such as Cesar Pelli (remember the old No 1 Wilshire or the PDC in Los Angeles?), or Helmut Jahn, are now cooling their act. Perhaps only Kohn Pedersen Fox of the big tower architects are hanging on in with a certain flair for their tops and bottoms.

The heroic claims made for the 'parametric' or for all the opportunities offered by the direct caress of solid material by the wizardry of the computer's three-dimensional abilities seem to have gone off at half-cock.

It is a territory where even Zaha Hadid's creative machine seems to produce less inspiring results than usual, where Reiser + Umemoto have tantalising apertures but then seem to just stop at the top. Toyo Ito sometimes swings a bit on the way up, but Bernard Tschumi hit the nail on the head in a recent lecture where he called attention to the formulaic nature of so much digital spaghetti – including some of his own!

Even so, these are the heroic efforts within an international plethora of glass boxes that as they mass together in any large downtown, deaden the spirit and force you to cast your eyes not upwards (as in the days of immigrants landing in New York or unbelievers confronted by Chartres Cathedral), but sideways or downwards, searching for signs of visible life.

Think of all those architects whose work intrigues us – Morphosis, Zumthor, Snøhetta, SANAA, Siza, Koolhaas ... dilute to taste ... and they rarely get

above 12 storeys from the ground. Steven Holl is just about getting there at Chengdu – artfully drawing your eye down the odd diagonal to avoid the dreaded 'tower' syndrome.

The explanation clearly lies in the reluctance of tower developers to engage with architects who perform brilliantly with horizontality, stacking or the surrounding of space. Even when there are dramatic changes of activity as you move up the building, change of articulation or interval is avoided. Of course this may also be linked to the unfashionableness of identifying the particular in the current taste, but I would put money on their preference for predictable consistency above all.

In London and a few loony places like the Gold Coast, there is still an instinct for play, which can have disastrous consequences, such as at Castle House in Southwark where an environmental device remains as an over-scaled feature atop a rather ordinary shaft, or rather successful consequences in the case of Piano's 'Shard' – even if it, too, homogenises the internal shifts of function. At this point, it is a question of 'eye' – or effectively couture – which enables us to compare the Shard favourably with Pelli's Gran Torre in Santiago, yet in the end, this does not solve the central dilemma.

Surely good architects who have not been so much of a risk on schools or hospitals or courthouses can at last be permitted to climb upwards into the sky.

LAST WORDS

'The first lunar base may be built by a giant spider-like robot built by NASA that can bind the dusty soil into giant bubble structures where astronauts can live'

wired.co.uk on 3D printing, 1 March

'When one building is completed, I become painfully aware of my own inadequacy'

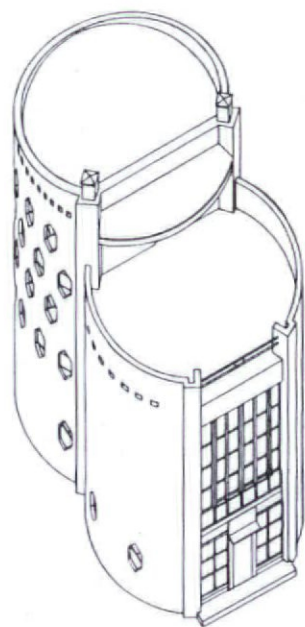
Comment by Toyo Ito on winning the Pritzker Prize, quoted in *The Guardian*, 17 March

'It's like tearing down an Indian burial ground. It's a no-brainer'

David Hasselhoff laments recent moves to demolish the East Side Gallery, the last significant stretch of the Berlin Wall, in order to create access to a new block of luxury flats. *The Washington Post*, 17 March

Your views

Konstantin Melnikov's house in Moscow must be preserved



We are approaching the 40th anniversary of the death of the architect Konstantin Melnikov, and the importance of his built works and the projects he drew has not stopped growing. His visionary schemes were decades ahead of their time: now, as new technologies are beginning to make them feasible, they exert an increasing influence on today's architecture. It is no surprise that many people, not just architects, go to Moscow to see his remarkable house just off the Arbat or his workers' clubs.

However, despite the time that has elapsed since Melnikov's death, and even the death of the state that first supported and then persecuted him, his legacy remains largely inaccessible. Extremely important drawings and documents both from Melnikov's private archive and from official institutions are closed to researchers. Many of his extant buildings are in very poor condition or have been severely deformed by needless and destructive 'modernisations', while others face the threat of demolition. His remarkable cylindrical home in Moscow (pictured), remains in the hands of the architect's granddaughter, Ekaterina Karinskaia. However, she lacks funds to maintain it, or to respond to the endless enquiries from official bodies, professional groups and interested parties. Promises to restore the house, open a museum in adjacent buildings, and assist the family have been made, repeated, and then forgotten.

Because Stalin's Union of Soviet Architects cut Konstantin Melnikov's career short in the 1930s, his influence in Russia has been limited, at least until recently. But worldwide, many of his buildings and projects have become paradigms of modern architecture as a whole.

The signatories to this letter seek the preservation of the Melnikov house as a public museum and fair compensation to the Melnikov family for their efforts to preserve it over the 40

years since the architect's death. They request, further, that all archival materials in Russia relating to Melnikov be preserved in one place, preferably in a museum next to the house, where they will be available to everyone.

We appreciate the complexities of ownership and control which both the house and archival documents present, but trust that a way will be found to resolve these issues. Only recently President Putin has spoken of the need for modern Russia to embrace, protect, and build upon its heritage. The work of Konstantin Melnikov offers a unique possibility for today's Russia to do precisely that. In doing so, Russians will also be embracing part of the world's heritage, and enabling people everywhere to join them in appreciating and building upon it.

Frederick S Starr, Johns Hopkins University and Ginés Garrido, GSD Harvard University. Signatories: Jean-Louis Cohen, Kenneth Frampton, Steven Holl, Rem Koolhaas, Alvaro Siza, and 28 others

Physical education

If one wishes to find scientists practising as artists, as argued in 'The Great Divide' by Joseph Deane (*Overview*, February), then I believe at the moment the best place to look is in theoretical physics. Much of the work of the more cutting-edge physicists (Michio Kaku being the obvious example) seems to involve huge conceptual leaps which are then tested afterwards. This has the effect of intertwining Pallasmaa's categories of 'facts and beliefs, means and goals'. Of course the aim is to get this approach to reach all of science (particularly those aspects which affect our everyday interactions more than string theory etc – no disrespect to physicists); it would be good if these physicists could encourage a new understanding of science from their side of the chasm.

Rory Stott, by email

Theory into practice

Peter Buchanan's essays have been thoughtful and erudite; but how useful have they been to readers who actually make architecture? I come at this as someone who has for more than 50 years struggled (unsuccessfully) with the difficult problem of how clients' briefs can be converted into practical, affordable and beautiful architecture.

After 10 years at the drawing board, in the '60s and '70s I helped to run the vast, ongoing *Architects' Journal* programme of 16 to 24 pages of technical guidance a week, trying to provide architects with guidance to produce better buildings – only to conclude that much of it had been so at odds with the ways in which architects design as to be unusable.

I succumbed, for a time, to the Design Method movement, which aimed to convert design into a quasi-scientific process and failed for the same reason as above: real architects simply do not evolve designs in the ways theorists – not one of whom had ever made a beautiful building – assumed.

I can only say: 'Here we go again'. Peter Buchanan's mélange of words, conceptual diagrams, and what-not make for impressive reading, but are of no practical use to an architect with a client's brief, sitting at a drawing board or computer trying to produce something vastly better than central Hammersmith, Vauxhall, the buildings and spaces around Stratford and Barking stations, and the rest of the visual nightmare that is gradually overtaking London and cities.

To end on a positive note, I would welcome being proved wrong. May I suggest that the AR publish, from time to time, the work of designers who demonstrably have used Peter Buchanan's ideas, so that we can see how they work out in practice? Such hard evidence would be instructive and encouraging.

Maritz Vandenberg, London

Letters to the Editor should be sent to:
The Architectural Review
69-77 Paul Street
London EC2A 4NW
Or by email to:
areditorial@emap.com
Letters may be edited

Silestone® Authentic Life

Kitchen and Bathroom Surfaces

Each element that surrounds us contributes to build our reality.
That's the authentic existence, the existence that defines who you are.

Silestone® lets you express character and emotion through your kitchen and bathroom. The only quartz worktop with bacteriostatic protection, and available in over 80 varied stunning colours and three exclusive textures.

Live the authentic life, live your life with Silestone®.



*"I love architecture and fashion,
but the authentic things are in the houses we live,
in the clothes real people wear.
That's what I tell people on my blog.
That is Authentic life."*

Macarena Gea (Blogger)



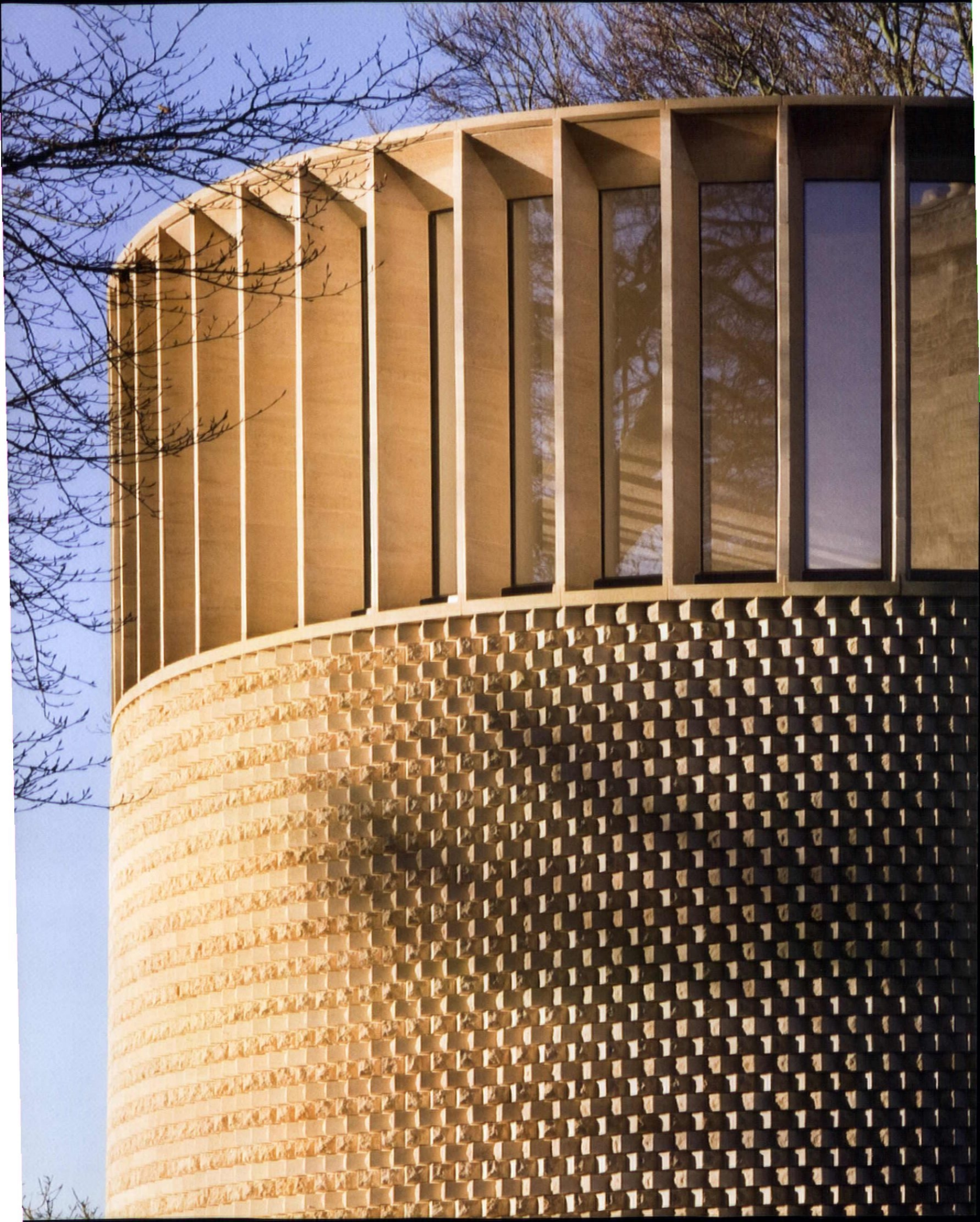
Worktop UNSUI / INTEGRITY Sink / SUEDE Exclusive Texture

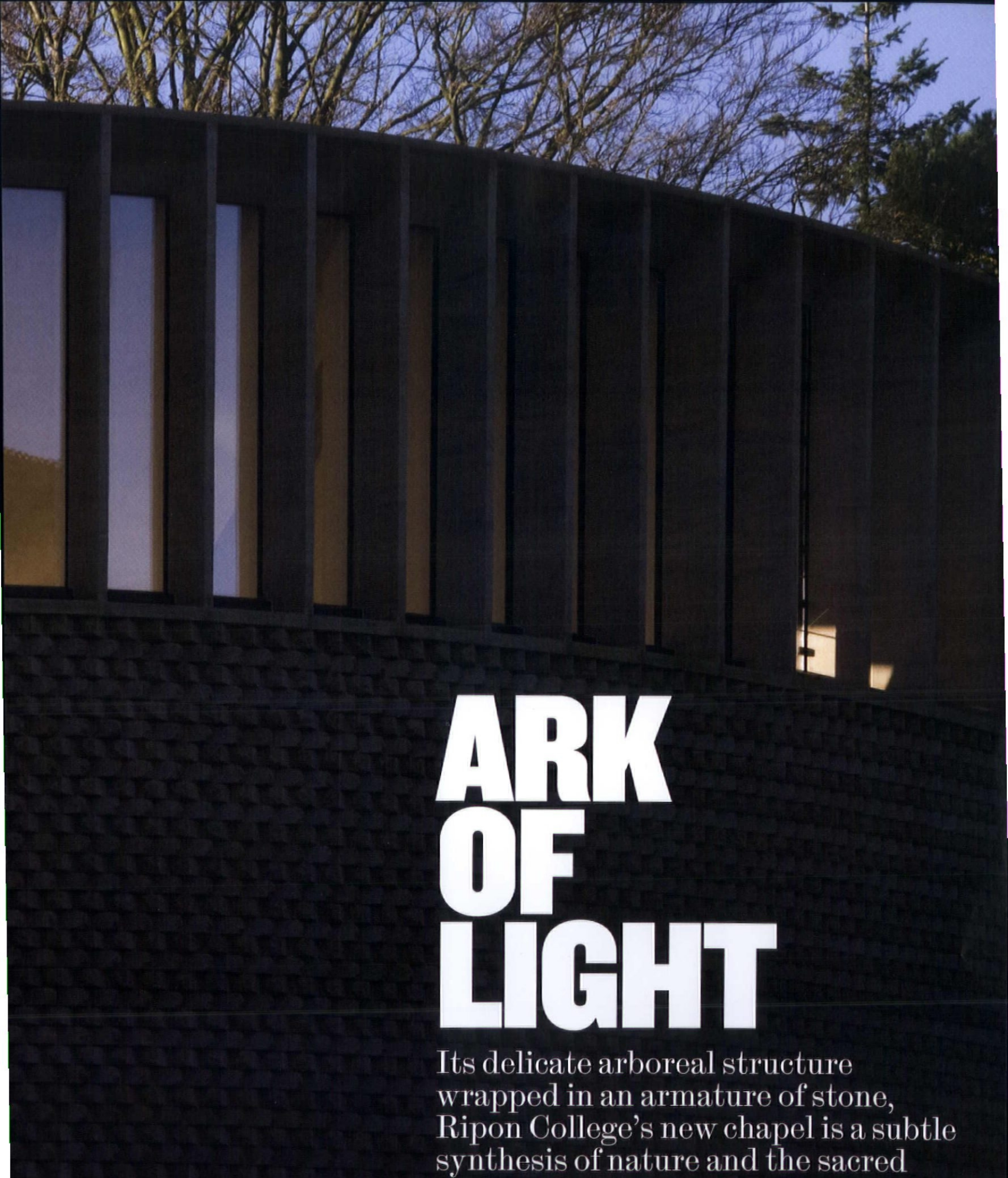
www.silestone.com



Reject all imitations.
Choose Silestone.
The Original Quartz







ARK OF LIGHT

Its delicate arboreal structure wrapped in an armature of stone, Ripon College's new chapel is a subtle synthesis of nature and the sacred

CRITICISM

PETER SALTER

PHOTOGRAPHS

DENNIS GILBERT

Ripon Chapel, designed by Niall McLaughlin Architects, sits in the garden of Ripon College, a theological centre on the edge of the village of Cuddesdon, Oxfordshire. The chapel sits off the brow of the hill, in deference to the parish church which can be seen on slightly rising ground. The site of the walled precinct of the college is not in the expected urban form of Oxford, but perhaps more like that of a model farm. It is reached by following country lanes that lead over a bridge, and is set among warm honey-coloured manor houses. As part of the client body, the Sisters of the Community of St John the Baptist have relocated their convent to the precincts of Ripon College. The new chapel is a locus for their orders of prayer, their life-long commitment, and also becomes the context for the college's theological reflection. Proposed courtyard accommodation of the convent has not been built.

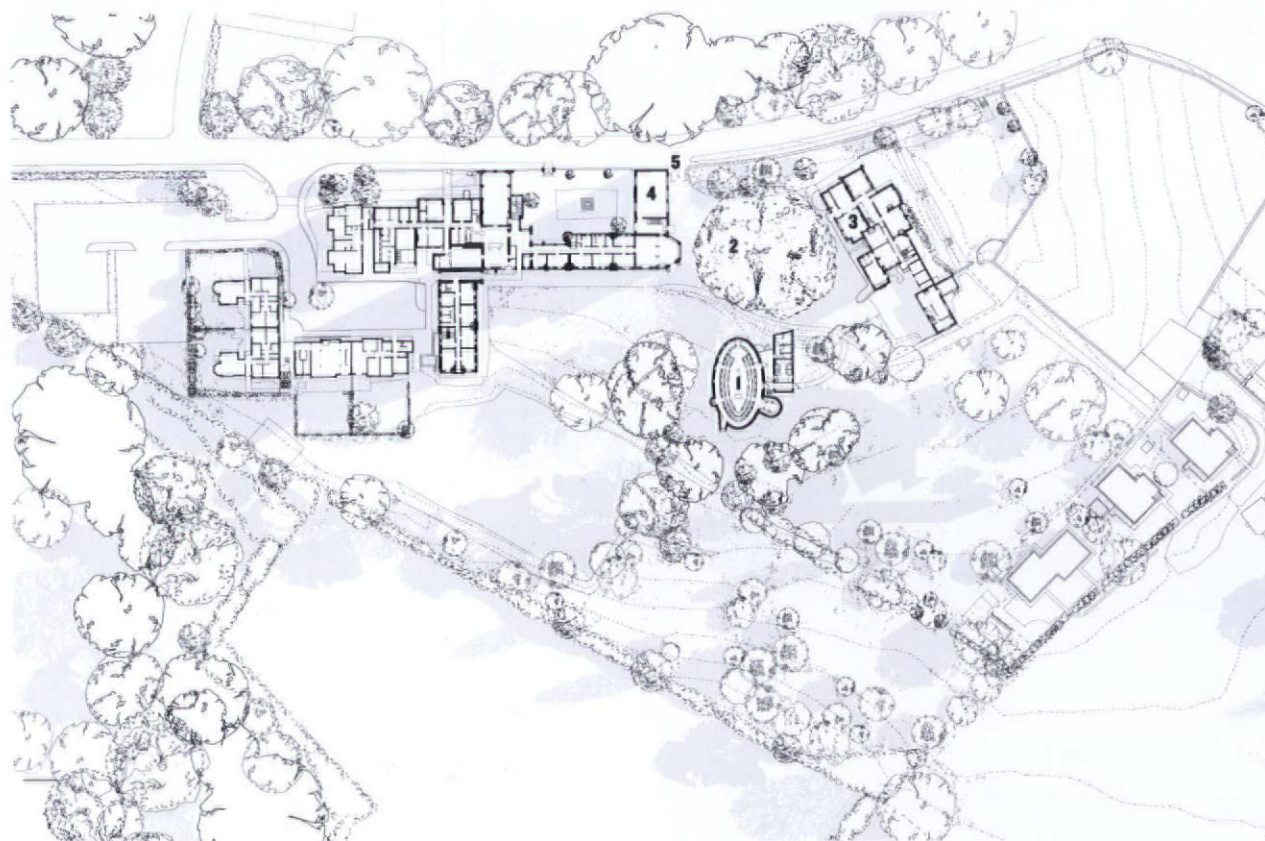
The architecture of George Edmund Street's college of 1854 sets the institutional tone for the complex. The open-sided courtyards and wings of buildings carry none of the tight quad form of the medieval Oxford college. The garden with its rather languid vegetation provides the over-sized site for the chapel, which is approached through a covered porch on the south side of the elliptical structure forming part of the sacristy.

Looking at the site plan of the chapel without its complex, it does appear alone, like a moored boat, tied to a giant beech within the haven of the walled garden. Its elliptical form presents an uncompromising and 'proper' architecture at ease with the majestic presence of surrounding mature trees. It is as though the trees have connived in the setting out of the chapel, the boughs of the sweet chestnut, beech and cedar giving shelter to its presence. Street's adjacent college buildings are attenuated and elaborate, forming courtyards as complete ensembles, with a 'nod' to the vernacular, and institutional

in setting. The presence of the chapel with its self-conscious vocabulary of stone and fenestration is certainly a match for Street's neo-Gothic bays and oriel windows. The stone detailing of the Street building is matched by the stripped clean detailing of Clipsham stone of McLaughlin's mannered building. Above the smooth and dressed storey-height plinth is a blind band of rusticated stone coursing that wraps the building like a vestment. Its fabric, textured by alternate courses of dressed and split stone laid at 45 degrees to the wall geometry, catches the sunlight on its traverse of the elliptical drum. The scale of stone blocks matches the courses of the Street building, but unlike that building the chapel comes alive because of the geometry that accentuates the rustication like a magnificent tooled shawl.

What McLaughlin and Street have in common is a sense of permanence, of building for perpetuity. The nuns, although dwindling in number, observe their office five times a day with high church ceremony; they chose building detail that is conscious of that perpetuity rather than the usual building warranties.

The arrival of the order of nuns at Ripon reminds you of those illustrations of early settlers to America – are they dismantling or constructing the boat structure? The carcass is an armature for an idea and a belief. The interior of the chapel carries resonances of a boat structure and of the vegetal forms associated with stone vaulting systems. The chapel's elliptical shape offers the same sense of completeness as a boat, in which you carry everything that is needed for a journey. Its fullness reminds me of the little Celtic gold boat with its oars preserved in the Museum of Ireland, its form produced by the workings of hand and eye drawing out the shape. In a similar way, McLaughlin arrives at his concept, showing a finger forming a depression in clay, a uniformly distributed



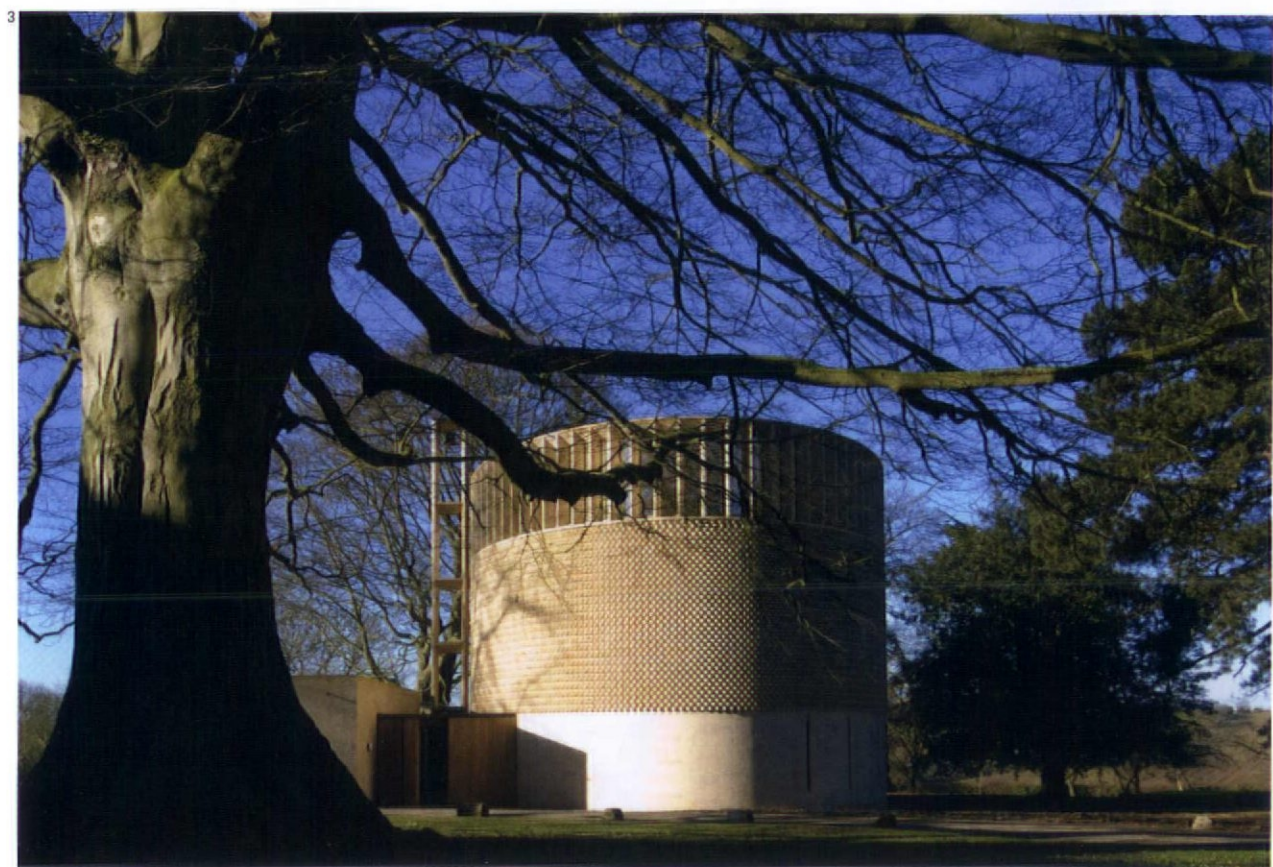
site plan

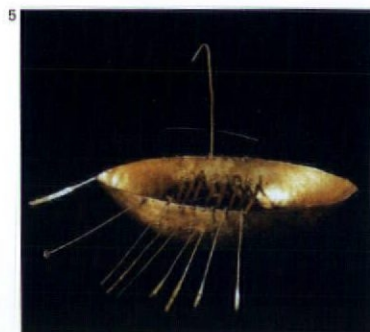
- 1 main chapel
- 2 existing beech tree
- 3 College House
- 4 Linden Building
- 5 entrance to college

1. (Previous page) the arboreal structure of the chapel is crowned by a narrow band of clerestory glazing
 2. The columns meet to form a filigree vault, allowing light from the clerestory to wash through the chapel. Its central feature is a lectern, emphasising the educational function of the space
 3. Ancient trees surround the compact, elliptical structure, like a boat poised in the landscape

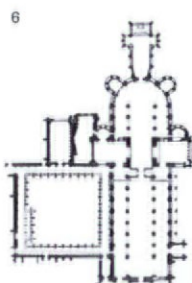
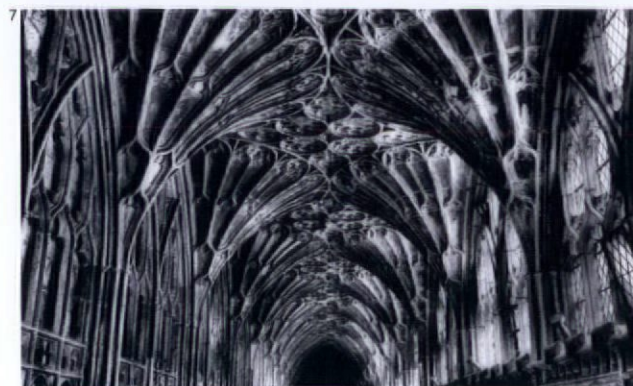


**Ripon Chapel,
 Cuddesdon,
 Oxfordshire, UK,
 Níall McLaughlin
 Architects**





4. The boat is a recurring image in Christian theology: here Christ and the apostles navigate the Sea of Galilee
5. The swelling fullness of the cymbiform chapel recalls an ancient Celtic golden boat in the Museum of Ireland



6 & 7. Gloucester Cathedral and its cloister, famous for its intricate fan vaults. Stone becomes lace in the hands of Gothic masons
8. The timber frame of the chapel seems to stop short of the soffit, creating an impression of weightlessness. A sequence of sections (below) shows the structural principles

loaded structure displacing ground. The chapel space steps down into the ceremonial dish, marked by two brass plates locating the centering of the elliptical geometry which in turn locks the altar table and the lectern into the geometry of the chapel.

The chapel, like the boat where every cargo is balanced against its plimsoll line and centre of gravity, distributes its precious spaces as niches and outliers, so that the sisters' prayer space is sited opposite and across the ellipse to the niche that is to contain the tabernacle of the Blessed Sacrament. The focus of prayer is glanced at from the settles opposite. In his competition document, McLaughlin alludes to the accretion of structures around the chancels of Gloucester and Canterbury Cathedrals. Such chapels, tombs and chantries tried to position their form as close to, and aligned with the altar and the Sacrament, as though such spaces had become part of the ceremony of worship. However, this is not a chapel for the village, which has its own parish church beyond. Consequently, the chapel has no font or other furniture of public worship.

The chapel design has to reconcile the wishes of both client constituencies. The high church ceremony associated with the Sisters of the Community of St John the Baptist, which included at the chapel's first blessing a celebration with incense, and that of Ripon College which, one would like to imagine, would use the space much like a Scuola in Venice, with fixed seating around the periphery of a central space used for readings, debates, and presided over by an altar of the Blessed Sacrament. Unlike the usual arrangement of the church, this chapel locates its altar in the western end of the space – albeit, the altar table and the lectern have interchangeable positions on the east-west axis of the chapel. This has much to do with the orientation of entry to the space and its relationship to the siting of the unbuilt convent. The clients wanted the lectern to be the first component of worship to be seen on entry to the chapel. Turning left at the entrance, the visitor follows

the ambulatory down a ramp that reconciles disabled access with the quiet processional route to the lectern sited at the eastern end of the space. The slope emphasises McLaughlin's wish for the chapel to be grounded at a lower level to the outside space, like a medieval church in which the threshold steps down into the nave.

The main space of the chapel is formed from a layering of structure. As a geometric figure, the ellipse enables the external wall to be self-supporting. The setting-out used the dimensions of the major and minor axes to describe the ellipse full-size on the ground, just as medieval craftsmen set out at full size the curving stone components on a tracing floor. The projecting intersections of geometry became the nodal points for the positions of the columns. Much like the erection of a boat skeleton, or the timber centerings for an arch, the chapel portals were erected and became the datum for all the



basic glulam timber frame



roof is supported by the frame



walls encircle the erect frame

**Ripon Chapel,
Cuddesdon,
Oxfordshire, UK,
Níall McLaughlin
Architects**

9



9. A thumb print in clay recalls God's moulding of Adam – an indexical trace of creation – and inspired the chapel's sunken floor

10. The architects work on a large-scale plan on plaster, a technique informed by Peter Salter's article on the traditional design process used to create fan vaults (AR January 2011)

10

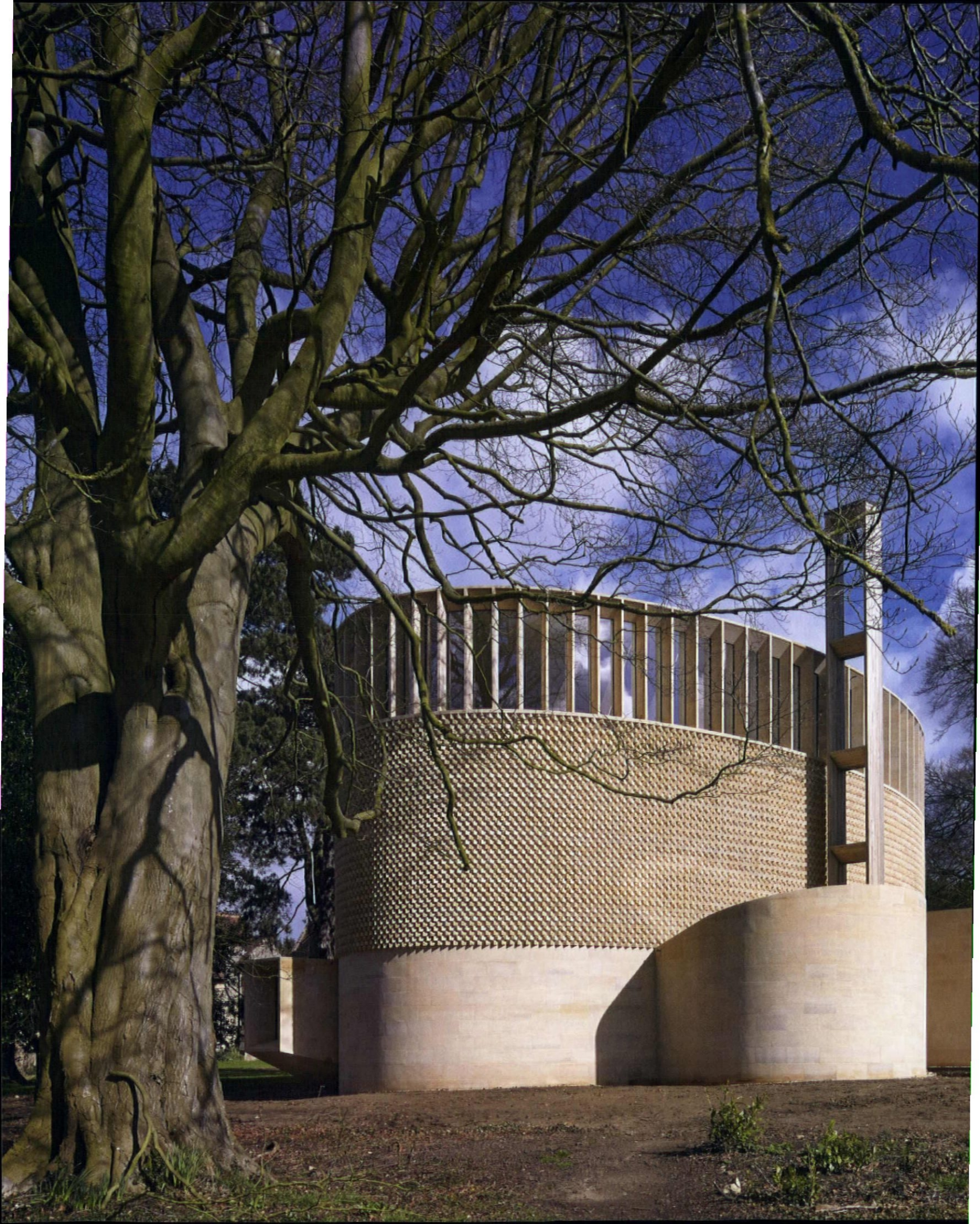


later elements of structure. They stood exposed to the weather, waiting for the layers of walling to be built that would finally enclose and protect the space. Inside, the composite V-shaped columns describe the space, so that the ambulatory is a space in between the layers of structure. The V-shaped columns turn at the height of the clerestory to form a portal structure, like the elbow of a ship's rib or the cruck of a medieval frame. A spur of timber from that elbow completes the connection with the roof. The delicacy with which the soffit connects to the columns is due to the stability of the elliptical geometry and the interlacing of the portal structures. The soffit of the roof is 'belly' shaped, its keel running along the axis of the ellipse. Its curvature lifts to the clerestory, enabling light to be reflected at high level through the depth of space. The complexity of the serial forms and the light remind one of the overlaid clear glazed windows of a Norfolk church, the clerestory glazing with its fine stone mullions like a curtain wall in the perpendicular style.

This perceived lifting of the soffit almost separates the column structure from the carcass of the roof, so that the structure becomes part of another order of building. A space within a space much like choir stalls, a large piece of architectural furniture. As an inserted form, it carries the spirit of the Gothic, in which soaring structure and light equate to godliness and heaven. However, this structure needs no flying buttress; as an inserted

structure, it is more akin to the fan vault, resolving its load paths within its envelope. McLaughlin writes of the influence of Gloucester Cathedral. Did he visit the cloister? The stone fan vaults spring from their plinths in ribbed vegetal forms that bifurcate and interweave close to the apex of the arch. Like the fan vault and unlike the Gothic, McLaughlin's timber portal uses the same geometric section throughout the structural ensemble. Similarly, the decorated keystone of the fan vault finds its equivalent in the cross weaving timber structure that locks the portal frame into a self-supporting arch. McLaughlin consulted the sisters on the structural alternatives to this fixing detail; they chose the detail for its clarity and sense of perpetuity. At Gloucester, the bench seats are like a string course around the perambulation of the cloister; at Ripon the bench seats share a base with the columns. The honey-coloured stone of the Gloucester cloister finds its equivalent at Ripon in the lime-rendered walls that reflect a similar quality of light. In both the cloister and the Ripon chapel, the paring down of the materials used contributes to the quietness and power of the space.

McLaughlin is also to design the Tabernacle for the Blessed Sacrament, to be made in oak and brass, as a further refinement of the scale of the chapel. As one of the rare reflective architects, McLaughlin has responded sensitively to the spiritual challenge of this commission.

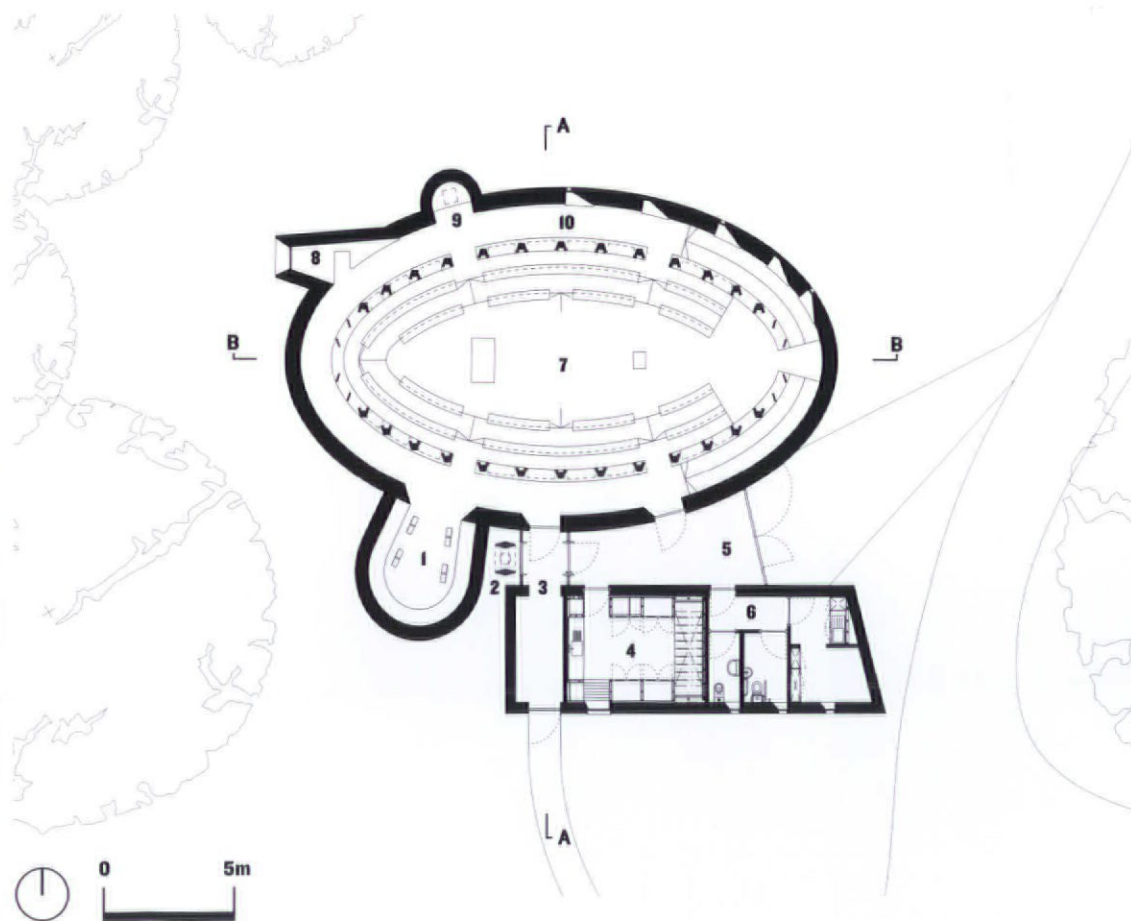


**Ripon Chapel,
Cuddesdon,
Oxfordshire, UK,
Niall McLaughlin
Architects**

11. The facade is detailed above the podium with a textured band laid in alternating courses of dressed and split stone
12. McLaughlin's addition sits in an easy dialogue with Street's original college buildings



- 1 sisters' prayer room
- 2 bell tower
- 3 prayer board
- 4 sacristy
- 5 entrance lobby
- 6 WCs
- 7 main chapel
- 8 private prayer space
- 9 blessed sacrament niche
- 10 ambulatory



ground floor plan

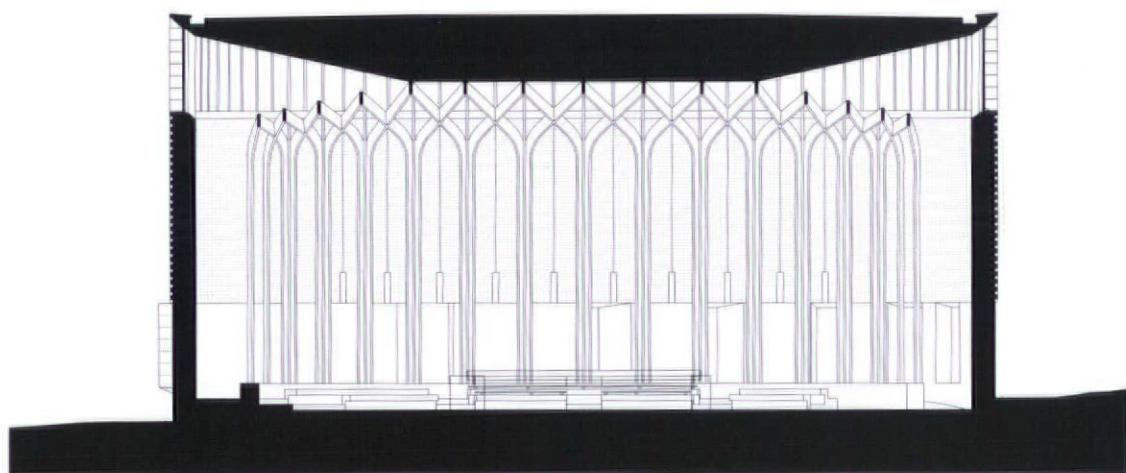




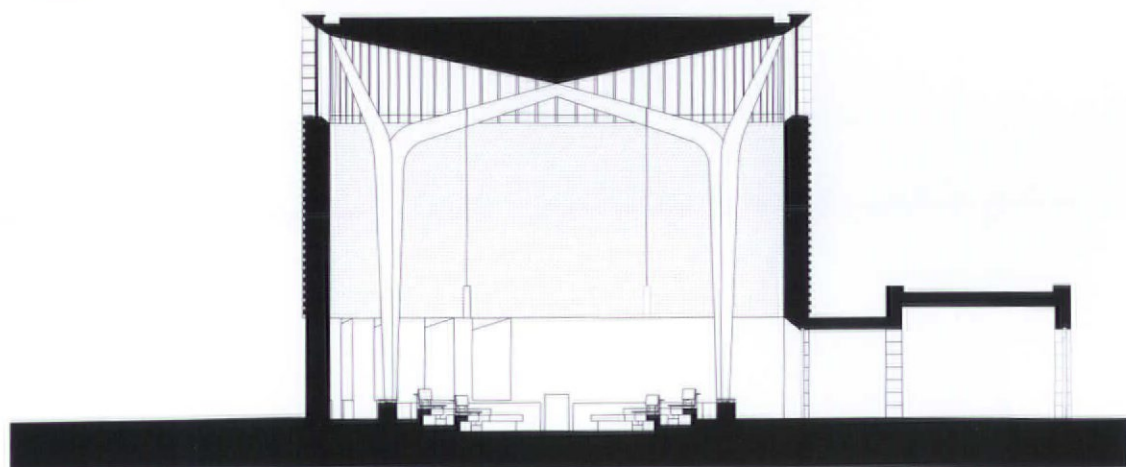


**Ripon Chapel,
Cuddesdon,
Oxfordshire, UK,
Níall McLaughlin
Architects**

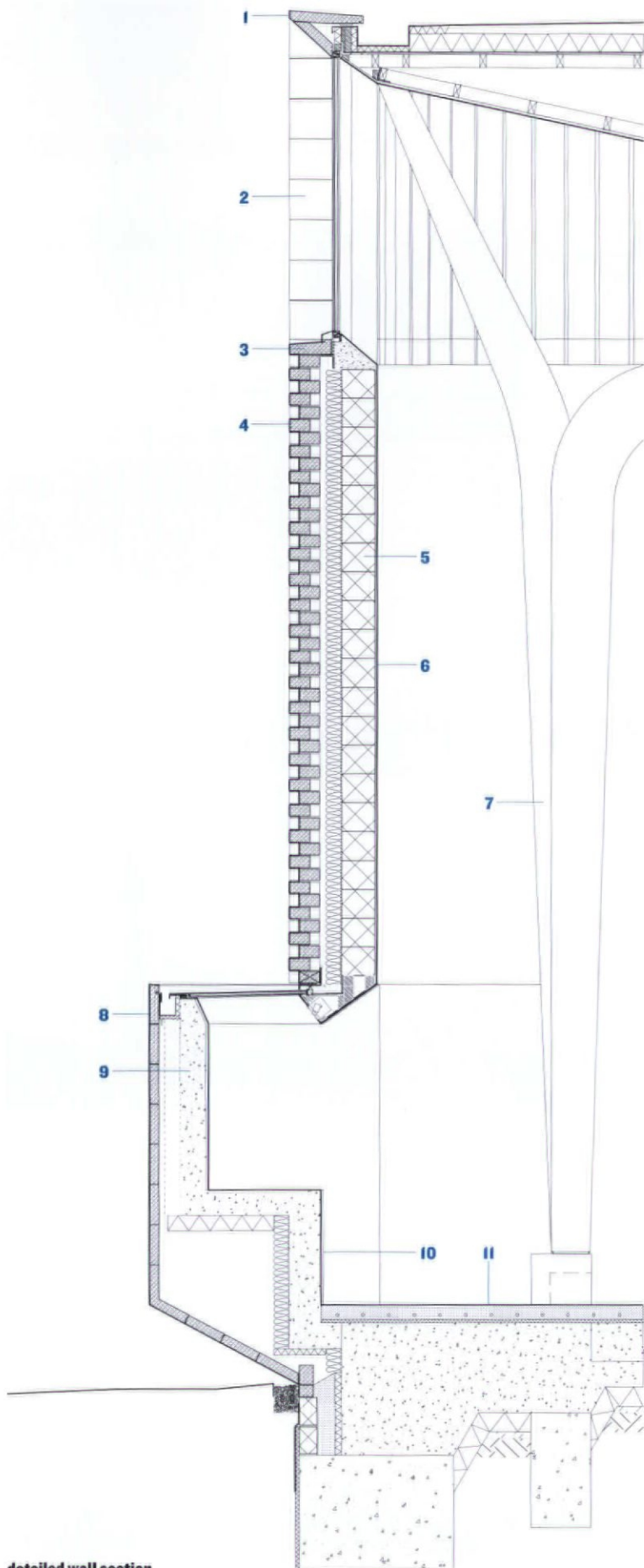
13. (Previous page)
the frame meets like
interlinked fingers below
the meniscus of the roof
14. Materially, the wooden
columns and ribs recall
the traditional argument
that Gothic architecture
derives from the forest
canopy, echoing the forms
of the surrounding trees
15. A circle of clerestory
glazing creates an ethereal
halo of natural light



section BB

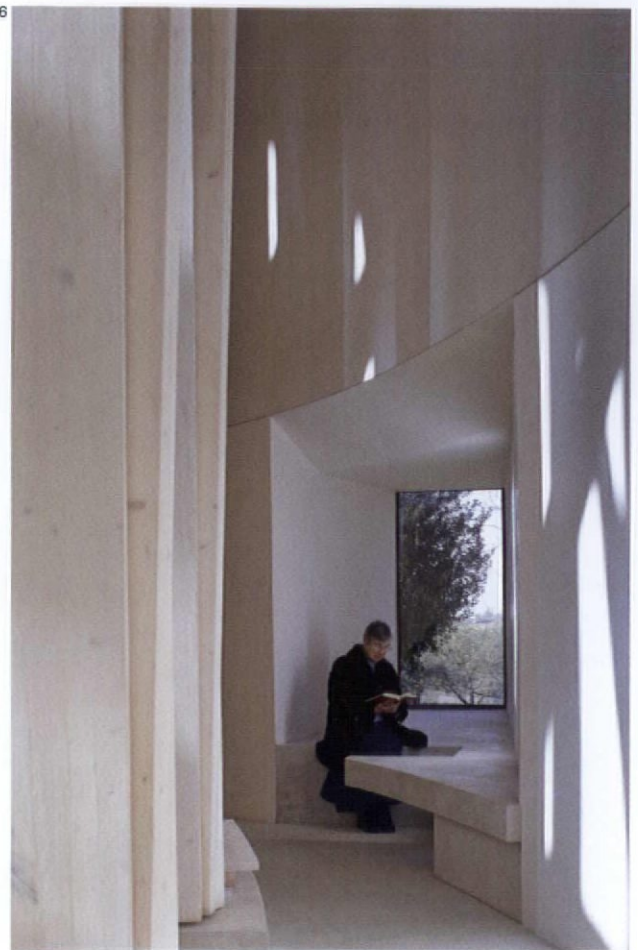


section AA



detailed wall section

16



- 1 ashlar stone capping
- 2 ashlar stone fins
- 3 stone sill
- 4 dogtooth stone wall
- 5 reinforced concrete block
- 6 textured lime plaster render
- 7 glulam timber structure
- 8 ashlar cladding
- 9 reinforced concrete wall with lime plaster finish
- 10 fair faced concrete
- 11 power floated concrete floor
- 12 clear frameless glass louvres
- 13 rain water pipe
- 14 clear fixed glazing
- 15 timber fins

**Ripon Chapel,
Cuddesdon,
Oxfordshire, UK,
Niall McLaughlin
Architects**

16 & 17. A bay window extrudes through the curved walls, illuminating a human-scaled, contemplative space

Architect

Níall McLaughlin
Architects

Structural engineer

Price and Myers

Services engineer

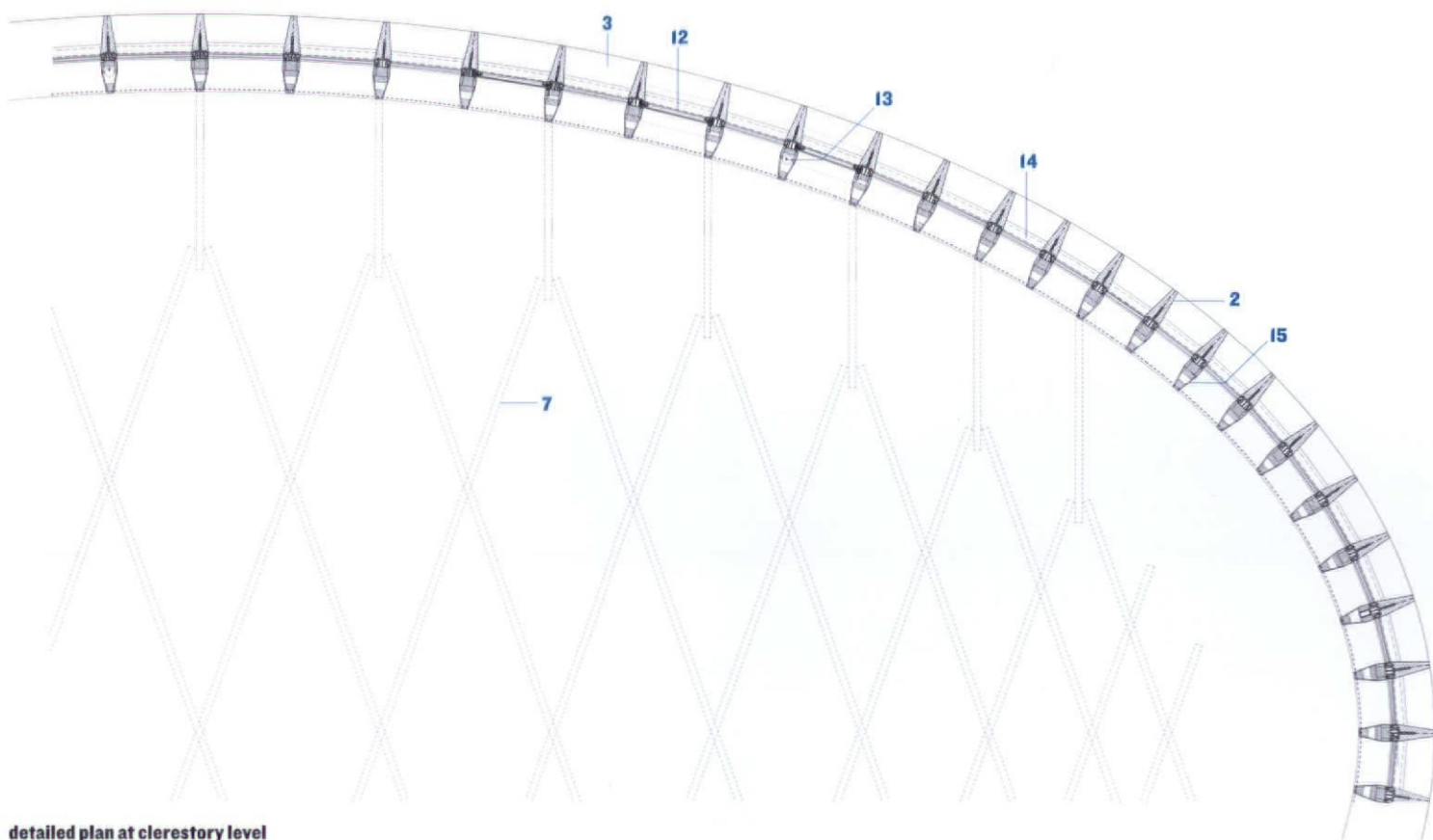
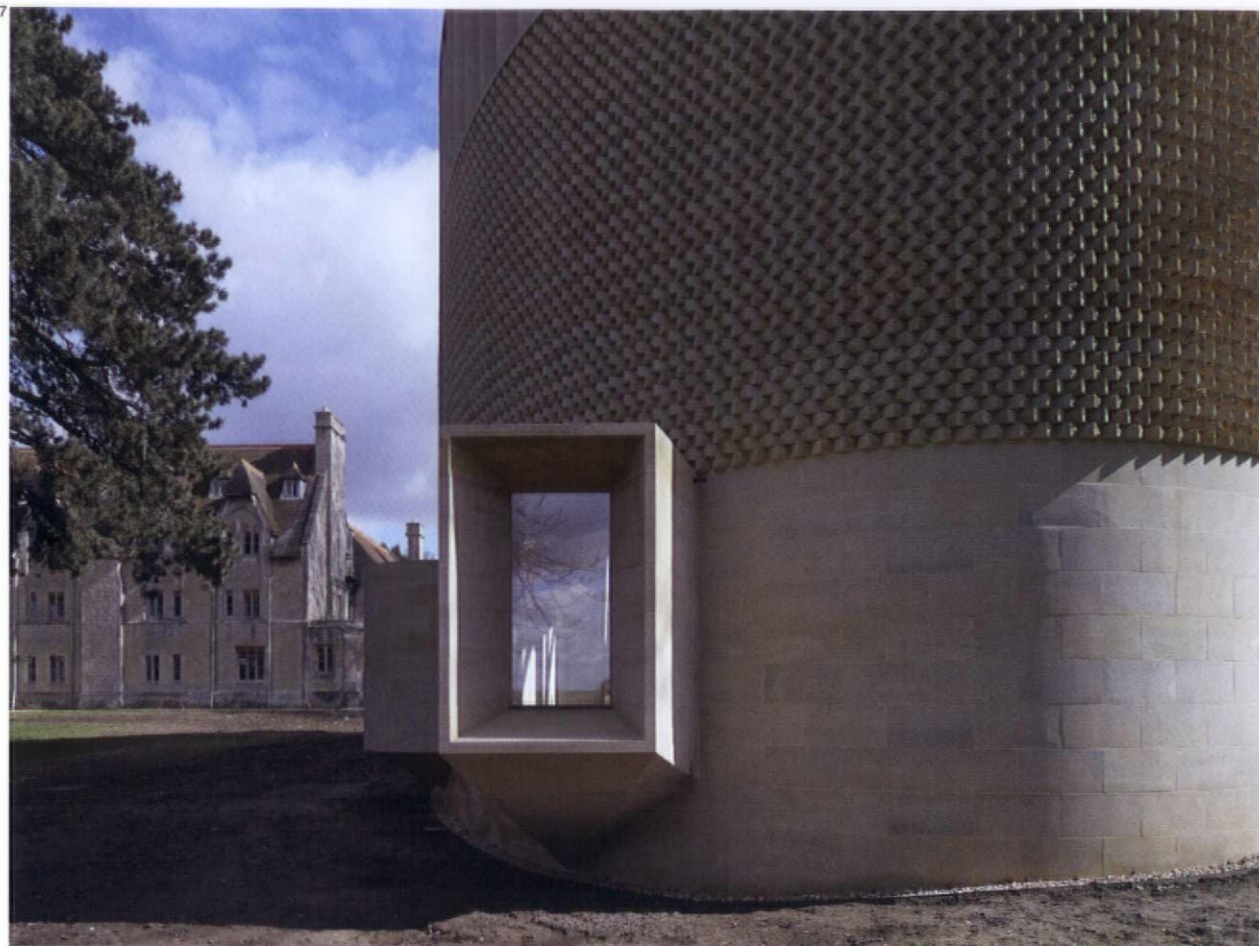
Synergy Consulting
Engineers

Stone consultant

Harrison Goldman

Photographs

All photographs by
Dennis Gilbert/VIEW
except 1, which
is courtesy of
the architect



detailed plan at clerestory level

SNOW LANTERN

A prototypical house by
Kengo Kuma updates an ancient
approach to living through
the severe winters of Japan's
northernmost island





REPORT

ROB GREGORY

In practice for over 25 years, Kengo Kuma has long held true to his core mission to humanise the city with natural materials. Before setting up his own studio, he learnt his trade from traditional craftsmen and went on to make his earliest AR appearances with projects such as the Nakagawa-machi Bato Hiroshige Museum of Art (AR October 2001) that modernised and refined a form of visual and physical porosity more commonly associated within traditional agricultural typologies. From here his work migrated into the city, bringing elements and characteristics of the natural world to complex and tightly hemmed-in sites, culminating in the most recently published Tourist Information Tower in Tokyo (AR November 2012) that exemplifies this motivation.

So in this lineage, this project is even more curious than these startlingly surreal images first suggest, taking the architect back to the rural outskirts and seeing him perform an apparent about-turn on his most enduring architectural preoccupation. Here, instead of bringing nature into the city, he has created an object that sits in the landscape like a conspicuous city slicker on a weekend retreat, dressing up a highly traditional rural building type in unsoiled, high-performance all-weather apparel.

The 180-degree shift in rationale, however, is conveniently justified by the word 'experimental', as this is not the stand-alone farmer's cottage its solitary figure at first suggests. Instead it is a working prototype and academic guest house, commissioned by an environmental technology research institute called LXIL JS Foundation that runs annual on-site student design and

construction competitions to promote sustainable construction, for which Kuma is site architect and chief judge. 'Our client did not want a technology-led model', explains Kuma, 'so we were encouraged to produce a design that took account of the history and specific locality of the site.'

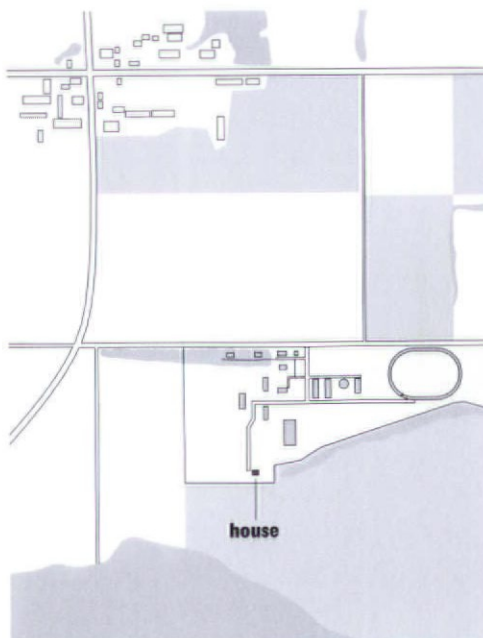
On the client's former ranch site, in Taikicho, Hokkaido, the northernmost island of Japan, Kuma and team took inspiration from the homes of the indigenous Ainu people, whose simple 'Chise' homes combat temperatures that fall as low as -25, with apparent ease. Chise translates as 'house of the earth' and 'house of grass' in contrast to the traditional domestic typology on Honshu where a private house is principally a 'house in wood' or 'house of earthen wall'. As such, Chise are not raised above the ground, but are on the earth, with a ground-bearing base of cattail mats arranged around a central fireplace kept lit all year round.

Accordingly, Kuma chose this as his design guide, instead of the less appropriately designed homes that tend to have thick walls and small windows that separate occupants from their surroundings. As the architect explains, 'In this house, we wanted an environment in which you could feel the nature even from inside, so the wall of this house penetrates light and you can sense the moving of the sun.' This is Kuma's

'Kuma has created an object that sits in the landscape like a conspicuous city slicker on a weekend retreat, dressing up a highly traditional rural building type in unsoiled, high-performance all-weather apparel'

House, Hokkaido, Japan, Kengo Kuma and Associates

1. (Previous page) at night the translucent skin of the house glows with inner light, like a luminescent deep-sea creature
2. In its verdant setting the building is a strikingly blank interloper



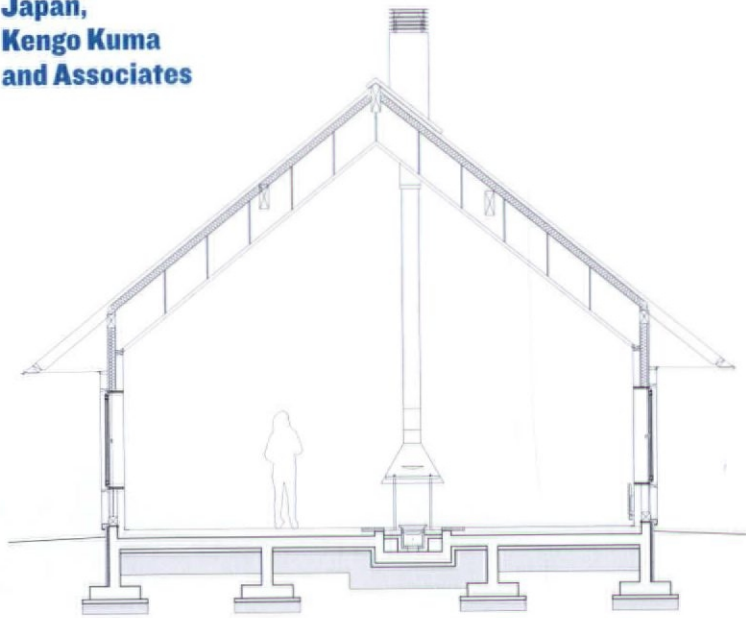
location plan

2

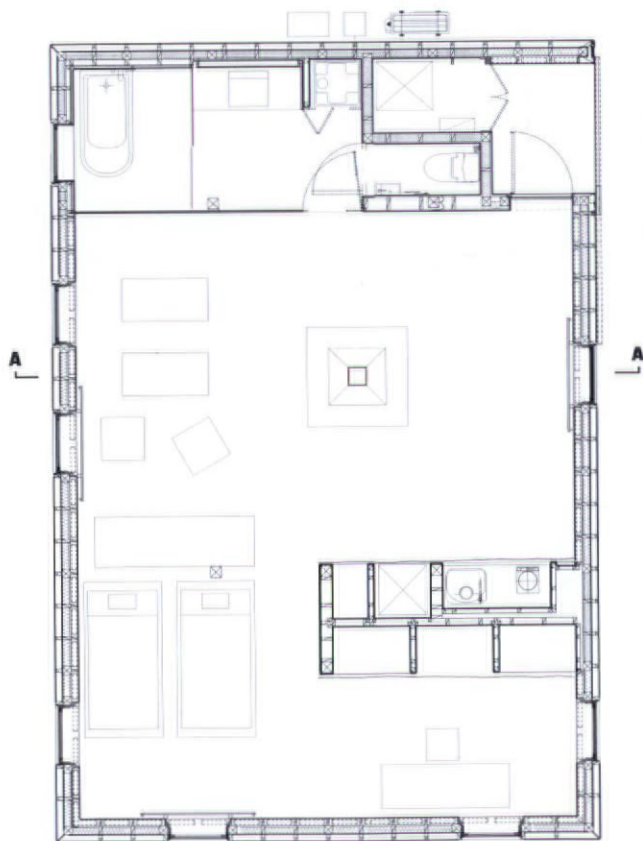




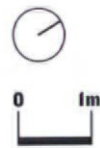
**House,
Hokkaido,
Japan,
Kengo Kuma
and Associates**



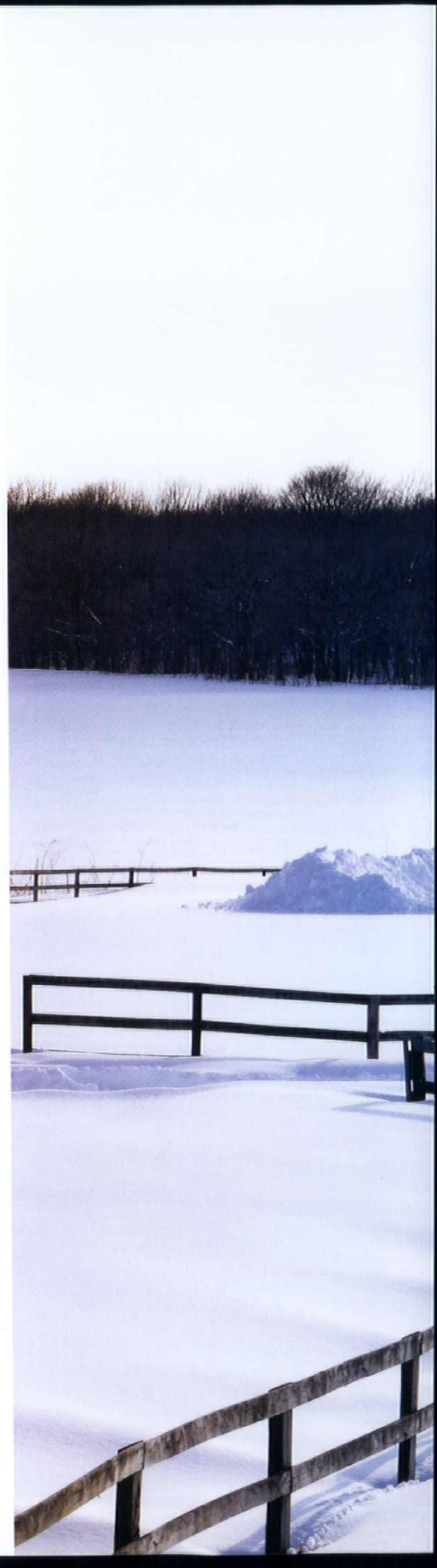
section AA



ground floor plan



3. The house is built to survive the cruel winters of Hokkaido where temperatures plummet to -25 degrees Celsius





**House,
Hokkaido,
Japan,
Kengo Kuma
and Associates**

interpretation of the 'house of grass' component of the Chise, which sees the roof and walls – traditionally covered with sedge or bamboo grass to secure heat-insulating properties – replaced by a synthetic coat. This four-season outfit comprises an external skin of polyester fluorocarbon coating, an interstitial layer of insulation made from recycled PET plastic bottles, and a removable inner lining made from fibreglass fabric which is simply held in place with a magnetic tape very similar in performance to Velcro. The combined build-up remains translucent, giving the house a tent-like quality that Kuma describes not only as the by-product of 'a dynamic form of environmental engineering for this time', but a manifestation of his 'longing for a life surrounded by natural light, as if wrapped in daylight on the grassland'. In this regard, without relying on any lighting system, the Memu Meadows house responds to nature's timescale, where the architect hopes its residents will 'simply get up when it gets light, and sleep after dark', continuing with the aspiration that, 'we expect this membrane house to enable you to lead a life that synchronises with the rhythm of nature'.

A slender larch frame gives the membrane layers structure and form, which is punctuated by a number of boxed-out frames. These apertures extend the experimental capacity of the 80-square-metre house, allowing a variety of window cassettes to be performance-tested over time along with its changeable underwear.

As Kuma recalls, 'we learned a lot from the wisdom of the Ainu people, and were assured that technology was not the only solution to lead a modern life. Through this, by combining ancestral wisdom with new techniques, we are trying to propose a 21st-century archetype of housing for Hokkaido'.



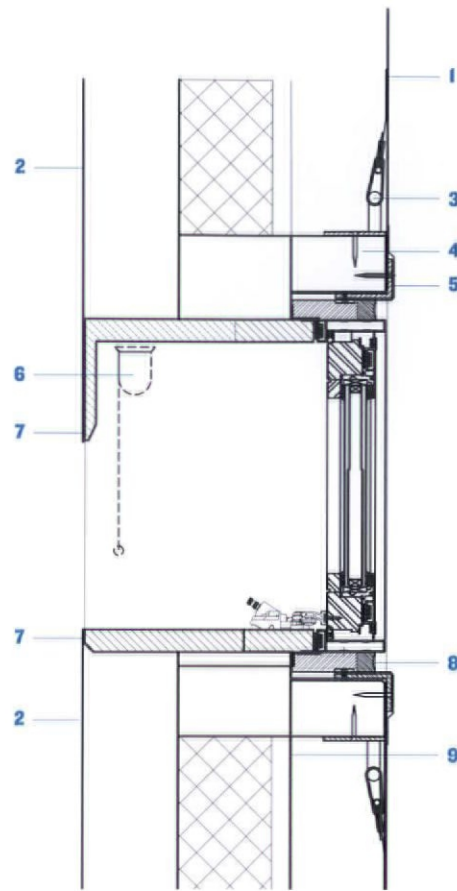
4. A central hearth heats the tent-like house (its inner skin can be removed for cleaning)

5. Beneath the high-tech surface is a conventional wooden frame

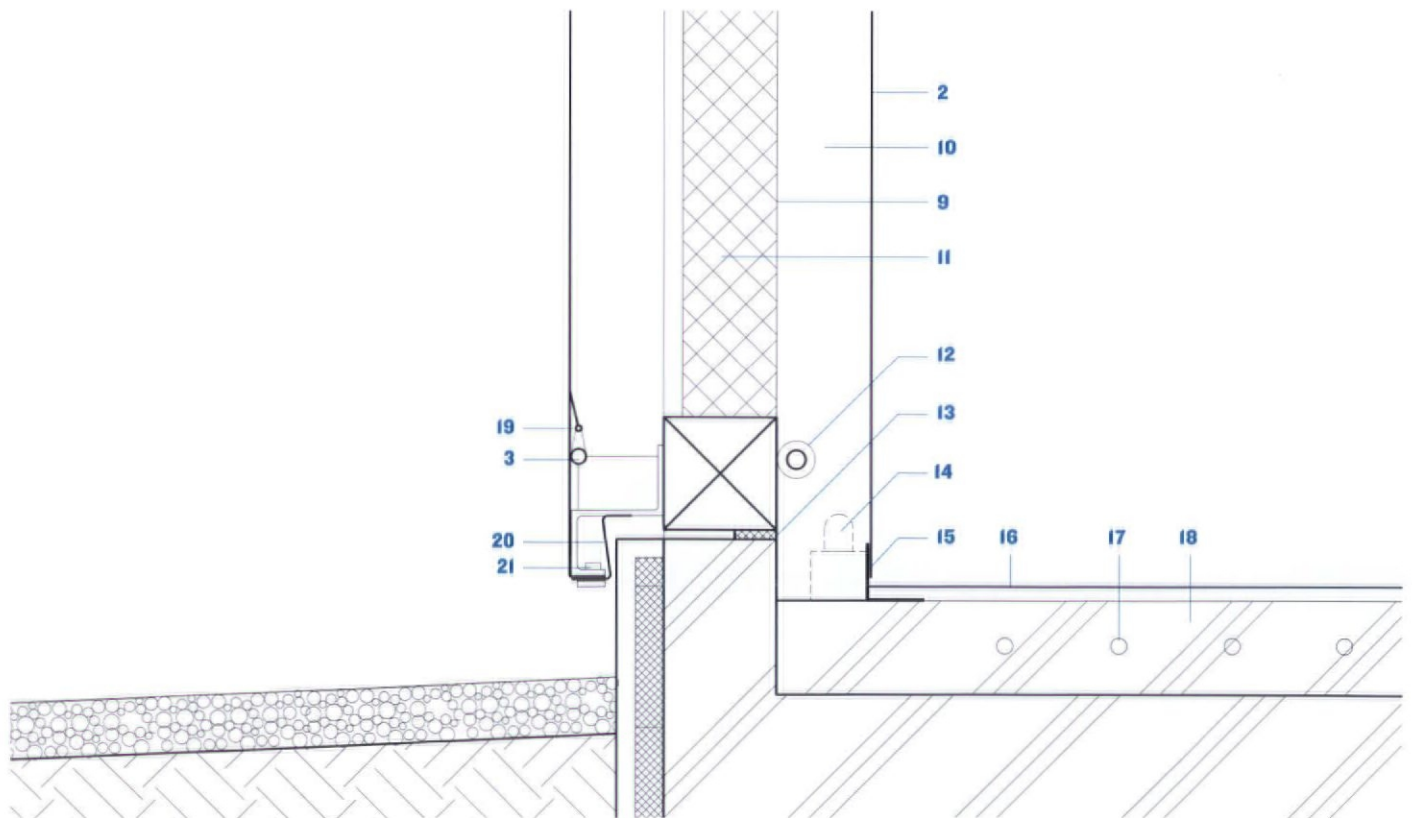
6. The fabric panels are attached with magnetic strips



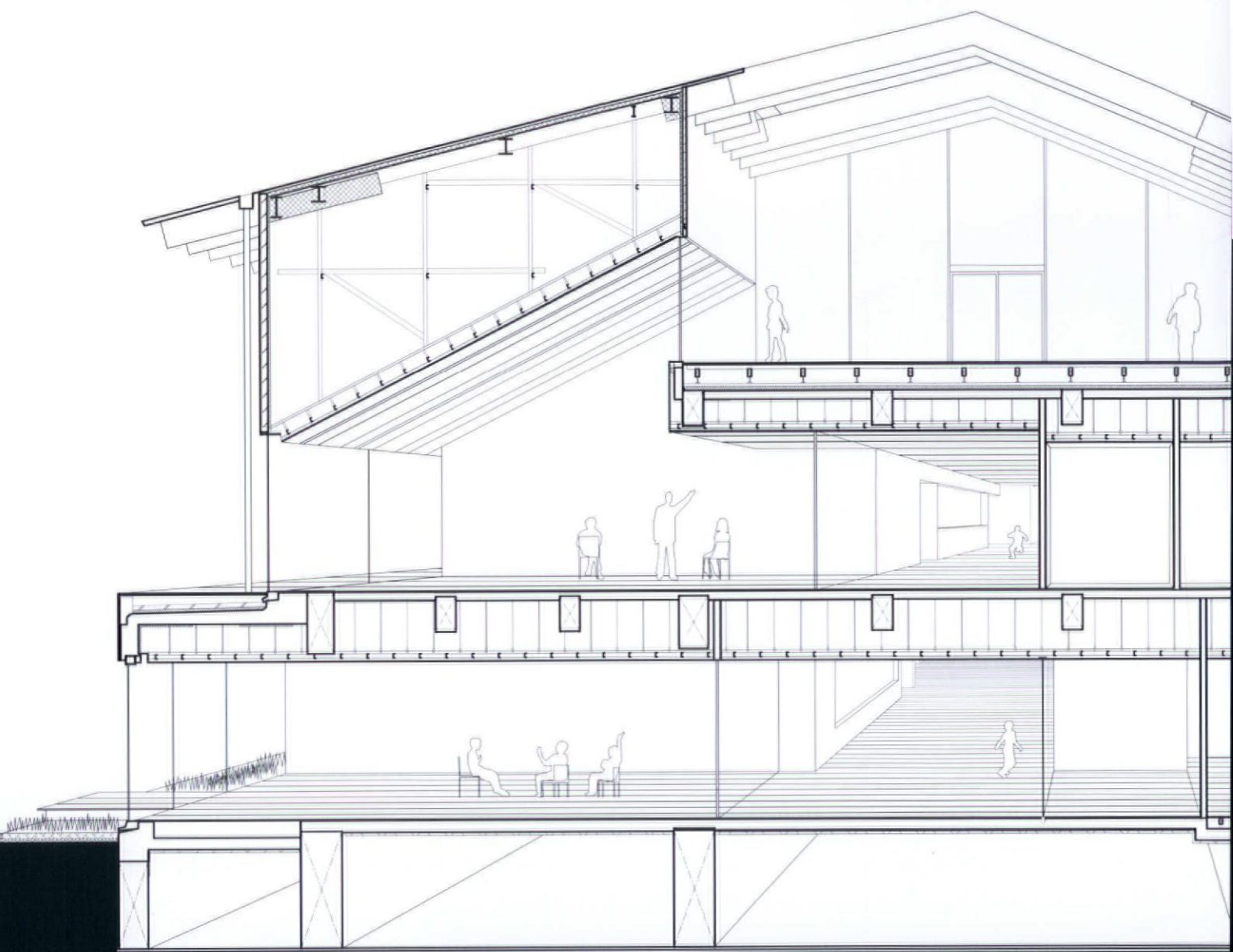
Architect
Kengo Kuma and Associates
Photographs
Courtesy of the architect



- 1 membrane
- 2 glass-fibre cloth
- 3 steel rebar
- 4 fixing batten
- 5 aluminium frame
- 6 shade
- 7 timber window frame
- 8 sealant
- 9 polyethylene sheet
- 10 timber glazing bar
- 11 100mm polyester insulation
- 12 hole for hot water pipe
- 13 polyurethane foam filling
- 14 light fitting
- 15 synthetic resin skirting board
- 16 straw mat floor
- 17 hot water pipe
- 18 reinforced concrete
- 19 flat rope
- 20 insect protection net
- 21 welded nut



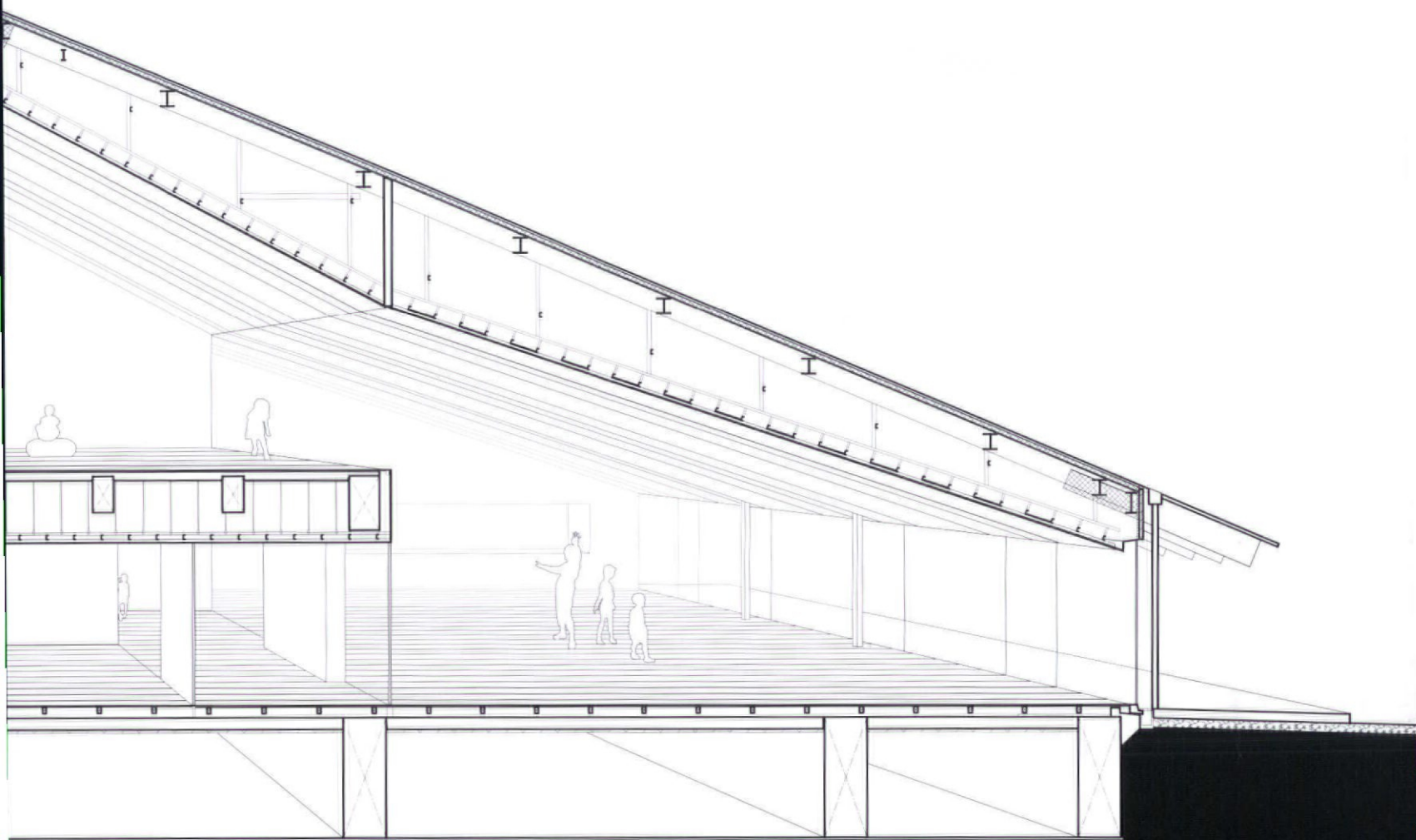
detailed section through external wall



ARTFUL ASSEMBLY

In applying historic Japanese building techniques to contemporary projects, Kengo Kuma orchestrates a synthesis of modernity and tradition, but does this approach go beyond an aesthetic level?

**School, Tama,
Tokyo, Japan,
Kengo Kuma
and Associates**





REPORT

YUKI SUMNER

Unlike other areas of Tokyo, where lack of space is a serious issue, the leafy town of Tama in the north-western part of the city, home to Teikyo University Elementary School, seems to spread out in a leisurely manner. A car park nearby, attached to a large *onsen* (or spa) centre, is the size of a baseball field. A large cluster of *danchi* (government-issue concrete apartment blocks) is situated on the hill across from it.

Connected to Teikyo University, the campuses of which are dotted around this area, the new elementary school is privately owned. Although not as expensive as some of the other fee-paying schools in Tokyo, it is unlikely the children living in those blocks of *danchi* next door are pupils there. The university also had the money to secure over five and a half acres of land and to commission Kengo Kuma, one of the most sought-after architects in Japan.

On arrival, you are immediately struck by its scale. Minimally clad in Japanese cedar, the buildings soar up three storeys to meet the steel roof, the exaggerated eaves of which are reminiscent of Buddhist temples.

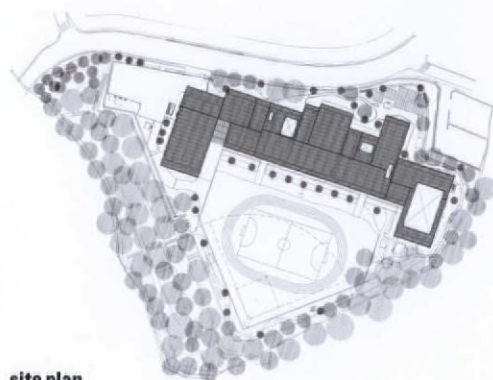
According to Kuma, the school is 'a wooden schoolhouse of our age'. The large, single roof connecting different sections of the school has, moreover, been inspired by *nagaya*: traditional terraced houses arranged in a row, usually under one single roof.

For some time now, Kuma has been obsessed with re-cladding the city of Tokyo in timber. The most recent example is Asakusa Tourist Information Centre (AR November 2012), but it can be spotted in earlier projects such as Omotesando One (AR May 2004). The architect is a prolific writer, and in his latest book, *Small Architecture*, he uses a black-and-white photograph of old Tokyo, densely packed with low-rise timber buildings, to convey how the natural limits imposed by timber made Tokyo look 'beautiful, cosy and soft'.

The Great Kanto Earthquake of 1923 killed roughly 100,000 people through the fire that spread via the timber terraced houses, destroying a good part of Tokyo. The government subsequently issued a decree that all public buildings, including schools, be built in reinforced concrete. Almost overnight, then, the city was transformed from timber to concrete. Yet as Kuma observes, the recent disaster at Fukushima

School, Tama, Tokyo, Japan, Kengo Kuma and Associates

1. (Previous page) perspective section
2. Alluding to Tokyo's terraced houses, Kuma employs traditional cladding techniques to clothe the steel and concrete structure with cedar, emphasising the scheme's modularity
3. (Opposite) the steel roof dissolves in places, lightening a potentially overbearing element



site plan



proved that even concrete and steel weren't robust enough to protect us from the leak of poisonous radiation. The architect asks: what is to come out of this recent disaster?

Kuma has resolved to 'rethink architecture from zero'. In his book he introduces a select number of small projects he has helped to design to illustrate that 'the world is going from big to small'. So Teikyo Elementary School isn't included. Conceived before the disaster struck, and completed a year later in February 2012, this school is not 'small' either in the conceptual or materialist sense. But the architect's obsession with timber is manifest in the project.

The elementary school sprawls rectilinearly over the total floor area of 7,781.52 square metres. The south facade, which faces the schoolyard, has been clad with alternating horizontal bands of glass and cedar, a common building material in Japan. In addition to the conventional *hameita-bari* (wood panel cladding), which is used to cover one side of the walls of the school's gymnasium, Kuma has employed two other traditional methods of cladding: *yamato-bari* (a Japanese version of board-and-batten) and *renji* (vertical

timber louvres used to cover windows, doors and other openings). These arrangements emphasise the scheme's modularity, another nod to traditional terraced houses.

Using different cladding styles, varying the expansive roof's height, as well as dematerialising part of it, Kuma has added much-needed tension and agility to the side of the building that may otherwise have been very plain and rather heavy. The top two storeys have been set back with a balcony. The architect, moreover, has toned down the protrusion of the eaves on this side, helping to make the steel roof look less conspicuous and more like the unassuming tiled roof of traditional houses. If you move far enough away from the building and squint, you can imagine the sliding glass doors transformed into delicate shoji paper screens.

Inside, most of the classrooms are on the sunny south side, and large corridors, labelled 'lounges', which are used as additional classrooms, run through the middle of all three floors. Communal rooms, such as the media centre, canteen, library and music rooms, are clustered on the other side. With their modified ceilings revealing the roof's slanted shape, balconies and sloped floors connecting different levels, these communal rooms feel generously proportioned. Kuma uses chipboard – made of crushed straw, rushes and poplar – not only on the inside as acoustic wall panels, enabling the feel of openness while sliding doors are kept open even during lessons, but also on the outside, under the eaves of the unifying

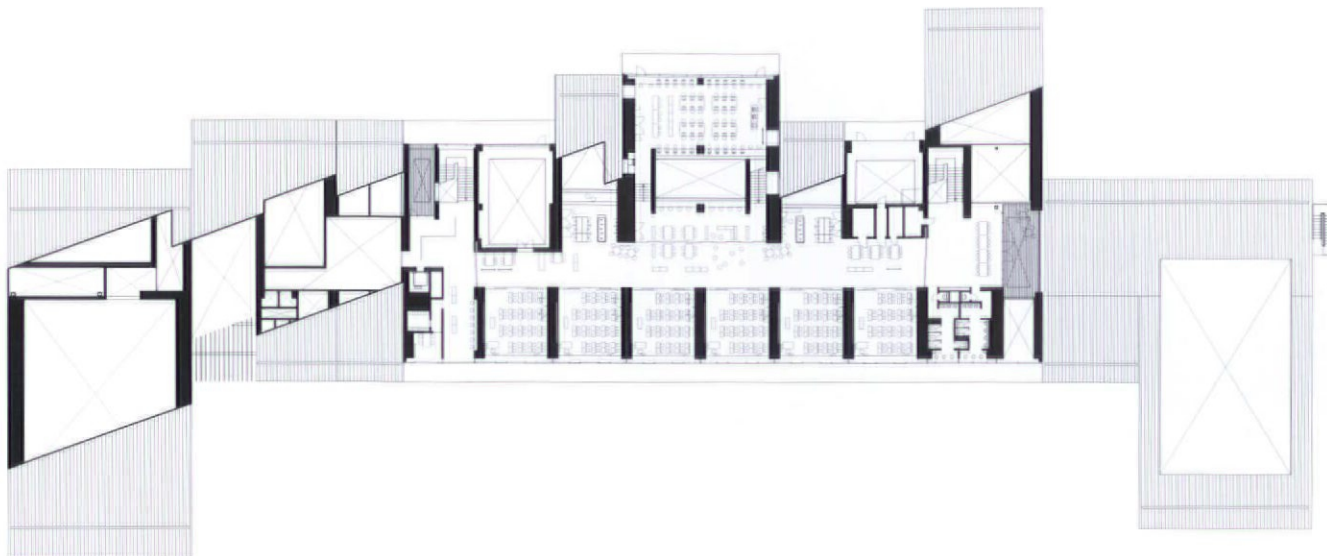
**School, Tama,
Tokyo, Japan,
Kengo Kuma
and Associates**

'The large, single roof connecting different sections of the school was inspired by *nagaya*: traditional terraced houses arranged in a row, usually under one single roof'

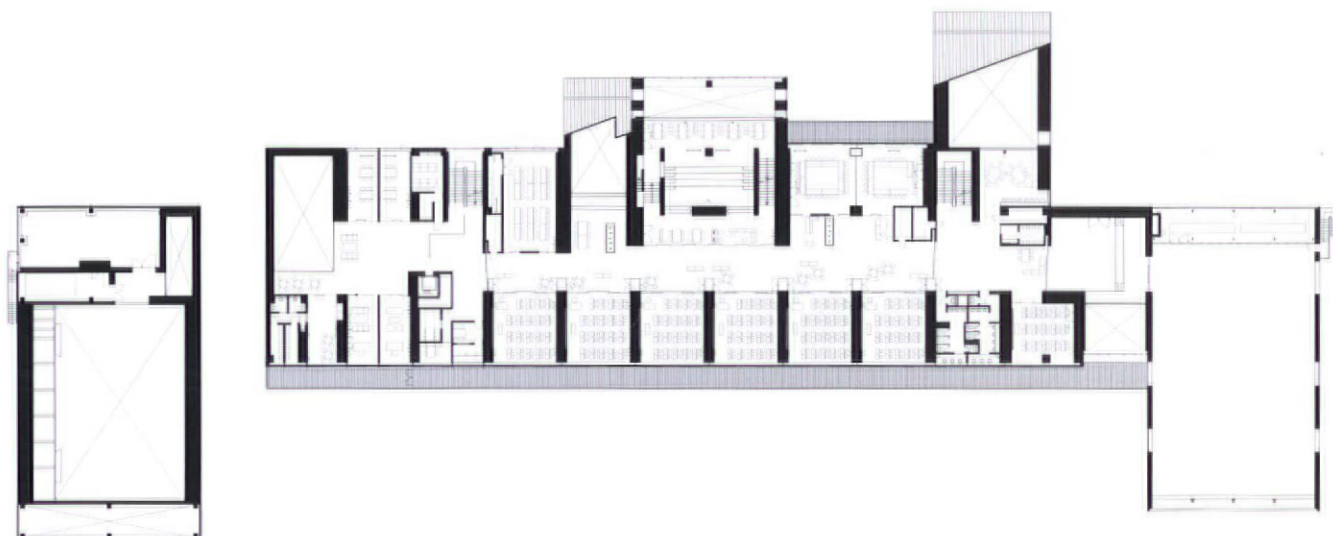


4. Child-scaled apertures enliven the interior and break down potentially overwhelming volumes
5. Sunlight streams into classrooms, which can be expanded by opening the sliding doors





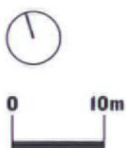
second floor plan



first floor plan



ground floor plan





'A building of concrete and steel dressed in timber is still a building of concrete and steel'

roof, in his bid to sell us the idea of using more wood in architecture.

Openness seems to be the key here. The school was envisaged as a one-storey building. With a surprisingly modest construction cost of £12.5 million, there are many good things going for the school which architects, engineers and schools, who may feel hard-done by recent cuts, could bear in mind. Some subtle ecological measures have been adopted: rainwater is collected from the roof and brought down to feed the artificial stream and promote wildlife at the school; absorber plates have been installed on the rooftop to channel warm air down via hidden ducts to help heat the classrooms in the winter and suck hot air out of them in the summer.

Despite all this, I have a slight issue with the premise on which this school's design is based. Architecture, particularly in the postmodern era, sometimes comes too close to fashion, and this is a perfect example. A building of concrete and steel dressed in

timber is still a building of concrete and steel. Simply using wood as a decorative device to bring back the aesthetic sensibility of the old times is rather superficial and not necessarily a good strategy to cope with the present situation. A city filled with uniformly low-rise timber buildings may look aesthetically beautiful, but if you take a closer look at that period when Tokyo was packed with them, you would find that the living conditions were terrible. The houses were badly congested, not well ventilated and unhygienic, with no proper infrastructure in place.

At the time of my visit, the school had been open for less than a month, and only had about 80 students. This may have affected my perception of the school, and details – such as the alcoves created to encourage curious children to explore space, or the small footbridges for them to cross over the dipped well of green from classrooms into the schoolyard – certainly help to break its scale down to more manageable parts for children, but the buildings still felt eerily big. None of that creaky tactile feel of a timber schoolhouse remains here. I imagine instead the children gliding through this giant architecture like some young astronauts in the slick infinity of space.

**School, Tama,
Tokyo, Japan,
Kengo Kuma
and Associates**

Architect
Kengo Kuma
and Associates
Photographs
Edmund Sumner

6. Wide corridors running down the spine of the building can be used as communal areas, or overspill classrooms if the doors are slid back
7. (Opposite) space is peeled away in the school canteen to reveal the geometry of the big slanting roof





GHOST HOUSE

Transmuted into a spectral
abstraction of its former self,
a ruined house in Alcobaça
comes back from the dead

House, Alcobaça,
Portugal,
Aires Mateus



CRITICISM

LUIS TAVARES PEREIRA

When Manuel and Francisco Aires Mateus were commissioned to design this house, their initial intention was to renovate the existing structure. But as the project developed they decided that their notion of heritage was not about fabric but about scale, about the typical urban legacy of the city's historic centre. So, they contend, it is the scale of the construction that was to be protected and not its language, material or colour.

In view of its ruined state, the practice ruled out refurbishment and instead conceived of treating the existing condition as a void, limited by four walls. Aires Mateus have described this as a first moment of 'crystallisation of a memory, where all elements kept from the existing house are treated to have the same look and texture. The walls are chiselled, the windows and

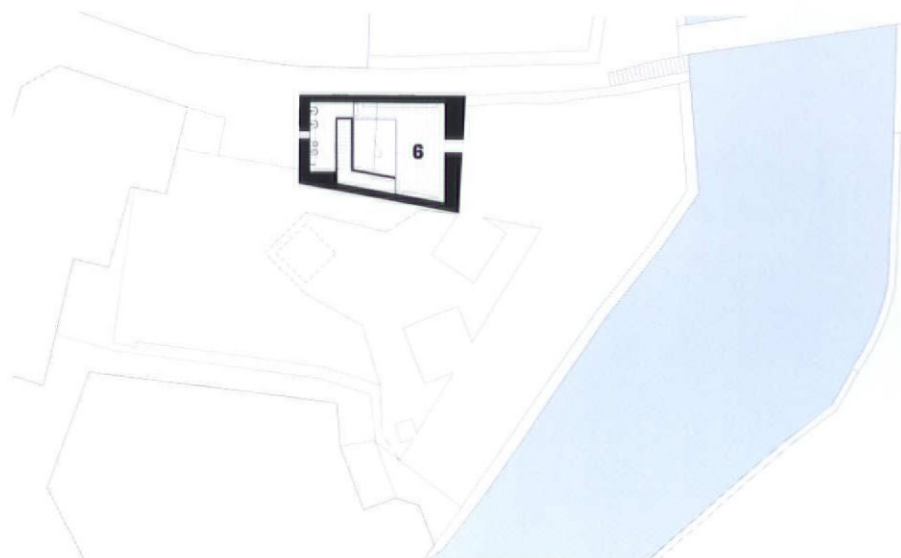


location plan

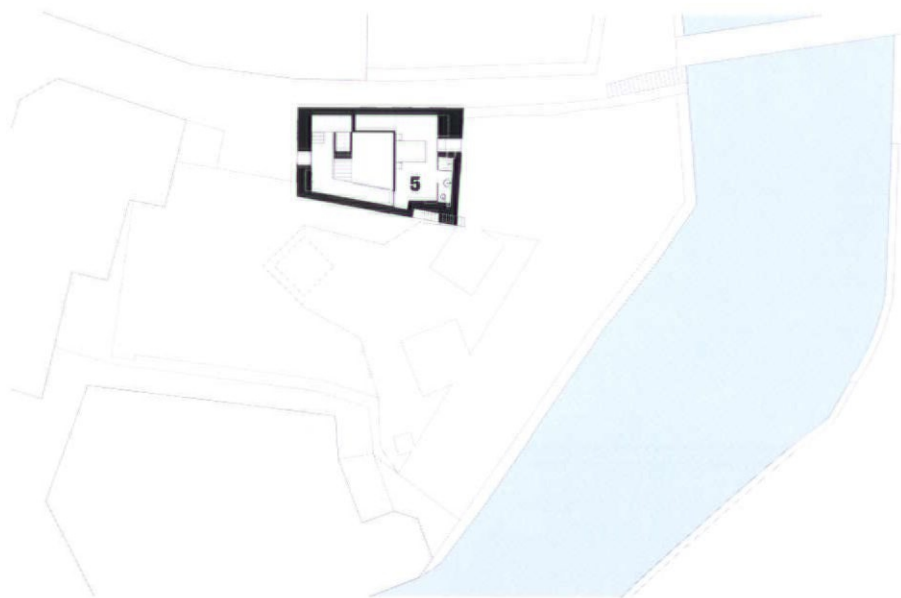
1. (Previous page) the new house retains the ghostly imprint of the former structure's aedicules, echoing the vocabulary of surrounding buildings 2 & 3 (next page). The house and its white-walled garden make a distinctive but understated addition to the urban ensemble

**House, Alcobaça,
Portugal,
Aires Mateus**

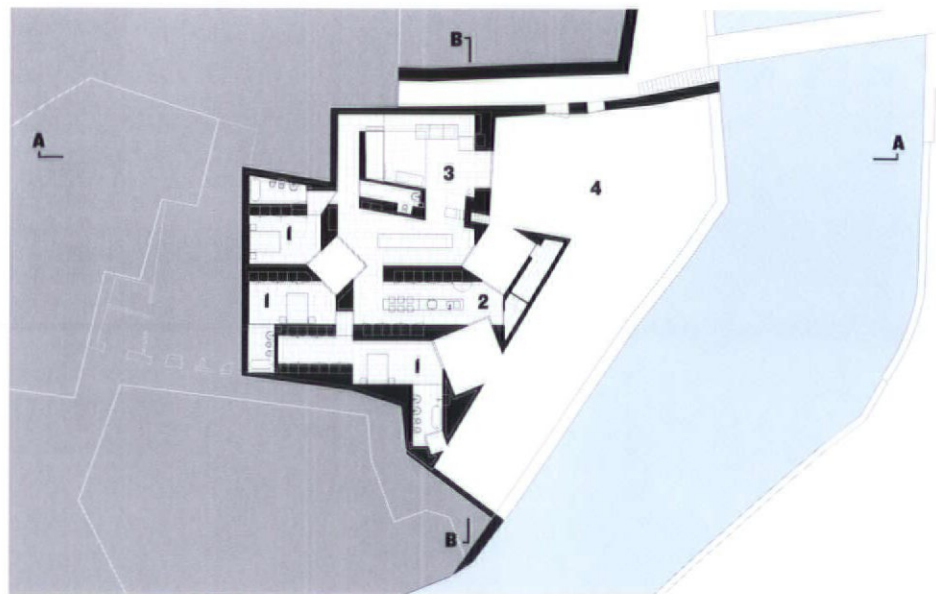
second floor plan



first floor plan



- 1 bedroom
- 2 kitchen
- 3 living room
- 4 garden
- 5 guest bedroom
- 6 library



ground floor plan

doors are enclosed, and both rendered in tin-coated plaster painted white'. And it is this whitewash – that covers pretty much everything but the lawn – that is the most striking feature of the house.

Sited on an irregular plot in Alcobaça, steeply sloped toward the river Baça, this is a 475sqm building arranged over three floors, extending the existing structure to the side at the lower level, set in a walled garden. There are two entrances: more dramatically through the street front into the intermediate level of the void space; or from a side street through the garden, directly to the main living floor.

Organisationally, the interior places the three family bedrooms at the lower level, each served by a small courtyard. Family life unfolds horizontally through the kitchen, dining and living space, which opens to the garden and to the landscape through a large window. Other rooms are distributed more freely, as volumes that spiral along the







exterior walls surrounding and defining a large, slightly Piranesian, central triple-height void. The intermediate level houses the guest bedroom and bathroom; the top floor, a library.

This play between a vertical development within the existing house and a horizontal development at lower level is where the functional dimension intersects with a dimension of pleasure. This was at the heart of the commission: the client's belief that 'architecture is very close to sculpture', and the challenge for the architects to come up with a 'revolutionary house for a reactionary milieu'. This dimension of pleasure – of spaces that are not absolutely necessary – develops vertically and culminates in the library.

To achieve this, light and form come into play. The inverted staircase below the access to the top floor, for example, mirrors the staircase leading to the lower level; or the excavated route compressed within the thickness of the wall for you

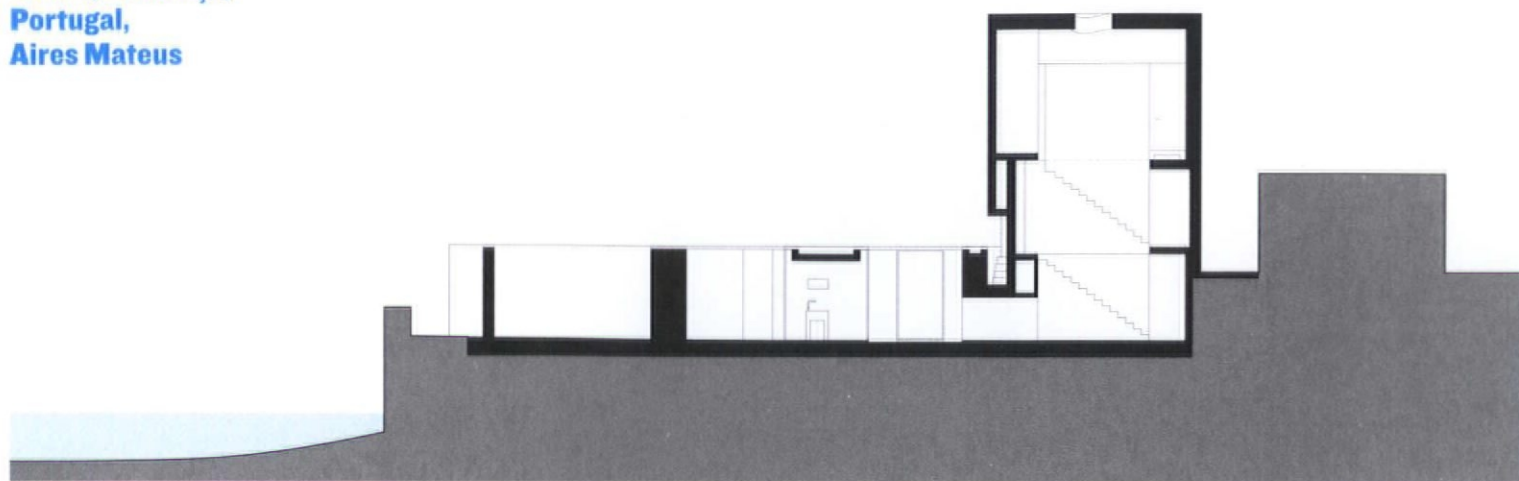
to ascend from the garden to the car park; or where a raindrop silhouette runs around the walls through the geometry of the skylight. 'The raindrop is a tribute to Siza,' say the architects. 'We felt we needed a top light to reveal the vertical dimension of the void. We designed an edge on one side, and on the other a sculptural gesture, which becomes immediately recognisable.'

Reading the plans gives a further sense of the architects playing with tradition, inversion and ambiguity. Using black and white not to distinguish between void or filled, but between served and servant spaces, the drawings coincide with the expression of an archaic construction system based on large, deep sustaining walls, and in the built form, where the depth of closets, or even small narrow rooms, are added to the wall membrane thickness to gain mass. So what you see from the outside acquires the expression of an archetypal tectonic,

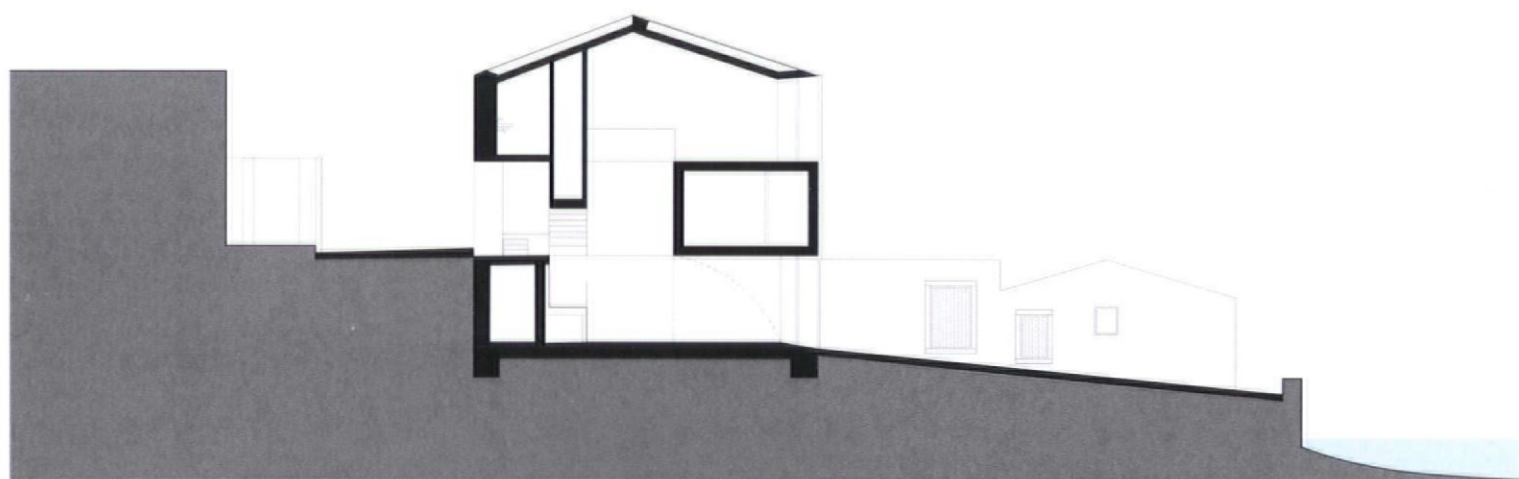
4. Weathered walls about the gleaming, glacial new addition
5. The plot's previous occupant was a low-slung, ramshackle ruin



**House, Alcobaça,
Portugal,
Aires Mateus**



section BB



section AA

without ever losing sight of the clearly contemporary expression of the ensemble.

And what of the interior qualities of the house? Surprisingly, light is plentiful and well tempered, contrary to the glare you might expect from the reflective white surfaces. When the light needs to be dimmed, filter elements have been introduced, such as the patios that work as light-wells to the areas of the house away from the facade. Both the effort to control the house's privacy and the extraordinary depth to the walls contribute to this comfortable internal light quality.

Cuts through the existing walls juxtapose the contemporary intervention with the original structure in the chessboard-like composition of openings typical of Aires Mateus, where rigorous geometry is matched by rigour in the construction. To the outside this suggests an apparent zero thickness of the pavement slab. To achieve this, the slab is recessed and the window covers its thickness;

'The decision to retain the former window frames derived from this need to keep some stable elements, from which to break free, disruptively'

from the inside, however, to see the bottom of the window disappear below the pavement looks awkward and artificial.

Given the extent of the intervention and the absence of much of the original building, you wonder whether the same strategy – of preserving the building scale and the urban condition that built the city's historic centre – could not have been achieved with a new construction altogether. Aires Mateus confirm this was a fundamental question through the design process. But they decided the existing building, and its scant architectural elements, should remain as something to hold on to.

The decision to retain the former window frames derived from this need to keep some stable elements, from which to break free, disruptively, to activate the latent conflict between modern and traditional architecture. And suddenly this becomes yet another antinomy, existing/new, or traditional/modern adding successfully to the Aires Mateus *modus operandi*.

Set in the larger context of the practice's body of work, the house contributes to ongoing research based on a great coherence between vocabulary and process, and an understanding of architecture as a 'will to form', through a minimalist lineage where tectonic is limited to few elements, to make the volume and surface come to the fore.

Solutions to perfect the minimal quality of the space include door handles replaced by a slit running along the edge of the door making it possible to pull it open, while the common lock is substituted by a spring lock.

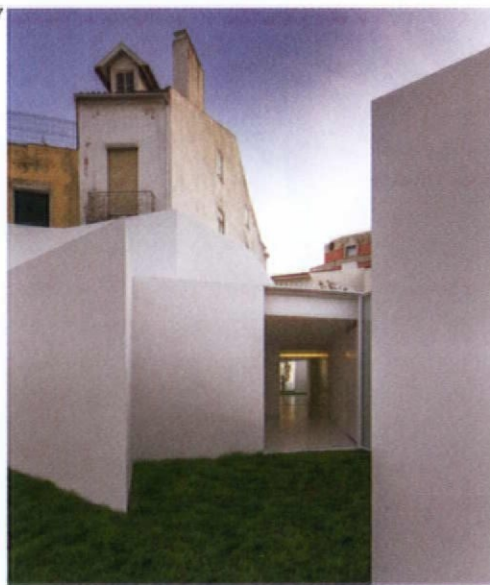


6. Corian surfaces, extensive storage and marble flooring create an interior of subtly modulated blankness

7. The green carpet of the walled garden extends right up to the threshold
8. (Opposite) at the heart of the house is a triple-height void washed by light from a teardrop-shaped aperture

Architect
Aires Mateus
Photographs
Fernando Guerra/VIEW

**House, Alcobaça,
Portugal,
Aires Mateus**



The bathtub is flush with the pavement, so it does not break with the planes of walls and floor. In the kitchen, as in the living space, all equipment is stored behind closet doors.

The tendency to abstraction reduces the expression of materials to a coat of paint, all things relentlessly white. The marble floor is white, as are all fixtures and fittings: doors, handrails, window frames, walls and ceiling, in spite of their difference in materiality – even the induction cooking stove, on top of the white Corian kitchen table, is white. On the outside, walls and roof are white.

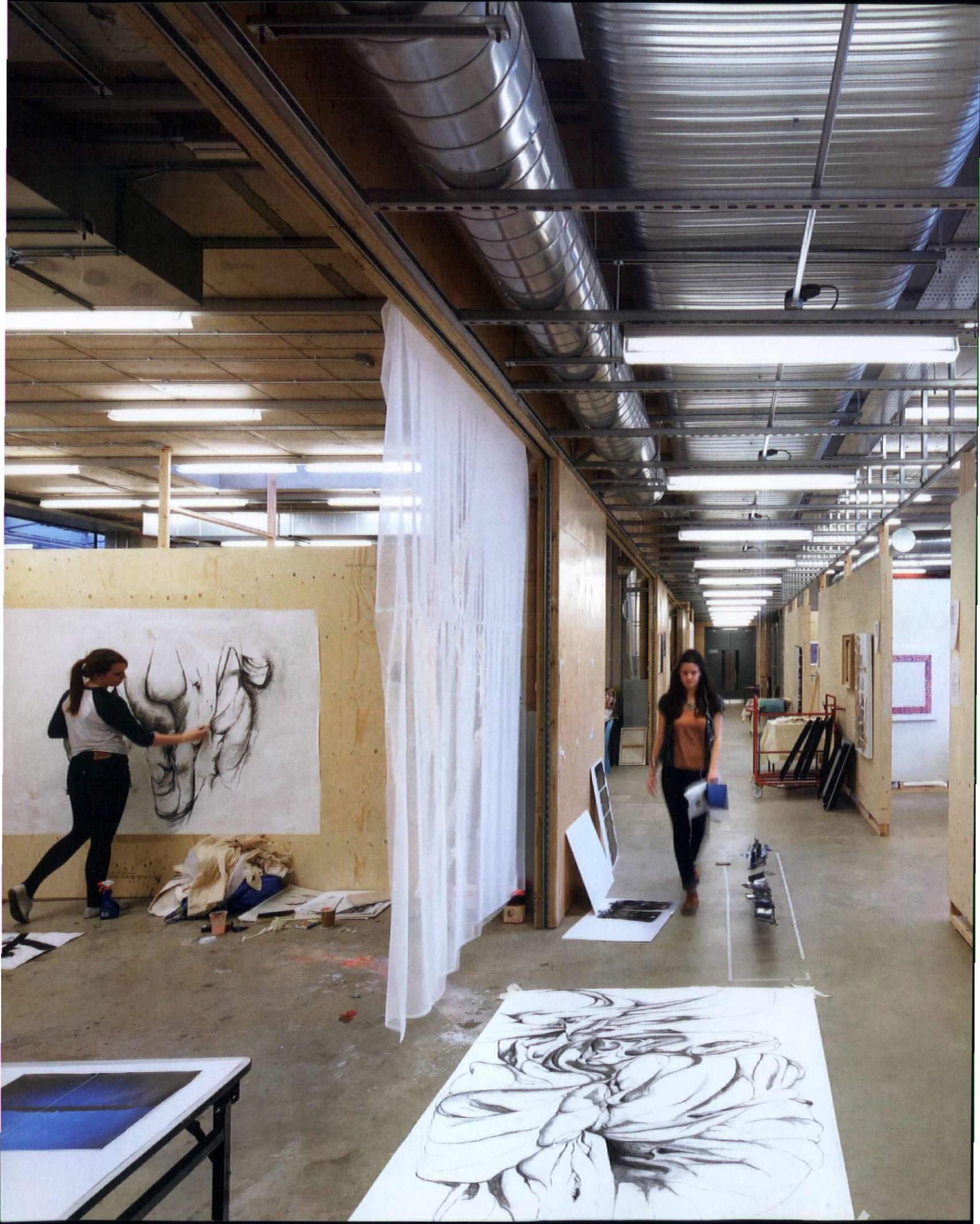
Aires Mateus refer to the concept behind their architecture as an acknowledgement of materiality, that 'we cannot run away from the idea of having a certain materiality on the project, on the construction. That we really accept the idea that it will have to be built, that it will have materials, that there is a certain heaviness in that condition'. And yet everything in the construction

'Everything in the construction denies materiality, eludes the construction lexicon, to achieve the abstract and diagrammatic aspect of form and surface'

denies materiality, eludes the construction lexicon, to achieve the abstract and diagrammatic aspect of form and surface.

Perhaps this idea of materiality can better be understood as a more specific research into the idea of limit, and its expression. 'It's very important for us the relation of the project to context, but it's also important the idea of a certain independence of spaces. And that this space that is dealing with the context and the interior can become a limit, a field, which can be explored.' And so it is explored – as a repository of depth, of the material image of classic construction.





LONDON SCHOOLS PART TWO CENTRAL ST MARTINS



At the centre of the vast King's Cross regeneration project, the new home for Central St Martins is a bold gambit in an emerging urban landscape. Bringing together all the disciplines for the first time, the college is learning from its first year in a building that hopes to support continuous creative evolution

While last month's look at the Royal College of Art showed an institution essentially splitting into two halves, both Central St Martins (CSM) and London Metropolitan are engaged in the obverse process of consolidation. The challenge facing all three London schools is, of course, how to make a culture – as much a social as a creative one – but for the two schools being discussed this and next month, the challenge has the larger dimension of bringing together disparate parts to make a new whole. For CSM, this unites all but two of 11 buildings scattered round the capital, and for London Met it combines the architecture and art schools for the first time. Both projects inhabit an existing physical structure, but the crucial distinction is one of scale. London Met is the baby of the group, a newly-formed faculty within a low-ranking university of 30,000 students, whereas CSM is an international powerhouse, one of the world's largest and most venerated art and design institutions.

Central St Martins

CSM stands out from grander competitors on lists of the world's top creative schools by being punkier and more daring. In the London design firmament, its star shines as brightly as the RCA. But where the latter perhaps has more kudos for its design courses (product, industrial, etc), the former leads in fashion, having launched Alexander McQueen, Stella McCartney, Katharine Hamnett and many others. What isn't obvious from their popular perception is how strikingly dissimilar in size the schools are: CSM has 4,200 students at both undergraduate and postgraduate level; whereas the RCA has 1,200 students, and only postgraduates.

Initially, Stanton Williams won a competition to add to CSM's cramped accommodation in Holborn, but this plan was abandoned in favour of amalgamating onto

the 67-acre regeneration site north of King's Cross and St Pancras train stations. Opening in October 2011, the subsequent design is a refurbishment of Lewis Cubitt's 1851 Grade II-Listed Granary Building and transit sheds, combined with a 200m-long new-build addition at the rear.

The internal organisation is easily sketched. Circulation is essentially cruciform in plan, but you enter on the short leg (as if from the chancel end of a church), through the centre of the Cubitt facade. The Granary Building is mostly given over to the library (placed here so students could gain round-the-clock access), and beyond it is a cross-axial route, on the other side of which is the building's largest volume, known as 'the street'. Teaching accommodation is ranged either side of this central space: the eastern transit shed configured as a flow diagram for materials being delivered and progressing through the workshops, while the western transit shed contains ground-level restaurant and retail facing outwards to what will be a busy public thoroughfare. The farthest end is terminated by the drama centre's theatre.

Behind this logical disposition, however, the architecture is quietly radical in two regards – by dissolving the traditional barriers between the departments within the college; and by dissolving the traditional boundaries between the college and the city. And if the first has been an exercise in changing the institution's internal dynamics, then the second has been driven by its extrinsic relationship with King's Cross.

Forging a relationship to the city

Developed by Argent, the masterplan sought to emphasise the regenerative impact of bringing CSM to the site, and therefore the interface of public and private became of paramount importance. 'There was a lot of talk about how introverted or not are art and design schools,' says architect Paul Williams. 'Certainly educationally, you can't just have the public



1. (Previous page) instantly recognisable as fine art studios, the radical difference in this building is moving away from fixed to negotiated spaces, which has informed new ways of working for the discipline
2. The Cubitt building in its original form ...
3. ... and in its current iteration. Stanton Williams wanted to cover the later wing additions in animated screens
4. The rear elevation is the entrance for the theatre. New build fills in between the existing transit sheds, with the two train stations glimpsed in the distance

Central St Martins, King's Cross, London, UK, Stanton Williams



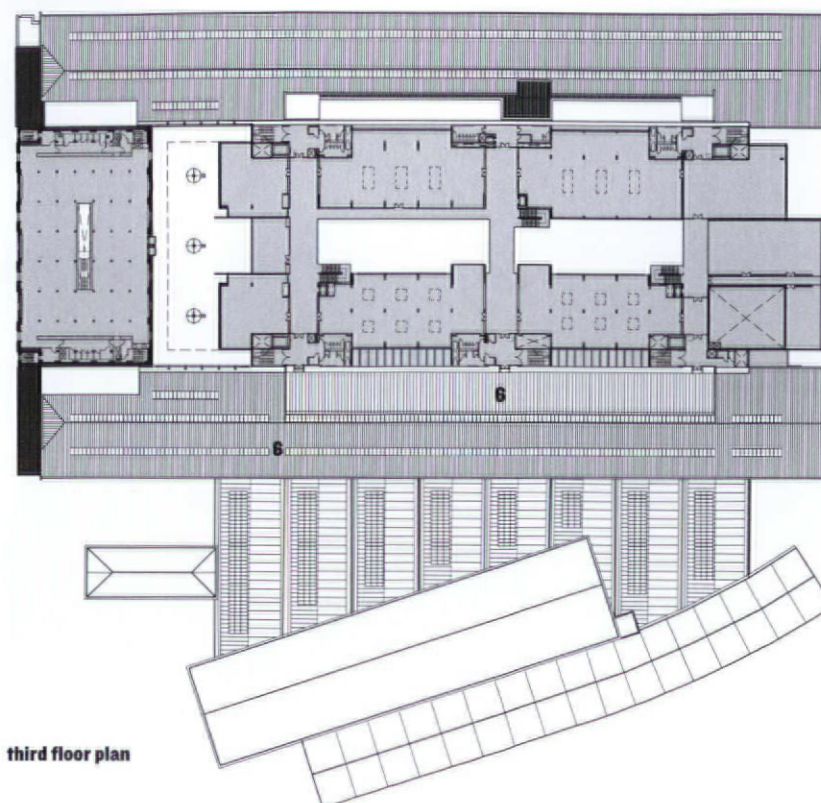
section BB



section AA

**Central St
Martins,
King's Cross,
London, UK,
Stanton
Williams**

- 1 Granary Building
- 2 east-west link
- 3 the 'street'
- 4 studio buildings
- 5 transit sheds
- 6 terrace



ground floor plan





walking round, but you want them to see what's going on – to be able to see the quality of work being produced within the college.'

Essentially the public can walk through the Granary Building and the east-west cross axis, but access to 'the street' is restricted to college insiders. English Heritage had prevented Stanton Williams from expressing the college's interior life on the Granary Building's Grade II-listed facade (their idea was subtle, animated screens over the later office wings), and so this threshold between the cross axis and 'the street' could have become an important alternative facade.

For this reason the use of card-access gates, as if entering the London Underground, does feel a particularly inglorious 'front door' to the college. As a boundary it is either too strong or too weak, neither allowing full movement into 'the street' nor enclosing it sufficiently to define it as its own space. The street compares slightly unfavourably with the large volumes in other London cultural destinations, lacking the drama of the Tate Modern's Turbine Hall, the spatial unfolding of the neighbouring British Library, and denied purpose as a pedestrian cut-through like the British Museum's Great Court.

Of course, as the architects are up-front about, this compromise results from balancing the college's needs for private space with the urban imperative for public. But it is as if 'the street' was conceived at the scale of the masterplan and doesn't develop much further. Even the name conjures the hackneyed label from countless schools and corporate campuses to describe the 'heart' of the building.

If we are to take the metaphor further, this would be a street suffering from a deep recession. Most of the ground-level edges are lifeless; only the cafeteria opens onto and spills into it. The theatre neither choreographs a processional route

'It is as if 'the street' was conceived at the scale of the masterplan and doesn't develop much further. Even the name conjures the hackneyed label from countless schools and corporate campuses to describe the 'heart' of the building'

outwards, nor makes a proper connection to inwards, suggesting a spatial (and perhaps institutional) remoteness from the college. On quiet days (such as I've seen it) the street risks drifting into the sterile world of the shopping mall, or even the office atrium.

But, ultimately the question is how well does – or potentially, can – the street frame the social life of the college, and here there is some debate. 'It works for students and staff alike,' says Jeremy Till, the noted architect and theorist who is now head of CSM. 'It acts as a classic social condenser. In terms of me being a leader, it turns it into collaborative leadership, because you're there and communicating with people. It has a huge effect on the way that people work here.'

But some of the students have been critical. Shortly after the building opened, one group, the U Choose Collective, scattered coloured flyers like confetti in the street and hung a banner over a bridge walkway to advertise a picnic. 'After half an hour, staff came to take them down and cleaned the street from the rainbow we created,' reported their blog, adding plaintively, 'we didn't vandalise, we just threw coloured paper.'

This is the kind of rebellion you would expect (and perhaps even encourage) in art students, and it is no doubt a natural process of acclimatising to the new environment, the adjustment as a creative model rubs up against a more corporate one. It is the sort of contested territory that the intellectual provocateur Jeremy Till must

have taken to like a duck to water when he joined the college after the building's completion. And indeed, when it escalated to graffiti on one timber wall protesting the proscription to paint it, Till framed the ribald commentary, hoping (I guess) that a half-celebration of dissent would be more effective than its full-hearted prosecution.

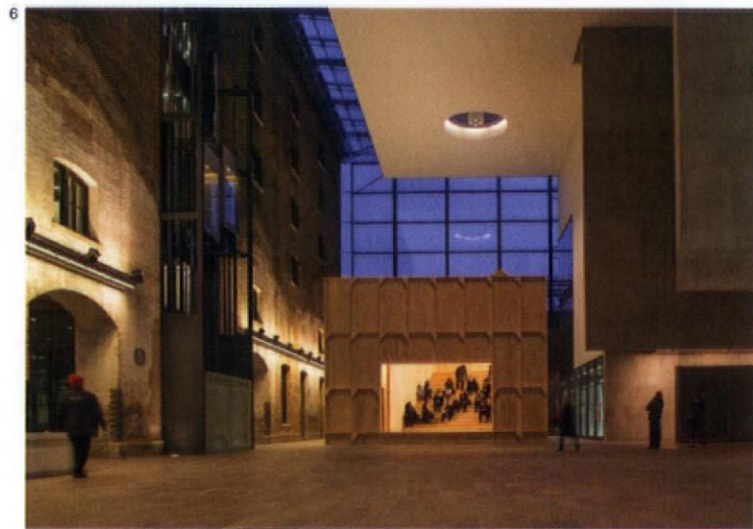
And, as Till acknowledges, how space is occupied still needs developing: 'The street we haven't quite got working right yet,' he says. 'It needs a level of infrastructure. It's quite difficult to put stuff in it, because it's so overwhelming. It needs an intermediate-scaled infrastructure, lighting and frameworks, so it becomes more easy to use; something in between the scale of a body and the overall volume, up to about six metres, and after that you can let it go.'

While these additions are forthcoming (one of the architecture faculty is designing them), the public space has already started to be used in new ways. Earlier this year an installation by Richard Wentworth and Swiss practice GRUPPE opened in the cross street. Called *Black Maria* after Edison's first motion picture studio, it encourages different forms of occupation. When I saw it before it opened, three male models lounging in double-breasted suits had clambered over the barriers for an impromptu photo shoot, making a fitting appropriation before the curated series of events kicked off.

Dissolving disciplinary boundaries

The other radical act of the building is the integration of the facilities of the various academic programmes. Space-utilisation analysis of the previous stock discovered that many of the spaces were underused and that there was also duplication of facilities. 'What happened in the previous buildings is that each of the courses basically built a wall round them, and there was not much interaction,' explains Till. 'The incredibly brave move of this building is to say, "That no longer goes".'

Central St Martins, King's Cross, London, UK, Stanton Williams



5. (Previous page) despite the gestural concrete planes attempting to articulate an 'entrance', the junction between the east-west axis and the 'street' is disappointingly made by swipe-card gates 6. Interventions have started to inhabit the east-west route, such as *Black Maria* by Richard Wentworth and GRUPPE, which opened in February 7. (Opposite) the 'street' awaits a secondary layer of infrastructure to enable it to be more easily used for other types of event



The decision was taken to make all the workshops shared, and to distribute them throughout the building. 'As soon as the workshops are distributed then student life is distributed,' continues Till. 'And now the workshops are shared – spatially and also logistically – it means that all those disciplinary boundaries are dissolved immediately.' He is convinced it is working: 'I'm not one to say that transparency is democratic, but students and staff definitely all say that the building, by making things visible, suddenly makes things available – creatively and intellectually.'

CSM has also introduced shared ownership of studio space between the departments. This is a very different proposition to fixed studios, and some types of work have gone further than others: 2D work retains more personal space; 3D has bigger spaces that must be let out if you want to make a large piece of work; and 4D is much more shared as the intention is that these students will work collaboratively. 'The cultural shift has been most dramatic in fine art,' says Till. 'They are now sharing space, and that has changed it from an individual sitting in a room waiting for the muse to strike, to a much more dynamic, negotiated set of practices.'

Shared project and teaching spaces have to be booked, but there are additional social learning spaces that students can just pitch up to. With this thrust toward integration, how the building encourages the social interaction of the school has been addressed in the design. Most specifically, staff and students share the canteen, the roof terrace, and the new bar, which opened recently in

'The architecture is quietly radical by dissolving the barriers between the departments within the college; and by dissolving the boundaries between the college and the city beyond'

a space by the theatre foyer. But more informally, there is, of course, the street and its elevated walkways and 5m-wide bridges.

Stanton Williams always wanted this to be a building that would allow for CSM's evolution. 'For us, we felt, the studios should be like warehouses: heavy loadings, big floor plans, daylight wherever possible,' says Williams. 'The scheme was predicated on the college coming in, inhabiting the building, and continuing to change. The architectural framework fixes certain things, but predominantly it's there to allow expression. The ballsiness of it, the challenge it sets, is that when you enter as staff and students, you've got to develop it as you see fit.'

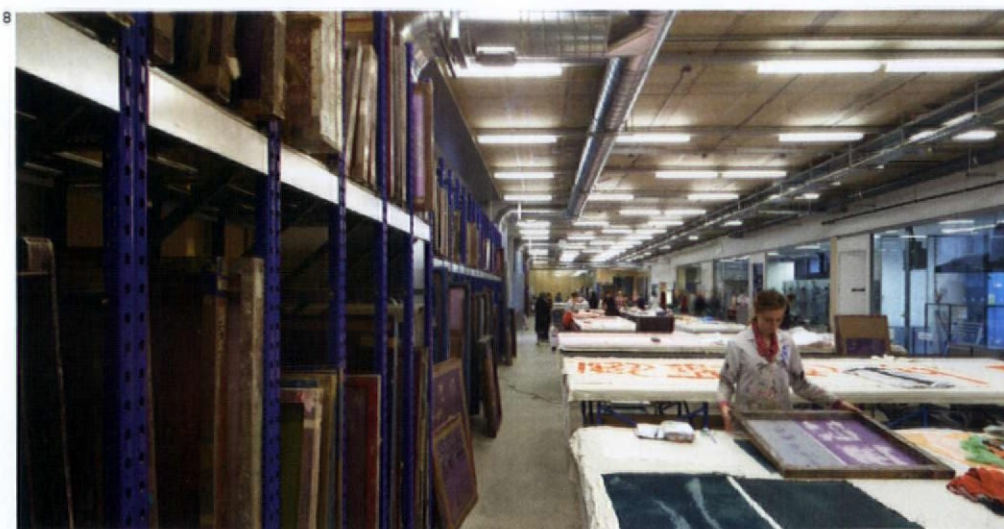
And this conception of it is one over which CSM is taking increasing ownership. 'At our recent away day we set some principles about our future organisation, and the number one bullet point was that we have to work with the building, we can't work against it,' says Till. 'The principle of the building allows us to be restless because it doesn't tie us down into a fixed type of working space. That takes a huge cultural shift and we haven't got it immediately right. But we've only been here a year and it's a work in progress. The building has a generosity which will allow us to move around and keep changing, as we are already.'

On the one hand, the erosion of disciplinary boundaries has been generated by the need to use space more efficiently. And the desire to save money is perfectly legitimate – even essential, given the changes in higher education funding. But art and design schools must also be judged on a different scale of values, and the really interesting thing over the coming years will be to see how far this new proximity generates creative intensity. There are many metrics for how a building performs, but in this case it must ultimately be judged on the quality of the work produced by the students, whether it will match – or even exceed – CSM's trailblazing history.

Next month's article will be on the new art and design faculty of London Metropolitan University

**Central St
Martins,
King's Cross,
London, UK,
Stanton
Williams**

**8. Printing workshops in the western transit shed
9. An early depiction of the eastern transit shed
10. The fashion school is very important in the college hierarchy of disciplines, and occupies top-lit studios in the eastern transit shed
11. (Opposite) the library occupies most of the Granary Building, and is open to all University of the Arts students**



Architect
Stanton Williams
Photographs
Hufton + Crow



World
Architecture
Festival
Singapore

2-4 October 2013

Knowledge
Inspiration
Community

2013 super jurors

Dietmar Eberle /
Baumschlager Eberle
Jeanne Gang / Studio Gang
Patrick Bellew / Atelier Ten
Ken Yeang /
Llewelyn Davies Yeang
Ken Tadashi Oshima /
University of Washington

The awards for the global
architectural community.

Entries close
24 May 2013

worldarchitecturefestival.com

Founder partner



Partner sponsor



I. The 'drab halls' of Université Paris X Nanterre, home of Lefebvre and his student Baudrillard, and epicentre of *les événements de '68*



TROUBLES IN THEORY PART IV: THE SOCIAL SIDE

Techno-fetishists may have argued for a scientifically determined architecture in the '60s and '70s, but at the same time more politically engaged voices were calling for the reinterpretation of space as an arena for the lived experiences of the everyday

ANTHONY VIDLER

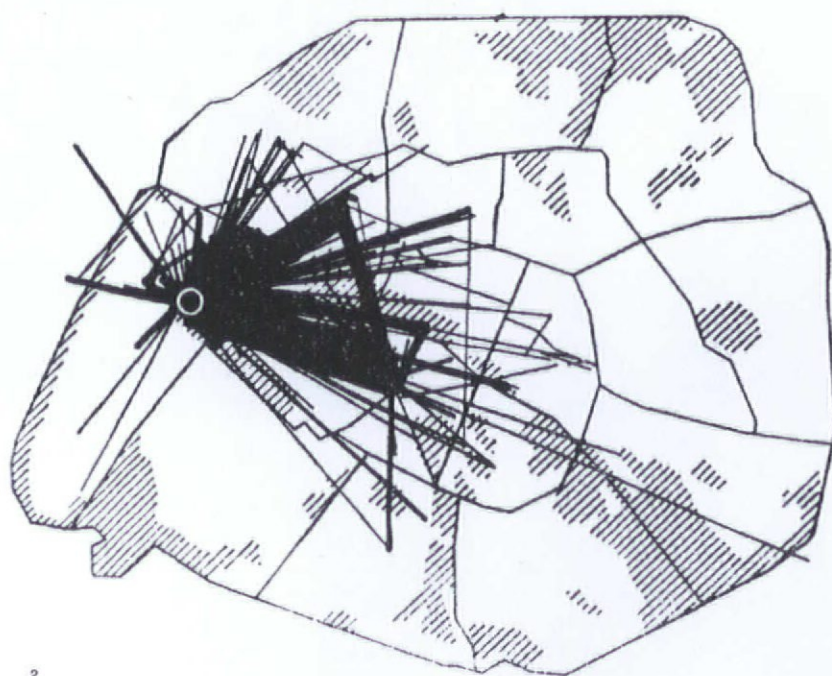
The last instalment of *Troubles in Theory* (AR August 2012) was concerned with what Reyner Banham termed the 'science side' of architecture that he hoped would lead Modernism to transform itself into a truly 'autre' architecture conforming to the technological achievements of the age. Equally potent for the late 1960s and '70s was what might be called the 'social side', exploring ways in which architecture might address questions of community in an age of alienation. Perhaps the foremost theorist of this 'side' was the French philosopher Henri Lefebvre, whose studies of 'everyday life' beginning during the war developed into a fully-fledged theory of social space.

In 1969, a year after the Parisian uprising, a young architecture student named Philippe Boudon published a slim book. Ostensibly a dry sociological investigation, replete with interviews and photos of the post-history of two 1920s housing projects near Bordeaux, its influence was immediately felt in architectural circles. These circles, and especially in Europe, were ready for it. The survey had been prepared for his diploma thesis at the Institut d'urbanisme, Université de Paris entitled 'Étude socio-architecturale des quartiers modernes Frugès construites à Pessac par Le Corbusier'. Pessac had been built for a sugar manufacturer Henri Frugès, who had, some six years earlier, commissioned a dozen houses at Lège, near Arcachon. Both estates were built up of prefabricated reinforced-concrete panels, and were, according to the Purist principles LC had developed during the *Esprit Nouveau* years 1918-23, unornamented, pure cubic forms. Boudon, 40 years later, was concerned to trace the fate of these cubes in the hands of their inhabitants. He followed the reactions of the contemporary press in the late 1920s as, horrified by these little boxes, it compared them to North African huts, although it was generally favourable to the modern conveniences provided – running water, toilets, kitchens etc. He laid out Le Corbusier's aims and analysed his possible sources – Adolf Loos, JJP Oud – and praised their concise planning without corridors, their standardisation, and ended by citing LC himself speaking to the visual pleasures of rational cubes: 'Rational cubic construction does not destroy the initiative of each.' And indeed, no initiative for alteration and 'improvement' had been missed by the inhabitants.

This study, in the wake of the social movements of the early '60s and their bias against the vast post-war housing developments that had rapidly become slums and ghettos, quickly became the oft-cited proof that modern architecture was not only dead, but deadly, representing a fundamental failure in its social utopian objectives. On the one hand it provided ammunition for those architects who were already reacting against the anonymous ubiquity of International Style abstraction – the endless glass boxes of corporate USA – who began to argue for a richer vocabulary taken from vernacular and historical examples (what we now know as postmodernism); and on the other for those who would prefer to get rid of architects altogether; implying the people don't like abstraction, they want something that looks like a home: we should allow them to design their own houses.

Already in 1961 Nikolaus Pevsner had complained of what he called a 'return to historicism' in what he for

'Modern space is abstract, but not for all that unified – it contains discontinuities, disruptions, contradictions – it simply has the will to be unified'



2. Diagram mapping the movements of inhabitants of Paris by ethnographer Paul-Henri Chombart, whose work had a strong influence on Lefebvre

3. Nineteenth-century French socialist Charles Fourier proposed massive communal buildings or 'phalansteries' to house his utopian communes. This plan shows the cells in which visitors would stay, segregated to avoid contamination

the first time called 'post-modern' architecture, and three years later maverick architect Bernard Rudofsky curated a popular exhibition at MoMA: *Architecture without Architects*. The case of Le Corbusier's Pessac was taken as sufficient indictment of the failure of Modernism. In 1972 in Saint-Louis, the first block of an infamous housing estate, Pruitt-Igoe, was blown up, an event that architecture critic Charles Jencks later claimed announced the death of Modernism and the birth of Postmodernism.

Nevertheless, not everyone felt that the transformations 40 years ago in Lège and Pessac were indications of modern architecture's total failure. Indeed, while Philippe Boudon's aim had been to advance the social study of architecture – something I will return to – his book was careful to balance the original social aims of the project with their long-term results, more concerned to show the differing tastes and shifting economic fortunes of the inhabitants as exemplified in their alterations over time than in a full-scale attack on the iconic architect who had died three years before.

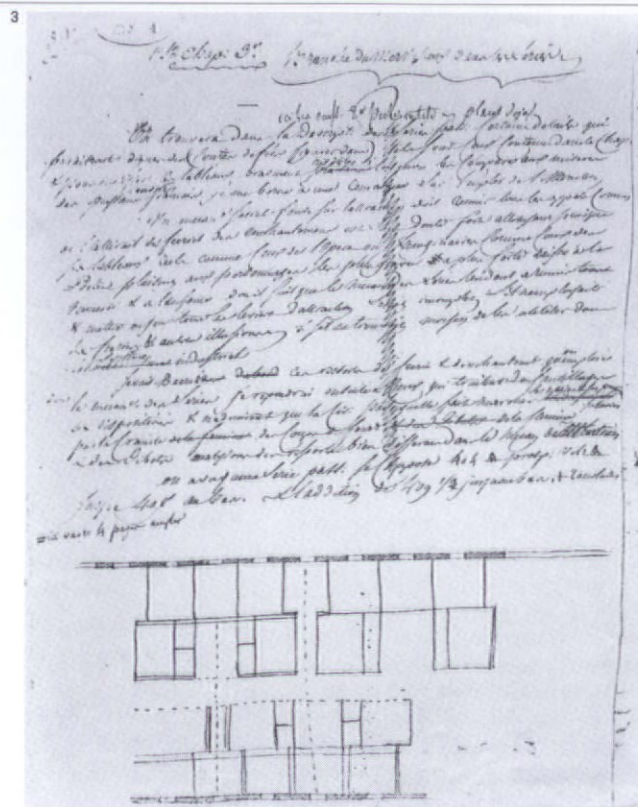
And, more importantly, his book was prefaced by a terse two-page introduction by the 68-year-old philosopher Henri Lefebvre.* Lefebvre opened his review of Boudon's study – 'an apparently thin and light "cas"' but one 'in fact weighty in meaning', as it assessed the work of 'the most celebrated architect-urbanist of modern times', a functionalist, who had conceived of this 'pre-formed space, geometric, composed of cubes and sharp corners, voids and solids, homogenous volumes'. And perhaps by design or by accident, Le Corbusier had produced a 'receptacle' that provided 'a space that was relatively plastic, modifiable'. The inhabitants had taken advantage of this, and had 'demonstrated the nature of inhabiting – they had inhabited actively, worked, modified, and added to what had been offered to them. What had they added? Their requirements [exigencies], qualities. In so doing they had produced a special kind of space: "a socially differentiated space".'

Boudon had demonstrated, summarised Lefebvre, that there was more than one level on which habitat could be measured:

- The level of theory mingled with ideology.
- The level of the architect and urbanist – urban ideology, the ideology of the plan (Boudon had shown the risks and perils of ideology).
- The level of requirements and realities in the application of the first level – a level that tended towards the confusion, the unsettling of theory and ideology.
- The level of urban practice – the effects of a way of life, of a style or the absence of style – the social work, the work of the collective.

This last level, Lefebvre concluded, showed itself as a 'topology, a meaning, a concrete rationality higher and more concrete than abstract rationality'. Boudon had shown the intersection of architecture and urbanism as an abstract idea and ideology with urban *praxis*. His study developed the 'elements for a clear formulation of the urban problematic and for a critique of all urbanism'.

Lefebvre had made his intellectual reputation before the war in a series of works dedicated to the critical



explication of philosophy from a Marxist perspective, and had, just after the war, published the first of three studies on 'everyday life', had become interested in the social implications of habitat, first in rural areas, then in urban contexts from the 1940s on. His dissertation research was carried out under the Occupation in the Campan Valley in the Pyrenees. This sociological study of rural France became the subject of his *doctorat d'état* in 1954. He then joined a research group of the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS), the Centre d'études sociologiques (CES), together with a roster of interdisciplinary scholars including Henri Wallon the psychologist (who was to influence the young Jacques Lacan), Marcel Mauss, Roland Barthes, and most importantly Paul-Henri Chombart de Lauwe, who was developing his group study of the neighbourhoods of Paris, and the typologies of housing, with the central aim of mapping social space.

Chombart was an interesting character. A pilot and an ethnographer, he had specialised in mapping territories through aerial photography. His study of Paris and its region was devoted to the identification of specific urban neighbourhoods, characterised by the everyday lives and movements of the inhabitants. Although Chombart was a great supporter of Le Corbusier, and had headed a sociological study of the Unité d'habitation at Marseilles, his neighbourhood studies, which had been influenced by Lefebvre's writings on everyday life, had in turn a great influence on Lefebvre, who published his *Everyday Life in the Modern World* in 1968. Gradually turning from rural to urban studies, Lefebvre and a group of sociologists

founded the Institut de sociologie urbaine in 1962, dedicating the first studies to the problem of the 'pavilion' habitat, and then as professor of sociology at Strasbourg, lecturing on urban theory. As Łukasz Stanek has traced in his remarkable study of Lefebvre (from which I am drawing heavily in this account), it was at this time that the sociologist came into contact with Guy Debord, the radical leader of the Situationists. Debord, a filmmaker and critical left-wing writer, had broken with the *Lettristes* to found the Situationists in 1958 – the first number of the *Internationale Situationniste* appearing in that year. Debord's theory of 'unitary urbanism' in opposition to modern CIAM planning as applied to the *grands ensembles*, appealed to Lefebvre, as did Debord's interest in the idea of everyday life situations – and indeed Debord was to publish an image from Chombart's study in his first issue. Through Debord, Lefebvre also met Constant in the Netherlands, visiting his studio in Amsterdam and viewing his models and drawings of New Babylon, then in progress (and published in the *IS* before the inevitable break with Debord).

But there was yet another model for Lefebvre's spatial theories that proposed itself in the late 1960s – one that also intrigued André Breton, and Roland Barthes who brought it to Lefebvre's attention: Charles Fourier, the early 19th-century utopian thinker whose *phalanstère* had become an icon for architects' imaginaries of the collective dwelling, through to Le Corbusier, whose *Unité* was a direct – vertical – response to it. Lefebvre even organised a conference to celebrate the bicentennial of Fourier's death in 1972. As Stanek has it: 'For Lefebvre, the starting point of Fourier's project was the discovery that each social group has consistency only in its proper space and that to invent a group and a social relation is to invent, or produce, a space. In that sense the concept of the production of space itself suggests the possibility of a society beyond alienation, that is to say above and beyond work in the modern sense'.

The final move that confirmed Lefebvre in his concept of space production was his appointment to the chair of sociology at the University of Paris 10, Nanterre, in 1965. A recently opened campus, it had been planned with all the rigour of debased functionalist Modernism. There he supervised a range of theses devoted to the study of contemporary global urban conditions, including that of Baudrillard. There Lefebvre wrote *The Right to the City* (1968), *The Urban Revolution* (1970), *Marxist Thought and the City* (1972) and many others in preparation for the magnum opus, *The Production of Space* (1974). When asked why the events of 1968 happened at Nanterre, Lefebvre simply replied – look out of the window. 'The Faculty buildings were designed for the function of education: vast amphitheatres, small "functional" rooms, drab halls, an administrative wing – the meaning of this morphology will soon become apparent. All this becomes the focus of political rebellion.' This quotation is from the film *The Explosion: Marxism and the French Revolution* (1968) originally titled *L'irruption de Nanterre au sommet*.

Finally, completing the run up to *The Production of Space*, in 1970 Lefebvre together with the architect

4



and educator Anatole Kopp, author of the first serious book on Russian revolutionary architecture and urbanism, *Ville et révolution* (1967), founded the review *Espaces et sociétés*, a journal that had a major influence on architecture, urbanism and research over the next two decades and which highlighted urban conditions from Paris to Latin America and Africa.

The Production of Space begins with Lefebvre's premise that 'space' as a concept, an ideology, and a practice, has a 'history', just like all other ideologically freighted terms. That history develops from what he calls 'absolute space', a space lived and developed in coincidence with social and religious life – what we might call 'traditional' space – to the modern version which he calls 'abstract space' construed according to the developing technologies of vision from the Renaissance on: geometrical space, visual (perspectival) space, and the space of power, or phallic space. Modern space is abstract, but not for all that unified – it contains discontinuities, disruptions, contradictions – it simply has the will to be unified. And when abstract space is 'constituted' – represented in real space – it does so in its most reduced form, fragmented and broken according to class divisions and class experience, contradictions that tend to be ignored or illusorily resolved in architectural projects. When considered as social space, space divides into space dominated and space appropriated, where the latter – as in the appropriation or 'détournement' of Les Halles before their demolition – has potential for the creation of new social spaces.

Lefebvre will never relinquish the possibility of a space of modernity, fashioned through the interrelation of the abstract space of ideas (utopia) and the real space of lived experience – a unitary understanding of social space. It is here that we can, with David Harvey, whose article on the blighted realms of Baltimore was titled 'The Spaces of Utopia', conserve a hope that we can develop a praxis of space that refuses to lapse into an often demagogic nostalgia for a past that we have never experienced, and that, if truth be known, was never ever like they tell us.

* In this essay I am deeply indebted to Łukasz Stanek's detailed study of Lefebvre's intellectual development, *Henri Lefebvre on Space. Architecture, Urban Research, and the Production of Theory* (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2011).

4. Constant Nieuwenhuys's 'New Babylon' project, an anti-capitalist rehabilitation of the biblically cursed city, which influenced Lefebvre's spatial theory
5. In the late '60s and early '70s Lefebvre published a series of seminal texts on politics, experience and urban space, including (clockwise from top left): Marxist Thought and the City (1972), The Urban Revolution (1967), The Right to the City (1968), and his magnum opus, The Production of Space (1974)

LA PENSÉE MARXISTE ET LA VILLE

HENRI LEFEBVRE



MUTATIONS • ORIENTATIONS
CASTERMAN/POCHE

henri lefebvre
la révolution
urbaine



idées/gallimard

Henri Lefebvre

Le droit à la ville
suivi de
Espace et politique



Points

THE PRODUCTION OF
SPACE
— Henri Lefebvre —



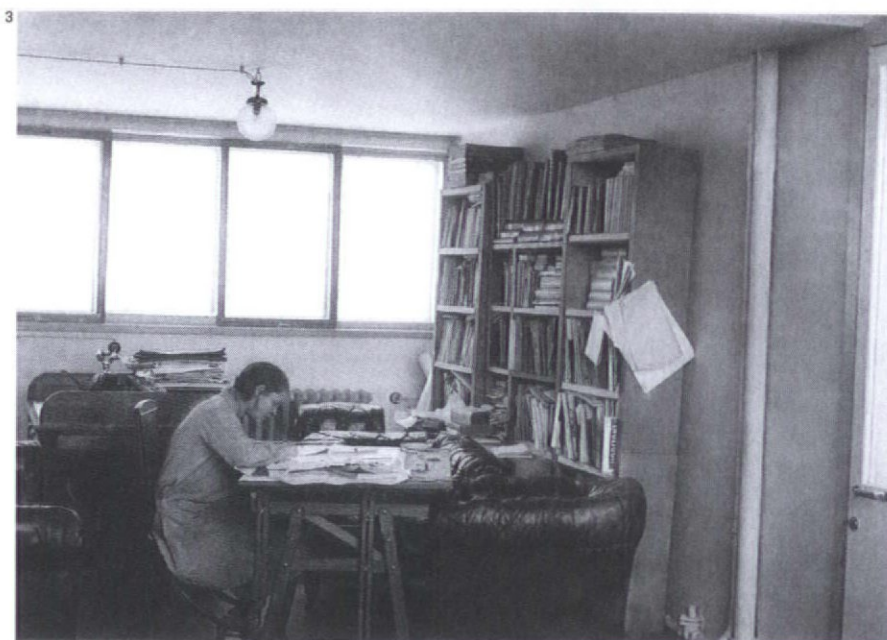
TRANSLATED BY
DONALD NICHOLSON-SMITH



RUINS OF UTOPIA

Built by Moisei Ginzburg in 1929 as a Constructivist machine for radical living, Moscow's Narkomfin Building immediately fell foul of Stalinist orthodoxy and now rots in a climate of state neglect and apathy

XENIA ADJOUBEI & ROBERT MULL



1-2. Sergei Savenkov's photographs show the young artists and creative professionals who currently occupy Narkomfin. In a ruthlessly capitalist country, the building has acquired a very different meaning: a symbol of alternative chic rather than Communism in concrete form
3. An archival photo shows one of the building's original occupants during Narkomfin's early years

EXPLORING EYE

Moisei Ginzburg's Narkomfin Building occupies a key place in the story of the development of Modern architecture. The problems faced by this prime example of Constructivism and failed prototype of communal living are eloquently captured in the images shown here; its fate is one which echoes that of many architecturally significant buildings in Moscow.

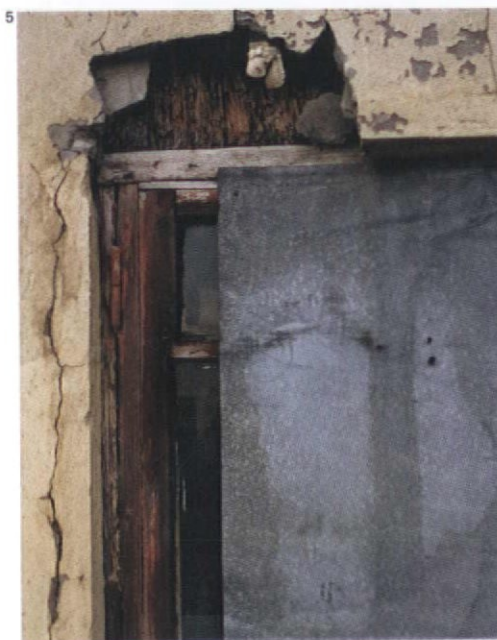
Several factors have brought the Narkomfin Building to the catastrophic state we see it in today. It is the nexus of apparently unresolvable conflicts of interests, meaning that we are increasingly at risk of losing it – this after it has survived the vast destruction of historic building stock in Moscow over recent years.

Narkomfin's neglect has, however, made it a unique haven for young artists and professionals working in creative fields, appreciative of its architecture and the communal lifestyle it was designed to promote. Young people, who have been renting or half-squatting the building, have brought new life, and some essential maintenance, to its dilapidated apartments and communal areas.

A collaborative project between the twinned institutions of London Metropolitan and Moscow Architecture School, *Narkomfin: A Modern Story* opens this autumn at the Cass Showcase Gallery in London. It aims to capture contemporary life at Narkomfin through the portraits of residents shot by Moscow-based photographer Sergei Savenkov, contrasting them with drawings and images from when the building originally opened in 1929.

Most importantly, the project aims to provoke a discussion about the situation facing monuments of Constructivist architecture in Moscow today, and what obstacles there are to restoring them and bringing them back into full use. With participation from both schools, a conference in London will look at the types of communities and creative projects the Narkomfin environment has hosted and created, the (generally failed) attempts to regenerate and restore it and, crucially, what will be its fate in the future.

For further information on *Narkomfin: A Modern Story* visit www.march.ru/en or www.thecass.com





4-7. Richard Pare has documented the recent decline of the building
5. A close-up shows a surprisingly low-tech subcutaneous layer of straw, revealing the traditional methods beneath this apparently cutting-edge structure: just as Communism was imposed, contra Marxist theory, on a feudal society
6. From the decaying, overgrown roof, there are views across Moscow. In the distance lurks one of Stalin's Seven Sisters, part of the wave of lumpish classicism that squashed the utopian experiments of the '20s
7. Ribbon windows, roof gardens and pilotis are Corbusian touches



8



9



8-10. The building was commissioned by the Ministry of Finance to act as a social condenser, admitting bourgeois professionals and spitting out fully-formed Communists. Now young creatives have occupied the space, transforming it into a playground for self-conscious bourgeois rebellion in a neat reversal of the original programme

Architect
Moisei Ginzburg
Photographs
Sergei Savenkov, 1-3, 8-10
Richard Pare, 4-7



REVIEWS

Kuma chameleon

JACK SELF

Kengo Kuma Complete Works,
Kenneth Frampton, Thames
& Hudson, £39.95

In 1991 the Japanese architect Kengo Kuma was commissioned to design a car showroom, now funeral home, in Tokyo. What he produced was a uniquely baroque style of Postmodernism with an astonishingly awkward character – a squat block, dominated by an extruded seven-storey Ionic column, whose vast ovarian volutes overshadowed a ‘crumbling’ Roman temple on one side, and a high-tech shopping volume on the other.

Where lesser men might have allowed this architectural chimera to stain their portfolios forever, at this point Kengo Kuma instead employed a *piece of writing* to radically transform his career.

This single act of critical self-reflection, crystallised into text, triggered a metamorphosis both ideological and aesthetic, and established a line of argument that drives his architecture to this day.

It is this inseparable relationship of design to words, and vice versa, that marks Kuma apart from his contemporaries: neither Kazuyo Sejima nor Shigeru Ban, for example, are known for their written work. By contrast, Kuma is both prolific and articulate. His 2008 book *Anti-Object* is among the most significant architectural texts to be published this century. It deftly rejected the iconic sculptural formalism of the boom years, denounced the fiscal immorality underpinning globalised society, and yet managed to remain propositional about new directions architecture might take. The book’s influence was magnified by its timely appearance at the height of the 2008 global financial crisis.

With this in mind, Kuma doesn’t so much *publish* writing, as *deploy* it.

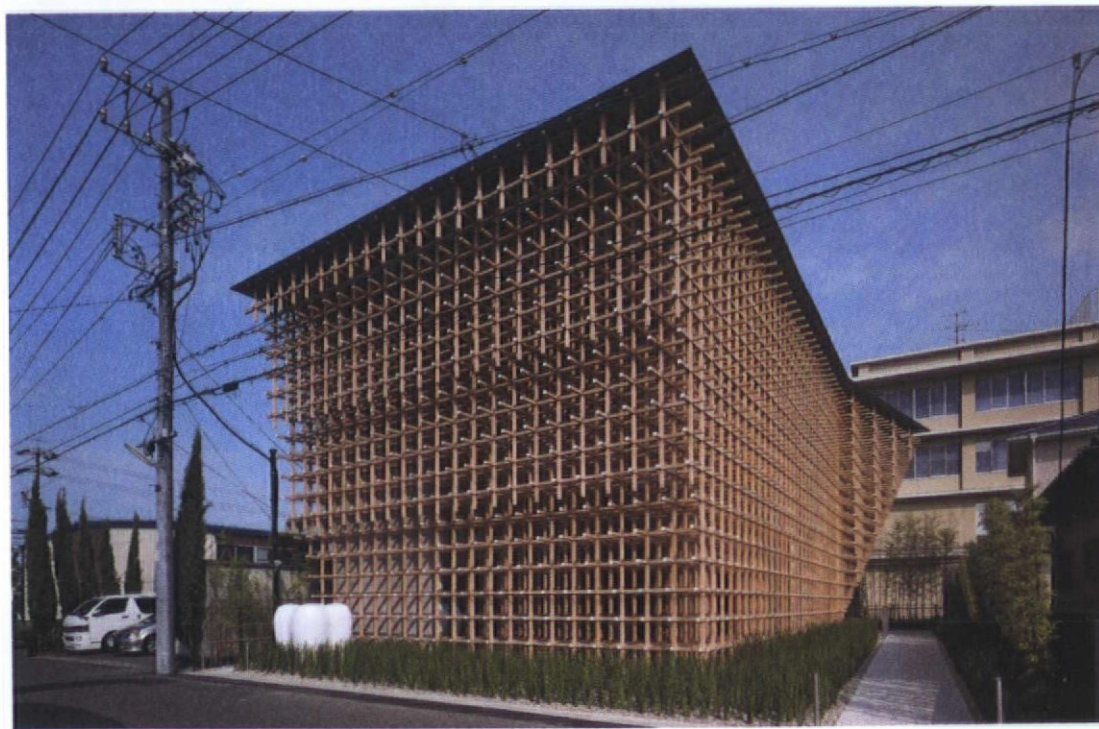
Below: Kengo Kuma’s GC Prostho Museum in Kasugai (2010) employs a latticework technique called *chidori*, traditionally used to construct wooden toys without using nails or glue

So the *Complete Works* shouldn’t be understood as just another library reference monograph. It is a concerted attempt to popularise Kuma’s interpretation of Frampton’s theory of Critical Regionalism.

‘What I am most interested in now’, he writes, ‘is inverting the structure of a culture that is centred around the city.’ For a publication entitled *Complete Works*, however, it is heavily, and strategically, edited around this theme. Only two-dozen projects (of 130+) are presented, albeit beautifully photographed and in thorough detail. These are arranged into three categories of material and architectural effect: water-glass; wood-grass-bamboo; stone-earth-ceramic.

The obvious phenomenological aspects of these categories would probably suffice for another Japanese Critical Regionalist, like Tadao Ando perhaps. However, for Kuma they assume more serious moral dimensions – deeply rooted in a rejection of urban cultural hegemony and a resistance to the decline of the rural. He waxes lyrical about the neglected skills of the craftsman, and the beauty of Japan’s topography (invoking the distinct fragrance of each valley according to its flora). He describes how to effect the dematerialisation of architecture, how to decompose its elements into particles that can float freely in a world neither wholly artificial nor wholly natural.

Just as with *Anti-Object*, the context for the *Complete Works* is integral to understanding the purpose of the book. Kuma uses his manifesto-like preface to rail against the metropolis as a locus for society’s intellectual and technological progress. But it is his comments about the devastating 2011 Tohoku earthquake and tsunami that expose the real motivation behind the book. Kuma deplores the architectural homogeneity produced by modernity, and sees the earthquake and tsunami as providing an opportunity to



redress the balance of this social and cultural decline. 'The Tohoku we saw destroyed ... was not the Tohoku that had been a paradise for craftsmen. Row after row of prefabricated housing units had been assembled from parts made in factories, and the people in those units commuted to work in the cities by car. A lifestyle similar to that of the American suburbs had destroyed the rich and distinctive culture of the region. When I saw the tsunami washing away those American-style houses and cars, Noah's flood came to mind. God had sent the biblical flood to punish an arrogant, corrupt society. The earthquake and tsunami seemed to me an expression of the anger of the gods at the way all of us had forgotten or ignored the fearsome power of nature.'

There is another aspect to his engagement with this context. On the last pages of Rem Koolhaas's recent Metabolist history, *Project Japan* (AR November 2011), a wistful Toyo Ito surveys a razed village in Tohoku. Reconstruction is compared to postwar Japan, supposedly analogous to the one that produced the Metabolist movement. Ito's directorship of the 2012 Japanese Pavilion at the Venice Biennale was his first public response to Tohoku: numerous iterations of a now built alternative housing scheme that involved residents in the design of their own homes.

Complete Works is Kuma's response, but you also get the impression it is a rebuttal of Ito, who is after all technically his *senpai* (an honorific term denoting an elder or mentor). There is a strict hierarchy of social influence in Japanese culture, in which each younger generation of apprentice *kōhai* must respect their *senpai*. 'Having said that, Kuma wrote recently in the AA's *Fulcrum* magazine, 'this is, in fact, only the situation as it appears on the surface. In fact all *kōhai* are desperately trying to overtake their *senpai*.



Above: Kengo Kuma didn't let this early monstrosity – a car showroom in Tokyo built in 1990, now a funeral home – hold his career back

For example, the work of the so-called Third Generation of postwar architects, Tadao Ando and Toyo Ito, is a biting criticism of the achievements of the Second Generation, Fumihiko Maki, Arata Isozaki and Kisho Kurokawa. In turn, the work of the Fourth Generation, people like Sejima-san and I, is a criticism and repudiation of the Third Generation. We may be all smiles when we meet, drink together, go to karaoke together, and so on, but in fact, deep down, we're always wondering how we can surpass the architecture of our *senpai*.'

In a painfully polite way, through the elegant glossy pages of this Thames & Hudson monograph, Kuma is drawing a line in the sand against Ito's generation – who fully embraced the techno-fetishism of the modern city – and making clear his political intent: 'Universal principles exist in the world, but at the same time the world is a collection of countless heterogeneous places.'

With regards to Frampton's introductory essay, it is certainly comprehensive, if a little predictable. It is not revolutionary (especially following the polemics of Kuma's preface). However, those unfamiliar with Kuma's work, and especially the close relationship it has with his writing and Japanese culture, will find this an excellent introduction. Kuma first met Frampton in 1985 at Columbia University, and acknowledges the enormous influence Critical Regionalism had upon the evolution of his work. In this respect, the text by Frampton is a complementary example of the sympathy between the two.

The final word must go to the architecture itself, which is immaculate. The refinement and elegance is everything one would expect of an architect closely allied to Japanese craftsmen. It is also remarkable the quality that Kuma achieves even outside Japan – his 2010 Glass/Wood House in New Canaan, Connecticut is equally

excellently finished. While formally diverse (which is to be expected of such tailored responses to location), there is an almost insistent consistency about the work. To somewhat contradict an earlier point, just because *Complete Works* should be primarily understood in its broader context does not mean it is not an accomplished monograph and an invaluable addition to any architect's library.

Materiality girls

MIREILLE RODDIER

Feminist Practices: Interdisciplinary Approaches to Women in Architecture, Lori A Brown (ed), Ashgate, £65

Improvised, not-for-profit, tactical, self-reflexive, playful, ephemeral, collaborative, non-Cartesian, instinctive, interdisciplinary, embodied: just a few of the terms describing *Feminist Practices* excerpted from the collection of articles that make up Lori A Brown's edited volume of the same title. What does it mean to practise in a feminist manner and how is it done? Through the voices of 19 different women, the book, originally conceived as a travelling exhibition, attempts to answer such questions. If resistance to a single hegemonic tradition is understood to be a feminist attribute, the book obliges by providing a broad spectrum of methods, offered by a diversity of authors, about projects located across both hemispheres. It also makes the singular identification of certain answers difficult. Whom do feminist 'methods' benefit: the production of an expanded knowledge to be made universally available, or 'women' – that disenfranchised half of our global population? In other words, is it about the formulation of new theories of difference, or is it about pushing for equal rights?

The latter may have been predominantly featured on the agenda of the first two 'waves' of feminism, but this selection of practitioners confirms that our current 'third wave', which has been dominated by work on materiality and performativity, is more preoccupied with embodied, individual spatial experience than with planning a coup on the patriarchy. The rise of everyday studies through spatial practices (Henri Lefebvre, Michel de Certeau, etc) first situated resistance within the realm of spatial experience and in the interstices of daily existence rather than through direct action against oppressive structures: the revolution would be tactical and freedom would emerge from *The Revolution of Everyday Life* – freedom of the working class rather than of womankind, but the methods posited were appropriated and today's feminist empowerment curriculum begins with the conscious experience of one's body and its movement in space. (That the practice of embodied experience shifted from means of emancipation to ends in and of itself is not so much discussed in the book.)

Despite Jane Rendell's reminder to resist binary oppositions, the relationship between fabric and structure – between the resilient and the rigid – emerges from most of the featured essays. The gender attribution is consistent throughout: the masculine resides in the structure/infrastructure, whereas the territory for feminist practices occupies the infill/fabric. This is made most literal in Lois Weinthal's essay 'Interior-scapes' through the parallels between architects and tailors as traditionally men with the authority to intervene on structure, and between interior designers and seamstresses whose role consists of repairing, mending or embellishing that which stands clear of structural concern. Weinthal doesn't reject the opposition but attempts to reverse its embedded hierarchy: what if the walls were contingent upon the design of the furniture? For Cynthia Hammond, air itself is the site of intervention of her Breathing Spaces, because of its invisibility.

Through the use of dancing fabrics and bodies, Ronit Eisenbach, Dana Reitz and their students undermine the formality of their school's 'Great Space' by reconfiguring its users' experience of the cold concrete



Above: University of Maryland seminar *Placing Space: Architecture, Action, Dimension* brought students of choreography and architecture together in an environment designed by Ronit Eisenbach

columns into a visceral experience of instability. In Lilian Chee's fascinating documentation of an episode in the life of the Raffles Hotel in Singapore, structure takes the form of dominant narratives, to which she opposes anecdotes, rumours and the fabric of fiction. In the reconstruction of a legendary event, Chee as feminist historian mends a weak factual narrative structure with fictional improvisations, like a seamstress whose work far eclipses that of the tailor. Whether tested on Turkish housing blocks, Indian domestic courtyards, the 'white space' of architecture, or the public spaces of Taipei, Melbourne or Toronto, the methods exposed in *Feminist Practices* mostly operate as ameliorative tactics to be implemented within an unchallenged normatively male power structure. Given the book's alarming introduction about the role and representation of women in both practice and academia today, one might experience the collection as an assessment of the effectiveness of the third wave's methods, which have dominated the last two decades of feminist practices.

To its credit, *Feminist Practices* offers both general trends and alternatives. Several essays present practices qualified as feminist through their tackled subject rather than through methodological 'difference' – a concept that has been essential to feminist theory, but as Teresa de Lauretis has argued, is itself the product of normative heterosexuality. Rather than limit their impact to the interstices, some 'minor architectures' target structural transformation, recouping the revolutionary spirit of *Everyday Life* practices. For muf architecture/art, intervention occurs early enough in the masterplanning process to appropriate and impact the direction of large building commissions. In Meta Brunzema's work on La Marqueta Mile in East Harlem, the parasitic design takes on infrastructural characteristics. For Kim Steele and Lori Brown, who respectively work on industrial agriculture and abortion clinics, change begins with implementing policy. In these projects, community participation serves as a means of empowerment at the legislative scale rather than towards a distribution of authorship. Of the entire collection, the most radical feminist practice

presented dates back to early 20th-century Berlin where the emergence of the 'career girl' called for the development of new housing typologies. Despina Stratigakos's remarkable account of the era suggests a managerial control unimaginable today: the provision of proper accommodation for the working woman elicited a comprehensive structure of production that included women clients and architects as well as a coalition of women's professional organisations, enabling such programmes to be exclusively financed by women and disclosing a factor absent from today's feminist practices: 'the growing financial strength of the women's movement and the willingness of its leaders to invest those resources in the built environment'.

One would logically conclude by asking: is Lori Brown's book itself performing at the structural level or is it mending the voids that colonise our current literature on architectural practice? In many ways, the answer resides outside her capacities as editor and solicits the collaboration of power structures. It would begin with its integration in required course syllabuses, or even more urgently with the release of a cheap paperback edition.

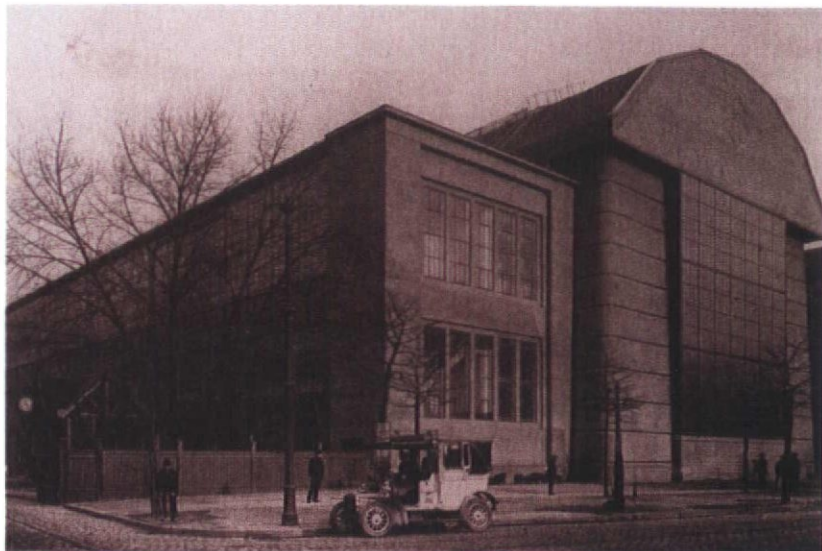
Cultural crucible

ANDREW MEAD

Metropolis Berlin 1880-1940, Iain Boyd Whyte and David Frisby (eds), University of California Press, £59

'Berlin is a suburb of New York: no more, no less. Everything of which the Berliner can be proud New York possesses ten times over. And what is New York? A desert. A huge cultural cemetery. Is humanity to finish up there?' So wrote the social scientist Werner Sombart in 1907, but a year later architect August Endell took a very different line: 'For anyone who has eyes to see, the city – for all its ugly buildings, its noise, its manifold shortcomings – is a miracle of beauty and poetry. Its streets contain countless wonders, infinite riches.'

This substantial anthology thrives on such contrasts. Focusing on Berlin's built environment, it brings together 229 texts by diverse authors. Architects, planners and politicians mingle with sociologists, novelists



Left: Behrens' 1909 turbine factory for AEG borrowed Doric motifs in an attempt to reform capitalist 'civilisation' – alienated, fragmented, cynical – as a 'community', with the factory replacing the temple at its centre

and critics. Some are well-known – among them, Behrens, Gropius and Hilberseimer – but others are less so, often newly translated into English. Instead of a synthesis and a single authorial voice, this is a history with many different perspectives – its texts all written at the time, not with hindsight, whether by key players in the city's development or observers.

Berlin became the capital of the German Empire in 1871 and over the next few decades this lacklustre city on the edge of Europe was totally transformed. The book's editors call Berlin 'a crucible of cultural modernity' that highlights 'the very nature of the emerging metropolis'; which is a valid claim, considering how central this city is to any balanced discussion of housing, industry, transport and consumption in the early 20th century. The texts are chronological, so Berlin's transformation takes place vividly before our eyes, but they are also grouped thematically, which makes the book easy to use as a reference.

A major theme of the collection is the emergence of functionalism from ornament-laden late-19th-century eclecticism, with housing and industry the particular test-beds. In a 1930 article, Gropius's prescription for a large housing estate was: 'Daylight, fresh air, sunshine; tranquillity; limited population density; good accessibility; rationally designed, convenient apartment interiors; and pleasant overall ambience.' Given the sometimes dour associations of his name now, the conclusion of the piece is noteworthy, as Gropius states that 'architecture emphatically does not begin and end with its functional value,

with mere fulfilment of a purpose'.

A pioneering scheme completed a few years before Gropius's article was Bruno Taut's Horseshoe Estate in Britz. The anthology includes an acute assessment by architect Leo Adler, who was attentive both to flaws in the estate's construction and in its designer's philosophy: 'The so-called objectivity tirelessly extolled in spoken and written word is in fact a delusion on the part of those who proclaim it. The series of little windows, like beads on a string, in the blood-red terrace have the air of a stealthy piece of ornamentation.'

Visiting the German Building Exhibition, 1931, Heinz-Willi Jüngst was even more jaundiced: 'Only when the free life of the individual has been given up and all joyful movement expired, will we discover the true charm of modern living: only then will we learn, like marionettes, to order our existences as functions of the plan and the furnishings.'

In the industrial realm it was buildings for electricity company AEG that attracted most attention, and this book has memorable passages on Behrens' Huttenstrasse turbine hall and the power station by Walter Klingenberg at Berlin-Rummelsburg. But for some, Berlin became a city of play as well as work, with lavish cinemas, department stores and cafés, alive at night with lighting and adverts whose aesthetics caused much debate. The book gives many glimpses too of movement: the spectacle of Berlin's streets, railways and huge Tempelhof airport.

Threading through the extracts is the question of city planning, including the ever-topical subject of high-rise buildings. We all know

Mies van der Rohe's unbuilt glass skyscraper on Friedrichstrasse but here are the arguments such proposals provoked. Overall there were increasing attempts to control Berlin's development, from the laissez-faire attitudes of the 1880s to the grim megalomania of Hitler and his lackey Albert Speer in the 1930s, and the last words in the book are Hitler's: 'Berlin will one day be capital of the world.'

It's a convention when reviewing anthologies to indicate omissions but in this case it seems mean-spirited to do so. Perhaps it's surprising that there's no sizeable extract from one of Walter Benjamin's memoirs of the city – his *Berlin Chronicle* or *Berlin Childhood around 1900*. The sociologist Georg Simmel is represented by a piece on the Berlin Trade Exhibition of 1896, but as author of *The Metropolis and Mental Life* he was particularly attuned to the city's impact on the individual psyche – for instance, the effects of noise. There could be something from the lecture that Mies gave in 1928, 'The Preconditions of Architectural Work', widely reported in the Berlin press: 'We do not need less but more technology,' was its credo. Given how instrumental Karl Baedeker's guides were in shaping public perceptions, a passage from the Berlin one might be instructive ('Almost every part of Berlin offers a pleasing picture,' says the 1912 edition). And to further diversify the tone of the anthology, there could be a Berlin sonnet by poet Georg Heym, admired by both Benjamin and Brecht. But this is just hair-splitting. The most obvious omission is a timeline, to make it easier to put the extracts in context.

We know only too well what happened in Berlin in the years after this anthology ends, so perhaps it's a little blithe for the editors to say simply that 'a reunified and reinvigorated city has emerged', which 'captures the imagination once again as one of the great cities of the world'. Leaving aside all the issues around postwar reconstruction and Cold War Berlin, surely the process of reunification hasn't been as smooth as that suggests? Think also of the protracted debates about the demolition of the GDR's Palast der Republik and the reconstruction of the Prussian Stadtschloss, in its place. Perhaps in the future an editor will survey the whole postwar period to make an anthology as rich and engrossing as this one.

Et in arcadia ego

AYLA LEPINE

White Cube, Green Maze: New Art Landscapes, Yale School of Architecture Gallery, New Haven, CT, USA, until 4 May 2013

Each day for weeks, TJ Clark spent hours in the company of Poussin's c1648 painting, *Landscape with a Man Killed by a Snake*, which was on loan from London's National Gallery. He honed in on its psychological and material details with a microscopic, introspective rigour; he wrote poetry delving deeper into his experience of looking hard at an old master painting in such a manner that simultaneously made sense of and complicated his existence as an art historian and as a man with mortality on his mind. The resulting book in 2006, *The Sight of Death*, was never meant to be. Clark came to the Getty in LA to look at Picasso, to confront modernity, to wrestle with that impossible and seductive modern master. Instead, he unexpectedly neglected his beloved Picasso for a time and formed a serious Poussin habit. It reframed his way of writing as a manifestation of a mental landscape, punctuated by emotional and personal inner pavilions.

In the exhibition *White Cube, Green Maze*, Frank Gehry's Getty Museum in LA is singled out as the epitome of the white cube and its legacy for world-class and minor art museums alike. These structures, which rose up in the midst of Modernism, became so pervasive as models for art display that they began to stand for museology itself rather than a contemporary turn in museological practice. Hotly – and rightly – critiqued by Brian O'Doherty in *Inside the White Cube* almost 40 years ago, the never-neutral arrangement of apparently empty voids in which art works might be liberated to speak for themselves without historicist architectural intervention swiftly dominated how art looked and how it should be housed. The white cube determined the terms through which spectacle and contemplation could be produced. Perhaps the most interesting trend within what we might call white cube culture was its hybridisation with architecture that had once served other purposes. A classic and not uncontroversial

case is the modifications by Herzog and de Meuron to Giles Gilbert Scott's Bankside Power Station to create Tate Modern. The 'cathedral of power' opposite St Paul's was partially transformed into a cavernous post-industrial set of spaces for pilgrims seeking encounter with post-1900 artistic divines.

We are still in the age of the white cube, though we are also in the midst of a growing and compelling array of reflective and exciting alternatives. *White Cube, Green Maze* explores six collaborative projects constructed within re-purposed, wild and remote places, ranging across Mexico, Brazil, Japan, Germany and America. In each case, landscapes have been carefully crafted to allow visitors, architects and artists opportunities to explore and create freely through spatial experiences that question the permeability of inside and outside. The exhibition therefore asks the viewer to perceive Paul Rudolph's assertive multi-layered concrete gallery at the core of Yale's School of Architecture as a set of global pavilions. It implies the 'green maze', placing architecture and works of art within a landscape that allows for interior and exterior, nature and culture, construction and destruction, to coexist in collaborative dialogue. Visitors begin in a small open-topped cube space. Instead of the walls of this museum within a museum declaring a white, sparse, pseudo-neutrality, they are saturated with lush forest imagery. This introduces two elements present throughout the exhibition: productive tension between the land and architectural intervention in wild places, and the photographic practice of Iwan Baan. The curatorial challenge of how to create a stable yet flexible aesthetic across several very different projects was met through inviting Baan to photograph each of the sites. His educated eye introduces exhibition audiences to the verdant playfulness, rawness, serenity and ambiguity of post-industrial islands in Japan, botanical gardens in Latin America, and a park intended to heal and unite a scarred urban landscape in Seattle.

Superb models, illuminating plans and sketches, and an arresting video of one of the project sculptures being produced by dropping monumental rusted beams from a crane into a vast lake of wet concrete, aim to bring us closer to these diverse lands, enticing us to come and see



Above: a botanical garden by Tatiana Bilbao in Culiacán, Mexico, brings the white cube into the great outdoors in a 21st-century update of the picturesque pavilion-in-a-landscape

them for ourselves. A distinct feeling of irritation at being in New Haven, Connecticut rather than Raketenstation Insel Hombroich in Germany or the remote island of Naoshima in Japan is a common sensation among visitors. This frustration is allayed in part by a generously illustrated and sensitively designed catalogue that expands on the debates housed within the exhibition's pavilion spaces, featuring sophisticated essays from Marc Treib, Raymund Ryan and Brian O'Doherty on the emergence of landscape-art-architecture's immersive experiences and the multiplicity of perspectives they offer. More than exhibition accompaniment, the book is a critical commentary on the current rise of these projects worldwide, noting international parallels such as re-purposing industrial structures, engaging artists and architects in new interactions, and making space for engaging the public in fresh conversation regarding environmental art and social change.

A notable paradox in *White Cube, Green Maze*, both in print and in the gallery, is that many architects including established masters such as Tadao Ando and Álvaro Siza, as well as emerging practitioners including Tatiana Bilbao and Johnston Marklee, are consciously referring back to the paradigm of the white cube within these jungle, brownfield and grassland sites. In doing so, are they really doing something new, or is the very old idea of the pavilion merely merging with the very established modern trope of the white cube as a kind of artistic reflexivity? Is a classic modern art strategy being interrogated, or is it simply being repeated in a mutated form in new landscapes? By way of an open-ended answer that allows for permeability between past and present, and nature and culture, it is useful to return to Poussin, perhaps. Et in arcadia ego. Among the promotion of organic growth and reclamation and artistic pilgrimage to sites that once were damaged, neglected or stripped of their natural beauty, the artistic and architectural practices that allow for the inevitability of deconstruction and decay are perhaps the most exciting. They situate visitors in exposed landscapes to remind us that the site of new life is often the sight of death, and the spirit of the white cube is never far away.

Hand of Corb

RASMUS WÆRN

Moment – Le Corbusier's Secret Laboratory, Moderna Museet, Stockholm, Sweden, until 18 April

It is the painter who did architecture we meet at the exhibition on Le Corbusier at the Moderna Museet in Stockholm. Even the architecture is presented as lustful, intuitive objects, with the sense of his hand present in the drawings. Jean-Louis Cohen – the prolific Corb expert who initiated the extensive exhibition at the Centre Pompidou for the master's centennial anniversary in 1987 – curated the exhibition. The selection of works in Stockholm is consequently exquisite, but serves as an introduction to his complex oeuvre rather than expressing a specific interpretation. The title and the content suggest a seamless oscillation between the roles as a free artist and an architect. This cross-fertilisation makes a good show, but its impact is harder to tell.

The exhibition is expansive in terms of objects – 200 paintings, sculptures, *objets trouvés*, drawings, furniture, models and movies make it the largest ever in Northern Europe – but is limited in that the work is consistently displayed as art rather than representations of existing buildings. The quality of the models varies from contemporary minimalistic to the magnificent original model of Chandigarh, a real attraction in the show. Despite the impressive collection of items, the exhibition still only manages to give a brief introduction to the world of Le Corbusier. No architect has been the subject of more literature, but this exhibition demands a catalogue. This should be on its way, and some of its content – Johan Linton's skilful explanation of the circumstances around Corb's radical proposal for a total makeover of Stockholm in 1933 – is already available, but in general the exhibition leaves you with questions rather than answers.

One of these is Corb's means of communication. The sculptures in the exhibition are all made by Joseph Savina, a Breton cabinet maker whom he considered to have a 'good sense of sculpture'. He transmitted his intentions in drawings and sometimes in written corrections: 'One must strive for finesse while maintaining the energy. It is only

Right: *I was dreaming* (first version, 1953), a painting by Corb in sub-Picasso surrealist mode Below: his wooden constructions, like *The Sea* (1964), were made by a Breton cabinet maker called Joseph Savina



when everything has been reduced to the utmost that the proportions come to light. To simplify involves classifying, ranking, weeding out and putting in order.' Maybe it is in words like these that his worlds of art and architecture merge.

The open attitude of the exhibition, with less interpretation than presentation, is all right, especially as the subject is one of the most demonised architects in history. A less dogmatic and more curious interest for Corb is needed in Sweden. Despite, or perhaps because of the fact that he has left no physical traces in the country, he became a scapegoat. It is unlikely that an exhibition like this would have been possible in, say, 1995, when a similar show was staged in the Danish city of Aalborg. But as Modernism stroked Sweden hard, so did Pomo.

He made few visits to Sweden. Apart from a lecture trip before the huge town-planning competition in Stockholm, it was the fruitless commission from art collector Theodor Ahrenberg for an exhibition pavilion in Stockholm in 1961 that appears in the archives. Ahrenberg created one of the most remarkable collections of modern art, where the painter Le Corbusier had a natural position next to Matisse, Picasso and Braque. The current exhibition was initiated by Ahrenberg's son Staffan and has many pieces from the collection. Nobody regrets that Stockholm was never replaced with a *ville radieuse*, but it was a shame that the pavilion never came to be. After

Corb's death a similar structure was erected in Zurich for art dealer Heidi Weber. A little piece of art in itself.

The stigma of scale became his destiny. More than any other architect, Le Corbusier was not only sensitive, but sensual in the small format and callous in the large. As an artist, he never prolonged a line ad infinitum as he did in the Plan Voisin. His orchestration of volumes did not have the rationality that his theories bestowed. The erotic foundation on which so many pictures are built, was rarely transmitted to his architecture and never to his urbanism. Even if the Stockholm plan is a large part of the exhibition, it is not the town planner that stays in the mind. It is the hands. Le Corbusier's obsession with hands is visible in most pictures, as well as in the Modulor and most obvious in the large sculpture he did for Chandigarh.

It is a rural big hand, to paraphrase Chinese landscape architect Kongjian Yu and his reflection on the healthy big foot as a more relevant ideal than ancient, but metaphorically speaking still present, deformed small foot architecture. Corb's art is a tribute to the rural, to the fertile and natural human, open landscapes and detached buildings. The small, sophisticated hand was as much an antipode of his aesthetics as the Dadaist's admiration of chaos and urban disorder. In Corb's art, the future of humanity rests in the rural hand, big enough to grab a bull by its horn. The ultimate image of control.



PEDAGOGY

University of Johannesburg, South Africa

MATTHEW BARAC

Three kilometres east of Sandton, Johannesburg's centre of wealth and commerce, is the township of Marlboro South. Since the fall of apartheid in 1994, the former industrial zone has been progressively occupied by squatters, some building shacks on vacant lots and others 'hijacking' neglected warehouses, subdividing the large-span structures into three-dimensional labyrinths that call to mind Piranesi's haunting *Carceri d'invenzione* etchings. These makeshift dwellings are home to hundreds of households. But recent evictions, prompted by increasing demand for land in the

city, contribute to the insecurity and marginalisation that characterise life for those who live there.

Enter Alex Oppen of the University of Johannesburg (UJ) where he leads the MTech in Architectural Technology, a professional preparation programme broadly aligned with RIBA Part 2. Environments such as Marlboro South, which provide the subject matter for the programme's seven-week 'informal studio', are symptomatic of South Africa's urban inheritance: a legacy of racial and economic divisions. Similar spatial conditions can be found in many expanding cities in the global south, but for Oppen, Johannesburg 'is the perfect laboratory, precisely because it is such an imperfect city'. By testing their ideas in contexts that could not be more real, students learn lessons more relevant and effective than those imparted in the classroom.

1. A figure-ground plan of Marlboro South was developed by Alex Oppen's MTech programme as part of their collective research; such exercises ensure students consider existing conditions in their designs, rather than reducing the site to a simplified tabula rasa

With the help of practice colleagues Thorsten Deckler and Anne Graupner, whose Johannesburg firm 26'10 south Architects highlights the interface between housing need and informal urbanity, Oppen's programme is developing a pedagogy that combines studio exercises with almost anthropological immersion in the field. Student teams survey and map the conditions of the settlement, pairing up with local residents allied to community-based organisations who act as guides. Together they develop 'site-specific ways of seeing' that not only provide insights into the priorities of those fighting to establish rights to live in the city, but also inform methods of construction and communication suited to a client group often overlooked in top-down housing delivery processes.

A key dimension of these methods of mapping and making, of seeing the city from street level and developing



designs on its future, is participation. By treating the site as a social milieu rather than a blank slate, students learn that meaningful architecture has to address the conditions that make it possible for people to establish a foothold in a place: to belong in a way that feels secure, and over which they can claim ownership. The programme has been operating as an exercise in team-building, bringing together not only students and residents but also diverse stakeholders – including Johannesburg's Goethe-Institut which sponsored aspects of the project including a follow-up travelling exhibition – with the aim of collectively building a vision of Marlboro South transformed into a legitimate urban neighbourhood.

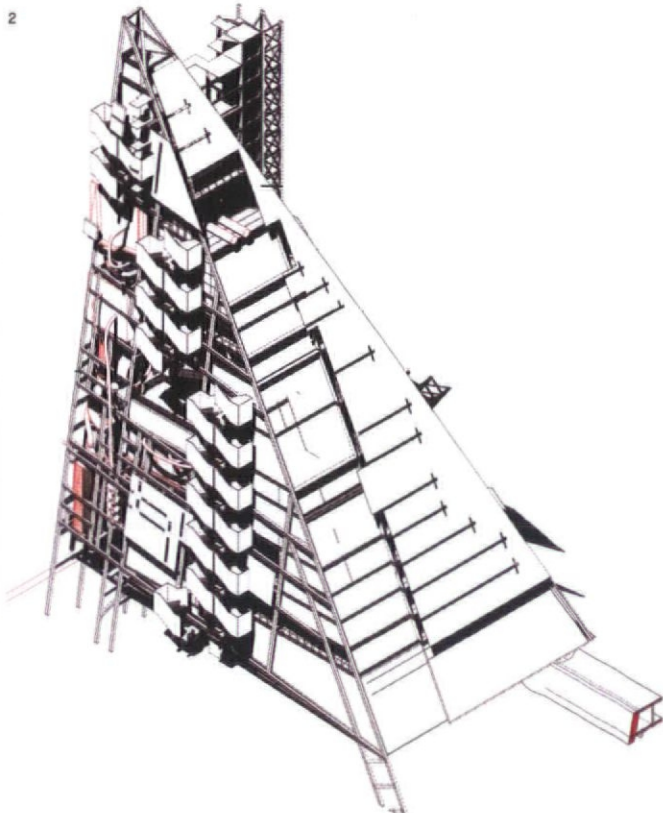
This iteration of the 'informal studio' at UJ engaged not only master's level students but also third-year undergraduates, and one

2. As part of a strategy to redevelop urban mining sites, this axonometric by Dirk Coetser illustrates a new water purification plant designed to combat contaminated ground water. Over time, the structure transforms into housing
3. Daniel Lyonga's project eases congestion of the Home Affairs department by moving immigration services to an adjacent building
4. A comic-based project by Jaco Jonker illustrates the story of housing evictions in Marlboro South. He proposes a scenario in which the villagers can thoughtfully rebuild these settlements

student – Jaco Jonker – decided to present his proposals as a comic book. He linked his spatial designs on the future to a narrative about the district's unfolding scenario, providing a contextual summary that recognises how local people have sought to establish a claim on the site. Jonker's proposal incorporates subtle adjustments to the informal urban fabric, introducing two- and three-storey walk-ups that release space for communal use, and housing new services by upgrading rather than demolishing homes already in place. In Deckler's analysis, this strategy promotes 'the devolution of decision-making power to residents, recognising the community's capacity as home-builders'.

The studio's emphasis on how practice in the context of urban informality should be strategic rather than limited to spatial solutions, naturally has an impact

on the MTech students preparing their final-year projects. A proposal by Daniel Lyonga reconfigures the main Johannesburg office for the department of Home Affairs, a government institution guided by implacable bureaucratic protocols that deals with visa applications and citizenship eligibility. To counter the anxiety caused by long waits and piled-up paperwork, Lyonga's design guts the building's corridor-crammed ground floor, installing instead an inviting and transparent public foyer. Similarly strategic in its thinking, Dirk Coetser's redevelopment of several metropolitan mine sites uses land remediation processes to address ground-water contamination caused by the industry that underwrites Johannesburg's historical economic base. His scheme is centred on phased machine-like purifiers which, over time, transform into housing.



REPUTATIONS

Herman Hertzberger

HANS IBELINGS

Herman Hertzberger is the exception to the rule that nearly all famous architects design their most significant works between the age of 30-something and their late 50s. Hertzberger did this as well, but after that he started a second act, as an architect, writer and educator. Now 80 years old, Hertzberger is still in his second act. This year will see the completion of the total make-over of his 1970s Vredenburg Concert Hall in Utrecht into the new Music Palace (2003-13), for which Jo Coenen, Thijs Asselbergs and NL Architects each designed one of the additional concert halls. And next year a new building for the Department of Applied Physics and Electrical Engineering of the Technical University Eindhoven will be inaugurated.

The first act of Hertzberger's career started in 1958, when he opened his own office in Amsterdam. A year later he became an editor of *Forum* magazine, together with Aldo van Eyck, Jaap Bakema, Dick Apon, Joop Hardy, Jurriaan Schrofer and Gert Boon, until a new editorial board took over in 1963. In the 1960s he realised his first projects, including student housing in Amsterdam (1959-66, with Tjakko Hazewinkel), a Montessori school in Delft (1960-66), the extension of Lin Mij Textile Laundry in Amsterdam (1962-64) and the Diagoon housing in Delft (1967-70). In 1968 he got the commission from Centraal Beheer, a Dutch insurance company, to build their offices in Apeldoorn. This 'workshop for 1,000 people', which he completed in 1972, gave Hertzberger world fame. Centraal Beheer offered an innovative open office concept with a wealth of informal meeting places in the building and on the rooftop terraces. Employees were free to decorate their workplace as they wished, to grow their own plants and even to keep pets, including

chicken. According to the long-time manager of the building this worked pretty well until someone took a rooster to work, upsetting the hens. After that the company's policy became a bit stricter.

While working on Centraal Beheer, Hertzberger became professor at the architecture faculty in Delft (1970-99), adding to his stature as one of the leading Dutch architects of his generation. Right after Centraal Beheer he landed the job for one of the most important cultural buildings of the 1970s in the Netherlands, the Vredenburg Concert Hall (1972-79). The year Vredenburg was inaugurated he was commissioned to design the new Ministry of Social Affairs in the Hague, a complex housing 2,400 civil servants. This building, which took 11 years to finish, marks the end of Hertzberger's first act. When he began the project, he was still very much immersed in the entangling complexity of his structuralist approach which he had developed and adhered to since the early 1960s. In the late '80s, however, he started to free himself from the constraints of the intricate system in which everything had to fit.

In an interview with Maarten Kloos in 2007, Hertzberger put this in a wider perspective when he candidly explained that it was more than just a release from a design approach: 'One could say that I gained independence only in the 1980s. I became less hindered by self-doubt, and I gradually managed to liberate myself from Le Corbusier and Aldo van Eyck. You shouldn't underestimate that process. The connection with Le Corbusier was a sort of father bond, which continued for a long time after his death in 1965. And the bond with Aldo lasted even longer.'

The transition from the first to the second act took place in the period when Hertzberger's architecture was out of step with the prevailing trends, and his work did not get

'At Centraal Beheer, employees were free to decorate their workplace as they wished, to grow their own plants and even to keep pets, including chickens'

Herman Hertzberger 1932-

Education

TU Delft (graduated 1958)

Professor

Professor of Architecture,
TU Delft (1970-99)

Dean of Berlage Institute
(1990-94)

Key buildings

Diagoon housing,
Delft (1970)

Centraal Beheer,
Apeldoorn (1972)

Vredenburg Concert Hall,
Utrecht (1972-79)

Montessori-College Oost,
Amsterdam (1993-2000)

De Titaan secondary school,
Hoorn (1999-2004)

Awards

Royal Gold Medal (2012)

Quote

'What used to be called
a sense of social concern
is now regarded as
paternalism'

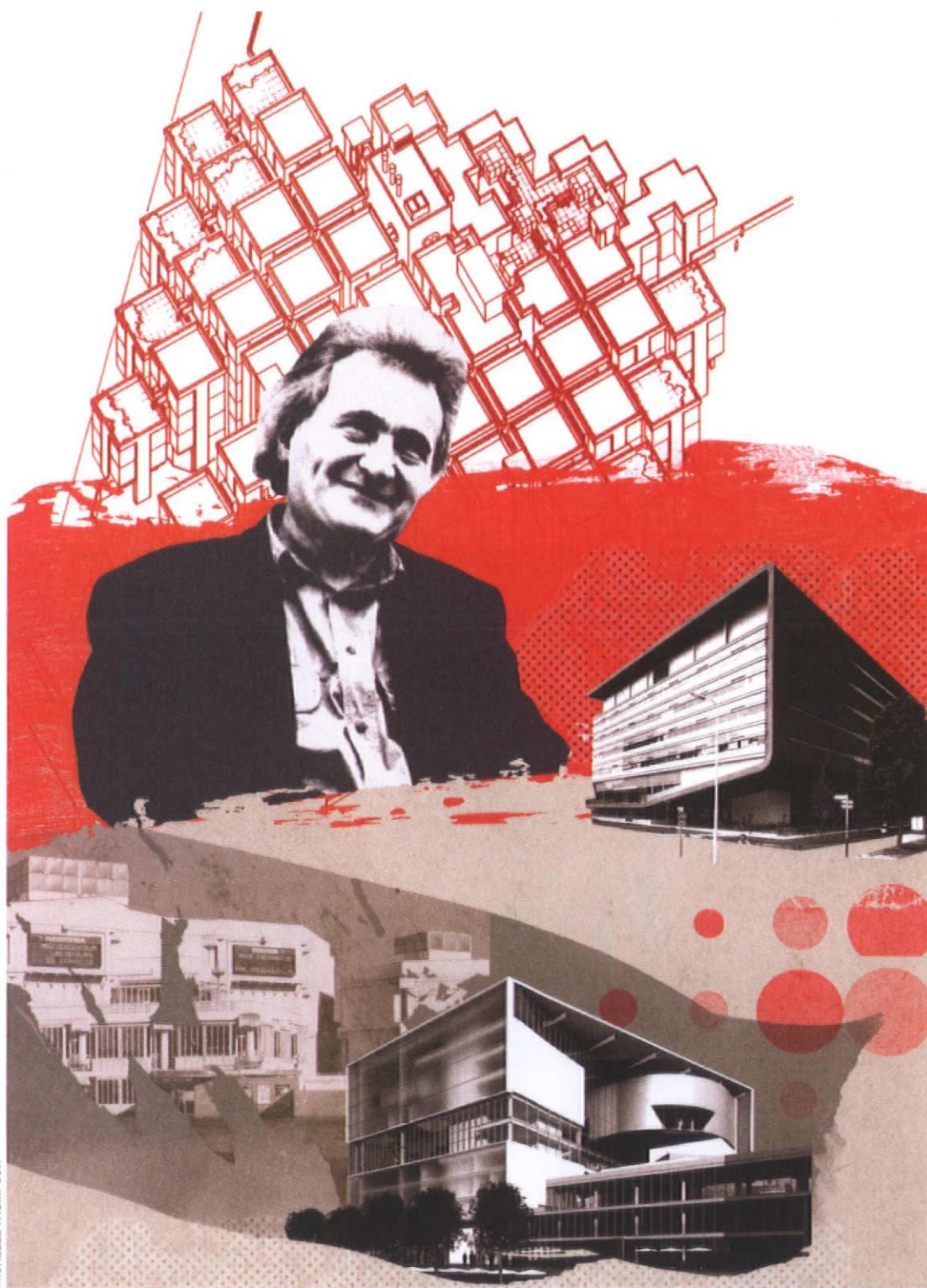
more than a lukewarm reception.

This coincided with the arrival of a new generation of architects, a large number of whom had been educated by Hertzberger. These young architects were often unimpressed by the achievements of structuralism, which they considered as old hat and sometimes they showed an undisguised aversion towards both its soft social overtones and its perceived lack of formal clarity.

Yet even in those years Hertzberger maintained his influence, albeit for a while more as an educator than as an architect. He played an important role in the creation of the country's first postgraduate architecture institution, the Berlage Institute, of which he became the first dean, from 1990 until 1994.

Especially in its first years, the Berlage Institute contributed greatly to the internationalisation of Dutch architecture, by attracting international students and by bringing renowned guest lecturers from all over the world to the institute, which was initially located in van Eyck's Orphanage, Amsterdam (which incidentally was salvaged from demolition due to an international rally initiated by Hertzberger). At the Berlage Institute, Hertzberger took the opportunity to teach in the Montessori tradition (of which he is a product) 'by not pushing him in any particular direction, but merely showing them the greatest variety of possibilities on offer'.

It might be too deterministic to claim that being dean at the Berlage widened his own perspective as well, but the appearance of the work produced since 1990 differs substantially from what he did before. In his second act, he developed a steady and consistent output which shows the formal and spatial liberties he now has taken in projects such as the Chassé Theater and library in Breda, the CODA arts centre in Apeldoorn, several housing projects in Middelburg, Dordrecht and Haarlem, a number of schools in



MICHELLE THOMPSON

Amsterdam, Hoorn, Arnhem and Dordrecht, a large university building in Utrecht, and much more. Not everything produced by his office is completely his own. To reflect this, in 2007 it changed its name to Architectuurstudio HH, and two younger architects from the office, Patrick Fransen and Laurens Jan ten Kate, gained more prominent roles.

Parallel to his design activities, Hertzberger published several books on his own work, and on his ideas on architecture. The most successful, and most translated, of these is *Lessons for Students in Architecture* (1991), based on his teachings in Delft since 1973. The Dutch edition of this book came out in 1996 under the telling title *Ruimte maken, ruimte laten* (*Making space, leaving space*), a motto for his approach of architecture. This comprehensive book is not only a didactical introduction to architecture in general but also an immersive journey through Hertzberger's world.

The length of Hertzberger's professional career is such that it exceeds the lifespan of some of his buildings. A few of them have been partly or completely demolished and quite a few are renovated or refurbished, sometimes by others, but in some instances Hertzberger was asked to do it himself, as with Centraal Beheer, the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Vredenburg Concert Hall.

Architecture is often too short-lived to make the complete shift from new to dated to timeless. Too many buildings fall victim to the wrecking ball or unkind rehabs before having the chance to prove they are timeless. This also holds true for the work of Hertzberger. Yet his career is long enough to have made full circle, from being new and exciting in the '60s and '70s, to slightly falling out of fashion in the '80s, to getting back to the centre of attention, and receiving nearly every accolade available in the world of architecture, with the exception of a Pritzker Prize.

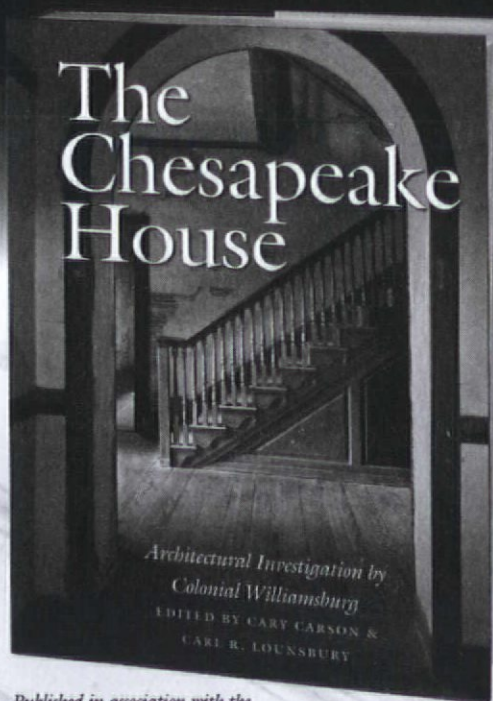


Woven Wire Fabric

Manufacturers of woven wire fabrics for lighting effects, partitions, window treatments, and other ornamental metal applications. For over 25 years, Cascade Coil has offered round weave woven wire fabrics that have fueled the imagination of architects, designers and other creative people around the world.



01.971.224.2188 | www.cascadecoil.com



Published in association with the
Colonial Williamsburg Foundation

488 pages 150 color plates, 200 halftones
\$60.00 cloth

@BOOK Most UNC Press books are
also available as E-Books.

"A remarkable book. Cary Carson and his colleagues have transformed the way architectural history fieldwork is performed and in the process have also changed our understanding of the early architecture of the Chesapeake."

—CARTER L. HUDGINS, Clemson University



For more than thirty years, the architectural research department at Colonial Williamsburg has engaged in comprehensive study of early buildings, landscapes, and social history in the Chesapeake region. Its painstaking work has transformed our understanding of building practices in the colonial and early national periods and thereby greatly enriched the experience of visiting historic sites. In this beautifully illustrated volume, a team of historians, curators, and conservators draw on their far-reaching knowledge of historic structures in Virginia and Maryland to illuminate the formation, development, and spread of one of the hallmark building traditions in America architecture.

"The fruit of a generation's labors and captures a revolution in the study of early American architecture. The authors adroitly combine field documentation with the most recent research as they explore the region's architecture—from the smallest details of construction and decoration to the broadest issues of social ritual and social prestige. This is the great work we have been waiting for."

—DELL UPTON, University of California, Los Angeles



THE UNIVERSITY of NORTH CAROLINA PRESS

at bookstores or 800-848-6224 | www.uncpress.unc.edu | visit uncpressblog.com

UNC Press books are now available through Books @ JSTOR and Project Muse



THE FUTURE. ILLUMINATED.
We see the future clearly. And so will you.

Philadelphia, PA USA
Pennsylvania Convention Center
4.21.13 – 4.25.13



www.lightfair.com



In collaboration with
The Illuminating
Engineering Society

IALD

In collaboration with
The International
Association of
Lighting Designers



Produced &
Managed by
AMC, Inc.

PHOTO CREDITS
(1) UNITED STATES INSTITUTE OF PEACE, WASHINGTON, DC USA | LIGHTING DESIGN BY LAM PARTNERS | © GLENN HEINMILLER,
IALD, LAM PARTNERS, © BILL FITZ-PATRICK, UNITED STATES INSTITUTE OF PEACE (2) CHANDLER CITY HALL EXTERIOR LIGHTING,
CHANDLER, AZ USA | LIGHTING DESIGN BY SMITHGROUP JJR | © TIMMERMAN PHOTOGRAPHY

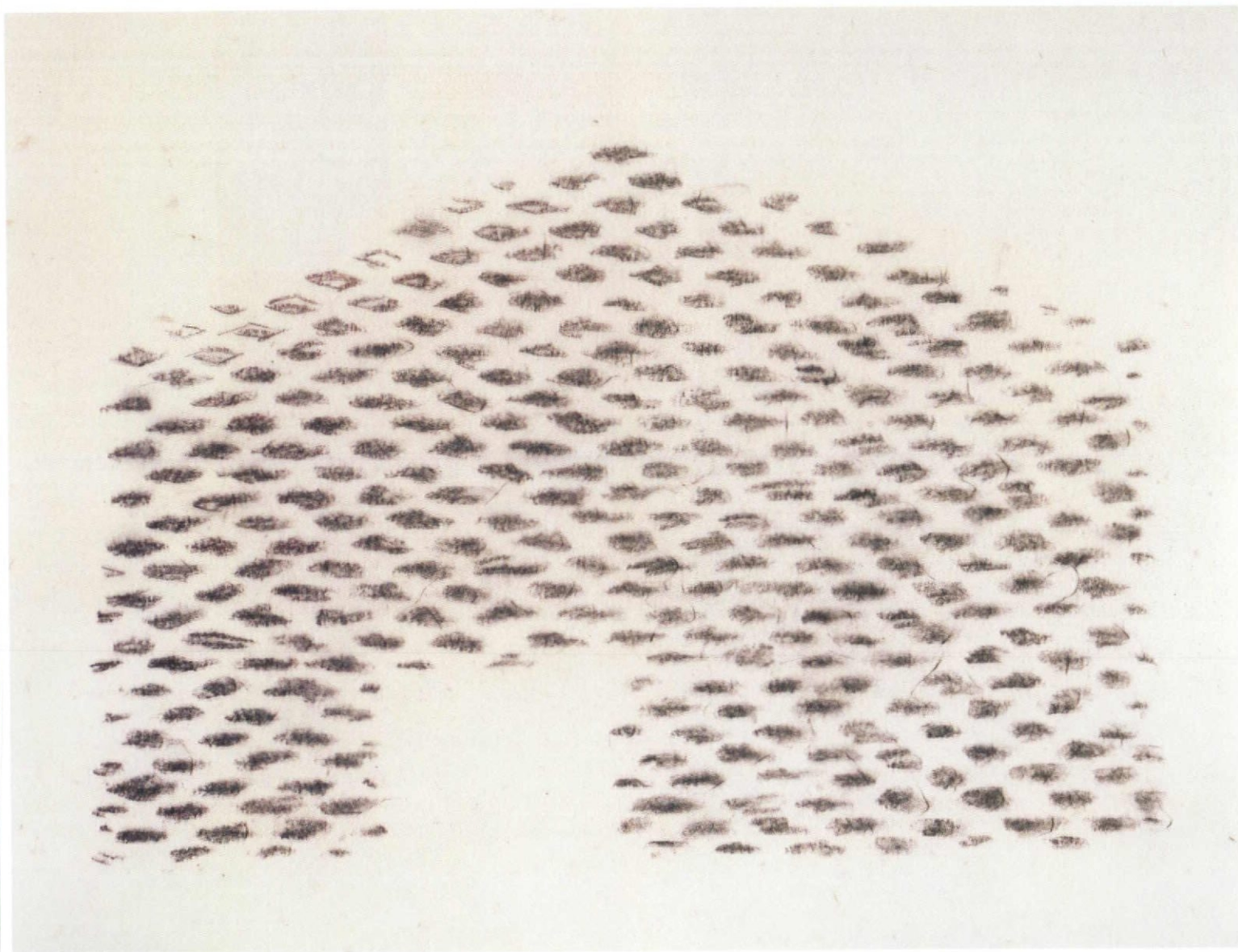
**IS YOUR
BUILDING
MISSING
SOMETHING?**



**THE CLOSING DATE FOR ENTRIES
IS FRIDAY 14TH JUNE 2013**

THE AWARDS TAKE PLACE AT THE MARRIOTT HOTEL,
GROSVENOR SQUARE ON THURSDAY 14TH NOVEMBER
DOWNLOAD THE 2013 ENTRY FORM AT:
WWW.BRICK.ORG.UK/BRICK-AWARDS-2013-ENTRY-FORM





This month's *Reviews* section makes the argument that Kengo Kuma is one of the few architects able to use writing as a critical tool. This sketch highlights his comparable dexterity at editing his images to the core idea. The smudges poetically indicate the voids in the facade of his design for the Chokkura Plaza in Tokyo, where stone is used to make a woven perforated screen.

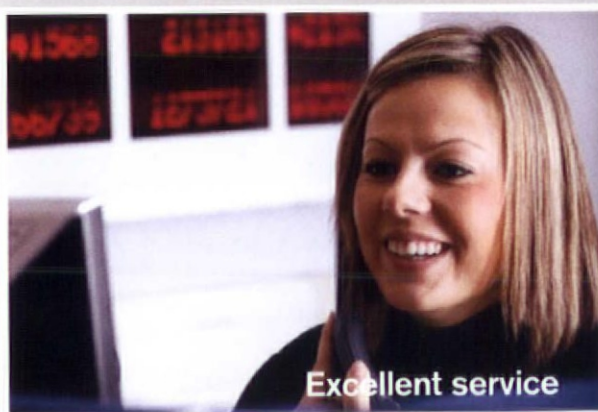
We know education.



Design, safety and performance were our design team's key considerations when creating all of our education range. From nurseries to universities, we're committed to raising the standard of our children's washrooms.



Anti-finger trap hinges



Excellent service



Low-cost cubicles

We know washrooms.

We know education washrooms.

Call 01474 353333 www.venesta.co.uk

10-year guarantee

Venesta

your challenge...

launching of the 5th
Roca international
design contest 2013

jumpthegap

www.jumpthegap.net

President



Kazuyo Sejima

Architect
Tokyo (Japan)

Jury



Josep Congost

Roca Design Manager
Barcelona (Spain)



Andrés Jaque

Architect
Madrid (Spain)



Benjamin Kempton

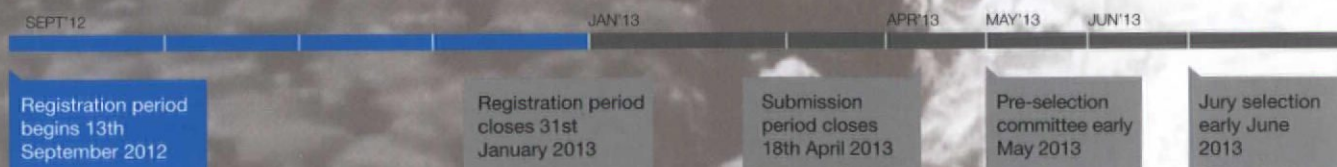
Wallpaper* Magazine
Interiors Director
London (United Kingdom)



Harri Koskinen

Designer
Helsinki (Finland)

Deadline for submissions
31st January 2013
www.jumpthegap.net



Roca

THE LEADING GLOBAL
BATHROOM BRAND
www.roca.com

with the support of

BCD
Barcelona Centre de Disseny