

THERMAE NERONIS



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Guest-edited by Garth Rockcastle

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Congress for the New Urbanism Green Architecture and Urbanism Council

Jess Wendover

When the ophthalmologist Dr. Ludwik Lejzer Zamenhof published the first Esperanto grammar in 1887, he envisioned the auxiliary language as a tool for increasing international understanding. The language continues to be spoken by nearly two million people, and the annual world Esperanto congress attracts an average of two thousand attendees, but Esperanto is now widely considered an anachronistic curiosity. The rise of more sophisticated means of translation and of English as a *lingua franca* have all but obviated the need for the form of communication Dr. Zamenhof envisioned. However, the history of the Esperanto movement and global reactions to its advocates' fervor should serve as a cautionary tale to the members of the Congress for the New Urbanism (CNU).

From November 30 through December 2, 2007, more than two hundred people gathered for the CNU's Green Architecture and Urbanism Council in Alexandria, Virginia, and Washington, D.C. Over three days, the event featured plenary lectures, discussion panels, and open dialogue sessions. Attendees, from around the world, included New Urbanism leaders and thinkers, professionals, government officials, and students.¹

The council highlight new opportunities for cooperation with an environmental movement of growing popularity, and it served as a reminder that CNU members have long advocated many principles of green urbanism. But in other respects it showed how some New Urbanists risk pushing their movement into irrelevance. Particularly difficult may be their insistence that the "Transect" system for categorizing development become a universal language for environmentally responsible development.

Best Foot Forward

In presentations at the council, practitioners who work on suburban retrofits, transportation planning, and passive stormwater management all demonstrated how traditional models of neighborhood development may be a significant help in combating human-induced climate change. Most of the Green Council attendees also moved quickly beyond seeking recognition for past work to discuss new tools or practices being developed within New Urbanism to advance a green agenda.

Among the council highlights was a presentation by Tom Low of a "Light Imprint Handbook." Low, a director of Duany Plater-Zyberk's Charlotte, North Carolina, office, argued that typical low-impact suburban development standards often yield poor designs, such as retention ponds circled in chain-link fence. His handbook merges discussion of the New Urbanist Transect, LEED for Neighborhood Development standards, and broad-stroke cost analyses of passive and active infrastructure techniques. It emphasizes sustainability, pedestrian-oriented design, and increased environmental and infrastructural efficiency.

Also a highlight was the panel "The Green Mile: Aligning Firm Ideology with Sustainability," at which representatives of Torti Gallas and Partners presented their Sustainability Process Checklist. Written to remind designers of such important issues as site selection, building adaptability, water conservation, energy use, materials selection, and community services, the checklist is organized so that a project manager can review it at each phase of a project, helping ensure a firm-wide commitment to sustainability.

Doug Farr's presentation on "Sustainable Urbanism," provided a third important moment. Drawn from his

recently published book, *Sustainable Urbanism: Urban Design with Nature* (Wiley, 2007), it provided the outline of a model sustainable neighborhood: around 160 acres with enough population to support retail and other uses within walking distance. Farr pointed out that this model development would also meet the LEED-ND criteria for diversity of uses, and cited a 2007 Zimmerman Volk study which showed that, given the option, more than one-third of surveyed consumers would prefer attached housing in compact communities.

The group then discussed the contribution of this type of neighborhood development toward solving the problems outlined in the widely lauded research paper "Growing Cooler: The Evidence of Urban Development and Climate Change," published in 2007 by the Urban Land Institute, Smart Growth America, the Center for Clean Air Policy, and the National Center for Smart Growth Research & Education. That paper documents how, in terms of carbon emissions, even technological advances in fuel economy will be negated if current driving patterns continue.²

While the conclusions of "Growing Cooler" were focused on federal policy, particularly reauthorization of a surface transportation bill, Green Council attendees argued that it also provides scientific support for the kind of neighborhood-based urbanism advocated by Farr.

Finally, a panel devoted to "What Can Schools Do?" brought together several academics with an ability to relate academic theory to design practice. Georgia Tech's Ellen Dunham-Jones presented statistics on the increasing number of students pursuing dual degrees in architecture and city planning, and discussed elements of the green design agenda proposed

for inclusion in an update to architecture school accreditation standards. Doug Kelbaugh, of the University of Michigan, presented an argument for considering equity hand-in-hand with environmental sustainability. And Mike Lykoudis poked fun at the New Urbanists' reputation within academia, claiming that at Notre Dame, "the plans for Seaside and Poundbury are tucked under every student's pillow." Those in attendance seemed to share the hope that a common interest in sustainability will open a new path to partnership between New Urbanism and American architecture schools

Enemies Foreign and Domestic

The Congress for the New Urbanism is far from new to issues currently being discussed under the umbrella of green development. Indeed, the group voted during a final open session to recommend that the CNU board adopt the tagline "promoting sustainable building for over twenty years." Some participants at the Green Council, however, seemed stuck in past modes of thinking, circling back to reference obstacles and critics from New Urbanism's early days as a movement struggling for relevance.

Part of the problem may be vision. Jeff Speck, former design director of the National Endowment for the Arts and for ten years the director of town planning at Duany-Plater Zyberk, explained that New Urbanism was formed from many different influences, but one common enemy: sprawl. Such tightly edited and argued texts as the Charter of the New Urbanism or Speck's own book with Andrés Duany and Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk, *Suburban Nation*, were rallying cries against this universal foe. But at the Green Summit several other perceived enemies seemed to be emerging: American academia,

stylistic relativism, architectural modernism, the smart growth policy movement, Ed Mazria and his Architecture 2030 movement, and even environmentalists (referred to by one speaker as "hippies"). The demonization of such a wide swath of the design field signals a weakness in New Urbanism's organization.

Many potential partners of the CNU admire its success, but they resist adopting its more codified positions. In particular, the Transect system of categorizing land use by intensity (ranging from urban core to rural boundary) asks practitioners to adopt this new framework in place of various long-standing, proven professional systems. Like Esperantists, New Urbanists seem convinced that the rest of the world should take up their cause to the exclusion of others. Instead of recognizing that other professions, advocates, and associations have already developed their own internal modes of communication, many within the New Urbanist movement believe the Transect should be the guiding framework for all urban development. In fact, the Transect diverges from existing professional practices so profoundly that insisting on strict adherence to it raises suspicions that its advocates are ignorant of other professional cultures.

During the final day of the Green Council, the group discussed the widely lauded LEED for Neighborhood Development (LEED-ND) project, of which the CNU is a founding partner along with the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) and the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC). LEED-ND is a shining example of the CNU's ability to promote widespread transformation of the mass-market built environment. But even this program came under criticism because the other partner

organizations oppose integrating the Transect into the LEED-ND framework. The USGBC, in particular, is hesitant to redesign the LEED-ND system around the Transect. The USGBC needs to demonstrate a measurable and objective system as it advocates that its various LEED products be adopted as regulations by public agencies and standard practices by the development community. The impact of the Transect on green urbanism is more subject to interpretation, and certainly more difficult to define and quantify.

Operating in a new green world will inevitably require breaking down the barriers that have prevented different professions from sharing strategies and knowledge. CNU deserves recognition for its ability to promote more compact and environmentally sustainable development, but it's difficult to envision the CNU as a partner in effective future collaborations when the organization is so openly critical of its own most widely publicized collaborative project (LEED-ND). The organization's broader goals might be more appealing to new audiences if, instead of teaching the world to speak Transect, the group could learn the lingo of other groups and influence them by bringing traditional neighborhood development to them on their own terms.

True Faith

In a discussion that perhaps captures the central crisis of the CNU, the Green Council considered a proposal to amend or append the CNU's 1996 Charter document. Titled "The Nature of Building Canons: Sustainable Architecture and Urbanism Principles," the amendment proposed "amplifying" the Charter. The council, over one hundred and fifty strong at this point, reached an

impasse over a line that referred to creating human settlements only with buildings with both “vertical and horizontal walkability” (that is, without mechanical lift systems—which would limit supported development to six stories or fewer). Supporters and opponents of the proposed wording argued emotionally for their sides, with supporters of the language associating tall buildings with the most nightmarish problems of state-subsidized and -managed housing projects. Many in attendance, however, argued that for the movement to remain relevant, it couldn’t take a universal stand against more dense development. Eventually, the entire proposal was shuttled to a future committee meeting for clarification.

Some level of committee referral is to be expected as a response to a proposal like this from the floor; clearly, wordsmithing becomes an absurd art form in a room of one hundred and fifty people. But the debate about highrise buildings (as well as other differences of opinion expressed at the Green Council) arguably rises above the level of word choice to indicate a real identity debate.

To its credit, the CNU has never adopted a rigid decision-making structure or membership criteria, preferring a flexible and grassroots-based system. But early on, CNU leaders also recognized the dangers of allowing individual actors to employ the name “New Urbanism” to describe work that at best accidentally misunderstood the principles of the movement, and at worst, knowingly used the term to capture market demand without reflecting the organization’s underlying values. The original invitation to the first organized meeting of the Congress in 1993 stated, “This is a crucial time of transition from practice by a few to acceptance by the

mainstream of the professions. The situation requires that standards be set so that those who insist on producing the ersatz are marginalized.”

Over the years, the CNU has proved reluctant to question its purported adherents, even about views that fall outside established, shared principles. Thus, the 2007 Green Council brought together speakers and members who represented a wide range of viewpoints under the big tent of traditional neighborhood development. However, it also resulted in the presentation of dissonant viewpoints that seemed more successful at alienating potential new partners than encouraging new initiatives. Clearly, a speaker who paired images of a quaint Nantucket storefront with a middle-American waffle house to demonstrate that some buildings are “loveable” while others aren’t was playing more to an in-crowd than trying to bring new followers into the fold. For such a rare, large gathering of powerful minds, much time was devoted to discussion of real and perceived slights towards the movement, instead of constructive responses like supporting the work of existing envoys to perceived outsider groups like academia, environmentalism, or the smart growth movement.

A real lesson for New Urbanism from the history of Esperanto is the list of enemies the international language movement has engendered. Esperantists have also defied the efforts of international bodies like the United Nations because those groups have relied on more traditional means of solving the problem of international communication (adding more languages, hiring more interpreters and translators, and ensuring that all employees are multilingual). New Urbanists should avoid such rigid positions. While it’s clear they deserve

a seat when issues of sustainability are being discussed, they should focus on being good tablemates, even if the Transect is not what is being served.

Note

1. The Green Council has met five times previously. Other CNU councils include, for example, a Classical Architecture Council. CNU members are invited to participate in councils that are relevant to their work, and the results are reported back to the general membership on the organization’s website and at its annual meeting. Specific recommendations from a council can be taken to the board of directors for consideration as official policy, including potential revisions to the Charter of the New Urbanism.
2. The full “Growing Cooler” report is now available from the Urban Land Institute bookstore (Washington, D.C.); www.uli.org.

Caring for Places: What Does It Take to Make Place?

It takes the mind of the beholder
 Wondering
 Imagining
 Caring how things are
 and might be

It takes circumstance and promise and
 Companionable surroundings

That is to say it takes being alert among things
 Standing beside them
 Moving among them
 Being enfolded
 Discovering positions in a larger pattern
 Choosing among paths and vantage points
 Investing attention

It takes events
 Everyday and momentous
 Spontaneous and contrived

which fill the spaces between and bring them to life
which engage the senses and prompt the mind

 Magic rings of silence
 Sounds that touch the nerves of being, echo and spur recollection
 The flows of social action

It takes marking the things that surround us in ways that call out and
recall events that take place

 Inscribing thought in matter
 Tracing the acts of conception and construction
 Embedding ornament that intrigues and offers to narrate
 Reflecting the joy of seasons and of ritualized time

 Forging libraries of aspiration
 Indexing paths through the repository of the city

It takes Companions
 Faces that challenge
 Faces that confirm
 Faces that dance

 The many great faces that help to bring places into being

 And yes, the face of the unfamiliar

— *Donlyn Lyndon*

Atlantic Yards: This Generation's Penn Station?

Norman Oder



To proponents, the \$4 billion Atlantic Yards project in Brooklyn, New York, is a model of urban redevelopment.¹ Designed by the architect Frank Gehry and consisting of sixteen towers and a basketball arena on 22 acres, it would extend and revitalize Brooklyn's downtown, add residential density near a transit hub, and include subsidized housing. It also would return professional sports to the borough, which hasn't been "major league" since the baseball Dodgers left for Los Angeles in 1958.

To detractors, however, Atlantic Yards represents "extreme density" and the corruption of public pro-

cesses. Including nearly three hundred apartments per acre, it would encroach on surrounding historic low-rise neighborhoods, burden local infrastructure, and create a deadening pattern of superblocks. Critics also claim its present form depends on hundreds of millions of dollars in public subsidies, tax breaks, and increased development rights, plus the use of eminent domain to benefit politically powerful special interests.

Kent Barwick, president of New York's venerable Municipal Art Society (MAS), sponsor of a recent exhibition on the work of Jane Jacobs, has suggested that Atlantic Yards might

be "this generation's Penn Station" because of the "absurdity" of the public processes involved. Just as the demolition of that landmark structure in 1963 for an arena and office complex accelerated the preservation movement, the battle over Atlantic Yards has prompted new outrage in the city about single-source deals and inadequate community consultation.

Above: The architect Frank Gehry and the developer Bruce Ratner are tweaked in references to a legal battle and traffic woes. Photo by Tracy Collins/3c.com; artwork by Patti Hagan and Schellie Hagan.



lines and a branch of the Long Island Railroad converge, it would also compound traffic at corners already plagued by gridlock. The project would also include 1,100 arena parking spaces and more than 2,500 spaces for the housing, thanks to antiquated city policies that require 0.4 spaces per household in outer-borough projects, no matter the adjacency of transit. Critics also point out that the arena, Gehry's first, would not only be wrapped by highrise structures but also sit directly across one street from row houses. (The state must still override zoning that bans sports facilities within two hundred feet of residences.)

On two sides, the arena would also present glass walls near major avenues, an effort at openness that has

raised security qualms. And for construction staging, the developer would capitalize on a dubious claim of blight to snag a 100-foot wide rectangle, later to house a 272-foot building, at least five times as tall as its neighbors.

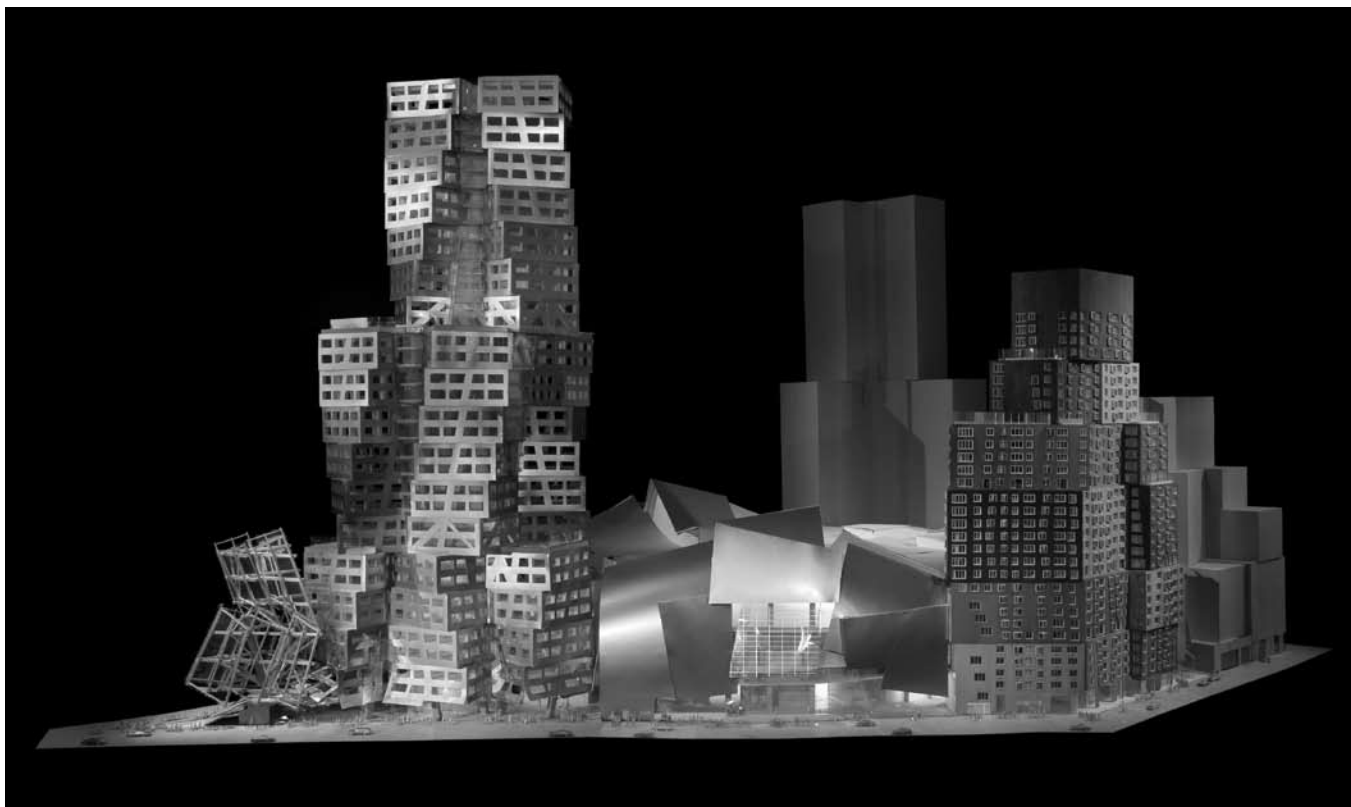
The State Override

Other neighborhood complaints, resonating citywide, have targeted the way permits have been issued by state and local agencies. Typically, such a project would have to go through New York City's Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP)—a post-Robert Moses reform which requires an advisory vote from affected local community boards, mandated public hearings, and approval by the City Planning Commission and City

Council. But Atlantic Yards was fast-tracked via the Empire State Development Corporation (ESDC), the alter ego of the state Urban Development Corporation. The agency, formed in 1968 in the wake of the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr., was granted "amazing powers"—in the words of the noted planner Alex Garvin—to override zoning and pursue eminent domain to assist the poor.

Opposite: The Atlantic Yards site plan creates two superblocks. Drawing from Atlantic Yards Final Environmental Impact Statement.

Above: Photosimulation by local photographer Jonathan Barkey, based on 2006 plan (since trimmed), shows perspective from south side of Dean Street below project's center. Image from www.pbse.com/AtlanticYards.



Today, the ESDC typically shepherds megaprojects like the Times Square redevelopment and Ground Zero reconstruction. Thus, while the ESDC conducted three public meetings to collect testimony during the Atlantic Yards environmental review, the process produced few changes—and a lawsuit-proof record of more than 22,000 pages.²

Perhaps the most contentious claim made to justify the redevelopment is that the site—an irregular area chosen by the developer, not by public process—is blighted. Among other blight criteria, the ESDC has cited buildings that do not fulfill more than 60 percent of their development rights.

Certainly, some buildings within the project footprint are moribund and decrepit. But industrial buildings in the footprint and nearby were

recently renovated into luxury condos after spot rezonings, and residences just outside the project boundary have sold for seven figures in Brooklyn's booming real estate market.

Nevertheless, the ESDC claimed that only the Atlantic Yards project could remove the persistent blight stemming from the railyard—even though no attempt had been made to market the property before Forest City Ratner announced its plan, nor the adjacent blocks rezoned—both alternative paths to development.³

Years of Contention

Atlantic Yards has generated great contentiousness, and its future remains murky.

Barwick's MAS and some neighborhood groups have accepted the project's inevitability and lobbied for

revisions—in particular, criticizing indefinite “interim surface parking” and open space (designed by Laurie Olin) that appears private, as well as calling for a new administrative structure to oversee the project's construction.⁴

However, the grassroots coalition Develop Don't Destroy Brooklyn has organized two lawsuits with support from residents in adjacent gentrified neighborhoods and several civic groups, and watchdog blogs like “No Land Grab” and my own “Atlantic Yards Report” have maintained persistent online analysis and criticism of the project.

Of the two lawsuits, one was a federal challenge to the use of eminent domain.⁵ The plaintiffs argued that the project was a sweetheart deal, benefiting the developer

more than the public. Among other things, they pointed out that city and state officials had backed the Atlantic Yards proposal eighteen months before the railyard was even put up for bid.⁶ However, both the trial and appeals courts have ruled that judges must defer to the public benefits (housing, sports facility, improved transit facilities, blight removal, etc.) found by the ESDC, and that non-blighted properties may be added to a project outline. A long-shot Supreme Court appeal has been filed.

The other suit, in state court, charged inadequacies in environmental review. It, too, was defeated in the trial court.

While Forest City Ratner sought a speedy schedule to resolve the inevitable appeal, hoping to open the arena by 2010, a state appellate court scheduled oral arguments for September of 2008, making it unlikely the developer will be able to meet this timetable. Even though the developer has begun demolishing buildings it owns and constructing a temporary railyard, it can't start arena construction until the lawsuits are cleared.⁷

Indeed, the developer acknowledged in March 2008 to the *New York Times* that all but the arena was on indefinite hold, blaming lawsuits and the credit crunch.⁸ The newspaper also reported that the developer was taking the unusual step of essentially cold-calling office tenants for the flagship tower. Faced with the looming possibility of a standalone arena sans towers, *Times* architecture critic Nicolai Ouroussoff, who called Gehry's design for the arena block "a tour de force," urged the architect to walk away from the project.⁹

On May 4, Bruce Ratner asserted in a *New York Daily News* op-ed piece that the project would be completed by 2018; the next day new designs

for three buildings were released. (Missing was the promised green roof on the arena.) Still, there's ample reason to question the timetable, and thus the delivery of promised public benefits, such as eight acres of open space and subsidized housing.¹⁰ An ESDC document shows that, after approving a project, "anticipated" to last a decade, the agency has now given the developer up to six years after the close of litigation and the exercise of eminent domain to build the arena, up to twelve years to build the first five towers, and an unspecified amount of time for the rest of the project. The developer has begun marketing 130 luxury suites, averaging \$300,000 a year.¹¹ This would offset a good chunk of the cost of building the arena—assuming it ever gets built.

Notes

1. As approved in December 2006, the project would cost \$4 billion. Rising construction costs have already boosted the expected arena tab from \$637.2 million to \$950 million, by far the country's most expensive arena ever. That suggests a significant increase in the overall price tag.

2. Former Deputy Mayor for Economic Development Dan Doctoroff has claimed that the city has learned from Robert Moses and managed to achieve development without alienating communities, characterizing the city's efforts as "making omelets without breaking eggs." However, in a December 2007 interview after he announced his departure from city government, Doctoroff acknowledged to the *New York Observer* that criticism of Atlantic Yards had had an impact: "If it happened again, and the state were to ask if I would encourage them to take Atlantic Yards through the ULURP process, I would say yes." (However, the ULURP process has its own problems, and is no panacea.) Mayor Michael Bloomberg's vaunted PlaNYC 2030 sustainability effort now posits much more community consultation for development over railyards or highway cuts.

3. While numerous states have reformed eminent domain laws in the wake of the United States Supreme Court's 2005 *Kelo v. New London* decision, New York has yet to act.

4. The Regional Plan Association, while announcing support for the project's first phase, has nonetheless criticized the lack of government planning and public input during the early stages, as well as an absence of consistent public oversight over the long term.

5. About 35 of 334 residents remain, as well as a handful of 33 businesses, along with a homeless shelter; many of the developer's buyouts have been accompanied by gag orders.

6. They drew significantly on Supreme Court Justice Anthony Kennedy's nonbinding concurrence joining the controversial 2005 *Kelo v. New London* eminent domain decision, which set out criteria for legitimacy such as an open bid process and commitment of public funds before most private beneficiaries were known.

7. The complete project probably will not be successful in any case without the enactment of larger policy changes to reduce traffic impacts, like proposed congestion pricing.

8. However, the limited pool of affordable housing financing preceded the credit crunch.

9. <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/03/21/arts/design/21atla.html>.

10. Ratner stated, "We anticipate finishing all of Atlantic Yards by 2018." However, his cousin, Chuck Ratner, CEO of the parent company Forest City Enterprises, in 2007 told investment analysts (in response to questions about three other projects), "As you know, in our business, these things take a very long time, most often, frankly, longer than we anticipate."

11. The developer also has a \$400 million arena naming rights deal with Barclays Capital and several other "partnerships" in the wings.

For more on the Atlantic Yards project, visit the following websites: FCRC.com—Forest City Ratner Companies; AtlanticYards.com—official Atlantic Yards site; AtlanticYardsReport.com—author's site; DDDDB.net—Develop Don't Destroy Brooklyn; NoLandGrab.org—No Land Grab; www.empire.state.ny.us/AtlanticYards/—ESDC's Atlantic Yards site. AtlanticLots.com—Municipal Art Society site.

Opposite: A May 2008 revision of the arena block shows a newly rectilinear office tower and an arena with less glass and a new metal skin. Model/rendering by Gehry Partners.

Why Re-Place?

Garth Rockcastle



Why, as a culture, do we tend to privilege the conception and making of new things, or places, over the chance to modify or remake existing ones? Making new is not intrinsically more challenging than remaking, amending, or renewing. Nor is the result routinely more appealing or longer lasting.

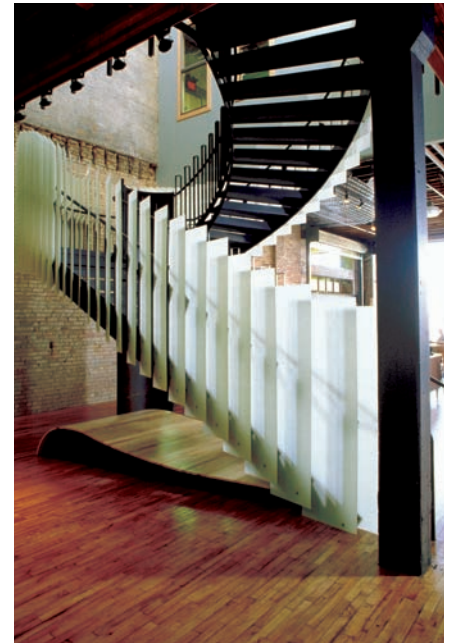
Does realizing the new require more effort? Does it involve more complexity? Not necessarily. Often it is more challenging or complex to redo a thing or place than to make something new. And in absolute molecular terms, everything and everyplace can *only* be remade, recycled, reassembled, reconfigured, or renewed. When we make, we

merely move, process, and assemble material that already exists (physically or in our minds)—we make something or someplace into *another*, which we may or may not call new.

As well, the more new we make, the more waste and disruption we produce. So why give new things and places a higher status? Why assign greater acclaim to those who give rise to them? Perhaps it has to do with pride and clarity of authorship: in making the new there is greater ego satisfaction, less need to share the accomplishment with others. Or perhaps it is a way to privilege the present over the past.

If this be the case, is this what we want as the legacy or driver of our culture? I do not believe it is. Thereby was this theme section of *Places* born, motivated by a desire to awaken the potential of shifting our cultural bias away from exclusive authorship, ownership, and the present, toward the value of seeing and practicing the ethical and creative potential of shared renewal and re-*placement*.

Above: Forum of Augustus, north exedra (medieval balcony of Casa de' Cavalieri di Rodi and Ghibelline windows of fifteenth-century residence for Barbo family). The tradition of reuse extends back through the Renaissance rediscovery of the ruins of antiquity. Photo by Phil Jacks.



Virtues of Re-Placement

To overcome the cultural myths that restrict us from fully seeing and embracing renewal, it is helpful to start by assessing more completely the real costs and consequences of our throwaway economy and cultural preference for the new. Simply put, all the disciplines responsible for designing, planning, and stewarding changes to the physical world (architecture, landscape architecture, interior and industrial design, public art, planning, preservation, and real estate development) need to do a much better job meeting our profound present global realities. Namely, we need to think and practice in ways that are more environmentally aware, more enlightened about heritage, and more concerned with a deeper understanding of (and need to collaborate with) each other.

This is certainly easier said than done. These issues are ubiquitous today, yet little real progress is being made to meet or overcome the obstacles or agendas they present. And even where some of us may cherish and advocate one of the above values, it is rare to see all three balanced and integrated in creative ways.

What we try to explore in this section is that remaking places can be a creative liberation and affirmation of progressive cultural values. It is in the *re-placing* of places that we will arrive at the most keen and fertile insights into how our current isolated modes of operation and segregated discourses have failed us. The section explores how

many of our disciplinary and professional assumptions (*new*, *exclusive*, and *solo*) are unable to address the cultural richness and complexity we can and should be attending to. What these essays and featured works share is the confidence and curiosity to pursue strategies of generative and expansive re-placement.

Meaningful places tend to share at least three qualities. First, they are unique to a specific location. Second, they are a reflection or embodiment of shared or constituent values. Third, they live in time; and the broader the reach they embody, the better. This may be why the very idea of place, and place-making, is sympathetic to what we focus on here as the living, shared, and circumstantial qualities intrinsic to acts of re-placement and regeneration.

When we consider and attend to all that we should, to make the most of a place, it is not only the material state we

Left: At Open Book, a center for reading, writing, and book arts in Minneapolis, a series of found, amended and intervening architectural and artistic gestures were collaboratively choreographed to create a reflective space for public use between programmed activities.

Right: This primary stair, linking the main public levels of Open Book was proposed as a bridge between dualities: book/stair, linear/circular, material/conceptual, first/second, etc. Its spine rotates to orient, disorient, and reorient the actions it supports. The etymological and literary play of words on the open “pages” relates to the architectural play of elements and experiences.

attend to, but the many associative (or cognitive) properties and the ways a place performs by minimizing harm and maximizing benefit. Yet, while the primary historic literature on place and place-making has underscored its interdisciplinary nature and shown preferences for relevant indigenous or organic solutions over controversial, transformative, or radical ones, the authors featured here explore a broad range of alternatives, not just to be different, but to open promising channels for further exploration.

Visions of Re-Placement

In the first essay in the section, Philip Jacks reminds us how long the adaptive reuse and re-placing traditions have been with us—essentially since time immemorial. While it is now fashionable among today’s urban elite (even if still contested by our more strict preservationists), adaptive reuse has a long, pragmatic, and philosophical tradition to build upon. Furthermore, many of our most cherished, reconstructed places are complex, layered open books of dynamic cultural, political, and social processes that have been the fortunate result of many acts of re-placement over time.

Rome, the focus of Jacks’s essay, is an exemplar of these processes. Thinking today about Rome, one can’t help but imagine how much less the city would be should it have been “protected” by the equivalent of the Secretary of the Interior’s standards during any one of its many historic chapters, restricting its evolution and richly complex condition.

Remaking of urban places in U.S. cities is also laced with the potential to tell richer and more complex stories than many mayors, chambers of commerce, or well-meaning preservation commissions are comfortable embracing. As Angel David Nieves argues, these sometimes unflattering and contradictory stories should not be excluded from the embodied city, but should reflect the complex realities found at the crossroads of memory and place. Doing so often creates new challenges for political interests and for the agents of more conventional, less controversial, histories. As part of the revaluing of places across the American



Above: Work on the Media Loft for a corporate client in Minneapolis featured a combination of found and new materials.

Opposite left: A small, semi-private third-floor addition is reached by a stair that both permits and confounds access as it links literal and conceptual worlds.

Opposite right: Because the lease required structural amendments to be reversible, sections of the old wood-plank floor were salvaged and re-displaced to a new multistory wall opened through the interior. The sections were collaged with other found building fragments, revealing the story behind this effort to bring daylight into a created space.

cultural landscape, communities and cultures that were once resigned to the invisibility of their sorted pasts can specifically benefit from new and more profound understandings in the hands of enlightened heritage professionals.

Nieves also reminds us that ever-present opportunities (surges in immigration and other urban influxes) have simultaneously brought new expressive and material opportunities to areas of cities latent with the hidden histories of prior marginalized groups. How these conflicts are resolved and opportunities seized, could open a new vision of America’s urban remaking and replacing.

The section then moves to the work of one of two artists we present, whose sensibilities and explorations hold useful lessons. Rose’s grandfather, an architect, was the designer of many early-twentieth-century public theaters, including the celebrated Palace Theater in New York, constructed during the heyday of vaudeville. Rose’s re-presentation of his grandfather’s richly detailed drawings, combined with images of the structures as they remain today, attempts to



show how meanings associated with buildings and places both shift and remain, unavoidably, over time.

In commenting on this work, Arthur Danto elaborates on the philosophical and psychological processes involved. He reminds us that reinterpretation and reevaluation are part of the experience of time itself, present in all places, real and represented, remembered or imagined—whether resulting from a sense of loss or melancholy, or produced out of hope or a love for beauty.

The next essay, by B. D. Wortham-Galvin, begins by exposing the superficial claims by designers, planners, and developers that their projects embody “a sense of place.” Her concern is that this phrase is too often little more than a buzzword to create support for the eradication of existing patterns of settlement and for the displacement of older residents, whose presence is no longer valued. Her article examines how notions about places are deeply affected by what people want to believe about them—to the extent this may eclipse what they really are.

“Making place is not just about physical creation and destruction; it is also about observation, narrative, association, and ritual,” Wortham-Galvin writes. In this way, she points out that all places are “remade,” guided by the motives and ideologies of those claiming authority over them. To understand the dynamics of this process, she further argues, it is useful to examine entirely fictional built environments, such as that of the ubiquitous “Springfield,” the imaginary town inhabited by the characters in the television show *The Simpsons*. Selected works by our second featured artist, Karen Wirth, who frequently collaborates with architects on larger-scaled projects, follow. Wirth makes a habit of situating her art in the larger environments they serve and reflect. Among her peers, Wirth is known more as a book artist than an installation or public artist. But she has also accomplished a range of work, at a variety of scales in diverse circumstances, that exposes her views and practices of collaboration, embracing, reflecting on, and reinterpreting existing buildings and urban contexts.



In addition to sharing her work, Wirth includes a short essay describing her approach to form-making, which progresses by answering a series of questions: “what is its content, where does this come from, who is the audience, what is the context, what does it mean?” We can see these as useful lessons for all the practitioners and teachers of our overlapping disciplines.

As a flipside to the discussion of re-placing in Rome, and a final contribution to the theme section, the architect

Above: At the 801, a project in downtown Minneapolis, new concrete-block walls were interlaced with the original timber frame of this former industrial warehouse to create live/work residential spaces. The walls provide spatial segregation, structural freedom, and fire safety. They also permit the interior “street” to serve as both an open circulation corridor and an art gallery.

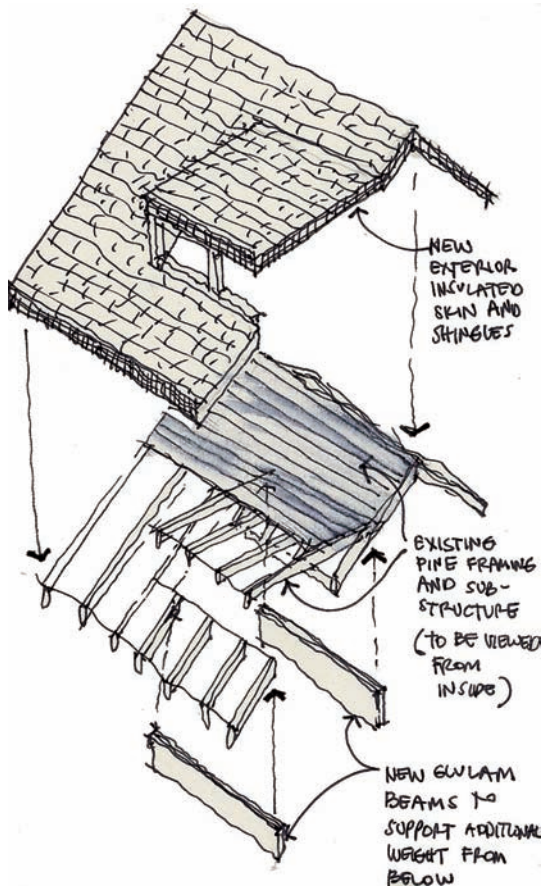
Left: Much of the waste of the selective demolition was redeployed for sculptural and material effects, like these garden fragments.

Right: Artwork along the interior street.



Carl Elefante exposes the difficulty of applying traditional preservation and renovation techniques and sensibilities to works of the Modern Movement. Both the heralded “monuments” and the more ordinary structures produced by modern architects of the last three generations have frequently been constructed of inexpensive and less enduring materials. Now that most of these structures need renewing, new kinds of decisions and opportunities are needed to guide the remaking of these structures. For some, new hybrid images should be possible where restoration is less appropriate or beneficial.

Elefante underscores that these decisions are rarely simple, and require an evaluation of technological, social/economic, and artistic/formal concerns. The need to make such difficult decisions will increase for architects and preservationists in coming years because a large part of our current built environment consists of such buildings, and the need to retain and further harvest their value is critical in cultural, economic, and ecological terms.



One View of Re-Placement

As a complement to the other essays in this theme section, and as a way of demonstrating in tangible form my struggles and explorations with these same issues, I have illustrated this introduction with some examples of my own recent professional work. Frankly, I relish the challenges and obstacles of working in existing buildings and contexts. Rarely do I choose to neutralize or diminish to a marginal or subservient status found attributes; and rarely do I strive to emulate the context's distinct characteristics. Rather, I value the possibilities of expanding, creatively engaging, and even inverting the embodiment of stories that places can hold.

These design techniques are more akin to the twentieth-century art practice of collage, where the copulation of seemingly disparate elements creates compound associations and meaning, enlarging their interpreted and experienced qualities. I find that the embodiment of narratives, whether real or imagined, partial or complete, reflective



or prophetic—whether of my mind or someone else's—matters less than the value of the presence they provide for engagement and re-placement.

All images are courtesy of the author.

Above: Ellingson/Bend Residence, St. Croix, Minnesota. This design emerged as an alternative to the clients' original intent to build a new house. Skeptical at first of the reuse process, the couple discovered attributes tied to a forgotten history of activity in the house. These could never have been created anew.

Left and top right: The old attic framing, the original building's bones and skin, was sandwiched between a new high-performing insulated roof and new glulam support beams to create a narrative surface linking the remodeled structure to its past.

Below right: Scratchmarks on the floor indicated where beds were once moved repeatedly by children. Elsewhere, in a hidden concrete mantle, the footprint of one of the owners as a child was found beside the paw print of a family pet. This was exposed, instead of being hauled to the dump.

Restauratio and Reuse: The Afterlife of Roman Ruins

Philip Jacks



As sustainability becomes ever more critical to the architectural profession, it is worth noting that the practice of recycling has a long history. Perhaps nowhere is this so richly documented as in Rome—both for the abundance of its classical ruins and the fact that over many centuries it was really two cities—one pagan, the other Christian.

As the institutions of imperial Rome gradually gave way to the *urbs sacra*, their physical vestiges had to be reappropriated. At times, this process occurred with little thought as to symbolic meaning; at others, the effect was quite conscious.

Only by the sixteenth century, however, did something approximating “adaptive reuse,” grounded in a set of design criteria, appear. Renaissance architects did

not look upon classical antiquities solely as models for imitation. Their objective was to critically analyze these remains and assimilate their forms into new typologies. Their projects—some executed, some known only from drawings—hold many lessons for contemporary designers seeking to reuse and recontextualize the architectural forms of modern cities.

Traffic in Spolia during Classical Times

One of the earliest and most celebrated instances of recycling sits on the Akropolis, in Athens. After the Persians laid siege to the city in 470 BC, citizens salvaged the charred column drums and metopes from the Parthenon, then in its early stages of construction. Eventually, the blocks of that older temple became the matrix for the one we know today. The genius of Iktinos was to retrofit old with new into a single proportional system so refined that it eluded the notice of archaeologists until the last century.

Above: Porticus of Octavia (view of interior pediment from Severan restoration).

Opposite: Arch of Constantine, south facade.

In late republican Rome (123 to 23 BC), the scavenging of building material was likewise a thriving business. Cicero once reproved his friend Verres for faultily restoring the Temple of Castor and Pollux in the Forum with stones redressed from the original structure. New marble was preferable, he argued, and the old blocks would have been better discarded, given to the contractors as compensation.¹ One consequence was a market in recycled materials that made older habitations prime targets for demolition. This became such a problem that two far-sighted consuls, Hosidianus and Volusianus, pleaded before the Senate in 44 AD to outlaw the buying and selling of property by third-party speculators.

Eventually, the emperor Vespasian, who ruled from 69–79, issued an edict to regulate profiteering in building debris by private citizens. Alexander Severus renewed this sanction in 222, just as the imperial quarries at Luna began to restrict the supply of white marble.² Yet it was this same emperor who restored the Porticus Octaviae with dismembered column shafts and entablatures of Pentelic marble. On the exterior pediment, the blocks were dressed smooth, but on the interior face, less exposed to public view, they were left rough-hewn. Was this a question of haste, or negligence? Or did the builders purposefully leave it that way to draw attention to its “otherness”?

Such ambiguity is reflected in the Latin term *restauratio*—which Livy (59 BC–17 AD) and Tacitus (ca. 56–117) understood to mean something akin to our modern sense of restoration. Late classical authors, however, construed it more loosely. The fourth-century grammarian Servius drew an etymological connection between *instar* (likeness) and *instaurare* (renew): “*instar autem est ad similitudinem; unde non Restaurata, sed Instaurata dicuntur aedificia ad antiquam similitudinem facta*” (“likeness in appearance also means in similitude, whence buildings made similar to the old are said to be not *restaurata* but *instaurata*”).³

It may be mincing words to distinguish between renewing or even reconstructing, and repairing or restoring; but *instauratio* would come to signify a new form that *resembled* rather than *replicated* an original.⁴

The Gesture of Appropriation

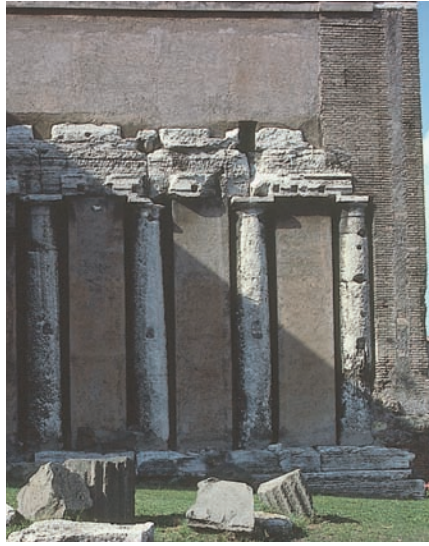
Even by antique standards the Arch of Constantine, however, marked a wholly new way in which fragments from the past could be reappropriated and recommemorated. Earlier emperors had taken great license in cannibalizing the projects of their dishonored predecessors. Vespasian, Titus, Galba and Trajan all availed themselves of Nero’s *condemnatio memoriae* by reclaiming the site of



his immense Domus Aurea for public edifices.⁵ In the case of the emperor Commodus, who ruled from 180–192, this meant refashioning the bronze Colossus of Nero with his own likeness as the sun god Helios.

However, the triumphal arch dedicated by the emperor Constantine in 315 represented a more willful act of appropriation on several levels. Its architecture was almost entirely reconstituted from earlier monuments—not just the famous reliefs of Marcus Aurelius on the attic, the Hadrianic roundels, and the Trajanic frieze on the interior fornix, but also capitals, columns, and architraves.

The appropriation of these elements all formed part of a larger ideological program aimed at legitimizing Constantine’s sovereign authority over Rome.⁶ As part of this effort, the heads of Marcus Aurelius were replaced with those of Constantine and the tetrarch Licinius. However, the sculptors involved with this project also depicted honorific statues of Hadrian and Marcus Aurelius in the relief of Constantine’s oration. On the one hand, Constantine was projecting his victory over Maxentius by co-opting the memory of these beneficent rulers. On the other, he was physically appropriating the forms of an earlier epoch to forge a new aesthetic.



Seen in this light, the intermixing of spolia was hardly haphazard or spurious. It articulated a new taste for *varietas*. Put another way, the disparity in styles had an appeal of its own. This practice pervaded much of Constantine's building spurt in Rome, most notably the Lateran basilica, where despoiled capitals along the nave alternated between Ionic and Corinthian.

Resanctifying the Ruins

One of the last interventions on behalf of the ancient city was the repair of the Augustan Temple of Saturn in the Roman Forum, which had been ravaged by fire sometime between 360 and 380.⁷ After this, the emperor Theodosius I, who spent little time in Rome, issued various ordinances against the transporting of marbles outside the city limits. But these all were to little avail. And the plundering of pagan cult sites became de facto policy when, in 382, his co-emperor, Gratian stripped the prefects of Rome of their responsibility for the upkeep of the city's ancient temples, which no longer held the status of public buildings.

Under Theodosius, Christianity became the official state religion. However, the new attitude toward ancient sites was probably driven as much by an urgent need for building material as any ideological divide. Thus, an injunc-

tion in the year 458 obliged Roman citizens to remove the ornament ("*ornatum*") from ruined buildings so it could be reused for new public projects. Such legislation stopped short of the destruction en masse of ancient *sancta*, however, leaving open the possibility that their vestiges could be reutilized for Christian worship. Ultimately, this was what spared large stores of antiquities from the nefarious limekilns, where marbles were incinerated to produce lime.

In early Christianity, clerics saw the need to exorcize pagan cult sites of their demons—a kind of spiritual whitewashing. Upon arriving in Agrigento, in Sicily, in 597, Gregory the Great (540–604), then a bishop, set as his first official act the reconsecration of the Temple of Concordia, to the saints Peter and Paul. And in the following century, the citizens of Siracusa erected a new roof over the archaic Temple of Athena, and rededicated it to the Virgin (Duomo of S. Maria delle Colonne).⁸

In Rome, the popes took a different tack. Rather than look to places of cult devotion, they set their sights on the Roman Forum, still rich in imperial aura, and specifically profane buildings. The church of Santi Cosma e Damiano, consecrated in 527 by Felix IV, occupied the former audience hall of the city prefect's office (Templum Urbis Romae) and an adjoining library from the Templum Pacis. The old Curia Senatus required only minor modifications to be rededicated to Sant'Adriano by Honorius I (625–38). And, after being donated to Boniface IV by the Byzantine emperor Phocas in 609, the Pantheon became the first in a long line of Roman temples to undergo official conversion, when it was dedicated to S. Maria ad Omnes Martyres.

Left to right: San Nicola in Carcere, south flank and east facade; south flank (incorporating Doric temple of Spes); north flank (incorporating Ionic temple of Juno Sospes).

Opposite: Casa de' Crescenzi, east facade.

In the case of San Nicola in Carcere, at the heart of the Ripa district, the basilica arose over the ruins of three contiguous temples in the old Forum Holitorium. Fish, produce, and cattle markets carried on from ancient days gave vitality to this neighborhood, which had come to be dominated by powerful clans, and one of these *magnati*, Cardinal Pietro Pierleoni, was likely responsible for the renovations to the basilica, which was rededicated in 1128.

The church's fortified tower was erected partly over the podium of the north temple (Janus) and partially immuring the front columns of the middle temple (Juno Sospes—Juno the Savior). Its prominent form and position, facing directly toward the Capitoline, declared the family's patronage of the church and the architectural relics it enshrined. Rather than obscure the ruins, however, the masons solidified the Ionic colonnade of the middle temple on the north exterior wall of the basilica. Its broken architraves were shored with fieldstone and rubble, and pier buttresses were added around the ancient cella.⁹ In the fourteenth century, as today, six Doric columns of the south temple (Spes—"Hope") also supported trabeation embedded in the south flank of the church.¹⁰

To medieval visitors, this heterogeneous appearance must have added to the basilica's curiosity. Renaissance architects, by contrast, recognized these temples as key to interpreting the writings of Vitruvius from the first century BC, and surveyed its ruins in isolation from the Christian accretions. Giacomo della Porta's surgical restoration of the facade at the behest of Cardinal Pietro Aldobrandini in 1599 was of a kindred spirit. He retained two of the Ionic columns from the ancient pronaos flanking a central aedicula, while the colossal order and attic gave the effect of a triumphal arch all but detached from the structure behind.

During this time, families competed in the appropriation of antiquities, not just to vaunt their Roman lineage, but also to attain strategic and territorial advantage. The Crescenzi, neighbors of the Pierleoni (and their formidable rivals), constructed a tower over their mansion to control traffic along the Tiber, as well as passage across the dilapidated Ponte Fabrizio.

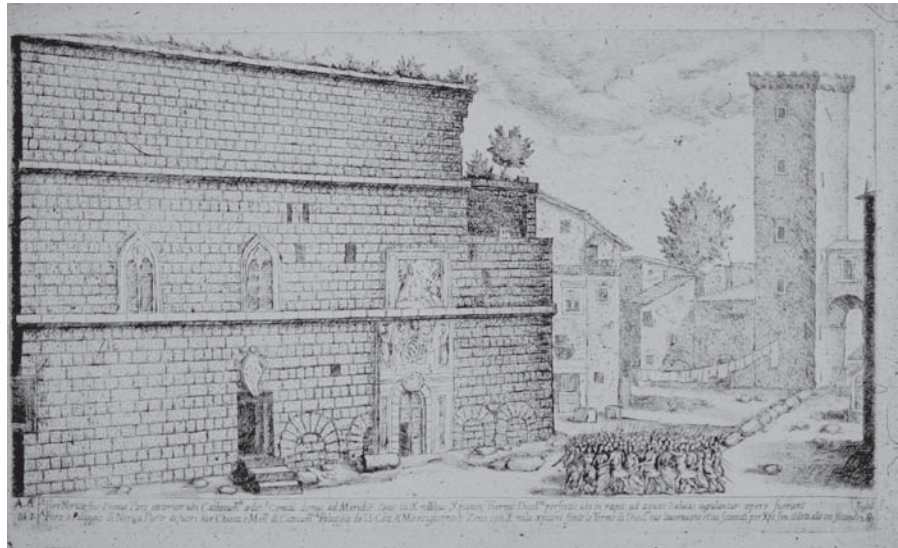
The Casa dei Crescenzi is generally dated between 1040 and 1065. Its resplendent south facade is composed of brick half-columns between recessed piers. Overhead, antique corbels recarved with putti and sphinxes support a frieze composted from two different spolia (their provenance has recently been traced to the Baths of Caracalla). Recessed arches support the projecting wall (*sporti*) for the *piano nobile*, with a dado stitched together from coffers to simulate a rinceaux motive.



The pastiche reveals the rudimentary quality of these masons' knowledge of ancient building technology. Yet, for all its deficiencies, the owner proudly attested in an inscription over the entrance that he was moved not "by vain desire, but to restore the city to its former beauty" (QUAM ROME VETEREM RENOVARE DECOREM).

Translatio: Place, Re-Place, and Context

Here it is fair to speak of *translatio* in both the literal sense, of a lifting from one physical context and re-placement in another, and the figurative sense, of a recontextualizing. But when does the architectural grammar become so altered as to invest new meaning or function in the original? This could occur only with historical perspective. A rich literature of medieval guides allows us to see how visitors came to distinguish between contemporary



Rome, the living city, and the memory of classical antiquity as conjured from the spectacle of its ruins.

One example may illustrate how these two worlds came to intersect. There are few sights more impressive than the massive firewall constructed of volcanic *peperino* blocks skirting the back side of the Forum of Augustus. At one end, a voussoir arch, known as the Arco de' Pantani, leads into the south exedra flanking the Temple of Mars Ultor. Travertine ledges divide the rusticated stone blocks into three courses. During medieval times this would have called to mind the new fashion for rusticated palaces, most notably the Palazzo Vecchio in Florence. Indeed, a popular twelfth-century guide, the *Mirabilia Urbis Romae*, erroneously identified the ruins of this wall as those of an imperial palace attached to the fora of Augustus and Nerva.¹¹

It was probably not by coincidence then that, not long after, this so-called “Palatium Nervae” was turned into a residence by Pope Innocent III, as a priory for the Order of Knights of St. John (Cavalieri di Rodi). And in 1466 Paul II entrusted its administration to his nephew, Cardinal Marco Barbo, who added a series of chambers rising to an elegant loggia with a magnificent view across the markets of Trajan

to his uncle's Palazzo Venezia, then close to completion.

Alò Giovannoli's engraving of 1615 shows the two *bifore* windows on the *piano nobile* and the modest ground-floor portal from the street. Today, viewed from the Via dei Fori Imperiali, traces of medieval arches can still be detected around the newer Ghibelline windows, above what remained of the ancient walling in *opus quadratum* below—a veritable architectural palimpsest.

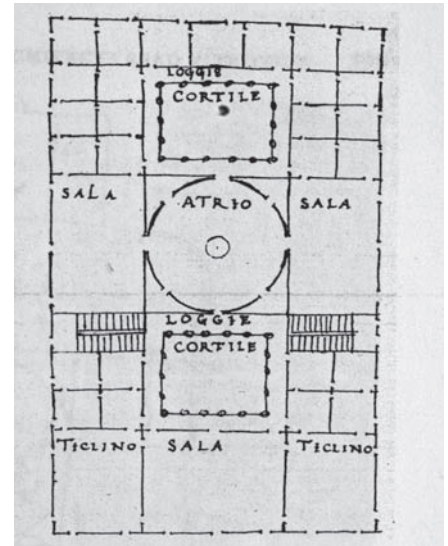
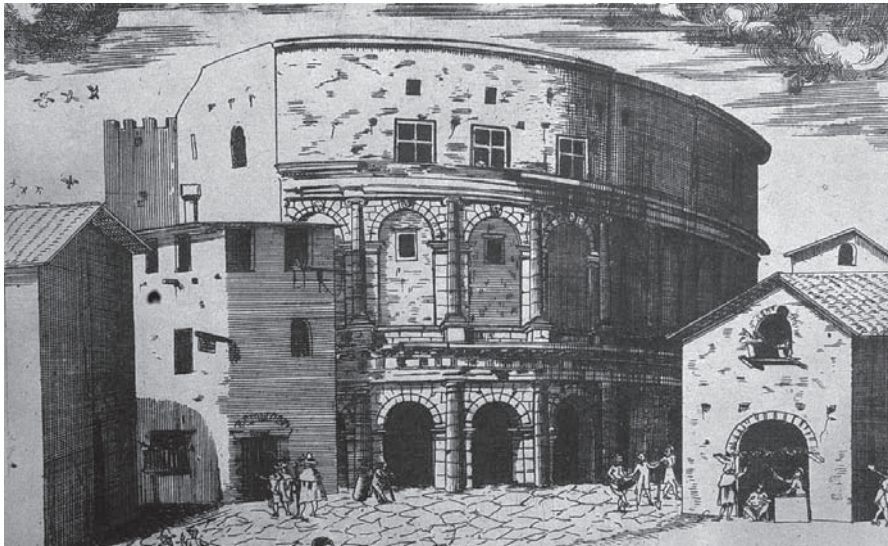
Restoration, Adaptation, Reinvention

In an oft-quoted letter addressed to Leo X around 1519, Raphael and his collaborator, the erudite Baldassare Castiglione, laid out a comprehensive account of Roman architecture leading up to their own day. For the first time, antiquity was not seen as monolithic, but as having evolved in distinct stylistic stages—from Augustan to Flavian to Severan. After deploring the incursions of the Goths, Raphael and Castiglione noted that in imperial times monuments often would be restored (*ristaurati*), yet always “in the same manner and method” (*con la medesima maniera e ragione*).¹² As examples, they pointed to the Domus Aurea, on whose foundations Titus later erected his *thermae* (baths), and to the Flavian amphitheater, which rose on the site of Nero's artificial lake.

Clearly, they were not referring to restoration in our modern sense, because neither of these later monuments bore the slightest resemblance to their precursors, but rather to a continuity in the technical art of building. This attitude toward the past came to an abrupt halt with the Arch of Constantine, which they deemed nothing short of

Left: Forum of Augustus, exterior firewall along Salita del Grillo (Arco de' Pantani in foreground; Temple of Mars Ultor in background). For a view of the north exedra inside the Forum of Augustus, see p.4.

Right: Alò Giovannoli, view of atrium to Forum of Augustus and Casa de' Cavalieri di Rodi (above). Engraving, 1615.



an aberration from the canon of Classical architecture—“foolish, without art or any good design.” Interestingly enough, this conclusion was made not without careful observation of the monument itself, from which Raphael and Castiglione were able to discern its hybridizing of Hadrianic, Trajanic, and Antonine elements.

Theater of Marcellus—Palazzo Savelli

In the same way that Raphael understood the act of *ristorare* as a process of adaptation by successive emperors, so too Renaissance architects saw a continuum between the physical fabric of ancient Rome, such as it had survived, and the emerging building style known as *all'antica*. It would not have occurred to them to preserve these ruins in archaeological isolation, only to modify their forms as appropriate to contemporary needs.

An early example of this practice can be seen in the Theater of Marcellus.¹³ Begun by Caesar and dedicated by Augustus, it had fallen into disuse by 525, when a Roman prefect hauled away portions of the travertine revetment to restore the nearby Ponte Cestio (Fabrizio). In the fourteenth century, the ruins, by then heavily fortified, passed from the Fabii to the Savelli family.¹⁴ At that time, however, the exterior was so obscured by ramparts that Petrarch mistook it for an amphitheater (“*guliseo de’ Savelli*”).

In 1523, when Cardinal Giulio Savelli commissioned Baldassare Peruzzi to redesign the attic story for a more sumptuous palace, butchers’ stalls occupied the ground-floor *tabernae*, and a warren of medieval houses had filled in around the interior *caveae*.¹⁵ According to his pupil

Sebastiano Serlio, Peruzzi relished the opportunity to undertake his own excavations and to analyze its structural system from the foundations. It is unlikely any trace survived of the third order on the exterior, which Peruzzi left as an astylar attic. Given that the Ghibelline windows do not align with the arcades below, he likely had no choice but to follow the preexisting wall partitions.

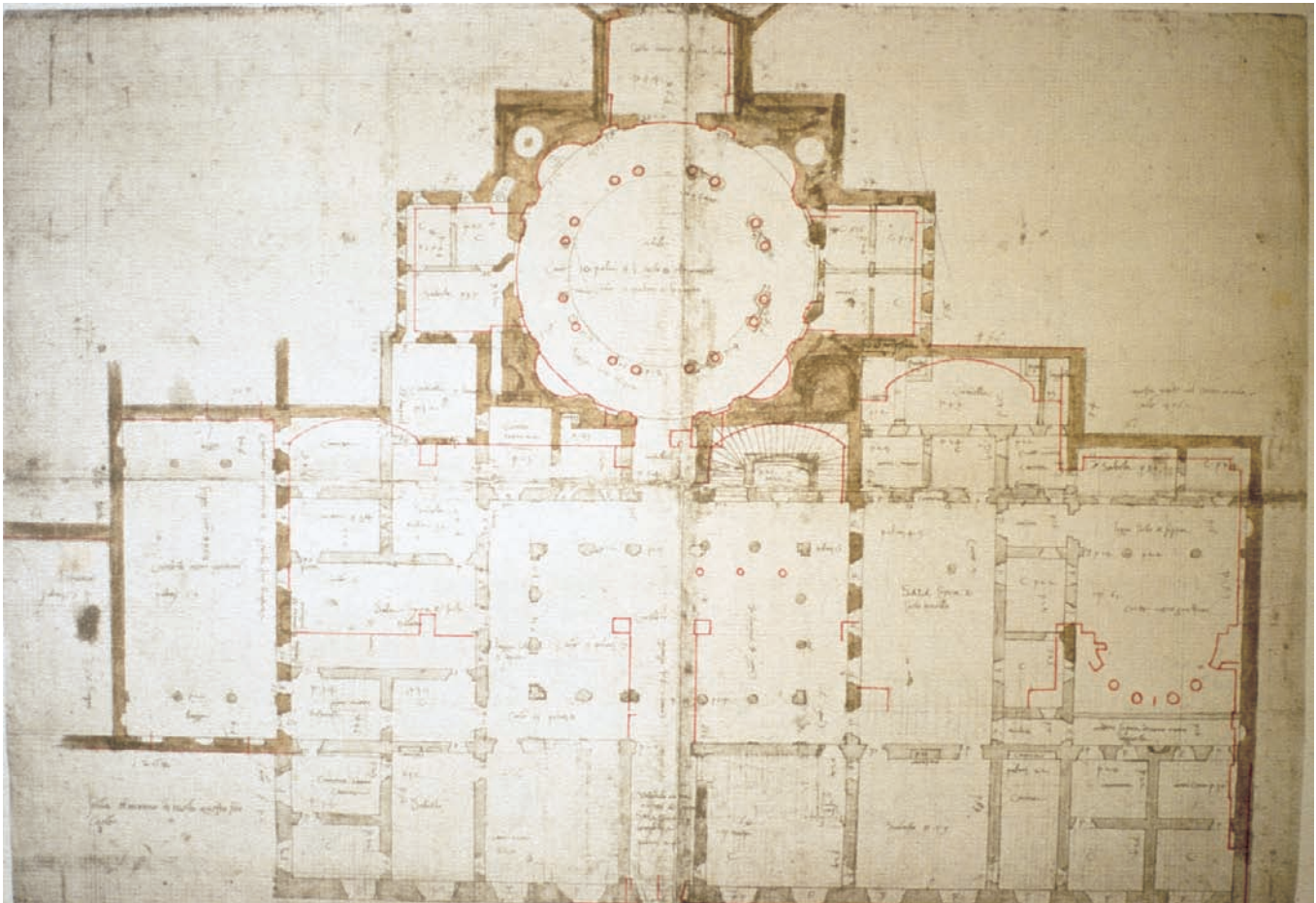
Baths of Agrippa—Palazzo Orsini

Around 1525, a count of the Orsini from the Pitigliano line charged Peruzzi with developing a plan to convert the Baths of Agrippa into a grandiose palace. The project is known only from a large drawing in the Uffizi, labeled “*therme agrippine*.” Technically, the drawing is quite unusual, because Peruzzi rendered the proposed construction in sepia wash to distinguish it from the ancient ruins in situ, which he superimposed in a precise red line.¹⁶

Peruzzi anchored his plan around the open rotunda, originally the *laconicum* (dry sweat bath)—popularly known as the Arco della Ciambella from the extensive portion of its dome still standing. The sheet is oriented east at the top, cut off where it would have connected by a wide hall to the *caldarium* (hot bath). Recognizing the

Left: View of Theater of Marcellus with Savelli apartments on attic story. From Giovanni Antonio Dosio, *Urbis Romae Aedificiorum Reliquiae* (1569), pl. 31.

Right: Francesco di Giorgio Martini, Plan for the palace of a *signore*. From *Trattato d’architettura*, II. Codice Magliabechiano II. I. 141, fol. 20 recto. Biblioteca Nazionale, Florence.



asymmetry of the ancient foundations, Peruzzi used it as a spur for invention: on one side of the rotunda he drew the binary columns as free-standing, on the opposite side as half-columns engaged to piers.

Below, the red outline shows partial walls constricting the axis from east to west. But he used the suggestion of three solitary columns running on a transverse axis here to create a spacious garden/courtyard (*cortiletto ovvero giardino*). This, in turn, egresses through a barrel-vaulted vestibule to the western entrance of the palace facing onto Via di Torre Argentina.

An avid scholar of Vitruvius, Peruzzi would have looked

to the ancient writer's description of the patriciate *domus* as a model for the Orsini project. In *De Architectura* (VI, 3), Vitruvius used the term *cavum aedium* to denote the central courtyard—further noting that the ancients called one specific type, covered by vaults, *testudinate*. Although no foundations of Roman houses had yet been unearthed, Renaissance architects would have found a number of ruins vaguely corresponding to Vitruvius's description. Leon Battista Alberti had identified just such a room in the imperial baths (ostensibly the *caldarium* in the Thermae of Caracalla): “In the middle, as in the center of a house, there is an atrium, roofed, spacious, and majestic; off this are rooms, their lineaments taken from the Etruscan temple, as we have described it. The entrance to this atrium is through the main vestibule, whose facade faces south.”¹⁷

Of course, the centrifugal disposition of chambers in a *thermae* made little sense when compared to the way Vitruvius described the progression from vestibule to atrium

Above: Baldassare Peruzzi, Survey of Baths of Agrippa (red) with ground plan for palace of Count Orsini di Pitigliano superimposed. Uffizi, Gabinetto dei Disegni, Arch. 456 recto. For the site of this project within the ruins of the ancient city, see the inside front cover.



to peristyle in a *domus*. But, in his translation of Vitruvius into Italian, the architect Francesco di Giorgio Martini had been the first to tackle this problem systematically. And in several diagrams for houses of *signori* which he worked on in the 1490s, he laid out three variations of the atrium (*ridutto*), the third called the *forma rotonda*.

Given Francesco's limited knowledge of classical precedent, the affinity of this symmetrical arrangement to the *palaestrae* in the ancient *thermae* is probably accidental. In Peruzzi's case, however, there is good reason to believe it informed the design process. Not far away, just to the east of Piazza Navona, the architect Antonio da Sangallo the Younger had been engaged since 1512 in enlarging the small Medici palace occupying a portion of the Baths of Nero (Thermae Alexandrinae). Here portions of one ancient *palaestra*—even some ancient statuary—were found in situ.¹⁸ The grandiose Palazzo Madama, as eventually completed later in the century, retained the disposition of twin courtyards, but rotated at 90 degrees, parallel to the Piazza Lombarda.

Markets of Trajan—"Theatrum Paulli"

Arguably the most radical project to transform an ancient site—the complex today known as the Markets of Trajan—never saw realization. The picturesque Torre delle Milizie, erected in 1232, rises to the north of the Aula Magna as the road ascends along the promontory up to the Quirinal hill. Medieval guides denoted this piazza as "Balnea Neapolis," then Bagnanapoli, and eventually "Maganapoli."

Renaissance architects interpreted the cluster of ancient *tabernae* as a grand palace, the so-called "Palatium Militarium," replete with a semicircular atrium facing onto the imperial forum. The antiquarian Pomponio



Leto traced the medieval toponymic to the Roman *aedile* L. Aemilius Paullus, noting that Balneapolis was a vulgarized form of "Balneum Paulli." This false etymology steered Renaissance antiquarians, who saw a further affinity of the sweeping hemicycle to an ancient theater or, alternately, to the exedra of the ancient *thermae*, as in the Baths of Diocletian.

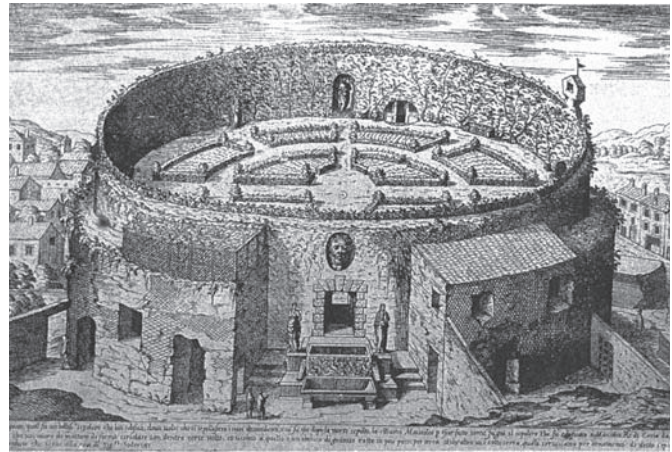
The grandest of the schemes for the transformation of the market ruins was that of Sallustio Peruzzi, who extensively studied the site in 1563, when Porzia Massimi founded the convent of S. Caterina da Siena. This new structure would comprise the former Conti palace, to which were annexed the Torre delle Milizie and ancient markets. The shops along the Via Biberatica were to be redispersed for a choir, cistern, refectory, and poultry farm. In one sketch, Peruzzi contemplated transforming the hemicycle into a *frons scaenae*, inverting the plan of the Roman theater by placing the spectators on the site of Trajan's Forum. Shortly after 1574, Ottavio Mascarino proposed a more conservative reutilization to accommodate the nuns.¹⁹

Baroque Rome and the Church Triumphant

As the popes engaged in ever more ambitious attempts to leave their imprint on the city, antiquities became increasingly vulnerable to despoiling. No site engendered more controversy than the Colosseum, which lay abandoned by the sixth century.

Left: The Markets of Trajan as they appear today.

Right: So-called "Bagni di Paolo" (hemicycle of Markets of Trajan). From Bernardo Gamucci, *Libri Quattro delle Antichità della Città di Roma* (1565). Woodcut based on drawing by Giovanni Antonio Dosio.



The structure had already been appropriated in various ways. By the twelfth century the Frangipane family had claimed two levels of arcades on its eastern side for their *palatium*. In 1332, on the occasion of King Ludwig of Bavaria's visit to Rome, the arena was outfitted for bull-fights. In 1366, the Compagnia dei Nobili Romani Sancta Sanctorum began purchasing houses clustered around the arena. After 1490, the Compagnia del Gonfalone performed passion plays there and erected a modest chapel, dedicated to S. Maria della Pietà.

In 1585, however, Sixtus V earmarked the Colosseum as part of his grand scheme to reconfigure Rome on a stellar plan. The amphitheater would be converted into a monumental church with an esplanade all around to link with the road under construction from S. Giovanni in Laterano (Via Merulana). Only two years later, however, he changed his mind and directed the architect Domenico Fontana to revamp the ruins as a wool factory, with covered shops on the ground floor and artisans' lodgings on the second story. The ancient Meta Sudans (a monumental conical fountain) and newly dug fountains extending as far as the Tor de' Conti would supply water for washing and dying fabrics. According to Fontana, the project was one year from realization when Sixtus's death put an end to it.²⁰

Bernini, when approached by Clement X to erect a

Tempio de' Martiri on the site for the Jubilee of 1675, advocated leaving the Colosseum unaltered as a testimony both to Christian martyrdom and the grandeur of imperial Rome. But his pupil Carlo Fontana was more easily swayed. Around 1705, he undertook a round peripteral church at one end of the long axis by commission of Innocent XI Odescalchi. His design, published posthumously in *L'Anfiteatro Flavio* of 1725, never saw realization.²¹

Roma Fascista

It is appropriate to end with the Mausoleum of Augustus, a monument which, more than any other, has embodied the sense of historical destiny for modern-day Romans from 1934, when Mussolini commenced work on the Piazzale Augusto Imperatore, right up to the present.

Ironically, this tomb of Rome's second founder, who had transformed a city of brick into one of gleaming marble, remained devoid of symbolic importance for most of its afterlife. The Colonna family used it for their fortified enclave in the twelfth century. In 1519, Leo X had its exterior stripped of travertine blocks for the laying of the Via Ripetta (at which time the obelisk from the ancient *horologium* was unearthed). Then, in 1546, Francesco Soderini bought the ruinous mound and undertook excavations that resulted in the discovery of numerous ancient statues.²² At this time the interior was rearranged with circular hedges forming a labyrinth garden. And in the eighteenth century, its Portuguese owner, Vincenzo Correa, sold the property to the Marchese Francesco Saverio Vivaldi-Armentieri, who refitted its grounds as a bullring.

The Master Plan of 1909 called for refurbishing the mausoleum as a concert hall, renamed the Augusteo, and disencumbering it from annexed buildings. Mus-

Left: Sallustio Peruzzi, Design for renovation of the hemicycle of the Markets of Trajan as a Vitruvian theater. Uffizi, Gabinetto dei Disegni, Arch. 682 recto.

Right: Mausoleum of Augustus as labyrinth garden of Palazzo Soderini. From Etienne Du Pérac, *I Vestigi delle Antichità di Roma* (1575).

Opposite: Richard Meier's reuse of the Ara Pacis. Photo by Gianpietro Ziro from Flickr.com.



solini expanded the scope of this project to clear a new road (Via Vittoria) linking eastward to the Corso. By 1938, the architect Vittorio Ballo Mopurgo's new design called for reintegrating the mausoleum with the two Renaissance churches along the Via di Ripetta—San Girolamo and San Rocco—to create a grander aspect on the west. Two new buildings for the Fascist administration, their low-rising porticoes deferring to the apses of Sant'Ambrogio and San Carlo, would then define the piazza on the north and east.²³

It was a foregone conclusion that the fragments of the Ara Pacis, which Augustus had erected in 9 BC near the Via Flaminia, and which, since their discovery in the sixteenth century had remained orphaned in the Palazzo Fiano, would find a more fitting home around the Piazzale. Mopurgo's enshrining of the altar was uninspired, but it amply fulfilled the propagandistic aims of Il Duce.

When in 1995 the mayor of Rome, Francesco Rutelli, commissioned Richard Meier to reinvigorate the monument with a new enclosure, it seemed again inevitable that the

result would stir controversy. Ironically, few critics voiced much concern about preserving the memory of Rome's Fascist past; rather, they complained of the impact of another tourist attraction on the surrounding cityscape. Meier contextualized in a way that seemingly has become de rigueur in the new techno-formalism: he left one wall of Mopurgo's travertine structure (with the text of Augustus's *Res Gestae* inscribed) dramatically piercing through the glass encasement.

Contextualizing in another, less successful way, Meier also tucked the entry to the museum beneath a travertine pavilion that rises from the Tiber and oddly cuts off the lower half of the facades of San Rocco and San Gerolamo degli Schiavoni.²⁴ Visitors can, however, take some consolation in the reflection of the soaring dome of San Rocco captured in the windows facing on the opposite side of Via di Ripetta. Whether this effect was conscious or not, hardly matters. Today, no less than in earlier ages, Rome has come down to us as a mélange of images—both real and virtual—experienced in time and space.

Notes

1. Cicero, *Oratio ad Verrem* II, 1, 54, §146-48.
2. Patrizio Pensabene and Clementina Panella, "Reimpiego e progettazione architettonica nei monumenti tardo-antichi di Roma," par. I, *Atti della Pontificia Accademia Romana di Archeologia, Rendiconti* LXVI (1995), p. 112f. These quarries were located some 300 km. north of Rome, at modern Carrara.
3. D. du Cange, *Glossarium mediae et infimae latinitatis*, tom. VII (Paris: Librairie des sciences et des arts, 1938), p. 154.
4. This subtle difference was not lost on the early Renaissance humanist Flavio Biondo, who entitled his guidebook *Roma Instaurata* (1446). This ground-breaking work transposed, as it were, the physical layout of the ancient city, obliterated with time, into a textual mapping ordered topographically.
5. Nero ruled from 54 to 68, followed by Galba in 69. Vespasian ushered in the Flavian dynasty, succeeded by his sons Titus and Domitian. Trajan was emperor from 98 to 117.
6. Beat Brenk, "Spolia from Constantine to Charlemagne: Aesthetics versus Ideology," in *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 41 (1987), pp. 104-5.
7. The inscription reads: SENATVS POPVLVSQVE ROMANVS INCENDIO CONSVMPVTVM RESTITVT.
8. Francesco Gandolfo, "Luoghi dei santi e luoghi dei demoni: il riuso di templi nel Medioevo," in *Santi e Demoni nell'Alto Medioevo occidentale, Settimane di Studio del CISAM*, XXXVI (Spoleto: 1988), pp. 895-97.
9. Andreina Palombi, *La Basilica di San Nicola in Carcere: il complesso architettonico dei tre templi del Foro Olitorio* (Rome: Istituto Nazionale di Studi Romani, 2006), pp. 75-79.
10. For a fourteenth-century drawing of the ruins in situ, see T.E. Mommsen, "Un problema riguardante la topografia medioevale di Roma: S. Nicola in Carcere nell'anno 1400," *Atti della Pontificia Accademia romana di archeologia, Rendiconti* 24 (1949), pp. 309-15.
11. On the perpetuation of this misnomer into the Renaissance, see Andreas Tönnemann, "'Palatium Nervae': Ein antikes Vorbild für Florentiner Rustikafassaden," *Römisches Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte* 21 (1984), pp. 63-65.
12. For the text, which exists in three variants, see John Shearman, *Raphael in Early Modern Sources (1483-1602)* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2003), pp. 520-21.
13. Richard Krautheimer, *Rome: Profile of a City, 312-1308* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), pp. 299-301.
14. Benedetta Origo and Enzo Crea, *Theatrum Marcelli: 'El Quiriso de' Savelli'* (Rome: Edizione dell'Elefante, 1973), p. 19, purport that Luca Savelli acquired the ruins in 1368 from the Pierleoni, but this is unsubstantiated.
15. Serlio, *Tutte l'opere d'architettura* (Venice: 1619), Bk. III, f. 69v. In 1925, excavations within the *caveae* revealed a fourteenth-century house. Paolo Fidenzoni, "La liberazione del teatro di Marcello e lo scoprimento di una casetta medioevale," *Capitolium* 2 (1926-27), pp. 599. (*Tabernae* were single-room shops covered by barrel vaults, often built in groups in ancient Rome. *Caveae* were the subterranean chambers in in a Roman arena or amphitheater.)
16. The drawing, Uffizi Arch. 456 recto, was first published by Heinrich Geymüller, *Documents inédits sur les Thermes d'Agrippa, le Panthéon et les Thermes de Dioclétien* (Lausanne-Rome, 1883), p. 16f. Further, Alfonso Bartoli, *I monumenti*

- antichi di Roma nei disegni degli Uffizi* (Rome: C. A. Bontempelli, 1914-22), vol. VI, p. 32. Rodolfo Lanciani refused to accept that the plan was asymmetrical around the north-south axis. In his *Forma Urbis Romae* (1893-1901), pl. 21, the entire bottom half of Peruzzi's drawing is transposed from the west to the south with a long corridor opening to the Via Papalis. The accuracy of Peruzzi's drawing (as recorded later by Palladio) was confirmed by a fragment of the Severan plan discovered in 1900. Christian Huelsen, *Die Thermen des Agrippa: ein Beitrag zur Topographie des Marsfeldes in Rom* (Rome: Loescher, 1910), pp. 14-16. Heinrich Würm, *Baldassare Peruzzi: Architekturzeichnungen. Tafelband* (Tübingen: E. Wasmuth, 1984), pl. 147.
17. Alberti, *De re aedificatoria*, VIII, 10. For discussion of this passage, see Linda Pellicchia, "Architects Read Vitruvius: Renaissance Interpretations of the Atrium of the Ancient House," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 51 (1992), p. 390f.
 18. In 1509 Alfonsina Orsini, widow of Pietro de' Medici, acquired the palace and adjacent properties "*con vestigia e pareti delle antiche Terme...*" Foundations of the Alexandrine baths extended as far south as the medieval church of S. Salvatore alle Terme. On the overlapping typologies, see Christoph L. Frommel, *Der Römische Palastbau der Hochrenaissance* (Tübingen: E. Wasmuth, 1973), Bd. I, 55f.
 19. Jack Wasserman, *Ottavio Mascarino and his Drawings in the Accademia Nazionale di San Luca* (Rome: Accademia Nazionale di San Luca, 1966), pp. 81-82, fig. 38. Mascarino's complex was demolished during the restoration of this archaeological zone under Corrado Ricci in the 1920s.
 20. Domenico Fontana, *Della Trasportazione dell'Obelisco Vaticano e delle Fabriche di Nostro Signore papa Sisto V* (Rome: D. Basa, 1590).
 21. Hellmut Hager, "Carlo Fontana's Project for a Church in Honour of the 'Ecclesia Triumphans' in the Colosseum, Rome," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 36 (1973), pp. 319-37.
 22. Anna Maria Riccomini, "A Garden of Statues and Marbles: the Soderini Collection in the Mausoleum of Augustus," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 58 (1995), pp. 265-83.
 23. Spiro Kostof, "*The Emperor and the Duce: The Planning of Piazzale Augusto Imperatore in Rome*," in Henry A. Millon and Linda Nochlin, eds., *Art and Architecture in the Service of Politics* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1978), pp. 270-302. In the context of Mussolini's grander *sventramento*, see Idem, *The Third Rome, 1870-1950: Traffic and Glory* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973), p. 32f.
 24. Nicolai Ouroussoff, "An Oracle of Modernism in Ancient Rome," *New York Times*, Sept. 25, 2006.

All photos are by the author unless otherwise noted.

Revaluing Places: Hidden Histories from the Margins

Angel David Nieves



As a fourth-generation Washingtonian who lives in the same house in which my grandparents raised my father and his brothers and sisters, I am intimately aware of what this neighborhood has meant to this city generally, and African Americans in particular. I am also sufficiently versed in the history of this community to know that the “Little Ethiopia” proposal is an attempt to attach a label to this community that is not supported by the historical record.¹

These sentiments, expressed by a local blogger, reflect tensions surrounding the effort to designate an area in the Greater U Street/Shaw neighborhood of Washington, D.C., as “Little Ethiopia.” The direct subject of the quote is an on-line petition that exhorts readers to support the renaming of a once largely abandoned retail corridor along Ninth Street.² More than seventeen hundred people have signed the petition, circulated by Tamrat G. Medhin, chairman of the Ethiopian-American Constituency Foun-

ation. Others, however, see the effort as historically unjustified, and “a slap in the face to the memory of all the important African-American individuals, organizations, and institutions that have made that neighborhood great.”³

In specific terms, the proposal under review by the Washington, D.C., Council would allow the name Little Ethiopia to be posted on street signs and on placards in the windows of area businesses.⁴ But, more generally, it illustrates the difficulties facing cultural-heritage professionals, like preservationists, in the new multicultural urban centers of the United States. Where once there was consensus as to what constituted America’s urban heritage, this is now being contested as new immigrant groups stake claims to neighborhoods formerly associated with older marginalized groups.

Above: Little Ethiopia. Streetscape along Ninth Street NW, Washington, D.C.



Ninth and U Streets: The Making of Little Ethiopia

Known as “Black Broadway,” Ninth Street Northwest between T and U Streets was once a cultural hub of African-American history and culture. Black-owned businesses there, such as Ben’s Chili Bowl and Lee’s Flower Shop, helped sustain the surrounding area after the 1968 riots and during the long years of construction of the underground Metro line. Previous large-scale regeneration efforts in the area have been unsuccessful, partially because of the large number of absentee landlords. Fueled in part, by an influx of Ethiopian immigrants, dozens of jazz clubs, movie theaters, restaurants, and entertainment venues have

Above: Cultural Tourism DC (CTDC) street signage along Ninth and U Streets NW, Washington, D.C.

Opposite: One of the many new family-owned restaurants found in Little Ethiopia, Etete (or “mama” in Amharic) Ethiopian Cuisine Restaurant, 1942 Ninth Street NW.

reopened, and important U Street buildings such as the Lincoln Theater, Bohemian Caverns, and Industrial Bank have been rehabilitated.⁵

The revitalization trend began during the 1980s with the opening of restaurants by foreign-born businessmen along 18th Street NW in Adams Morgan. As one restaurant owner stated: “We bought abandoned buildings, rebuilt them and cleaned this area up to make it what it is.” In recent years, Ethiopians have opened as many as ten restaurants east of Thirteenth Street and along Ninth Street, between T and U Streets Northwest.⁶

One of these is Yared Tesfaye, co-owner of Etete Ethiopian Cuisine, on Ninth Street, downstairs from a new Ethiopian-owned hair salon. “This block was a dead block,” he explained in a *Washington Post* article. “There was no money being generated for the city.”⁷ Now investors are pouring money into the area.

Tamrat Medhin, of the Ethiopian American Constituency Foundation, explained how this activity led to the Little Ethiopia proposal: “We’d like to get recognition from the host country for our contributions.... There are thousands of people [Ethiopians] serving in taxis, parking lots, hotels and restaurants.”⁸

Opponents of the designation, however, take a different view. They note that the Ethiopians would not have been able to stake a claim to the area without the long-lasting contributions of African Americans. Some community leaders even dismiss the Ethiopians’ campaign as completely inappropriate, arguing that the history of African Americans along U Street would be significantly overshadowed, and even erased, by designating the area Little Ethiopia.

According to Myla Moss, an Advisory Neighborhood Commission member, whose local district includes the east side of Ninth Street: “You get a gold star because you’re good entrepreneurs, but that doesn’t mean you get a whole corner.... I don’t think you’re going to have a lot of the African-American community rallying around this.”⁹

Clyde Howard, a retired manager in the U.S. Postal Service put it this way:

African Americans made U Street what it was and never once petitioned to have U Street renamed. The Prince Hall Masons wanted U Street to be Prince Hall Avenue. It was rejected and now they want to come here and identify Ethiopia. No way. It opens the door for other people who want certain segments of the city identified. I understand Chinatown because (the Chinese) were all over that area. Everybody would want a particular section named after their ethnic origin. It will open a door for a mess.”¹⁰

Valuing Place

The valuing of cultural heritage as a public good lies at the center of preservation policy in the U.S. In general, it has only been when a district, building, or artifact is believed to contribute to the collective understanding of what it means to be American that the case can be made to raise taxes or divert resources from other needs to protect it.

Recently, however, urban and regional development agendas have come to be dominated by concern for sustainable development, adaptive reuse, and community capacity-building through local heritage preservation. At the same time, the population of American cities has grown increasingly diverse, as postcolonial migrations have brought new social constructions of race, class, and ethnicity. To some extent, these migrations have caused U.S. metropolitan centers to address long-standing issues of segregation, marginalization, and unfair housing practices. However, recent literature has also suggested a growing relationship between the clustering of certain visible new minority groups in urban neighborhoods and the revaluing of older urban places.¹¹

Twenty years ago, studies of segregation compared only black and white residential patterns; nowadays any such analysis is incomplete without consideration of various Latino, Asian, and African populations. For example, by 2000, one in six persons, or 17 percent of metropolitan Washington's population, was foreign born. Similar trends have allowed cities in the "New South" like New Orleans, Atlanta, and Raleigh/Durham to support regeneration projects in areas once considered lost to violent crime, prostitution, and drug trafficking.

Washington offers a particularly stark example of the impact of these trends. Neighborhoods such as Shaw, Adams Morgan, Columbia Heights, Mount Pleasant, and Penn Quarter have all become hotspots for "new urban living." Large areas of these historically African-American areas are now being reclaimed not only by white and gay urban pioneers but also by new immigrant communities. Interestingly, however, despite the progressive, neoliberal-minded professional attitudes behind them, these gentrification and regeneration trends are only increasing Washington's socio-spatial segregation.

New patterns of racial division, however, tell only part of the story. Although ethnic enclaves are, in part, the result of racism and prejudice, a new appreciation of their historic value to marginalized communities is changing the way they are perceived by cultural heritage professionals.¹² In particular, urban enclaves—areas of strong residential and commercial concentration like "Little Ethiopia"—can



help relatively new immigrant groups claim a space for themselves through the promotion of greater visibility, political empowerment, and economic gains.

San Francisco's Chinatown and New York's Little Italy are recognized as two such successful historic enclaves. Recently, other areas of the Washington metropolitan region have been singled out through informal processes, such as Annandale's Koreatown. More formally, New York has created Korea Way, in Manhattan, while Los Angeles has designated a Thai Town and a Little Armenia.

In the past, as Joseph Heathcott has written, the heritage industry has been "yoked to its own legislative successes and disappointingly narrow statutory criteria" when responding to the interpretation, management, and recording of the history of migration and immigration in the U.S.¹³ But present demographic change is challenging design and heritage professionals to develop new policies and programs that acknowledge shared histories of mar-

ginalization. These policies can encourage multiple groups occupying the same neighborhoods to unite in a common effort to lay claim to their hidden histories of struggle in opposition to segregation.

One such effort in Los Angeles may provide an important precedent for Washington's U Street. Interestingly, it has also involved the designation of an area as "Little Ethiopia." Since 2003, when the Ethiopian-American Advocacy Group (EAAG) arranged for the designation of the area (along Fairfax Avenue, between Olympic and Pico), the Fairfax Avenue Ethiopian Business District (FAEBD) has helped local merchants and property owners market a variety of initiatives and beautification projects as a way to knit together seventeen underserved ethnic enclaves.¹⁴ Here, concern for heritage as a public good has been of value to many groups, even those with seemingly competing interests.

The present tensions surrounding the Little Ethiopia proposal in Washington call out for preservationists to take a role of greater advocacy, one which recognizes the mutual benefit the groups involved might gain from cooperating with each other.

Reawakening the Passion

The field of heritage preservation has undergone a transformation in the past decade, including as it now does, the hidden histories of marginalized communities and a subsequent appreciation of the ways those communities express values, citizenship, and racial-ethnic identity. With the revaluing of places across the American cultural landscape, communities and cultures that were once resigned to invisibility are now benefiting from a new and more profound understanding on the part of both heritage professionals and the public at large.

Yet a single ethnic group's claim to urban space is no longer easily accomplished in light of competing interests in contemporary American cities. The case of Washington's Little Ethiopia is but one example of the controversies that may act as a wake-up call to heritage professionals, challenging their comfortable notions of "valuing place." The preservationist Ned Kaufman may have said it best:

*Once upon a time, historic preservation was a passionate protest. Now it's a prudent profession. The question is: Could this careful, practical, well-organized profession of historic preservation once again give rise to a movement—a passionate effort to change, in profound ways, how society imagines, preserves, and inhabits its heritage.*¹⁵

Coming to terms with what Kaufman calls the "usefulness" in the urban places that minority groups inhabit and love may recenter current debate. It might even allow a certain knowing/unknowing to occur, through which old divisions might lose their sting and contemporary groups might find new ground for cooperation.

Developing the kind of alternative interdisciplinary methodology necessary to grasp the multiple meanings of difference in the cultural landscape, while also articulating a new model for historic preservation, poses considerable challenges.¹⁶ To begin, it involves rethinking the way meaning is inscribed in the landscapes of marginalized groups—for example, where Africans and African Americans have used everyday spaces to establish a collective identity in the face of racialized oppression. Yet by examining the embedded history of these places, one can further understand how the layering of historical meaning occurs. In the contemporary built environment, immigrant groups are continuing this process, not only articulating their complex social relations with the dominant order, but inscribing new layers of cultural meaning within cities such as Washington, D.C.

Notes

1. Michael K. Fauntroy http://www.michaelfauntroy.com/2005/11/globalization_a.html (accessed January 12, 2008).
2. www.petitiononline.com/ea100/petition.html.
3. Fauntroy, http://www.michaelfauntroy.com/2005/11/globalization_a.html (accessed January 12, 2008).
4. The Washington, D.C., Council is still considering the proposal. Council members feel that there is no need to grant them a special commemoration status. Little Ethiopia is in the Greater U Street Historic district already.
5. Daniel Muhammad, Mashadi Manong, and Rodney D. Green, "Scenarios for Economic Development in an Inner City Community in the District of Columbia," *Review of Black Political Economy*, Vol. 28, No. 2 (2000), pp. 82–83.
6. After the fall of Ethiopia's Emperor Haile Selassie in 1974, Ethiopian immigration to major U.S. cities such as New York, Los Angeles, and Washington grew rapidly. According to the 2000 Census, 15,000 Ethiopians live in the Washington region; however, the Ethiopian Embassy disputes that number, saying as many as 120,000 live there, and others have claimed the number may be as high as 200,000.
7. Walter Nicholls, "Washington's Little Ethiopia: A New Cluster of Restaurants Brings Exotic (Yet Inexpensive) Appeal to Ninth and U Streets," *Washington Post*, May 18, 2005, p. F01.
8. Ibid.
9. Paul Schwartzman, "Shaw Shuns 'Little Ethiopia': Black Leaders Note Immigrants' Pride But Resist Designation," *Washington Post*, July 25, 2005, p. B01.
10. Carla Thompson, "Ethiopians in Washington: History Confronts the Future," Special to AOL Black Voices, http://ethiopianworldfederation.org/ethiopians_in_washington.html.



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13. Joseph Heathcott, "Curating the City: Challenges for Historic Preservation in the Twenty-First Century," *Journal of Planning History* 5, No. 1 (2006), p. 83.

14. The project received support from the California State Assembly and the Los Angeles Neighborhood Initiative (LANI). See <http://www.lani.org/FAEBD.htm> (accessed January 20, 2008).

15. Ned Kaufman, "Moving Forward: Futures for a Preservation Movement," in *Giving Preservation a History: Histories of Historic Preservation in the United States*

(London: Routledge, 2003), p. 313.

16. Randall Mason, "Fixing Historic Preservation: A Constructive Critique of 'Significance'," *Places*, Vol. 16, No. 1 (2004), p. 66; and Angel David Nieves, *"We Gave Our Hearts and Lives to It": Black Women, Industrial Schools, and Nation-Building in the New South* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, forthcoming), p. 273.

All photos by author.

Above: A more casual dining experience can be found at Queen Makeda Ethiopian Restaurant, 1917 Ninth Street NW.

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On the Covers

Front cover: Re-placing now. Atrium at Open Book, a center for reading, writing, and book arts in Minneapolis. Renovation by MS&R Architects. The staircase features the work *Gail See Staircase* by the artist Karen Wirth. See discussion on pp. 40-41. Photo by Rik Sferra.

Back cover: Re-placing then. Forum of Augustus in Rome. View of the north exedra with Ghibelline windows of the palace for Paul II Barbo and tri-cusped aedicula for Casa de'Cavalieri di Rodi (late twelfth century). See discussion on p. 14. Photo by Philip Jacks.

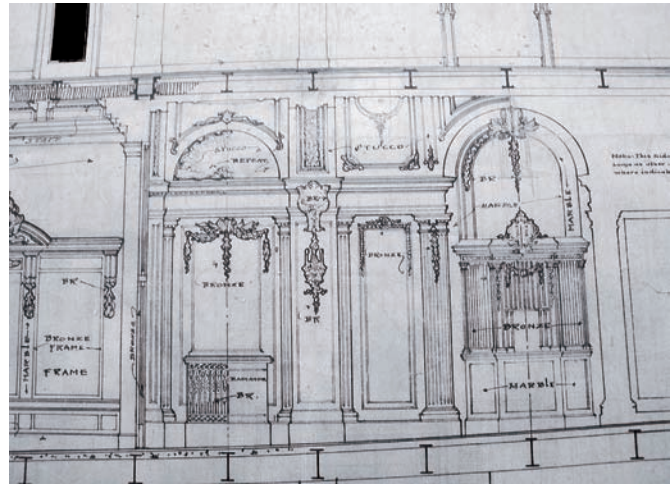
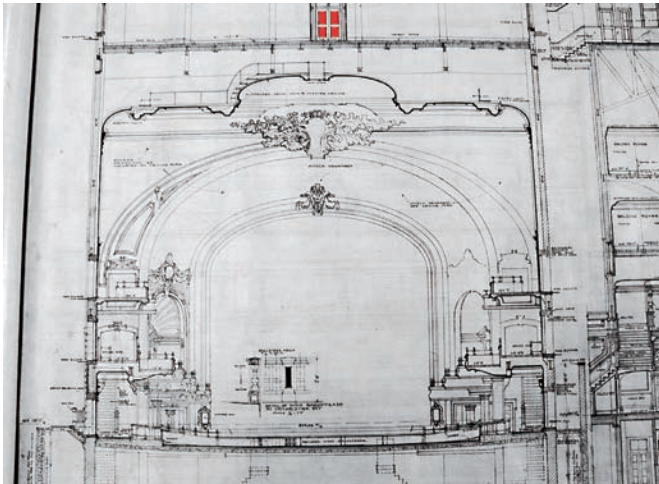
Inside front cover: Reconstructed map of the archaeological area around the Baths of Agrippa and the Pantheon in Rome, with the site of Peruzzi's project for the Orsini palace shown in red. See discussion on pp. 15-16. Drawing by Philip Jacks, after Huelsen.

Places would like to thank the following reviewers of articles considered during the 2007/Volume 19 publication cycle.

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Maps and Plans

Thomas Rose



Architectural plans create the pragmatic framework for a complex narrative of built space. In the most literal way, they map a site and are the means by which we are able to experience the space of the constructed landscape. Historic architectural drawings and plans are anything but static documents; rather, they represent an intricate historical narrative revealing the aspirations of society and the collective imagination of the culture. The structures they depict represent the view a society has of itself and the ways it presents its accomplishments to the world. The structures also convey the culture's prideful perceptions of self, individual, and collective—ranging from the prosaic to the sublime.

I was drawn to architecture by the experience of growing up in a house designed by my grandfather, Thomas Leslie Rose. But it was not until my father, also an architect, gave me a copy of my grandfather's memoir that I became aware of his remarkable history. Using this memoir, written between 1932 and 1933, just a few years before his death in 1935, as a script, I began linking my interest in the phenomenology of place with the histories of his projects.

This primary text narrates his introduction to architecture through his apprenticeship with J. J. Egan in Chicago, and it continues to his meeting and partnership with Charles Kirchhoff in Milwaukee. I have taken the liberty of editing it to include only those sections that relate specifically to his training and practice. This project is the creation of a fiction based on the historic architectural plans and drawings of Thomas Leslie Rose and his partner, Charles Kirchhoff, and should not be considered a documentation of particular work by the firm.

My observations and interpretations of the existing structures are represented in the photographed and edited images of the structures (some of which are reproduced here). The photographed drawings are engaged but not paired with the photographed images. It is the intersection between the fact of the map and the experience of it that interests me as a visual artist.

My images are an attempt to provide one view of the work of Thomas Leslie Rose through the frame of time—the distance from what the structures were in their own time to my reading of them, made possible by their continued presence. This work is about my impressions of these built places—the fictions I have read into the lived spaces.

Above left: Interior elevation of the Palace Theater, New York, showing the stage and the outline of the ceiling dome.

Above right: Lobby elevation and detail of the theater's ticket booth. The detail and style of the drawing suggest the use of forms available in architectural handbooks.

Opposite: Swag and wave detail around stage-right box, capped with a scallop shell-patterned lighting fixture.

Page 28 top: Composite drawing of the theater, incorporating the south interior wall elevation, lobby to stage door, with a photograph of the current wall.

Page 28 bottom: Empty stage with ghost light.

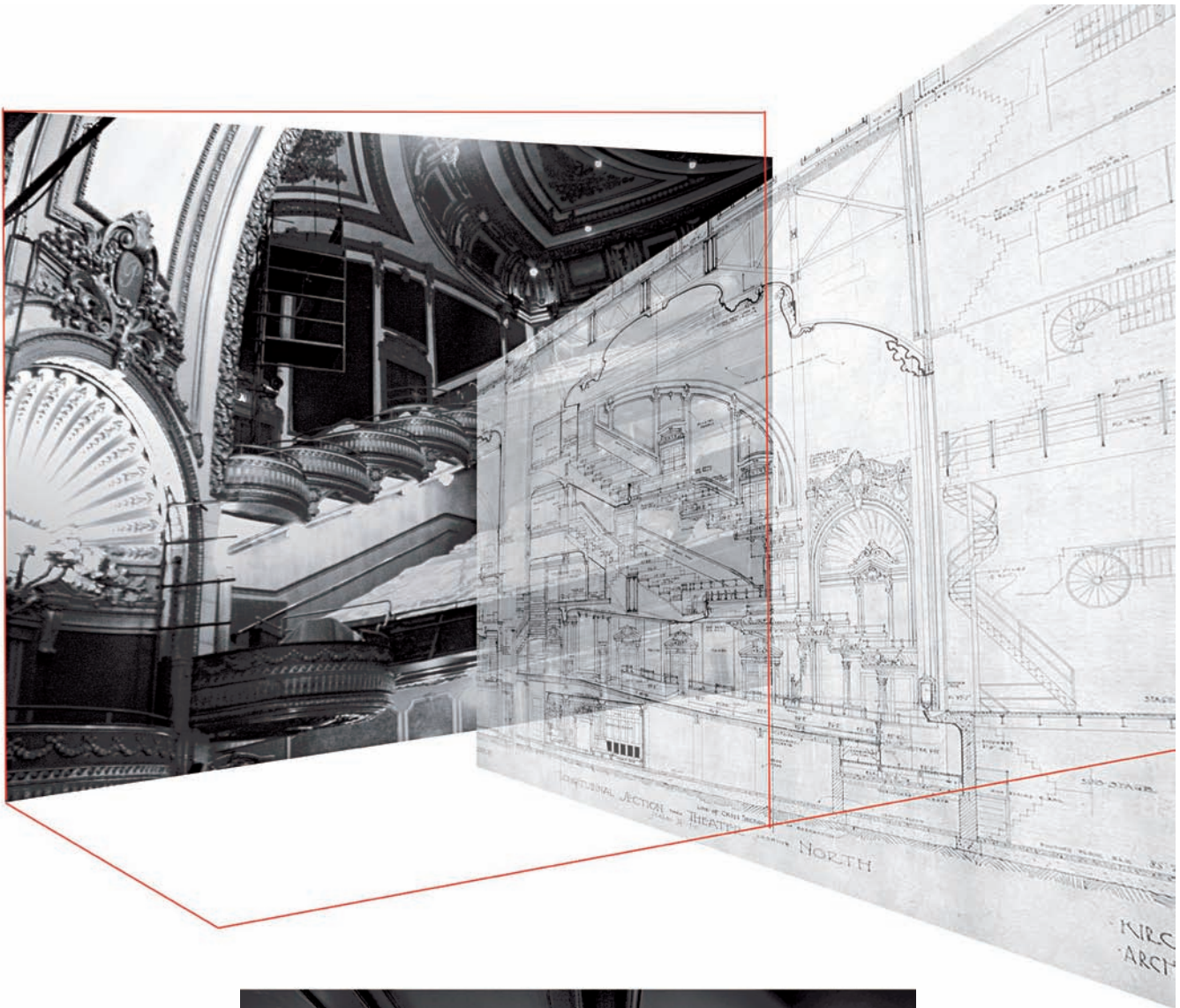
Page 29 top: The ceiling's shallow dome and light fixture superimposed over a reflected ceiling plan and outline of its molding configuration.

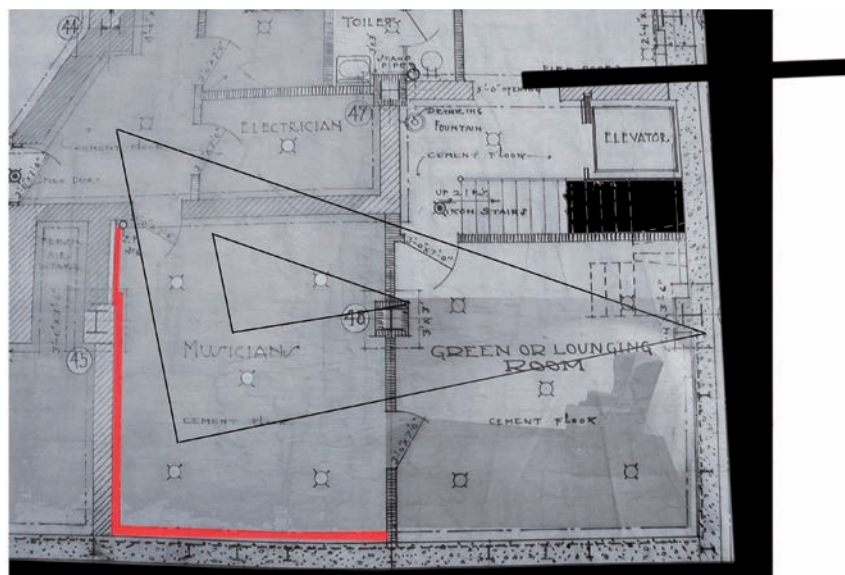
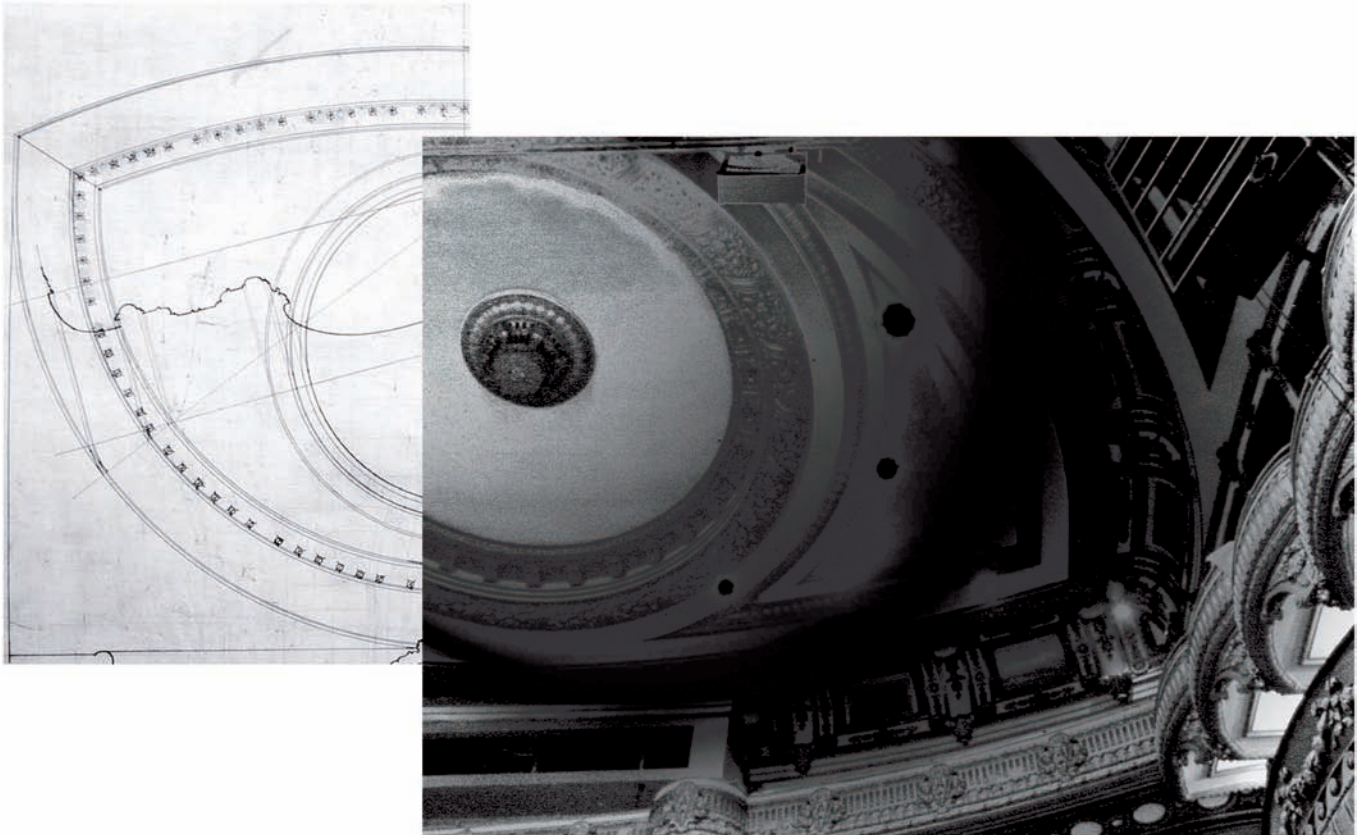
Page 29 bottom: Composite drawing with photograph, "Waiting in the Green Room."

Page 31 left: The proscenium and empty stage as they currently exist.

Page 31 right: Curtain-shrouded door to box seats.







The Past in the Present

Arthur C. Danto

There are two modes of what, with a certain ontological bravura, I shall designate “historical being,” which, taken together, set us off as a species. Both modes, from early on, have engaged me as a philosopher, because each involves a peculiarity of knowledge as well as of language.

The first mode can be made salient by considering what I call “narrative sentences.” A historian says “Erasmus was Europe’s greatest pre-Kantian moral philosopher,” without anyone thinking twice. But no one could have said “Erasmus is Europe’s greatest pre-Kantian moral theorist,” for the obvious reason that the speaker—a contemporary of Erasmus—would have died well before Kant was born, let alone written *Foundations of a Metaphysic of Morals*. “Petrarch opened the Renaissance,” is made true by events in Petrarch’s future that neither he, nor his contemporaries, could have imagined.

The other mode of historical being is not quite so readily indexed to matters of tense, reference, and observation, but it is of no less human importance than viewing life as narratively structured. It concerns the fact that we are always living in a historical period. A period—or a culture—is the weave of everything in what Hegel called its “objective spirit,” consisting of all the institutions of human life at a given time—language, art, clothing, laws, etc. In any period, there are certain temporal concepts indispensable to the conduct of life. Earlier and later; before, after, and at the same time; now and then. But these do not enable those who belong to a period to experience time, as most of us do, *historically*—seeing things as *belonging to other periods*. Hence people can not experience their own period *as a period*.

In the present work, Thomas Rose is interested in *how we experience time historically*. In my view, his concern is with how one period leaves traces of itself in later periods to which those traces do not belong historically.

Playing the Palace

Rose’s grandfather, Thomas Leslie Rose, designed many buildings in his era, but my interest here lies in what must have been his masterpiece—the Palace Theater in New York. The Palace went up in a period that it reflects—the so-called “Progressive Era” of American politics, from the 1890s to the 1920s. Its essential structure still reflects that period, when it was America’s premier vaudeville house, and “playing the Palace” was the ultimate accolade of variety artists.

Today parts of the Palace Theater belong to the period in which it was built, and do not belong in our present architectural period, other than as residues. No one today

would or perhaps could erect an interior with the Palace’s decorative details, except as a replica, a facsimile—a *re-production*. Such a work would have an entirely different spirit from the surviving theater; it would belong to our period entirely, whereas what remains of the Palace is present in our period without belonging to it. Straddling two periods, we experience the theater in the light of our period, and hence we experience it historically.

Let me introduce a piece of philosophical structure. In his masterpiece *Being and Time*, Martin Heidegger wrote of a *Zeugganz*—a whole consisting of tools that “refer” to one another: the hammer refers to the nail, the nail to the plank, the plank to the saw, the saw to the carpenter’s square. It is as if the system of tools came into being as a whole. One could not just have the saw; there have to be things to cut—namely, planks—for the saw to make sense; and the planks have to be connected if something is to be built, so we have to have nails or something like nails. I would like to propose that a period is a whole in which the parts *reflect* one another.

The period to which the Palace belonged reflected the kinds of acts it was built to show to people who had the leisure to be entertained and enough disposable cash to pay for them. Vaudeville was a going practice in the year the theater was built, 1913, and its builder, Martin Beck, specifically intended to bring the top acts to New York. There was obviously already a hierarchy of acts and certain “star turns” that people wanted to see, and the name of the theater, “The Palace,” connoted an entertainment elite for an audience that appreciated quality.

But interest in vaudeville ended abruptly. The Palace became a place to show and see movies in November 1932, and both the name and the Neoclassical architectural style became irrelevances—residues of a vanished form of life. To experience them now with reference to the period to which they belonged is to experience time historically. Tom Rose’s images of his grandfather’s architectural achievement are presented here as a way of enabling us—his viewers—to have that experience.

Memory and Imagination

An important aspect of the design of the Palace Theater was its beautiful integration into the building that housed it. An extruded arch, implying the proscenium arch, was set into the rusticated exterior facade, just over the marquee. This was crowned by an escutcheon, framed by swags on either side. A rhythm of swags then crossed the entryway, just above the marquee; and the facade itself was punctuated by baronial ornaments symmetrically positioned



relative to the entryway. In like, but inverted, manner, the interior of the theater was marked by an outside balcony, surmounted by lamps and a row of three windows, divided from one another by frames enlivened by cartouches.

This decorative program was restrained but insistent. It was palatial, as the name required, intended to architecturally assure visiting throngs of their privilege at entering so noble a space. Specifically, the arch proclaimed a welcome that framed the imagination of ticket-holders, who would have been directed by doormen/ticket-takers in swagged livery through the inner portal to ushers who would have escorted them to their seats. The facade was a promise of the artistic excitement that waited within. The Palace *was* a palace, a fairy site of magic displacement. It belonged to its time and place by the way it identified itself as *not* of its time or place. It was elsewhere made present, a fantasy the architecture helped imprint on the imagination of theatergoers.

Tom Rose's work is composed, in addition to his grandfather's memoir, of the latter's drawings for the Palace and for other of his buildings, and of photographs the grandson took of some of these buildings, and especially of the interior of the Palace Theater. It has in consequence something of an archeological excavation, with strata belonging to different periods.

The memoir, though written in the 1930s, is in a style that belongs to the earliest stratum. There is not a line in it that could spontaneously have been written today. It presents the tone of a self-made man, a Horatio Alger who remembers hard times, which he faced with a nineteenth-century fortitude, and it evinces a philosophy of craftsmanship that goes back even further.

The beautiful architectural drawings, together with the neat lettering—reproduced on architectural cloth!—would already have looked old-fashioned when World War I ended and the twenties arrived. Their program of ornamentation belongs to the first generation of multiunit dwellings that went up in New York in the 1910s—when there was a demand for the highrise buildings that became emblematic of New York before the era of the skyscraper, and when electric motors could lift elevators only eleven or twelve floors.

In the theater, the cartouches and the escutcheons, the bead-and-reel moldings, the fruited swags, the shallow domes, the pillars and balustrades—and the proscenium arch itself—all came from the vocabulary of the eighteenth-century Adams style, adapted from the Rococo, and were probably found in architects' manuals of the late nineteenth century.

The photographs are twenty-first century, of course, intended to convey a feeling of pastness, and they testify to the phenomenology of experiencing time historically. But, as I said, there is more to experiencing this work than that. Those who sat in the theater in its moment of glory did not experience it historically at all. They thrilled to a sense of glamour, to the production of which everything in the architecture and on the stage aspired.

Tom Rose's work gives us another kind of experience altogether. I have sought to articulate its philosophy and something of its psychology. In its own way, the experience is much the same as that one might have had visiting the ruins of ancient Rome in the eighteenth century. In addition to time, it evokes a pathos of beauty and melancholy.

Mythologies of Placemaking

B. D. Wortham-Galvin

We accept the reality of the world with which we are presented.
—Christoff (played by Ed Harris), *The Truman Show*

Designers and planners frequently herald the concept of “sense of place.” However, this ill-defined buzzword most often serves to rally support for redevelopment projects that ignore deep patterns of local culture. Advocating for sense of place may sound laudable, but it often implies the eradication of urban fabric or the displacement of residents deemed unsuitable for newly conceived places. The idea of “place” thus becomes a way of conveying value—as if some areas have the sense of place and others do not. Even less understood or appreciated is what happens to places that are remade. Indeed, are there places that are anything but remade?

This essay contends that place (re)making and (re)presentation involve more than physical manipulations. Places are both real and imagined: they depend on mental association as well as physical shape and character. Given this richness of qualities and meanings, how is it possible to evaluate proposals for change?

Frequently, designers and planners turn to a discussion of “authenticity” to sort through such issues. But, as the French cultural theorist, sociologist, and philosopher Jean Baudrillard has noted, when authenticity is evoked, we are already in the world of the fake or fictional.¹ Furthermore, because places are defined by the imagination of many, they occupy a realm that cannot be properly judged in terms of authenticity. In early twenty-first-century America, then, the appeal of “sense of place” may have more to say about being caught between traditionalism and (post)modernity than about actual experience.

For designers and planners the key realization should be that a place has truth based not just on the facts of its existence, but also on the things believed to be true about it. Making place is not just about physical creation and destruction; it is also about observation, narrative, association, and ritual. Inevitably, a discussion of place reveals mythologies about the ways we have made and enacted the built environment. And such a discussion invokes a fiction more real, as it were, than any available reality—a conflicting simultaneity of archetypes, models, ideals, and performative tactics.

Guided by various motives, people enact place for many reasons: to disseminate propaganda; to reveal the politics

of context; to perpetuate tradition; to instill beliefs and values; and to rebel against these patterns. Places whose outward form may thus appear permanent and universal are founded on the experiential, associational, and ephemeral nature of dwelling and being.

Myth and the Placemaking of America

To retrieve these sources and discard the intervening layers of myth would tell only half the story.... The myths themselves hold hints of New England's character. In fact, they too shaped it. — Jane Holtz Kay²

Mythmaking and place are intertwined with identity. America as a place, writ large, was created out of the ideas of America mapped onto its spatial territory.³ Thus those who work (popularly, socially, politically, and aesthetically) to reconceive an idea of America are also remaking the place. One of the enduring mythologies of America involves its origins, not only the Revolutionary leaders but also constructed cultural landscapes. One of the most important of these was the idea of colonial New England.

After the adrenaline of the Revolution had worn off, Americans turned toward the crafting of a national identity. In a country founded in *tabula rasa* conditions (if one ignores, as the colonists did, the displacement of millions of Native Americans) the reconstruction of a common past was a logical step. Socially useful myths about the founding of the country were needed to adhere the new (white, land-owning) citizens to one another culturally and politically. An important part of this effort was the colonial revival, which emerged in antebellum America (1814–1864) and continued for the next hundred years. During the nineteenth century, it embodied a willful (if sometimes incoherent) attempt to construct a collective memory. Its many variations went well beyond aesthetic fad, as it used the events, heroes, and aesthetics of the Revolution in an effort to create a common national ideology.⁴ The anthropologist Bronislaw Malinowski asserted that myths are stories “which [have] the function of justifying the present and thereby contributing to social stability.” The French anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss observed “that myths may be activated or reactivated in order to legitimize a version of history that is useful....”⁵ The American cultural historian Michael Kammen has argued that the colonial revival accords with Malinowski’s paradigm of mythmaking, but that the ideas of Lévi-Strauss explain how it sustained itself.

Whether it was antebellum America seeking social stability (Malinowski) or Victorian America attempting to

Opposite: Like this stage set, *The Truman Show*, Williamsburg, television shows, and New Urbanist communities all play with the notion of “the real” and “the myth” of placemaking. Photo by W. G. Chase from Flickr.com.



legitimize a past useful for its present (Lévi-Strauss), it was the landscape of preindustrial New England that provided a primary site for the construction of the new American myth(s). The geographer D. W. Meinig has specifically cited the importance of the New England village. According to Meinig, “Every mature nation has its symbolic landscapes. They are part of the iconography of nationhood, part of the shared set of ideas and memories and feelings which bind a people together.”⁶ In this regard, the New England village symbolized how to make community in the new nation.

If landscapes are mirrors in which people see what they need to about themselves, what colonial revivalists saw in New England says more about their desire to construct a narrative of American exceptionalism than to replicate the actual historical record. New England’s invented past stabilized and homogenized a present made socially uncertain by the great waves of migration during the nineteenth century.

The writer and designer J. B. Jackson has described the schism between the romanticization of an “ancient” New England and its reality. He pointed out the experience of

William Dean Howells, who traveled there on assignment from an Ohio newspaper in 1860. Howells observed:

*With its wood built farms and villages, it looked newer than the coal smoked brick of southern Ohio. I had prefigured the New England landscape bare of forests, relieved here and there with the trees of orchards or plantations; but I found apparently as much woods as at home.*⁷

What Howells found was actually a landscape in decline. During the 1860s more than ten thousand farms were abandoned in Massachusetts and Rhode Island. It is not surprising therefore that he did not find the bucolic setting of his imagination. Jackson also described how Nathaniel Shaler made a similar observation in 1869. According to Shaler:

*There is something sad about the look of the land. One never sees an acre gained from the forest; around the pasture lands there is often a belt where the wood marks its gain upon the cultivated tract.*⁸

As Jackson noted:

*...a cycle of sorts was thereby completed: the man-made landscape of New England had got its start back in the seventeenth century on the hilltops cleared by Indian fires; it had slowly expanded, generation after generation, into the wooded valleys. And now, in the second half of the 19th century, the fields were retreating from the hills and leaving them to the forest.*⁹

Despite New England's second-growth forest, visitors there after the Civil War still envisioned an open landscape of meadows and villages dotted with trees; they desired a smallness of scale to contrast with the wide-open, almost scaleless landscapes of the American west. Many Americans thus looked to New England for their cultural patrimony, while they sought their natural patrimony in the landscapes of the west. However, others made no such distinction. According to Jackson, they simply lauded New England's cultural and natural heritage by citing its Virgilian qualities (no matter how common its landscapes actually were).¹⁰

The image of New England as America's original Elysian Fields became even more powerful as industrialization put pressure on life within cities. Soon, those with means began to leave the city during the heat of summer and seek relief in a "real" America, which they discovered in rural New England.

This image was reinforced in the landscape architecture of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Olmsted and Cleveland and Copeland and Eliot would take the New England of their childhood memories (a mix of fact and fiction) and transplant its bucolic rock outcroppings, shallow streams, short grasses, and tended forests to parks in Manhattan, Brooklyn, Omaha, and Chicago. Eventually, Jackson observed, this American park movement would be transformed into the idealized garden suburbs of the twentieth century.¹¹

Jackson and others have seen this gap between the idyll of New England and its physical reality as evidence of the colonial revival's propagandistic intents. In particular, it defined and asserted an American way of life with specific associated notions of domestic and gender relations. According to Meinig: "Taken as a whole, the image of the New England village is widely assumed to symbolize for many people the best we have known of an intimate, family-centered, Godfearing, morally conscious, industrious, thrifty, democratic community."¹²

Such ingrained values have made it difficult to penetrate the movement. Its generalizations and clichés claim to

embody the American experience. But in the process they obliterated the multitudes of experiences actually lived by Americans during the eighteenth century.

(Re)Presentation of the Contemporary American Place

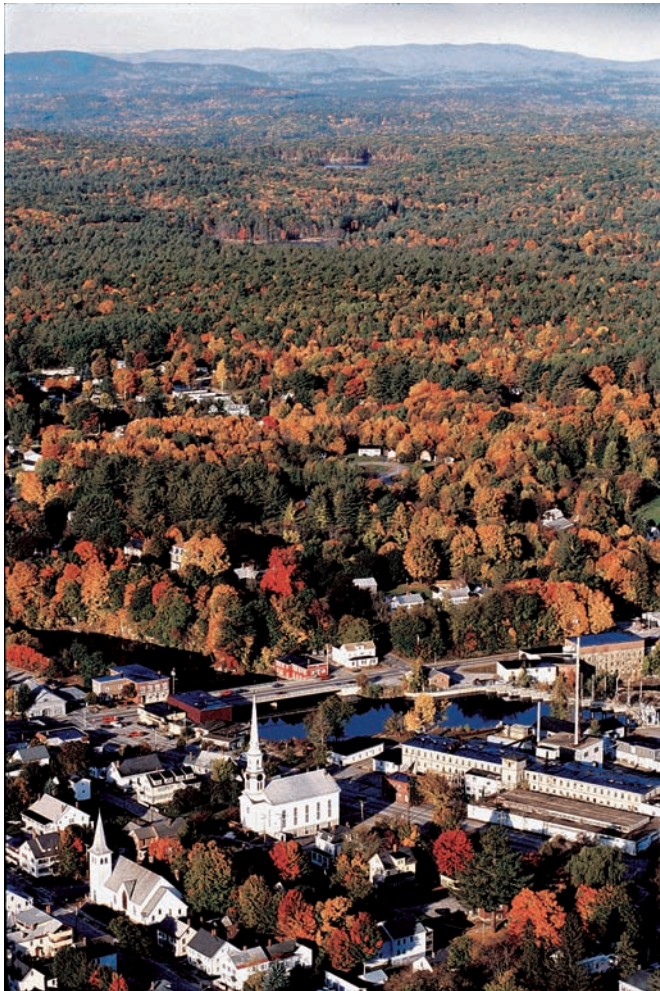
You have to appreciate authenticity in all its forms.
— advertisement for Winston cigarettes, 1999

America's mythologies have continued to affirm a set of values even as those values (and the media used to present them) have changed. This has been true of New England-cum-American idyll representations, from the eighteenth-century engravings of New England town centers by John Barber, to the mid-twentieth-century *Saturday Evening Post* covers by Norman Rockwell, to the contemporary television series *Gilmore Girls*.

The mythology has also been implicit in a contemporary design approach, the New Urbanism. Founded almost thirty years ago, the New Urbanism is arguably the most significant urban design and planning movement to have emerged in the late twentieth century. As the website newurbanism.org notes, "Currently there are over 4,000 New Urbanist projects planned or under construction in the United States alone, half of which are in historic urban centers." New Urbanism's principles address issues as diverse as transportation, health, urban morphology, building typology, and socioeconomics. However, it is not the specifics of any of these that most provoke critics, but the sense that the image of these places and their built forms and spaces serves up one more version of the New England village.

Perhaps unintentionally, the movie *The Truman Show* (1998) best illustrated this mythological conceit. Its main character, Truman Burbank (played by Jim Carrey), doesn't realize that the quaint town of Seahaven in which he has lived his whole life is really a studio set run by the visionary television producer Christoff (played by Ed Harris). He is likewise unaware that his family, friends, and the residents of the entire town around him are actors.

Filmed at the ur-site of New Urbanism, Seaside, on the Gulf Coast of Florida, the movie highlights the simulacra at play in this representation of a New England village. In the opening voiceover, as Truman bicycles past the town green, Christoff declares, "While the world he inhabits is, in some respects, counterfeit, there's nothing fake about Truman himself. No scripts, no cue cards. It isn't always Shakespeare, but it's genuine." Critics have seized on this comment in their attacks on New Urbanism. They claim



the line between Truman's faux cinematic community of Seahaven and the hyperreality of the developer Robert Davis's actual Seaside, Florida, is nearly invisible.

One critic of New Urbanism, Ada Louise Huxtable, has argued more generally that the replacement of reality by idyllic fantasies at such places as Colonial Williamsburg, Disneyland, and the New Urbanist community of Celebration, Florida, is a particularly American phenomenon.¹³ She cited the American desire for "authentic reproduction," the ubiquity of real fakes, and the culture's comfort with them. While accepting that architecture has a role to play in mythmaking, she argued that the distinction between sentimental unreality and nostalgic idealism has become increasingly blurred. Above all, she objected to a pervasiveness of simulacra and hyperreality that has made it possible for Americans

to relate increasingly to their environment through consumable spectacle rather than lived experience.

Left: Idyllic New England: an aerial photograph showing the center of Penacook, NH, surrounded by a landscape of foliage leading to mountains to the northwest. Photo by Dan Habib/*Concord Monitor*.

Right top: Battle Road Farm in Lincoln, MA. This New Urbanist development received national attention for its planning and design. Modeled after a mythical nineteenth-century New England farm village, the development comprises two or four townhouses, 40 percent of which are affordable housing. Photo courtesy of New England Futures, Lucy Chen.

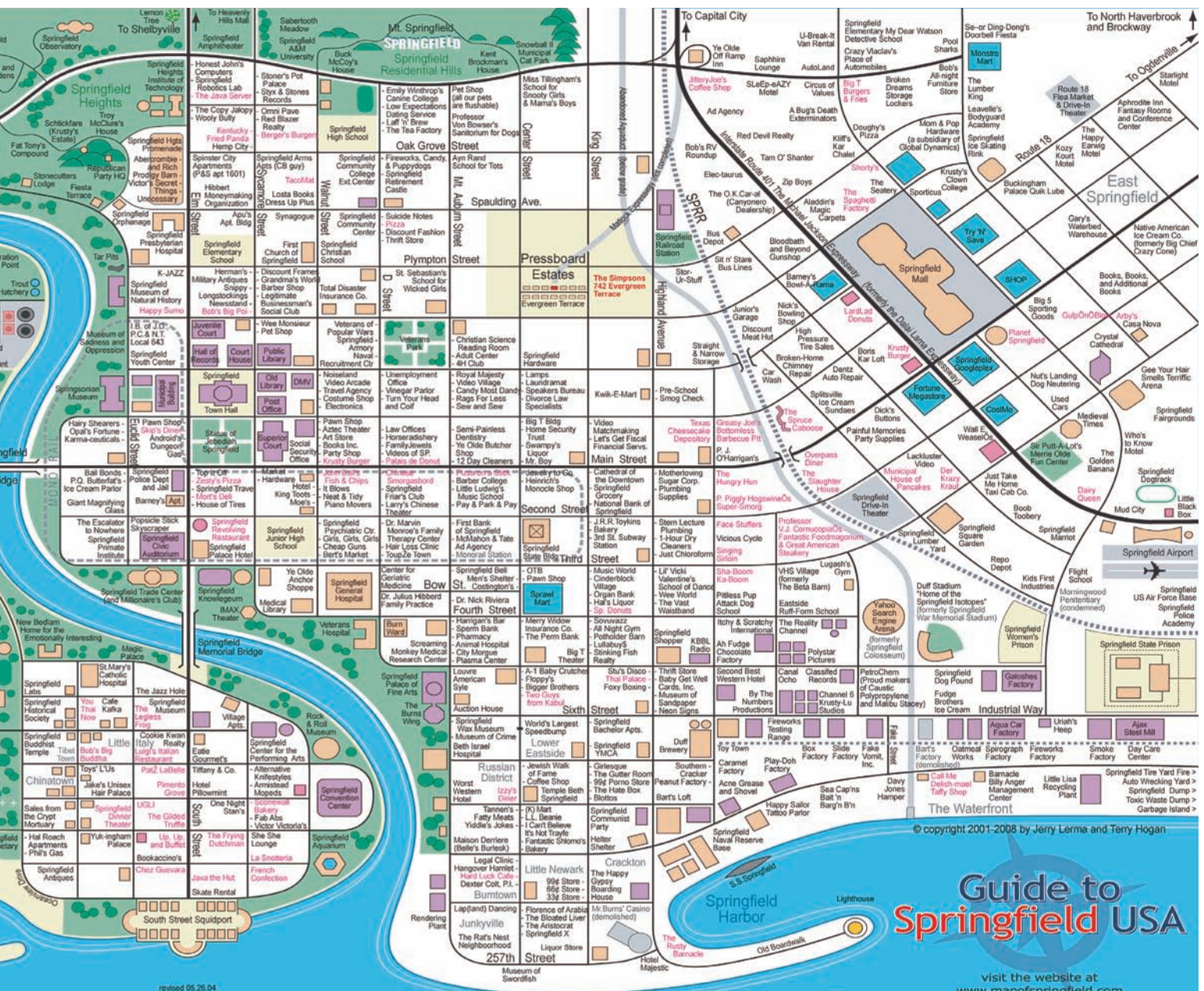
Right bottom: Mashpee Commons, MA, reinvented the image of New England using New Urbanist techniques. A "traditional town center" has been built that will include mixed-use neighborhoods with housing, offices, stores, civic buildings, and open space. Photo courtesy of New England Futures, Cornish Associates.

Designed by Myth

When subject matter is forced to fit into preconceived patterns, there can be no freshness of vision. — Edward Weston¹⁸

One of the most complex exercises in placemaking in recent American culture has been an animated television series, *The Simpsons*. Released in December 1989, the show

is now the longest-running prime-time comedy on television. What began as a sitcom about the dysfunctional antics of the Simpson family, with the son, Bart, as an anti-hero, smart-mouth, protagonist, has expanded to become a socio-cultural and political commentary on postmodern America, with Bart's father, Homer, a working-class everyman, as its central figure. The power of *The Simpsons* lies in its enduring popularity; it is not a subculture, it is culture. This



mainstream hit has now been viewed by a broad American (and international) audience for nearly twenty years.

The Simpsons focuses not on issues of lifestyle or personality, but on institutions and ideas.¹⁹ These have been rendered visible as a source of cultural and political satire through the invention of a fictional place, Springfield, U.S.A. Springfield is described as having been founded by Jedediah Springfield, near Shelbyville and Capitol City, in a state whose name is never mentioned.²⁰

The series' creator, Matt Groening, chose to name its principal setting Springfield not only because he was raised in Springfield, Oregon, but because of its ubiquity as a place name. There are seventy-one Springfields in thirty-six states in America.²¹ Groening was clear, however, that his Springfield is not based on any real place; it is entirely fictional. It is the *idea* of America that Groening is invoking.

Despite its global reach, then, what *The Simpsons* represents is "not a form of global culture, but of local culture," that is accessible world wide.²² *The Simpsons'* Springfield thus resonates as both reflection of and oppositional tool to present-day America, as it uses social and physical archetypes to tell the stories that describe contemporary America.

The social commentary of *The Simpsons* also extends to the (re)making of the quintessential American place. Yet, episodes and seasons of the show contradict a singular mapping of Springfield as a city, town, or suburb. Because it includes the mythologies of all of these, it is not a neatly drawn version of any of them. Springfield also pushes on notions of what constitutes those place types: is it the forms, demographics, activities, economics, or cultural rituals and institutions?

Recently, an Internet plan of Springfield was constructed by *Simpsons* devotees Jerry Lerma and Terry Hogan based on their exhaustive viewing of the show.²³ The map reveals a morphological bricolage of American urban, suburban, and small-town stereotypes: the gated community, the land-grant university, ethnic enclaves (Chinatown, Tibet Town, Little Italy, Russian District), impoverished neighborhoods (Bum Town, Crackton, Junkyville), the cultural-institutional core, the town green, the Cartesian grid, the cultural park on the river, the CBD, the mega-mall, the Interstate that divides the community and creates residual zones, the military base, factories on

the river, the stadium in a sea of parking, the historical tourist waterfront, the suburban strip, etc. These physical types represent a complex palimpsest. But what is significant is not just the plan but the commentary involved in the show's enactment of place. The town's many qualities are reaffirmed because they represent the reality of the contemporary American built environment. But the show simultaneously questions the values that drive this design.

Mythmaking

In contemporary Western usage, myth has come to mean falsehood, a story that is not true. The word, therefore, carries a dismissive, pejorative connotation. As a complex cultural process, however, mythology can be utilized as a method of stewarding and engaging design of change. Thus, the stories of the placemaking of America have contributed to the shaping of the nation's values and belief systems, and what is significant is not their veracity but their purpose.

Myth, whether it is concerned with secular or sacred narratives, derives its power from being believed and deeply held as true.²⁴ Myths that are based on events and actions over time become imbued with symbolic meaning, transformed, or even reversed. What people think, feel, and say about a place becomes more important, while the facts become less germane, to the point where the original conditions become irrelevant. This process occurs in part because the places described become detached from their original context and a new context is substituted.

Mythology can become a powerful design tool if deployed judiciously, as it has been by Groening and his team, not to unquestioningly reinforce naturalized notions of how to make America, but to reveal beliefs and values and bring them into tension with counter-currents and American subcultures.

Under this paradigm, it is not New Urbanism's engagement with fiction or myth that should be troublesome. Certainly, much other contemporary design traffics in its own mythologies of modernity and postmodernity. It is rather unwillingness within the New Urbanism to allow tensions and conflicts to develop within the narrative of making place. It should be noted that this same unsatisfying quality in New Urbanist work is also present in that of such counter-contemporaries as Daniel Libeskind and Zaha Hadid.

The mythologies of places lived in reveal a richer environment than morphological circumscriptions or economic statistics. Place has actions, characters, a setting, and points of view. This is precisely Holtz Kay's lament—that

Previous page: This map of Springfield, USA, is based on the animated series *The Simpsons*. It maps the various typologies of the twentieth-century American city, suburb, and town. Available on the Web at www.mapofspringfield.com. Image courtesy of Jerry Lerma & Terry Hogan, 2005.

people sacrifice meaning and memory, often complex layers in conflict, in order to uphold the veracity of the physical object itself.

Should placemaking be about the purity of a space, or about the relationship people have with, within, through, and beyond it? Are these purposes mutually exclusive, or can they coexist? Place has an indeterminacy and creative potential that can be seized or taken advantage of, and prompted instead of swept away or denied. If mythology and fiction are always embedded within place, then should not the designer engage them directly, and build upon or play with them in the shaping and remaking of space? A “sense of place,” then, should embrace experiential and associational narratives as well as physical attributes.

Place is always a remaking process, never a product.

Notes

1. Jean Baudrillard, “The Precession of Simulacra,” in *Simulacra and Simulation*, originally published in French by Editions Galilee, 1981 (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1994), pp. 1–42.
2. Jane Holtz Kay, *Preserving New England* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1986), p. 214.
3. The term “America” is used here to refer not only to the political-geographical area known as the United States of America but also to establish an ideological construct.
4. Ideology is used here in its common definition as a body of ideas reflecting the social needs and aspirations of an individual, group, class, or culture. During the nineteenth century the colonial revival grew with and strained against another great American trope, that of progress and modernity.
5. Michael G. Kammen, *Mystic Chords of Memory: The Transformation of Tradition in American Culture* (New York: Knopf, 1991), p. 17.
6. D. W. Meinig, “Symbolic landscapes: Models of American Community,” in *The Interpretation of Ordinary Landscapes: Geographical Essays* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979), p. 164.
7. As quoted in J. B. Jackson, *American Space: The Centennial Years, 1865–1876* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1972), pp. 87–88. William Dean Howells (1837–1920), author, editor and critic, became editor (1871–1881) of the *Atlantic Monthly*, a post that gave him enormous influence as an arbiter of American taste. Publishing work by authors such as Mark Twain and Henry James, Howells became a proponent of American realism.
8. Ibid, pp. 88–89. Nathaniel Shaler (1841–1906) was an American paleontologist and geologist who wrote extensively on the theological and scientific implications of the theory of evolution.
9. Ibid, p. 106.
10. Ibid, Chapter X.
11. Ibid, pp. 107–111.
12. Meinig, “Symbolic landscapes,” p. 165.
13. Ada Louise Huxtable, *The Unreal America: Architecture and Illusion* (New York: The New Press, 1997).
14. Baudrillard pioneered the popular use of the terms “simulacrum” and “hyperreality” in their postmodern context. See his *Simulacra and Simulation* (1981) and *America* (1986). The novelist and semiotician Umberto Eco should also be acknowledged for his contributions to the concept of hyperreality in the postmodern literature.
15. Ernest Pascucci, “Intimate (Tele)visions,” in Steven Harris and Deborah Berke, eds., *Architecture of the Everyday* (Princeton: Princeton Architectural Press, 1997).
16. Ibid, p. 39.
17. Ibid, p. 41.
18. Edward Weston et al., *The Daybooks of Edward Weston* (New York: Aperture, 1990), p. 256.
19. John Alberti, “Introduction,” in John Alberti, ed., *Leaving Springfield: The Simpsons and the Possibility of Oppositional Culture* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2004), p. xiii.
20. In the “Behind The Music” episode the state is mentioned; but there are several versions of the show, each with a different state name (including Kentucky and Missouri) to keep the not-revealing-the-location-of-Springfield joke going.
21. Fairview is the most common American place name; there are 275 Fairviews in 42 states. According to the USGS, Springfield is in the following states: Alabama x4, Arkansas x2, California, Colorado, Florida x2, Georgia x9, Idaho, Iowa, Illinois, Indiana x2, Kentucky, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Maryland x4, Maine, Michigan x2, Minnesota, Missouri, Mississippi, North Carolina x4, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Jersey x2, New York, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania x2, South Carolina x3, South Dakota, Tennessee x2, Texas x3, Virginia x8, Virgin Islands, Vermont, Wisconsin, West Virginia.
22. Duncan Stuart Beard, “Local Satire with a Global Research: Ethnic Stereotyping and Cross-Cultural Conflicts in *The Simpsons*,” in Alberti, ed., *Leaving Springfield*, p. 290.
23. www.mapofspringfield.com. The map was started in 2002 and last updated on May 25, 2004.
24. Roland Barthes, *Mythologies*, trans. by Annette Lavers (New York: Hill and Wang, 1972).

Displace/Discover

Karen Wirth



The artist and writer Robert Smithson once made a distinction between a site, a place in the world, and a nonsite, a representation of that place in a gallery. While his descriptors for site included “open limits, scattered information, and some place (physical),” nonsite incorporated “closed limits, contained information, a no place (abstraction).”¹

A simple dichotomy like this implies that the architect deals with the site and the artist with the nonsite, but it really is the slippage between the thing and its representation that characterizes both. The form of a work is developed as a response to a series of questions: what is its content, where does this come from, who is the audience, what is the context, what does it mean? Thus, meaning is not automatically derived from program; the facts are in service to meaning at the same time that they help determine it.

As an artist I work with architecture as a theme, public art as part of a larger sculpture practice, and the book as

subject and metaphor. Associative thinking—or re-placing—is at the core of my approach to the questions above. My work explores place as both site and nonsite through word play, sequential patterns, and grids—each providing a basic structure that allows for layers of fluctuating meaning.

content, context, subtext, text, textural, architectural

So begins the word game that continues, handwritten on eighty 6-foot-high Lumasite pages supported by a two-story steel spine in my work *Gail See Staircase*, at Open Book, a center for reading, writing, and book arts in Minneapolis. Co-designed with the architect Garth Rockcastle of MS&R Architects (the guest editor of this section), the staircase also includes welded steel railings inspired by bookbinding structures. The viewer of this work becomes both user and reader, enclosed in a space, traveling through the text. Through the manipulation of roots,



prefixes, and suffixes, the word lists shift from books to architecture, from reading to living (*vivir, vivre, livre, libre, libro*). Like the stair steps themselves, the forward linkage of the words carries the user through the space.

The shift of meaning from book to architecture in both words and object provides a physical embodiment of Ferdinand de Saussure's definitions of paradigm (associative relationships) and syntagm (sequential relationships). Associative word games have interested me since childhood, long before I learned them formally through semiotics. Words link and slide, compare and contrast, continuously creating meaning that is further modified by each reader's unique set of experiences. The result is a migration of meaning. One thing replaces another, yet they coexist.

These layers of dual meaning are also evident in another of my works, *If not (T)HIS, If not (T)HERE*, commissioned for the Art Lab at the Walker Art Center, in Minneapolis,

in conjunction with the exhibition "Ed Ruscha: Editions." Inspired by the asymmetrical compositions of Ruscha's word/image prints and his droll exploration of the Los Angeles landscape, *If Not (T)HIS* is a room-sized sculptural book that compares "There," Los Angeles, with "Here," Minneapolis. It includes photos and a three-screen video, "Every Building on Lake Street," that provide a Minneapolis take on Ruscha's book *Every Building on the Sunset Strip*.² Here, the book form allows for a series of codings and recodings—a page is a place, a book cover is a door. *If not (T)HIS* invites the reader/viewer to enter the space of a book, a room, and a landscape.

Opposite: *Gail See Staircase*. Also see images on cover and p. 5. Photo by Rik Sferra.

Above left and top right: *Summerhouse Library*.

Above bottom right: *If not (T)HIS, If not (T)HERE*. Photo by Dennis Dennehy for Walker Art Center.



Instead of bringing a landscape into a room, another of my works, *Summerhouse Library*, is an outdoor installation for the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum that imports a reading room onto the landscape. Welded steel window wells, grown over with trailing vines, provide an open framework for four books that explore the relationship between art and the landscape. Printed on weatherproof vinyl, these *Field Guides to Art in Nature* explore color, pattern, texture, and perspective. The viewer examines the books while looking out to the natural surroundings. Caught between landscape and place, representation and real, all the usual cognitive sureties are called into question: scale fluctuates; purpose appears and then disappears; experience reveals its limits.³

Specifics of place were more explicitly rendered in my

work on the Minneapolis Hiawatha Light Rail Stations, co-designed with MS&R Architects and ESG Architects.⁴ Each station was meant to reflect its surrounding community as gleaned from public meetings and historical research. The collaborative process among artists, architects, and community provoked a lively dialogue that yielded rich details.

Approached as large-scale site-specific sculpture, each station has its own character. For example, the 38th Street station borrows details from neighborhood bungalows. And the 50th Street station, which faces Minnehaha Park, provides a transition between urban and natural environments; playing off the dual meaning of the word “canopy,” I designed the image for the glass station canopy as the underside of a winter tree canopy.

Another of my works, *Vertical Circulation*, constructed over a year from August 2001 to August 2002, calls the concepts of place and nonplace more directly into ques-

Above: Minneapolis 38th Street light-rail station.



tion. In a strange inversion, post-9/11, the sky became the constant when the world was shifting. The photographic grids of clouds document specific times and places, even if clouds themselves are elusive and universal.

Each series of cloud photographs reflects a different idea of place. For one, taken during a sabbatical year abroad, I photographed the sky every day—morning (east), noon (above), evening (west). As an avid walker, I also wore a pedometer to document footsteps, going into the millions, and each photograph was noted for footstep number and place.

The images and data served as a frame for *Vertical Circulation*. The title refers to stairs, columns, the book delivery system for library stacks, and the concept of ascendancy. Incorporating books that were constructed from rubbings made at the same locations as the photographs, the grids of sky and land capture the variables of seasonal change, emotional mood, and constant flux.

In the spring of 2007 I was fortunate to spend a semester abroad with students from the Minneapolis College of Art and Design at the Burren College of Art in County Clare, Ireland. As a means of grappling with their sense of displacement and discovery, we addressed weekly sketchbook topics—among them, Art/Artifact, Boundaries, Inside Out, Story:Telling. I made a book each week, some made assemblages, others drawings.

By organizing a pedagogy that put my work in play with theirs, I found both place and replacement—I was teacher and student, guide and fellow traveler. Together, we affirmed difference and found similarity through shared investigations of place. In Ireland, with my students, place became the starting point for understanding, a site for making and remaking the world.



function, fiction, depiction, picture, pictogram, pictograph, hieroglyph, hierarchy, arch, archive, architecture, archetype, type, typograph, graph, ideograph, idea, ideology, logic, magic, imagination, image, afterimage, afterword, word, wordplay, play

Notes

1. From Smithson's more complete table in Nicolas de Oliveira et al., *Installation Art* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1994), p. 33. Included as a footnote to Smithson's essay on "The Spiral Jetty," reprinted in Nancy Holt, ed., *The Writings of Robert Smithson* (New York: New York University Press, 1979).
2. Ed Ruscha, *Every Building on the Sunset Strip* (Los Angeles: Heavy Industries, 1966).
3. *Summerhouse Library* was designed and executed with Laura Fulk and Chad Rutter, senior undergraduate students from the Minneapolis College of Art and Design. A production edition of the book *Field Guides to Art in Nature* is available through Printed Matter (printedmatter.org), the world's largest distributor of publications by artists.
4. The conceptual design of the Warehouse station downtown was with ESG; the conceptual design of the 38th, 46th, and 50th Street stations was with MS&R. Concurrently, I managed the team of artists on the conceptual design phase. The glass canopy design for the 50th Street station emerged from a separate public art opportunity during the construction phase.

All photos are by the author except where noted.

Above left: Minneapolis 50th Street light-rail station.

Above right: Sketchbook pages. Top Row: Karen Wirth; Michael Mott; Wirth; Aaron Bickner. Middle Row: Isa Gagarin; Wirth; Jamie Sandruck; Wirth. Bottom Row: Wirth; Aaron Bickner; Wirth; Laura Lewis.

Renewing Modernism

Carl Elefante

We live today in the modern world; that is, we live in a world shaped by modernism. All aspects of the places we inhabit have been molded by the aesthetic principles, design sensibilities, and technical capabilities of modernist thinkers, designers, and builders. Modernism has prevailed, superseding building blocks of brick and stone with crystalline structures of metal and glass.

The rise and proliferation of modernism has pressed vigorously forward for more than a hundred years. Wright's Larkin Building was completed in 1904, his Unity Temple in 1906. Having surpassed their fiftieth year, many landmarks of modern architecture are eligible for historic landmark designation. Though it may seem paradoxical, both Mies van der Rohe's Farnsworth House (1951) and Philip Johnson's Glass House (1949) are designated historic sites operated by the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

Modern-Era Architecture, Preservation, and Sustainability

As modernism becomes historic, the "modern-era" building stock, as it is often termed, is moving into a period of refurbishment. Two very real issues have emerged that highlight the need for well-formulated and effective strategies for its renewal. First, the conservation of modern-era buildings presents a broad spectrum of preservation challenges that are substantially different from those of "traditional" buildings. Second, as architects retool for sustainability and respond to climate change, transforming the environmental performance of modern-era buildings must play a significant part. We cannot map a path to sustainability without emphasizing the conservation of existing resources as a guiding principle—if not *the* guiding principle.

Numbers alone indicate the importance of preserving and transforming modern-era buildings. Structures from the 1950s, '60s, '70s, and '80s represent more than 55 percent of all nonresidential buildings in the United States, a stupefying 36 billion (with a "b") square feet.¹ By comparison, projections for new nonresidential construction over the next twenty-five years total around 28 billion square feet.² This is why, over the next generation, renovating modern-era buildings represents an even larger and more difficult endeavor than designing new buildings.

Preserving Modern-Era Architecture

Much of architectural preservation focuses on saving buildings associated with important historic figures or buildings of exceptional architectural merit. Washington's

Mount Vernon is often cited as the first successful historic preservation effort in the United States. But it was outrage over the destruction of McKim, Mead, and White's Pennsylvania Station, at the time regarded by many as New York's most awe-inspiring structure, that is credited for generating the political will needed to pass the National Preservation Act of 1966.

For more than four decades, architectural preservation has been conducted according to a broadly accepted set of principles codified by the U.S. Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. The Secretary's Standards establish four rubrics for treatment: preservation, restoration, reconstruction, and rehabilitation. Setting reconstruction aside (although Mies's Barcelona Pavilion serves as an example of a modern-era building possessing the cultural importance to merit it), two types of efforts are emerging with regard to modern-era buildings: the preservation and restoration of significant modern-era landmarks, and the rehabilitation of the "ordinary" modern-era building stock.

Work in the first area is becoming increasingly well-established within preservation practice. For example, the reconditioning of the exterior of Wright's Guggenheim Museum (1959) is expected to be completed this year; Mies's Crown Hall (1956) has undergone a meticulous restoration; and Gordon Bunshaft's Lever House (1952) was renovated by his successors at Skidmore, Owings and Merrill. Each of these projects illustrates an effort to extend the life of an important modern-era landmark whose cultural and architectural significance is beyond debate.

Each also demonstrates how working with modern buildings is redefining preservation thinking and technology. Modern architects and builders were famously forward-looking and quick to innovate, frequently incorporating materials and methods with little track record and no established methods for maintenance, repair and reconditioning. As a result, preservationists are now faced with rendering judgments about the conservation of materials where economy was emphasized over durability, and where original performance expectations differed substantially from present-day standards. In the eyes of many preservation professionals, the marked lack of quality is the defining characteristic of modern-era construction.

A greater challenge may lie in the second effort noted above, however. As historic preservation has "matured," it has broadened its view, finding value in the forest as well as the trees. "Historic districts" thus recognize *unexceptional* properties for their importance as "contributing structures" to a pattern of architecture and urbanization. There



Modern-Era Restoration Challenges

Quinn Evans Architects' restoration of Wright's Pope-Leighey House has elements of both the Guggenheim and Crown Hall examples. Pope-Leighey is one of Wright's many Usonian houses, modest and built with inexpensive materials. Wright designed projecting eaves with extremely aggressive cantilevers that sagged and rotted as the wood framing aged. The restoration involved a complete disassembly and restructuring of the cantilevered eaves, "restoring" them to a capacity and durability they lacked.

Top: Restored exterior view of Wright's Pope-Leighey House on Woodlawn Plantation in Alexandria, Virginia.

Bottom left: Prior to restoration, sagging eaves attest more to Wright's structural optimism than neglect or the ravages of time.

Bottom right: Restored interior view, defining modernism's cultural legacy with simplicity and elegance.

All photos courtesy of Quinn Evans Architects.



Transforming Modern-Era Buildings

Working with William McDonough + Partners, Quinn Evans Architects prepared renovation plans for a “typical” K Street office building. McDonough’s design proposes a complete replacement of the K Street facade with an extremely high-performance glazing system incorporating building-integrated photovoltaics and electrochromic glazing elements. Tenant partitioning, fixtures, furnishing and all mechanical and electrical systems are also replaced. McDonough’s Cradle-to-Cradle protocol guides material selections and systems design.

Left: Existing view of 2029 K Street NW, one of Washington, D.C.’s hundreds of undistinguished modern-era office structures. Photo courtesy of Quinn Evans Architects.

Right: Proposed renewal emphasizing the creative and technological possibilities of replacing the south-facing facade with a light-responsive curtain wall. Rendering by William McDonough + Partners.

are a few examples of modern-era historic districts, like the South Beach Art Deco Historic District in Miami, where the integrity of the pattern is emphasized over the merits of individual structures. But, even among hard-core preservationists, it is difficult to find many who advocate the creation of extensive modern-era historic districts.

Is this simply a function of our place in time? Will modern-era buildings and districts be viewed differently as their numbers dwindle?

Modernism and Sustainability

The preservation of modern-era buildings will be driven by sustainability, and making modern-era buildings sustainable will be no small undertaking.

Picture the existing nonresidential building stock as five buildings. One is a traditional masonry-and-stone building; one is a contemporary, high-performance green building; the other three are modern-era buildings. Over the next twenty-five years, the traditional building and the three modern-era buildings will require comprehensive modernization to adhere to the standards set to combat climate change. During the same period, two new buildings will be constructed.

This may be somewhat of a simplistic model, but it shows how the fate of the modern-era building stock represents a major challenge—and an opportunity.

The challenge lies in three areas. First, the fractured urbanism and far-flung suburbanization of modern-era cities presents tough problems. Creating cities that function as high-performance urban systems is a nearly unattainable ideal for America. Current circumstances, many of which are the product of modernist anti-urbanism, pose formidable constraints. Second, improving the exterior envelopes of modern-era buildings will be difficult and may favor replacement over enhancement. Third, modern-era buildings were designed in an era of cheap energy, and nearly all depend on fossil-fuel-consuming systems to be habitable, even on the most basic level.

Modern Urbanism

Fortunately, since the postwar decades, when the city was declared dead, planners have begun to toss aside the anti-urban theories of Le Corbusier and Wright and rediscover the fundamental vitality and efficiency of cities. In humanistic terms, cities are again understood as places for people, an emphatically social species. As designers of urban systems, planners have been forced to acknowledge the practical necessities of density and compactness as subsidizing sprawl has become increasingly unaffordable.

However, change in the marketplace is far from absolute. Many metropolitan regions are still struggling to reestablish the viability of their urban cores while vigorous development continues at their perimeters.

How does urban context define the problem of sustaining the modern-era building stock? Modern-era buildings can be categorized broadly as representing two conditions: those located within established urban cores and those not. However, in both settings, there are encouraging signs. Many plans have been drawn to transform car-oriented suburban satellite cities, retrofitting transit, mixing housing, commercial and institutional uses, and creating places for pedestrians. “Smart growth” has become the guiding framework for most public policy initiatives both within established urban cores and outside them.

Smart Growth and Preservation

How effectively do such plans contend with the existing building stock? On the positive side, many are, by their nature, “infill” plans—strategies for filling in the empty spaces of low-density suburbia to justify the costs of parking structures and transit investment.

Frequently, smart-growth plans call for drastic restructuring. The existing building stock may simply be in the way, even in densely developed urban settings. Certainly, there are places where this approach makes sense and is justified by the conditions on the ground and the vision of the plan. However, the opposite is also true.

PlaNYC 2030, New York’s climate-change initiative, serves as a somewhat troubling example. Preservation of existing neighborhoods, to say nothing of historic preservation, hardly gets a mention. A number of its proposed model redevelopment plans, even those in tightly packed neighborhoods in Brooklyn, Queens, and the Bronx, have raised deep concerns in the preservation community, which sees them as a return to the heavy-handed tactics of Robert Moses. In several of these development proposals, underutilized industrial districts that have the potential to be the next SoHo are to be razed to make way for forty-story condos. Is smart growth new packaging for old-school urban renewal?

Preservation Growth Models

Washington, D.C.’s Downtown Development Overlay District (DDOD) makes for an interesting comparison. Its origins are in historic preservation, and it favors a more incremental attitude. The ordinance provides for transferring development rights from historic properties to designated receiving zones. Its intent is to prevent the

loss of historic buildings exposed to the pressures of rising property values, while providing economic resources to maintain and restore them.

Whether intended or not, the DDOD program is having a significant effect on modern-era buildings. Washington's K Street is a receiving zone. The canyon of mostly modern-era office buildings, famous for housing powerbrokers and lobbyists, is undergoing a once-in-a-generation transformation. There have been a number of tear-downs, and, certainly, more will occur. However, in most cases two or three stories are added onto the existing structural frame, expanding rentable floor area, increasing density incrementally, and creating an economic engine that drives the renovation of the entire structure.

In these projects, the exterior envelope is sometimes replaced in its entirety. However, some architects have approached the renovation of building facades with a lighter touch, adding new elements, or incorporating existing features such as stone-clad spandrels or columns. In almost every project, mechanical and electrical systems that were terrible energy hogs have been replaced with high-performance systems. Responding to today's real estate market, many are LEED-certified major renovation projects.

Washington's DDOD ordinance addresses the three compelling topics raised by modern-era buildings: urban context, building envelope, and mechanical systems. Yet the program is not equivalent to historic-district designation, because its goals for the receiving zones are not preservation goals. Instead, it sets out to create conditions for the renewal of aging modern-era buildings. Economic resources produced by transferred development rights raise the quality bar for renovation work, making green building practices and high-performance systems a realizable objective rather than a wish. The DDOD ordinance is a very important model for sustainable urban policy.

Transforming Modern-Era Buildings

In 2006, the District of Columbia Historic Preservation Office (Washington's SHPO) and the D.C. Preservation League (the largest and most active preservation nonprofit in D.C.) published a study of modern-era buildings in the Washington area. The study initiated a process that is expected to continue for many years by identifying a "key inventory" of about 250 buildings likely to receive historic designation. To a significant degree, the list recapitulates the design awards won by Washington's most prominent modern-era architects.

Assuming that most, if not all, the buildings placed on the inventory will be preserved as icons of modernism,

what does the inventory express about the great majority of modern-era buildings in the city? What is their value materially and culturally?

The fundamental task facing the next generation of architects and preservation professionals is to capture the value of the energy, material resources, and environmental impacts embodied in these modern-era buildings. Transformation, rather than preservation per se, is the appropriate objective. I base this judgment on four observations about modern-era architecture.

First and foremost, modern-era buildings are by their nature adaptable. The concept of "universal space" articulated by Mies and by Le Corbusier's Villa Domino construction system established the theoretical basis for the buildings lining K Street, Park and Michigan Avenues, and Wilshire Boulevard. A durable structural frame is constructed to be as neutral and minimal as practicable. Every other part of the building is easily adaptable—even expendable.

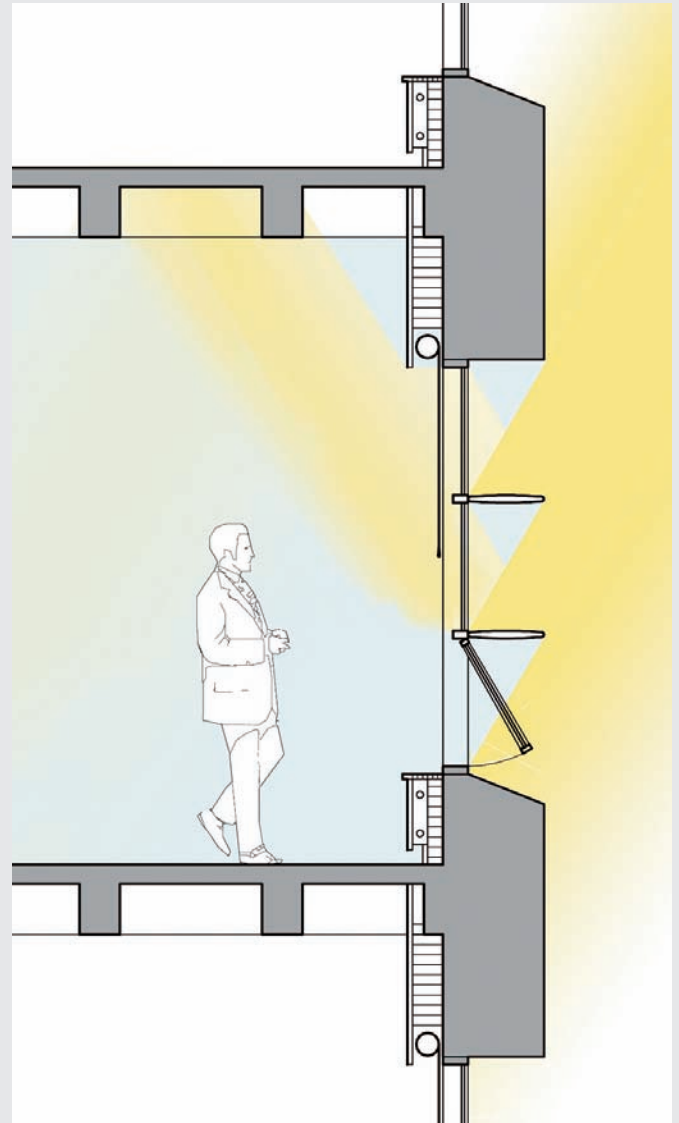
Second, although the degree of quality varies from city to city, many modern-era buildings are simply designed and built to a low standard. As noted, most were built with no regard for energy use and with inexpensive materials lacking durability. It is easy for preservationists to achieve success in both preservation and sustainability in the restoration of traditional buildings whose porches, operable windows, and cupolas provide historic character and climate-responsive function. Similar win-win scenarios for modern-era buildings are difficult to discover.³

Third, unlike examples from the postwar period, when the fronts of traditional buildings were "modernized," the curtain-wall modifications and replacements taking place along K Street are generally consistent with the original design approach. I confess to a certain discomfort when viewing architecture in such overtly stylistic terms, equivalent to changing outdated "clothing." However, the work along K Street represents a continuum of modernism. In light of the need to improve performance, facade modifications and replacement are fundamentally practical.

Last, the transformation of modern-era buildings, their appearance included, is not inconsistent with the underlying philosophy of rehabilitation, because responding to changing needs may be the only way to justify retaining an existing building. Modification is better than destruction.

Greening Modern-Era Buildings

Accepting that modern-era buildings require a new preservation paradigm, today's architects need to become more rigorous in assessing their value. The "throw-away" society that created such low-quality structures is still



Greening the AIA Headquarters

In 2007, Quinn Evans Architects prepared a master plan for renovating the American Institute of Architects Headquarters in Washington. The objectives of the study were to “green” AIA HQ, create a model workplace, and conduct enlightened stewardship of the building, a future modern-era landmark. The intersection of the modern-era stewardship and greening agendas advanced the AIA’s understanding of lifecycle and demonstrated scenarios for meeting the 2030 Challenge through a renovation project.

Top left: The AIA “campus,” including the historic Octagon, landscaped courtyard, and 1973 Headquarters designed by The Architects Collaborative (TAC). The photo-montage illustrates how photovoltaic panels, vegetative roofs, and skylights may be added to a modern-era building of some distinction.

Bottom left: Photo-montage illustrating a strategy for adding sunshades to alleviate the effects of the building’s southern exposure.

Right: Detail of the window upgrade option with exterior sunshades, operable sash, and interior shades. Are visually apparent interventions appropriate on significant modern-era buildings?

All images courtesy of Quinn Evans Architects.



D.C.'s Modern-Era Renewal Marketplace

Making use of Washington, D.C.'s Downtown Development Overlay District (DDOD), which transfers density from historic sites and residential encouragement zones into the urban core, Fox Architects added three floors to a typical modern-era office building. The project also included recladding the entire facade, upgrading mechanical and electrical systems, and fitting out the interior spaces new occupants. Incremental growth and once-in-a-generation revitalization are fueled with transfer development rights, capturing the value of existing resources and transforming the performance of an inefficient building.

Left: Pre-renewal view of 1120 20th Street NW, another example of Washington, D.C.'s modern-era building stock.

Right: Computer-generated illustration of the proposed renewal showing the addition of two floors, the extension of floor plates into previously recessed corners, and the replacement of the entire building facade with curtain wall. Full building renewal is fueled by the economic engine of transfer development rights (TDRs). Images courtesy of Fox Architects.

largely at work. Sustainability and green building are changing this attitude for the better. But the high cost of building, economically and environmentally, will also ultimately demand that the structures we invest in contribute to vital communities that will last for generations. As architects get serious about these issues, basic tenets need

to become ingrained in their practice.

For starters, heeding the words of Ernest Boyer and Lee Mitgang is essential.⁴ Architects need to think in terms of constructing communities. Buildings are not merely objects; they work in partnership to create and re-create places, neighborhoods, and cities. The vision

of today's architects far too frequently follows myopic fascination with an architectural language established by modernism nearly a century ago. It is time to pay attention to the forest, and its processes of regeneration, not only the trees.

Designing in nature is the next imperative. There are many lessons to be learned from the Bedouin tent, the igloo, and the Anasazi cliff dwelling. There are others to be learned from vernacular regional architecture. Reconnecting with the environment means reinvolving people in acts of observation and control: opening and closing a window, turning lights on and off, raising and lowering shades, putting on or taking off a sweater. Advanced human comfort modeling is beginning to provide science that confirms what we already know. People are biological creatures. One size does not fit all. Architecture and engineering must reconnect with people and help people reconnect to nature.

Today, our faith in technology borders on the pathological. Got a problem? Develop a technology to solve it. Many of the problems we face today are the unintended consequences of the technologies we have adopted and proliferated in the past. Greenhouse gas emissions are the most obvious example. There are many, many more.

Architects working with historic structures have the opportunity to observe building technology from a closer perspective. Most components of traditional buildings are considered outmoded and substandard. This is simply wrong. As an example, properly maintained and weather-proofed, traditional wood-frame windows perform well. More to the point, they are readily repairable.

By comparison, modern replacement windows can be shown to perform poorly when their lifecycle is considered. As multicomponent assemblies, their glazing and frames are nearly impossible to repair. Glass and aluminum features that should last for decades, or even centuries, are integrated with seals and other moisture-management elements that are expected to last for twenty to thirty years ("differential durability" is the term). Furthermore, claims regarding the improved operational performance of modern windows are frequently overstated, measuring thermal performance at the center of glazing while ignoring actual installed performance. And it takes decades of operation to recapture the energy and environmental impacts expended in the manufacture of aluminum or vinyl windows. Many of the supposed improvements now being made to modern-era buildings are the problems that architects will face in 2030 or 2040 as these hopeful technologies reveal their mortality.

Modernizing Modern-Era Buildings

As architects face the greatest challenge of our generation, renewing the modern-era building stock, and by extension, reforming the places they make, it is absolutely critical that reality trump good intentions. Along with the unabashed conviction and aesthetic freshness of modernism's vision come complexity and contradiction. Those aspects of modernism which have proven more wishful than insightful leave practitioners today facing problems both astounding and perplexing. Modernism's legacy is certainly vast. As such, it is all the more critical that truly workable solutions be discovered.

It is perhaps simplistic, but it is equally profound, to observe that the present looming environmental disaster is directly attributable to the abysmal performance of modern-era buildings and urban systems. The only path to reducing current levels of environmental degradation leads through their transformation. While there are many lessons to be learned from the enduring resource-effectiveness of traditional buildings, the challenges of capturing the material and cultural value of the modern-era building stock will require new ideas and creativity. Blind faith in technology must be replaced with clear vision of the full consequences of the way we make and operate buildings, and most importantly, how those who follow us will have to remake them as they inevitably age over time.

Modernizing the modern-era building stock is just beginning to emerge as a discipline. But if it is to succeed in providing real solutions, it must rediscover the fundamental durability of building while reconnecting modern-era buildings with their urban and natural communities. Only through creative transformation can the promise of modernism's "new tomorrow" be finally and fully realized.

Notes

1. The United States Department of Energy (DOE) maintains the Commercial Buildings Energy Consumption Survey (CBECS) of non-residential buildings. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) maintains numbers on the residential building stock.
2. Projections of building industry activity are cited from "The Boom To Come: America Circa 2030," published in *Architect Magazine*, October 2006.
3. For a wonderfully fascinating exception, refer to "The White City" of Tel Aviv. In 2003, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) proclaimed it a World Cultural Heritage site.
4. For an insightful assessment of the need to refocus architectural practice and education onto the quality of communities instead of individual buildings, see Ernest L. Boyer and Lee D. Mitgang, *Building Community: A New Future for Architecture Education and Practice* (Princeton, NJ: The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 1996).

A Gradual Departure

Photographs by John Bartelstone

The standard way to photograph architecture, whether new or historic, is to present a subject as pristine in appearance; and publication of a historic place is usually a catalogue in pictures and words of what is left, with structures in chronological order. But when the purpose is not to provide a catalogue but to evoke a sense of place, a photograph can do that by providing evidence of relentless and inevitable change with time. On these pages the place in question is the Brooklyn Navy Yard, where the United States Navy built ships for 165 years before leaving in 1966, and where 4,500 Brooklynites still work, many in non-ship-related activities.

John Bartelstone, the architectural photographer who took these pictures, has approached the yard as a personal project for some thirteen years. There was change over the years in which the Navy built ships here, as there has been in the years since it left, and particularly in the years when John has photographed. Sometimes the sight of change in his photographs is simply a reminder that time is passing in our own lives, say in the form of the Trade Center towers seen in the distance over one dry dock. Sometimes it is visible where old equipment is turned to present-day uses: in one picture a modern tugboat is being serviced in a granite dry dock originally built in 1850 to assist in construction of Navy line-of-battle ships.

The sense of place is strongest when we see incongruence: truck tires thrown at the foot of a massive salt-water fire pump; a former Naval machine shop where a World War II poster still urges safety on Uncle Sam's behalf, but where giant hydraulic presses were recently stored by a machinery trading company; an originally exterior, one-story brick structure of the 1870s under a high

roof (with air vents), probably from 1904; and a cannon, which at the end of the nineteenth century was retired for use as a bollard, and is now seen accidentally uprooted. Sometimes the changes can be construed as simply "development": a heating radiator stands to one side of a coal fireplace under fluorescent ceiling lights in an interior view of the Naval hospital, built in 1834.

— *Cervin Robinson*

1. Dry Dock 5, of the early 1940s, with a crane of the 1950s or '60s, taken in 1996.
2. Dry Dock 1, of 1850, taken in 2006.
3. Salt-water fire pump, of about 1960, taken in 2001.
4. Building 128, main machine shop, of 1904 and 1917, with Uncle Sam poster, taken in 1995.
5. Building 128, taken in 1997.
6. Brick structure of the 1870s, under a roof of the early 1900s, taken in 2005.
7. Uprooted bollard near dry dock 2, of 1890, taken in 1994.
8. Interior, Navy Receiving Hospital, of 1834, taken in 2006.

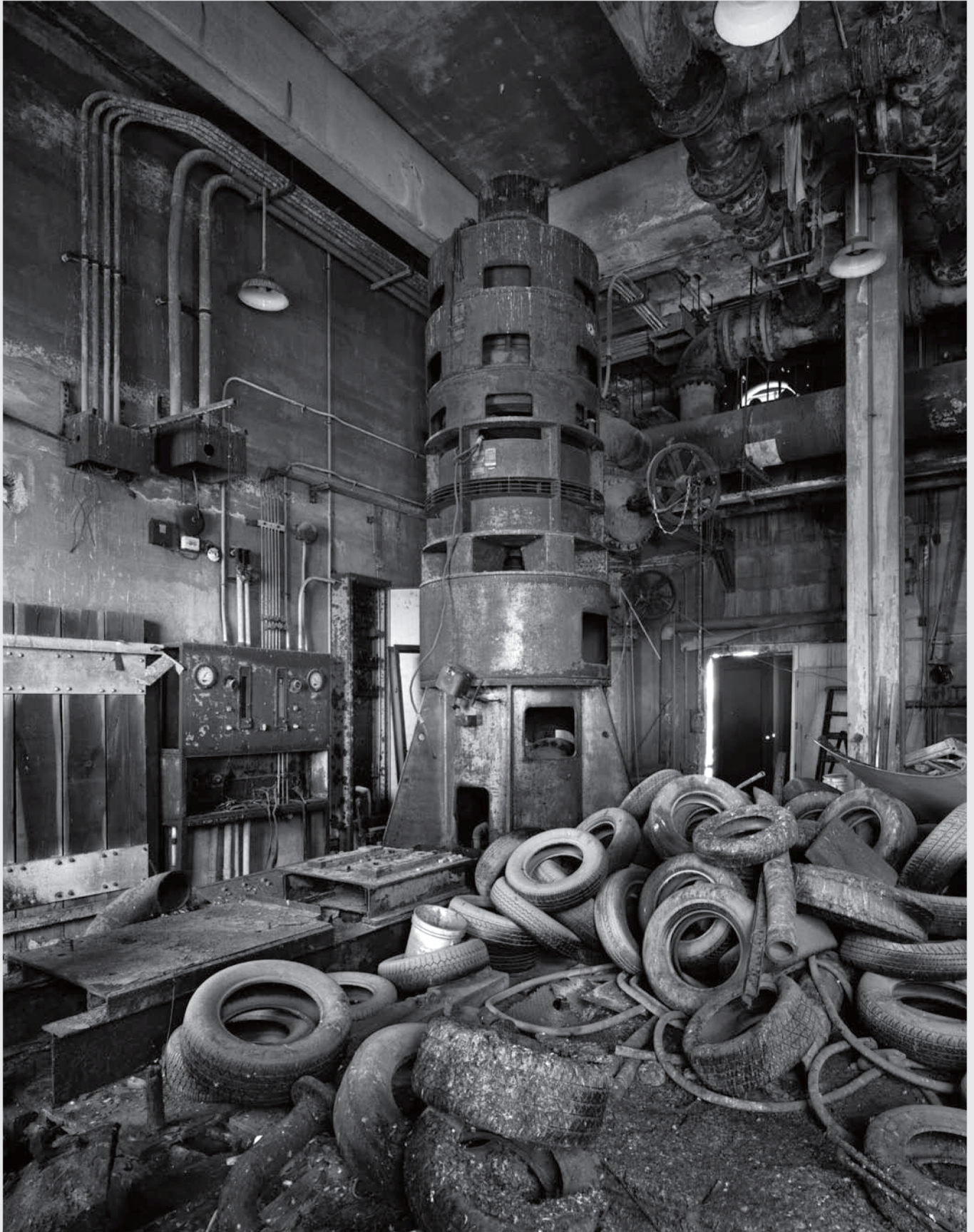


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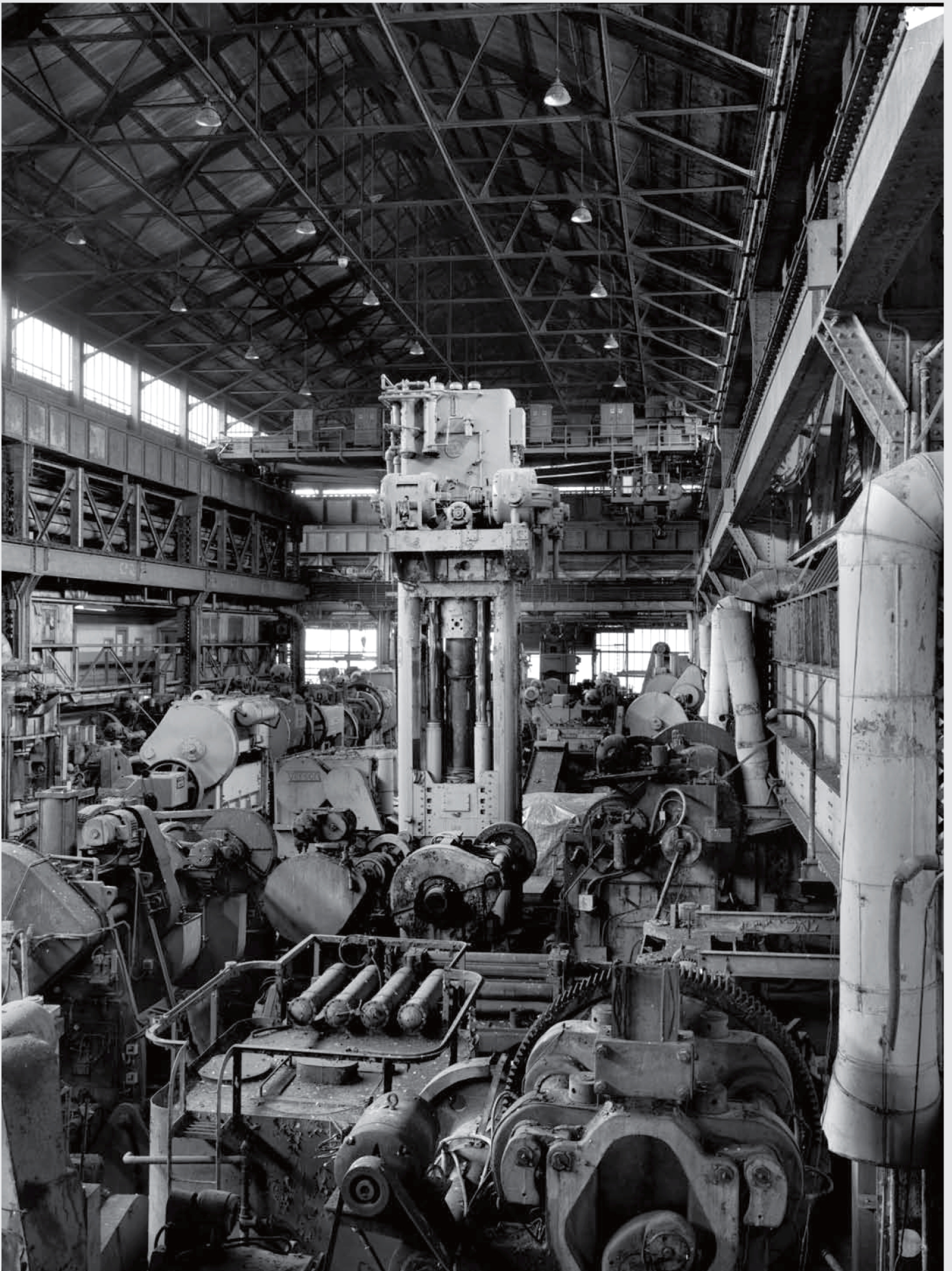




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5







Beyond Cut-and-Paste: The Promise of Collage in Contemporary Design

Sanda Iliescu

The ease with which image fragments may be appropriated from the Web and other sources and the increasingly available methods for manipulating, blurring, and blending them have encouraged the wide use of digital “cut-and-paste” collage as a method of spatial representation in architecture and landscape architecture. Yet this convenient sampling process is not without risk. The uniformly digital and purely visual nature of these fragments can create a homogenized smoothness that robs such collages of the potential for double readings and multiple frames of reference. At their least successful, digital montages are strangely disembodied and weightless, suggesting placeless, amnesiac designs. The origins of fragments are suppressed, as are the particularities of place: sounds, scents, and the textures of physical materials.

Perhaps in compensation for this lack of sensory depth, digital montages often depict linear perspectives whose vertiginous vistas are punctuated by signifiers of motion, such as runners, cyclists and skateboarders. The absence of elderly, poor, disabled, or even ordinary-looking people perhaps hints at these compilations’ underlying reductive ethos.

High-Tech Utopia vs. Historicist Nostalgia

Examples of this phenomenon were particularly evident in a high-profile international competition, held in 1999, to convert part of a 460-acre

military base in northwest Toronto into a public venue called Downsview Park. The text for one proposal even described the new approach as a “fluid, liquid digital sensibility.”¹ Unfortunately, this facile approach obscured the site’s gritty textures, ignored its complex history, and downplayed the problems inherent in making a public park.

All five proposals in the competition depicted literally open (yet hardly public) spaces that were dominated by visual flows and high-tech systems but lacked any semblance of figurative space or place. Instead, the schemes highlighted the nonfigural network itself as an iconic, utopian figure. Thus, visual smoothness replaced what might have been developed as compel-

ling formal relationships. Spatial hierarchies, edges, and distinctions were all suppressed, as were any considerations of social or political conflict.

In their singularity and literalness, such digital montages are antithetical to both the original intent of modernist collage and its subsequent role in postmodern critique. In abandoning collage’s critical power to elicit multiple and potentially conflicting readings, contemporary digital “cut-and-paste” collages reinforce the hegemony of singular, linear narratives, the very quality that modernist collage makers set out to contest.

A second form of contemporary collage seems a welcome departure from such fluidity. Socially rather than visually motivated, it centers on

Above: Emergent landscapes: “Energy Pathways and Activity Landscapes at Night.” Digital montage depicting a proposal for Downsview Park, Toronto, 1999, by the team led by Brown + Storey Architects.

Opposite: Landscapes of salvage: Green Project volunteer workers remove slate roof tiles from a house in New Orleans. Photo by Daniel Weiner.

preservation, recycling, and adaptive reuse. Its fragments are not weightless images, but physical materials—the flotsam and jetsam of our decaying cities and abandoned factories. From old mantelpieces, Classical cornices, and cast-iron bathtubs to large-scale urban ruins, architects and builders are testing ways in which the old may be reborn.

Issues of sustainability drawn from an environmental agenda often underlie these efforts. For instance, workers with the ReClaim New Orleans Project have salvaged buildings destroyed by Hurricane Katrina, saving as much as 85 percent of their materials for future construction.² “If you come in and bulldoze everything and grind it up and throw it in the

landfill,” Shane Endicott, president of the Portland, Oregon, ReBuilding Center told the *Washington Post*, “you’re throwing away tons and tons of opportunities to rebuild lives.”³ Yet, while its social and environmental goals may be laudable, the aesthetic of such work is often governed by placid nostalgia or rigid preservationism. Relics from the past are assumed to be more beautiful than the designs we might realize today. Thus, as forms are designated either valuable because they are historic or trivial because they are contemporary, a worthy tactile appreciation for materials degenerates into fetishism. Similarly, respect for history succumbs to empty pastiche—to collage as picturesque image-making.

An Ethical-Aesthetic Overlap

In attempting to fix the unpredictable ebb and flow of human events into singular, idealized narratives—one privileging the future, the other the past—both these contemporary collage practices depend on closed, static conceptions of time that undervalue the present, with all its vivid contingencies and complex relationships. They reduce aesthetics to the production of objects of “calculated visual seduction,” in the words of the architect Juhani Pallasmaa, and fail to fulfill architecture’s profound existential potential.

“The role of architecture,” Pallasmaa wrote, “is not to entertain or thrill us but to structure our understanding of the world and of our very existence, to articulate how the world touches us.”⁴

As a design method, collage has much to offer. The poetics of collage are potent both because they make room for ordinary, crude, or fragmentary materials and because they represent a challenge to rigid or normative boundaries between art and life. Overly literal interpretations miss the most significant contribution of collage: its ability to both surprise us and change our way of looking at art and at the world.

As harmonious wholes and collections of disjunctive fragments, collages encourage a unique aesthetic experience, one in which sensations of conflict and reconciliation can recall similarly complex relationships in life. More insistently perhaps than “purer” art forms, collages can evoke thoughts and emotions outside the strictly aesthetic realm.

In bringing what is essentially an ethical mode of attentiveness into the aesthetic experience, collage may thus suggest ways to bridge that most paradigmatic of divides: between “good form” and form that contributes or attests to the “common good.”

Private Memories and Civic Structures

We used only old material. A demolished shed gave us wonderful pieces of concrete, bricks, and tiles. We also used floor bricks from the stable of the old farmhouse. Still, we hadn't enough material, so we looked for bricks in the local area. Our neighbor restored his stable and gave us ceiling tiles. When a wall surrounding a nearby church was demolished, we got some very beautiful old bricks that now cap our new walls.

—Anneliese Latz, 2003⁵

The German landscape architects Peter and Anneliese Latz offer a contemporary example of the ways designers may explore collage's deeper contribution. Like that of early modernist collage makers, the Latzes' work addresses strict boundaries between conceptual categories—between the natural and the manmade, the public and the private, the everyday and the aesthetic. Their designs for both large public parks and intimate private gardens evoke a vivid sense of the past, one that encompasses the histories of particular sites and their immediate contexts as well as broader landscape traditions.

At the same time, the Latzes' designs may incorporate bold new technological solutions, and their inclusive spirit informs a similarly tolerant approach to materials, forms, and processes. Ordinary, inexpensive materials are usefully integrated with precious, expensive ones. The mundane coexists with and even engenders the sacred, and public places incorporate peculiarly private elements while defining shared, communal intentions.

In a Latz design, traditional manual techniques are juxtaposed with sophisticated digital technologies; socially and environmentally motivated practices, such as abiding by safety codes or recycling, suggest new aesthetic ways of arranging shapes, textures, and materials; and visual arrangements are considered in relation to equally compelling sounds, scents, textures, and visceral sensations such as an embodied awareness of weight, tension, or balance.

Designs by the Latzes provide more than a set of visual impressions. They also have a way of evoking memory and of reaching beyond themselves. As aesthetic forms they are not fixed, static objects but con-

tingent, open structures profoundly intertwined with social, cultural, and ecological processes.

Walking through the garden the Latzes built for themselves at Ampertshausen, and to which the quote at the beginning of this section refers, one is struck by the vast array of colors, textures, and scents of its extensive walls. One can touch rough and pitted surfaces next to smooth or slippery ones, and smell wildflowers and fruits along with mildew, mud, and old dust. Yet the knowledge that these new walls are built entirely of used materials changes one's perception of these aesthetic delights. It becomes difficult to consider this place a complete or stable artifact. Rather, Ampertshausen points to places and experiences beyond itself. The garden is at once private and outward-looking, a kind of idiosyncratic architectural scrapbook with an uncanny way of stirring memories.

Collage Breakthroughs

In the summer and fall of 1912, Braque and Picasso invented not only a novel artistic technique but, more significantly, the dramatically new idea that discarded materials could be worthy of aesthetic contemplation.⁶ More perhaps than anything that preceded it in the development of modern art—more than cubism's splintering of subject matter or its conception of pictorial space as a series of flat frontal planes—the idea that bits of trash could have aesthetic merit represented modernism's most anti-traditional statement.

By 1913, Braque felt sufficiently confident in this new aesthetic that he produced *Still Life with Tenora*, a four-foot-wide composition in which pieces of newsprint, faux-bois, and construction paper were mounted on stretched linen, painting's most con-

ventional of supports.⁷ In its merging of delicate, classical pencil drawing with crude paper fragments, Braque's work redefined the still life. *Still Life with Tenora* was not an illusion of bounded objects in stable relations to each other and a neutral ground, but rather a field of geometric linkages and complex figure-ground reversals.

The achievement of Peter and Anneliese Latz in challenging and shifting aesthetic preconceptions of the public park is analogous to the emergence of collage as an acceptable artistic form. The Latzes' first radical conception for a large urban park was realized in Saarbrücken, in the 1980s. Built on the banks of the river Saar, Hafeninsel, or Harbor Island, incorporated the site's war rubble and remnants of nineteenth-century coal docks to produce extensive new walls, allées, and garden plots.

Similar strategies appeared in Duisburg-Nord, a 568-acre park opened in 1994 on industrial wasteland in the Ruhr district. Here, steel plates once lining the walls of a foundry were used to pave a new "Piazza Metallica"; old concrete bunker walls were recycled as supports for a new footbridge; and a former iron and manganese storage shed was converted into a playground.⁸

And at Kirchberg Park, built in Luxembourg in the 1990s, spoil from road construction was piled into

dune-like earthworks. Footpaths were then created between them leading to spiral-shaped meadows and basins, rendering the site's water retention and drainage system a tangible aesthetic presence.⁹

These parks' fragments convey an inescapable sense of the past.¹⁰ Yet

Left: Georges Braque, *Still Life with Tenora*, 1913 (pasted paper, charcoal, chalk, and oil on canvas) © ARS, NY / ADAGP, Paris / MOMA NY. Photo courtesy of the Museum of Modern Art/Licensed by SCALA / Art Resource, NY.

Right: Hafeninsel (River Port Island Park), Saarbrücken City Park, Germany (1985–1989). Plan and photo by Latz + Partner.

because there are so many remnants, because so much remains unknown about each one, and because they are all treated with the same care and equanimity, the parks' insistent harkening back avoids nostalgia and instead conveys a broader, more general idea of memory. Who can tell why, in one of Hafeninsel's walls, a square rose-colored block came to be right next to a circular millstone? Or why this millstone was once painted blue?

New inventions figure prominently too. Set alongside the old fragments, their presence can be striking—as in the case of a gleaming steel faucet installed above a medieval drain in the Latzes' landscape for the Windberg College dormitories.

Left: Recycled wall, Hafeninsel (Harbor Island), Saarbrücken, Germany (1985–1989).

Right (top and bottom): Recycled garden walls, Hafeninsel (Island Park), Saarbrücken, Germany (1985–1989). Among the fragments incorporated in these walls are a millstone, segments of circular sewer pipes, and an old bicycle seat. Photos by Elissa Rosenberg.

Like random memories or dream images, projects by the Latzes weave together old and new and convey an evolving sense of time, one in which past colors present, and present alters ideas of the past. Like the collages of the American artist Joseph Cornell, such designs suggest that who we are and what we do today are continuations of countless and (for the most part) unexceptional threads that lead backward. Allusions to nonidealized pasts may also alter the effect of individual, idiosyncratic fragments and suggest a public life that is intertwined with private events.

Forms That Reach Beyond Themselves

Essential to such a balance of private sensibility and shared civic intention is an emphasis on networks of movement, visibility, and accessibility. In Latz designs, traditional garden tropes such as spiral meadows, clipped hedges, and bosques of flowering fruit trees are aggressively integrated within larger fields. Like

Braque's figure-ground reversals, the projects can be read both as sets of recognizable figures and as syntactical fields connecting diverse locations and reaching out toward existing buildings, roads, and footpaths. Thus, at Saarbrücken, new garden paths align with infrastructure and frame vistas of the old city's landmarks. And in a recent landfill rehabilitation proposal for Hiriya, Israel, an array of pedestrian bridges connect the landfill's figural mound to multiple surrounding locations.

Such compositions are less about forms than the relationship between forms. In this sense they recall the early 1950s collages of Franz Kline. Kline created dozens of such works using discarded telephone book pages, collages that dazzled the eye with their complex oscillating shifts between figure and ground, between shapes that simultaneously recede and project.

John Elderfield likened Kline's black marks to an abstract "visual carpentry," reverberating and expanding the paper's rectilinear geometry.¹¹

One moment Kline's black strokes figure prominently in our imagination, while the next our focus shifts unexpectedly to outlined figures of

printed text. Often both conditions occur simultaneously, bluish-black and creamy-white shapes forming a poised, dance-like equilibrium.

Tactile, Visceral Experiences

It is impossible to regard projects by the Latzes as purely visual compositions. Their scents, sounds, and textures, as well as a sense of their weight and tensions, are central to one's experience of them. Such physicality recalls the tactility of all physical montages, but most particularly the collages of Alberto Burri.

Burri constructed his *Sacco* series of the early 1950s, not by gluing bits of paper but by meticulously stitching and darning fragments of old, stained burlap. Stretched across gaping holes, Burri's strings literally held the canvas together. Their tension provided both

a useful force and an aesthetic quality to be experienced viscerally as connecting otherwise disjunctive patterns and forms.

At Ampertshausen, whose retaining walls are three feet thick at the base, a visitor encounters the same visceral aesthetic force. This is not the tension of Burri's strings, but its inverse—load-bearing compression. In these “dry” walls, no mortar or cement glues pieces together. Instead, the fabric is made structurally sound through the careful fitting of salvaged fragments.

Top: Hafeninsel (Harbor Island), Saarbrücken, Germany (1985–1989). Courtesy of Latz + Partner.

Bottom: Franz Kline, *Untitled II*, c. 1952 (ink and oil on cut-and-pasted telephone book pages) © ARS, NY/MoMA NY. Photo courtesy of the Museum of Modern Art/Licensed by SCALA / Art Resource, NY.

Many Latz designs also embody a painstaking process of sorting remnants into categories for both practical and aesthetic effect. Fragments that once belonged together usually remain together, forming coherent groups. Yet the arrangements do not follow inflexible rules. Thus, in a wooded area at Hafeninsel, small bricks and stones nestle within gaps between cyclopean blocks. In these recycled walls, any one thing is ready to give way and adjust itself to the demands of its neighbors.

Such a pragmatist attitude evokes a spirit of accommodation, a deference to the specific needs of each fragment. This, too, was evident in the collages of Burri, who meticu-

lously worked with preexisting holes, tears and stains, adjusting and incorporating new bits within and around old formations.

Ethics and the Poetics of Collage

Underlying the Latzes' design method is a tendency, evident in the work of each of these other collage artists, to expand the boundaries of what is traditionally considered aesthetic.¹² What makes a collage surprising, but also meaningful, is its open invitation to the presence of worldly, "unaesthetic" things within the artistic frame.

It is exactly this openness that has led some to brand the Latzes' approach a "junk aesthetic." Yet, spanning this difficult divide between art and nonart, between the aesthetic and the worldly, is collage's greatest achievement. When we experience a Latz park or look at a collage by Braque, Kline, or Burri, we sense a kind of transparency, as aesthetic impressions and other

more worldly phenomena come forth and then recede. As this happens, one may be touched unexpectedly by emotions as personal and even spiritual as they are aesthetic.

Perhaps the most rudimentary way in which a collage may kindle a sense of "goodness" or "hope" comes in its attention to old, worn objects. Something that was simply "garbage" has been saved: lifted out, cared for, repaired, and accorded new aesthetic value. Collage's aesthetic "saving" can speak to us as a story of survival, a sign that things—and, by analogy ourselves—may withstand difficulties and be renewed.

For instance, Kurt Schwitters collected street trash, old posters, and discarded theater tickets, which he reassembled into richly nuanced color compositions. Similarly, Jessie T. Pettway, a quilter in Alabama's Gees' Bend community, created rhythmic fields from fabric remnants and patches of used clothing. Her

Left: Alberto Burri, *Sacco B* (detail), 1953, © Fondazione Palazzo Albizzini, Collezione Burri. Photo courtesy of Scala / Art Resource, NY.

Center and Right: Recycled wall, Latz Garden, Ampertshausen, Germany. Photos by Anneliese Latz.

quilts offer a glimpse into the life of a rural African-American community, of poverty and hardship—yet also a human capacity to transform life’s meager mementoes.¹³

At Duisburg-Nord, the Latzes created a poignant example of this practice by lining the edges of new garden plots with salvaged iron beams. Some beds are planted with fresh soil and flowers; in others, vividly colored lichens thrive in the acidic soils of

industrial waste. Still others display not plants but carefully sorted industrial junk: old screws, pellets, and scrap-metal. Here, among fields of varying blacks, browns, and purple-grays, visitors may discover a different kind of flowering: of rust and microscopic molds growing in the grooves of precisely machined gears, nuts, and bolts.¹⁴

Such a design strategy goes well beyond normal ecological practices. Practices like recycling are clearly

“good to do.” But there is another ethical dimension that transcends such specific environmentalist messages, one that is shared with other collage artists.

What, after all, is salvage, and how do we recognize it? We do so by perceiving a form in two very distinct ways: first, as what it used to be, and second, as what it presently is. Thus, two contrasting states—old and new, worthless and worthy—are perceived simultaneously.

Collages can make other similarly unexpected associations—for example, between different forms of expression (written words and visual shapes), and different cultural realms (the mundane and the artistic, the conceptual and the perceptual, the natural and the technological). Such

Left: Kurt Schwitters, *Untitled (ereid)*, 1929 paper on paper © ARS, NY Photo: Kurt Schwitters Archive at the Sprengel Museum Hannover. Photographer: Michael Herling/Aline Gwose.

Right: Jessie T. Pettway, “Housetop” Quilt (nine-block “Log Cabin” variation), ca. 1960 (cotton: corduroy, twill, printed shirt and dress material, seersucker). Courtesy of Jessie T. Pettway and Tinnwood Media / Matt and Paul Arnett.

associations can strike us with both their strangeness and their equally powerful sense of congruity.

Narratives of salvage are thus but one manifestation of a collage's more general capacity to connect what is disconnected. In so doing, collages may evoke the conflicts and tensions, as well as the potential for reconciliation, that we associate with real life. This peculiar voice is not didactic; it does not speak with any specific message—that recycling is “good,” for instance. Rather, it touches us in much the same way as metaphor. It evokes a sense of the precarious balance or harmony we experience in real life—a hard-won, defiant harmony: harmony against the odds.

The Problem and the Promise

That so many architects and designers practicing today have turned to collage is perhaps a good thing, a sign of their interest in exploring concerns not traditionally found in the field, and therefore in breaking with worn-out precedent. However, I am not sure that the kind of work with which I began this essay delivers on this promise. Too often eye-catching digital montages succumb to the sensational—to simple flash and purely visual qualities. Meanwhile, historicist montages tend to diminish the inherent conflicts of collage, and instead harness its aesthetic in the service of some straightforward, narrow message. Rather than metaphor, what we get from this kind of work is cliché. What we lose is collage's power to summon feelings that span the fertile territory between art and life.

Above: Climbers, Duisburg-Nord, Germany. Photo by Manfred Vollmer, courtesy of Michael Hough. Originally published in Michael Hough, *Cities and Natural Process* (London: Routledge, 1995).

A particularly evocative instance of this power can be seen at Duisburg-Nord, where a series of concrete walls were fitted with footholds, transforming an industrial ruin into an airy, joyful arena for climbers. Neither suppressed nor entirely transformed, the old walls are now reframed by new life, becoming both continuous with and dislocated from the present. In the process, old wall and new activity become strangely harmonious. And as the aesthetic gap between old and new begins to dissolve, the divide between the concepts they represent begins to lose its meaning. Strict oppositions between disjunctive realms—industry and leisure, decay and new growth, nature and construction—give way.

Of course, collage also suggests that there remain insoluble problems. Trash incorporated in a public park remains trash; toxic soil remains dangerous, even when visually impressive in coloration or monumental accumulation. At Duisburg-Nord, not all the park's canals were transformed into active waterways; some were left empty, to stand as incomplete traces of a complex, ambiguous past.¹⁵

As the contemporary montage artist Thomas Hirschhorn has suggested, collage also suggests a paradox, "an attempt to connect that which cannot be connected."¹⁶

Notes

1. The proposal was by Tschumi/Revington/Finlayson. For a full text, see "The Digital and the Coyote," in Julia Czerniak, ed., *Case: Downsview Park Toronto* (Cambridge: Harvard University Graduate School of Design; and Munich: Prestel Verlag, 2001), p. 82.
2. The ReClaim New Orleans Project is sponsored by two nonprofit organizations based in Portland, Oregon: Mercy Corps and The Rebuilding Center. See <http://www.mercycorps.org/countries/unitedstates/1009> (accessed June 5, 2006) and <http://www.thegreenproject.org/> (accessed March 3, 2008).
3. As cited in Martha McNeil Hamilton, "New

- Orleans' Deconstruction Zone: Groups Salvage Materials, Memories by Carefully Dismantling Houses," *The Washington Post*, Dec. 17, 2005, p. F14.
4. Juhani Pallasmaa, "Our Image Culture and Its Misguided Ideas about Freedom," in *Architectural Record*, Vol. 189, No. 1 (Jan. 2001), p. 51.
5. Anneliese Latz, quote from 2003 letter to author. The text refers to the construction of retaining walls at Ampertshausen.
6. "My dear friend Braque, I am using your latest paperistic and powdery procedures. I am in the process of conceiving a guitar and I use a little dust against our horrible canvas." Pablo Picasso, letter to Georges Braque, Oct. 9, 1912. The text is published in Isabelle Monod-Fontaine, "Braque, la lenteur de la peinture," in Monod-Fontaine, ed., *Georges Braque, les Papiers Collés* (Paris: Centre national d'art et de culture Georges Pompidou, 1982), p. 40.
7. This collage, in the collection of New York's Museum of Modern Art, was formerly known as *Clarinet*. Lewis Kachur recently discovered that the woodwind depicted in this picture is in fact not a clarinet, but a tenora, a folkloric instrument from Catalonia. See Robert Rosenblum, "Cubism as Pop Art," in Kirk Varnedoe and Adam Gopnik, eds., *Modern Art and Popular Culture: Readings in High & Low* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1990), p. 126.
8. Luis Fernandez-Galiano, "Parque Duisburg Norte, Duisburg (Alemania)," in Fernandez-Galiano, ed., *AV Monografías: Pragmatismo y Paisaje* (Madrid: Arquitectura Viva, 2001), pp. 82–85.
9. "Thinking Big: Latz and Partner Like to Work on a Grand Scale," *Landscape Design*, No. 307 (Feb. 2002), pp. 26–28.
10. Peter Latz, "The Idea of Making Time Visible," *Topos European Landscape Magazine*, No. 33 (Dec. 2000), pp. 94–99.
11. See John Elderfield, *The Modern Drawing* (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1983), p. 198.
12. For an accessible introduction to the relationship of ethics and aesthetics, see Elaine Scarry, *On Beauty and Being Just* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999).
13. See John Beardsley, "River Island," and Jane Livingston, "Reflections on the Art of Gee's Bend," in William and Paul Arnett, eds., *Gee's Bend: the Women and Their Quilts* (Atlanta: Tinwood Books in association with the Houston Museum of Fine Arts, 2002), pp. 22–35, 52–61, 104.

14. A polarity deeply ingrained in the contemporary imagination is that between natural and industrial processes. By juxtaposing and overlapping these two processes in surprising ways, the Latzes' projects reveal them as deeply intertwined: there is nature in industrial decay, just as human processes and technologies can profoundly alter nature. See Mara Miller, *The Garden as an Art* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1993), p. 25. Also see Elissa Rosenberg, "Gardens and Nature: Duisburg-Nord, Germany, Latz + Partner," in Sanda Iliescu, ed., *The Hand and the Soul: Aesthetics and Ethics in Art and Architecture* (Charlottesville, VA: The University Press of Virginia, forthcoming).
15. Michael Hough, *Cities and Natural Process* (London and New York: Routledge, 1995), pp. 148–152. Also see Peter Latz, "Landscape Park, Duisburg-Nord: the Metamorphosis of an Industrial Site," in Niall Kirkwood, ed., *Manufactured Sites: Rethinking the Post-Industrial Landscape* (London and New York: Spon Press, 2001), pp. 150–61.
16. A poignant critique of consumerism, planned obsolescence, and waste, Hirschhorn's startling accumulations of common, everyday materials—plastic pails, aluminum foil tentacles, metal chains, shattered mirrors—strive to connect disjunctive forms to each other and to a world outside. "In essence, Hirschhorn creates three-dimensional collages, a practice historically associated with political polemic and protest," wrote Susan Snodgrass in "The Rubbish Heap of History," *Art in America* (May 2000), pp. 156–57, 177. For a more recent analysis of Hirschhorn's work, see Hal Foster, "An Archival Impulse," *October*, No. 110 (Fall 2004), pp. 3–22.

Little Rock's Emerging Nonprofit Corridor

Stephen Luoni

One of the defining ideas of the twenty-first century will be the emergence of the nonprofit sector as a dominant force in shaping social agendas—a prediction recently voiced by former President Bill Clinton. While innovation is the expected course of business in the marketplace, nonprofit organizations are typically known for their delivery of services in the aftermath of market or planning failures. Rather than limit their identity to the mitigation of marketplace and government shortcomings, new, enterprising nonprofits have committed their resources to modeling best development practices in their own communities.

This is the case with Little Rock's self-dubbed Nonprofit Corridor, anchored by its first completed projects, the William Jefferson Clinton Presidential Center and the Heifer International World Headquarters. Both exemplify the role of green building in urban recovery, and have been recognized nationally with awards from the American Institute of Architects' Committee on the Environment (COTE)—in addition to other environmental awards for brownfield remediation and industrial waste recycling. Both have also been cited for superior design accomplishment, having received Institute Honor Awards (Clinton Library, 2006; Heifer Headquarters, 2008), the highest distinction for built work granted by the AIA.

The Nonprofit Corridor and Brownfield Redevelopment

In 1997 an abandoned rail-switching yard and warehouse district on the Arkansas River in downtown Little Rock became the designated site for the proposed Clinton Presidential Center. Since then, there has been more than \$1.4 billion in surrounding mixed-use urban redevelopment.

Indeed, the former President consciously chose this brownfield site to spark reinvestment in the languishing downtown where he served as governor for twelve years. Completed in 2004, the \$165 million center is the only Presidential facility committed to downtown recovery, and the center's new University of Arkansas Clinton School of Public Service offers the only degree of its kind in the nation.

Acting on a petition from the Clinton Foundation, other locally based global nonprofits have purchased adjacent property, forming a sixty-acre greenbelt along the river. The first of these, Heifer International, a world-hunger organization recognized by *Forbes* as a "Gold Star" top-ten United States charity, completed its headquarters there in 2006. It is the first of a three-phase \$100 million "Global Village" development by Heifer that will include education and interpretive centers.

Two other major nonprofits are slated to build headquarters next to the Clinton Presidential Center and Heifer International. The Lions World Services for the Blind will soon break ground on a \$25 million headquarters and campus. CareLink, which provides services for the elderly and employs more than 650 people, is in the planning stages of its new headquarters.

A self-organizing nonprofit corridor should not be altogether surprising in Arkansas, because, along with Mississippi, the state leads the nation in philanthropic giving as a percentage of income. Arkansas also ranks third in the nation for assets owned by nonprofits, totaling \$279 billion, exceeded only by Illinois at \$321 billion and California at \$787 billion, according to the National Center for Charitable Statistics. The state excels in providing economic incentives for recruiting and retaining qualifying nonprofits. Arkansas

recognizes that nonprofits bring premium economic development and exemplary standards of stewardship to their home communities.

Anchored by the shared commitment of the Clinton Center and Heifer International to showcase sustainable development practices, sometimes at considerable expense, Little Rock is making a powerful case for the nonprofit corridor as an important urban development tool.

Heifer International World Headquarters and Low-Impact Development (LID)

Designed by Polk Stanley Rowland Curzon Porter Architects, of Little Rock, the \$17.5 million Heifer Headquarters was named one of the Top Ten Green Projects in America for 2007 by the AIA COTE. The project also received a Platinum Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design certification for New Construction (LEED-NC) from the United States Green Building Council; the platinum certification is the construction industry's highest honor for buildings that demonstrate environmental responsibility. It is one of forty-five buildings in the nation to have achieved a platinum rating and the only one in the south-central United States to have done so for new construction. It uses 55 percent of the energy of a comparable building utilizing conventional construction methods. The monthly water bill for this 94,000-square-foot facility with more than two hundred staff is only \$150.

Heifer's implementation of Low-Impact Development (LID) embodies longstanding wisdom that the preparation of a building site is the first important architectural act. LID is an ecologically based site-development model that minimizes the impacts of stormwater runoff. Runoff from



hard parking lot and roof surfaces is the single largest contributor of nonpoint-source pollution in watersheds. In the first hour of rainfall, urban stormwater runoff has a pollution index far greater than that of raw sewage. Heifer built a demonstration green parking lot to address these pressing sustainability issues.

The entire Heifer site is designed as a sponge to capture, filter, infiltrate, and cleanse stormwater runoff. This state-of-the-art stormwater management system employs bioengineering techniques to facilitate natural hydrological processes (i.e., evaporation, transpiration, and groundwater recharge). Runoff-treatment elements, including pervious surfaces, filter

strips, landscaped bioswales, retention basins, and reconstructed wetlands, essentially form a closed-loop system that keeps rainwater on site. Such bioengineering avoids the costly pipes, curbs, gutters, and catch basins in typical civil-engineered systems, which merely transport polluted stormwater elsewhere and burden municipal sewage infrastructure.

Wetland landscapes with wild grasses and reedy plant material are substituted for the chemically dependent green lawn, and they surround the building. The shallow-arc glass building essentially sits within its own stormwater treatment landscape, which has become a diverse habitat for ducks, watersnakes, dragonflies,

butterflies, turtles, and indigenous plant life. Besides water treatment, the wetlands at the Heifer headquarters will store nearly four million gallons of water for reuse as site irrigation and aid building temperature control. Temperature control will occur as the result of four-story glass-enclosed exterior stair towers extending over the wetlands, which will induce convective ventilation from the water through open metal

Above: The site plan for the Heifer International World Headquarters shows its proximity to downtown Little Rock and the Clinton Presidential Library. Drawing by Polk Stanley Rowland Curzon Porter Architects.



floor grates, negating the need for air-conditioning. Here, landscape systems are not just green (energy neutral), but regenerative, as they foster net energy production.

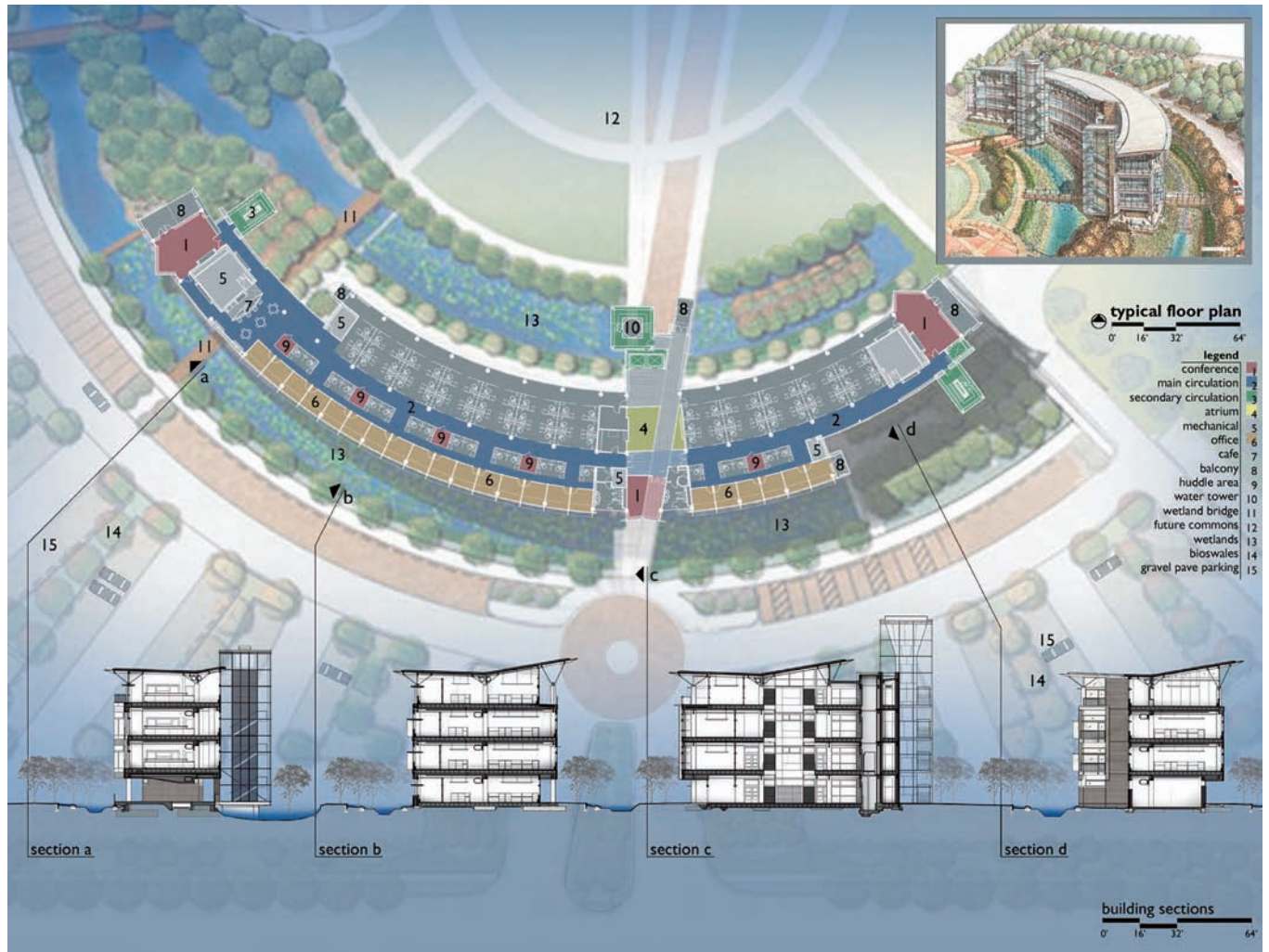
The project's handsome skin and plan configuration further estab-

Heifer International World Headquarters. The AIA's Committee on the Environment honored this complex in 2007 for a "top ten" award based on its response to issues of land use and site ecology. Photos by Timothy Hursley. Drawings and photos courtesy of Polk Stanley Rowland Curzon Porter Architects.

lish strong connections to the site. Outdoor rooms within the building's mass connect ground-floor public spaces to wetland boardwalks and provide porch-like spaces on the upper floors. The building's narrow, 62-foot, width and its east-west orientation also assure that all workers have access to views and natural light. Finally, vertical fins and horizontal sunshades integrated into the building's porous, responsive skin are designed to maximize solar gain or screening according to diurnal and seasonal solar cycles.

One of the upsides of locating within this industrial district is that Heifer's steel was fabricated three blocks down the street. Its aluminum curtain-wall system, constituting more than 90 percent of the exterior, was fabricated just across the street.

To top off these remarkable design accomplishments, the Heifer project recycled 97 percent of the demolished material from the warehouse complex that had occupied the site, helping make it this brownfield remediation project the largest by volume in Arkansas history.





William Jefferson Clinton Presidential Center and Park

Designed by Polshek Partnership Architects, of New York, the Clinton Center includes a Presidential library and museum, an adjacent archive and research center, and the University of Arkansas Clinton School of Public Service. The Presidential library received a Silver LEED-NC rating when it opened in 2004, but this rating has since been superseded because of continuous improvements in sustainability by the center's management. Last November the Clinton Presiden-

tial Library became the first federal building to receive a Platinum LEED certification for Existing Buildings, the highest green building rating.

The riverfront Presidential complex holds the most consequential position in Little Rock's Nonprofit Corridor, serving as a terminus to the riverfront road in the walkable downtown River Market District. Separated from downtown by an elevated interstate bridge, the library responds with a 420-foot-long elevated glass porch facing downtown. The porch is foregrounded by a dramatically sculpted

28-acre riverfront park, designed by the San Francisco-based landscape architecture firm Hargreaves Associates. In order to overcome the fragmenting effect of the highway bridge, the Presidential park creates a shared space between downtown and the iconic edge of the Presidential center, on the opposite end.

Unlike the preceding twelve Presidential library complexes, the Clinton Center avoids both overt monumentality and remoteness. Rather, it incorporates pedestrian-scaled urban plazas, terraces, gardens,



and porches within a larger campus that triangulates the Presidential center with downtown Little Rock and with North Little Rock, across the river. The center's exterior entry plaza aligns the Clinton Library with the adjacent renovated Victorian-era Choctaw Station (where the Clinton School of Public Service stands) and the abandoned Rock Island Railroad Bridge. The 1899 bridge will be restored as a pedestrian link to North Little Rock and will become part of the 24-mile Arkansas River Trail system. Motivated by the need for urban repair and concern for context, the center's campus plan reconnects disparate elements without compromising the resolute formality expected in a Presidential center.

On approach from the popular River Market District one-third of a mile away, the Clinton Library's west-facing glass-screened porch strikes an imposing figure as it cantilevers over the sculpted riverfront park. The

multistory porch is part of a 14-foot-wide double skin, accessible from the museum and great hall. The glass facade is made of laminated panels infused with black dots for tinting and white dots for reflecting sunlight, cutting heat gain by 50 percent. The glass porch is a sunscreen by day and a grand stage for public galas at night offers dramatic views of the downtown.

Solving for the Triple Bottom Line

Both the Heifer International Headquarters and the Clinton Presidential Center create strong relationships between architecture and the land, but in different ways. In Heifer's case, ecological modeling frames the planning approach, resulting in a "productive park," measured by natural resource yields. In the case of the Clinton Center, a social ecology of representational spaces extends the pedestrian culture of downtown.

It is further interesting that both projects are developed in a modern

idiom that is uninhibited when it comes to expressing architectonic systems. Both also convey a convincing public semantic not often seen as possible in a modern syntax.

Both projects were highly capitalized efforts, and set truly high standards of stewardship for future projects in the Little Rock Non-profit Corridor. While the corridor does not have a master plan, non-profits will likely continue to be the self-appointed agents for bringing green urbanism into the mainstream. They do this by solving for the triple bottom line, integrating social and environmental measures into economic development.

Clinton Presidential Center. The AIA's Committee on the Environment honored this complex in 2007 for its role as a urban catalyst. Opposite and left photos by Timothy Hursley. Right photo courtesy of Polshek Partnership Architects, LLP.

Urban Design and Civil Protest

Max Page



Out of the images, videos, and recorded sounds from rallies, marches, and protests that made up a fascinating exhibition at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in February and March, “Urban Design and Civil Protest,” one keeps coming back into my head. It was one of the more mundane photographs from the show—a could-have-been-anywhere shot of a sea of backs in a public square. But one person has

Above: The occupation of public space still provides a powerful form of civil protest. Buenos Aires, 2006. Photo by Tali Hatuka.

turned to look at the camera, nervously wondering who is taking this picture. It is in Leipzig, at one of the Monday-evening rallies that grew and spread to every city in the German Democratic Republic in the fall of 1989. The young man warily looking into the camera might well have reasoned it was being held by an agent of the Stasi, the East German secret police, cataloguing the perpetrators of the protest. But he and thousands of others remained and returned week after week, in the process, it is not too much to say, bringing down the East German regime.

The man’s look is a reminder of the

power, in Woody Allen’s words, of “just showing up.” Though the exhibition deftly portrayed the diversity of national traditions of protest, from China to Venezuela, it returned again and again to its central premise: the persistence and effectiveness of mass protest in public places.

The exhibition, at the MIT Museum’s Compton Gallery, in Cambridge, was a visual and aural first draft of a larger work, on “the socio-spatial dynamics of protest” by its designer, the Israeli architect Tali Hatuka. Hatuka, Marie Curie Research Fellow and Fulbright Fellow at MIT’s Department of Urban Studies and

Planning, has traveled the world documenting the relationship between urban design and civil protest. The exhibition presented preliminary findings from this research, and had the refreshing feel of a work in progress, with tentative ideas offered to visitors, not finished conclusions.

The exhibition had three components. Its centerpiece was a series of case-study models—Resurrection City, on the Mall, in Washington, D.C., in 1968, Istanbul in 1977, Leipzig and Beijing in 1989, Tel Aviv in 1995, Caracas in 2002, Buenos Aires in 2006, London in 2007, and several others—each showing the venue or route of protest and key architectural elements that defined it. The models sat atop rolling pedestals, which also contained pull-out drawers offering further glimpses and documentation of each event.

Two black-box rooms were carved out of the exhibition space, one showing video clips of different types of protest and the other—by far the more powerful—playing sound recordings from protests. In this latter room, visitors came closest to being connected to a protest, with calls for “Out of Iraq!” a mass rendition of “All we are saying is give peace a chance,” and, in the case of one protest, the sounds of gunfire.

Ringling the exhibition space were graphic interpretations that began to develop a visual vocabulary for understanding the interaction of political protest and urban space. For example, to analyze the Leipzig protest of October 9, 1989, Hatuka used a Nolli-like map to mark in white the open space of the protest site, the Augustus Platz. She then inverted the map, to show the physical boundaries of the protest in white. In each case she further noted the dimensions of the protest site and provided a sectional view of it. To these she added the



form of protest (e.g., a march or a rally with speakers), its voice (the means of expression), and, finally, its scale (i.e., whether it was a local or national protest and whether it was a one-off or recurrent event). The goal of the exhibition and Hatuka's larger project is to understand what she calls “spatial choreography”: “an intricate juxtaposition between people—through voice and appropriation of space—and space itself.”

Peripheral vs. Denied Space

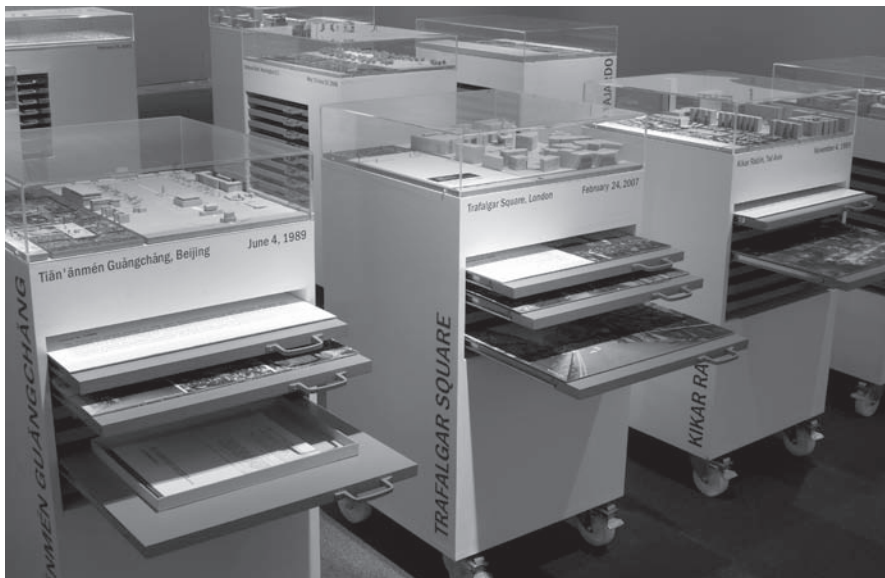
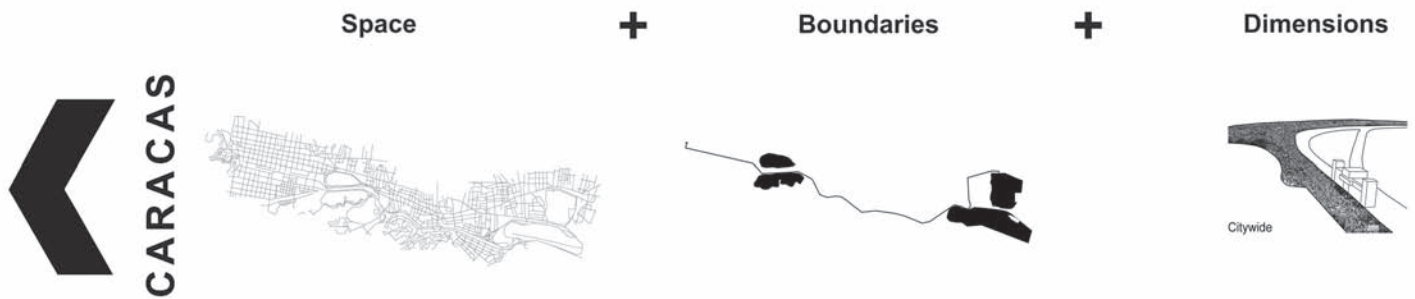
The opening reception for the exhibition was highlighted by the inaugural Ross Silberberg Memorial Lecture, sponsored by the Department of Urban Studies and Planning. The event honors a former faculty member who was known for his commitment to social justice. In its first year, the lecture was given by the University of California, Berkeley, anthropology professor James Holston, author of *Insurgent Citizenship: Disjunctions of Democracy and Modernity in Brazil* (Princeton University Press, 2007).

Holston complicated an already multilayered topic by suggesting that we need to look not only at protest in central civic spaces but also to where the protesters come from—the peripheries of the great metropolises of the new century. “Insurgent citizenships may utilize central civic space and even overrun the center,” he said, but “they are fundamentally manifestations of peripheries.”

Holston went on to suggest that a focus on protests in the civic center may be misdirected, or at least misleading. Rather, the real protests—or insurgencies—begin “in the realm of everyday and domestic life taking shape in the remote urban peripheries around the construction of residence. It is an insurgence that begins with the struggle for rights to have a daily life in the city worthy of a citizen's dignity.”

The department head, Lawrence

Above: Protest in Leipzig, 1989. The man looking back into the camera is testimony to the power of “just showing up.” Photo courtesy of Stadtgeschichtliches Museum, Leipzig.



Vale, brought the exhibition and talk together by suggesting that “insurgent citizenship, to be effective, needs to exploit both periphery and center.” He then posed the question that Hatuka’s exhibition suggested,

though never made explicit: “How does a regime design public spaces that accommodate a rally but also serve daily life?” Shouldn’t urban designers deliberately be able to create better spaces for the exercise of democratic protest?

I am not so sure.

Is not the central tone of most protests an aggressive irony, a boisterous public excoriation of political hypocrisy, of the emptiness of a regime, whether it be the most closed, authoritarian police state or an open, democratic one? As the exhibition made clear, protesters choose their

sites, their routes, their rituals, and their songs to highlight the distance between a regime’s symbols and the needs and desires of the people. A protest can succeed only, I argue, if it defies the regime by occupying space usually denied it, or occupies it in a way that transforms the place’s meaning.

The Mothers of Plaza de Mayo, in Argentina, chose their location—in front of the Presidential palace in Buenos Aires—to tirelessly insist on getting final justice for their disappeared sons and daughters. In response to laws preventing demonstrations, they inventively—and as a biting critique of the repressive rules gagging free speech—“walked” in a circle around the fountain at the heart of the square, wearing their signature bandanas and carrying photographs of their children.

Anti-Iraq War protestors in London likewise chose Trafalgar Square precisely to challenge contemporary jingoistic attitudes by tying them to the jingoism of the past, embodied in the column of Lord Nelson at the center of the square, named after the battle where he gained fame in 1805. The tension between the architecture of the regime and the call of the movement is the generating energy of the event. In a way, urban design and civil protest have to be at odds with one another.

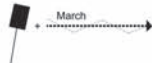
Across top: Caracas, Spatial Analysis. Drawings by Tali Hatuka and Shimon Vaitzman.

Bottom: The exhibition included scale models atop rolling pedestals, with drawers beneath containing additional documentation. Photo by Judith M. Daniels, courtesy of the MIT Museum.

+ Form + Voice + Scale = Image



Linear



Spatial Dialogues + Signage



Spatial
Choreography



Choosing a site filled with irony is only one element of protest, however. In my view, one of the central experiences of a mass protest is precisely to be part of the “mass”: to find oneself in a space that is expressly out of scale with the individual, and to find that thousands, together, have filled it. In the March for Women’s Lives on the Washington Mall in 2004, that vast, agoraphobia-inducing swath of grass and monuments was as packed as a New York City subway car. The space had been “appropriated,” to use Hatuka’s term. I suggest that it had been conquered, at least for a day—and, in the minds of the participants, forever.

Likewise, the Lincoln Memorial and its reflecting pool were not designed for the civil rights demonstration of 1963. But, surely, we cannot now imagine them without envisioning the scene there when Martin Luther King, Jr., gave his “I Have a Dream” speech. That the image of a protest has supplanted the image of a monument designed in part to reunite the white North and the white South in the 1920s is in and of itself a sign of the victory of the civil rights movement.

Finally, the element that remains constant over virtually all of these protests is this: the feeling of being surrounded by hundreds of thousands



of other people who share beliefs. Most people who would participate in political protest feel themselves in the minority, besieged by forces beyond their control. Activists often suffer alone, or in small cells of likeminded sufferers. A massive rally is supremely uplifting for the protestors themselves and the movement they represent, reminding them of a simple point: you are not alone.

Michael Walzer’s powerful book *Exodus and Revolution* (New York: Basic Books, 1985) ends with his summation of the power of the Exodus story in Western culture. The

message of the enslaved people who rise up and defeat an invincible power and head toward the Promised Land comes down to this:

“The way to the land is through the wilderness.” There is no way to get from here to there except by joining together and marching.

<http://www.urbandesign-civilprotest.com/>

Above: Marchers in London, 2007. Photo by Tali Hatuka.

Contributors

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