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VAN ALEN REPORT DECEMBER 2001

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recreating the city

“Words come easily. But what happens now is not so easy. Testimonials are not motivation, Private loss does not become public wisdom by itself. The emotions of grief and pain are not organizing principles. Words come easily. Meaning does not. This is a moment to crystallize the torrent of experiences, emotions and words into meaning. That is hard...like design is hard.”

JOHN HOCKENBERRY

**VAN ALEN
INSTITUTE**

PROJECTS
IN PUBLIC
ARCHITECTURE

Van Alen Institute is committed to improving the design of the public realm.

Our program of Projects in Public Architecture promotes education and action through design competitions, workshops, studies, forums, web sites, and publications including the Van Alen Report.

While the Institute grounds its work in New York City, we structure our projects to engage an interdisciplinary and international array of practitioners, policy-makers, students, educators, and community leaders.

REMARKS

The words come easily in a time like this. All the words: the where I was, the what was lost, the what you saw, the what we felt words. The images of an event experienced by the world have been collected, its testimony transcribed, and still the words and images flow. They flow so easily now, examinations of what happened, vows of vigilance, pledges to fight back, plans for confronting new enemies... Or are they old enemies? The swings of mood and mentality are more a careening vortex, a vortex from how to find a way to build new understanding to we have been misunderstood, we have behaved badly, we have been harmed, we are innocent, we are guilty, we should lay waste to everything from Damascus to Burma. We, we, we... they, they, they... what about us?

The connotative shifts of objects are staggering, the meaning of which boils and churns now. It's breathtaking and horrifying, Architecture as a target. Airplanes as missiles. Murder as martyrdom. Mail as menace. A suddenly popular city landmark constructed out of nothing but rubble. Designers have had some competition lately. The acronym FDNY, a four-letter word with no vowels that suddenly means so much.

Words come easily. But what happens now is not so easy. Testimonials are not motivation, Private loss does not become public wisdom by itself. The emotions of grief and pain are not organizing principles. Words come easily. Meaning does not. This is a moment to crystallize the torrent of experiences, emotions and words into meaning. That is hard... like design is hard.

So many of you had the experience of someone seeing where you work, what you do and had them get that semi-blotto expression on their face which seems to ask: You get paid to do... This? Someone actually pays you to do this?

It's a hard question to respond to and designers have understandably been a bit self-conscious about justifying their existence down through the years. Nice office, cool clothes, lots of travel, cool stuff. Lost in all that... Lost in our consumer motivated casino economy... Lost in a media which spends its time analyzing its audience rather than its product... Lost in all this is in fact that what designers do when they do it is hard. Unimaginably hard. Seeing what things, events mean rather than chasing after where they go is hard... and important. And right now everybody knows it, even though they don't know that they know it and that means out there, there is an electricity of significance, of curiosity, of solidarity, of shared experience out of which can come meaning. Designers provide that spark that crystallizes that meaning. And this is a moment that must be grabbed for isolated America, for this tiny world. Designers know things before the rest of us, which means though they might not feel like it, though they might not get treated like it, though they might not get paid like it, they are leaders.

Waving a flag of meaning, creating the discourse through which we will understand and organize the days and weeks ahead. That's a design question, whether it is the signage in downtown Manhattan, the shape of airline baggage, the shape of a skyline, each product, each symbol needs redefinition. It is designers who know how to make something secure without fueling fear and hate. It is designers who know how to represent the events without losing their ambiguity. Designers know these things, you know these things, and we need them now, from all of you, all the time.

After September 11th, America no longer has the luxury to define itself by its success alone. The same is true of its culture, discourse, economy and military. There must be meaning, there must be a connection to the world, it must be explicit, and there must be people who are not afraid of making a statement to show the way for everyone to begin doing the same. To show the way forward. That's why we design.

This, I think, is the sacred partnership between responsible designers and the citizens of the world hungry for meaning and truth, who live the work of designers. This partnership can save the world... or destroy it. Those are the only two specifications. That's the project. **Talk comes easy. Design is hard for a reason. We need it so much.** **JOHN HOCKENBERRY** AT THE CHRYSLER DESIGN AWARDS

Noted author and NBC correspondent John Hockenberry opened the 9th annual Chrysler Design Awards October 17th, 2001 with these remarks, to a standing ovation. This year's awards, with a jury co-chaired by Chee Pearlman and Leslie Gill, were given to Thom Mayne, Robert Mangurian and Mary-Ann Ray, Kathryn Gustafson, Susan Kare, Daniel Rozin and Stefan Sagmeister. The Awards recognize excellence and innovation across all design disciplines.

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Cover: Remarks by John Hockenberry at the Chrysler Design Awards October 17th, 2001.

William Van Alen (1882-1954), the Institute's namesake and historically most significant benefactor, was the architect of New York City's 1930 landmark Chrysler Building.



VIEW FROM WORLD TRADE CENTER LOOKING EAST OVER MANHATTAN PHOTO: VAI, 1998

"Buildings are symbols of cultures and repositories of our history," affirmed Bonnie Burnham, the president of the World Monuments Fund at the announcement of their 2002 World Monuments Watch List that included an unprecedented addition — Historic Lower Manhattan as the 101st site — in response to the destruction of the World Trade Center. The WMF's decision to class a whole district as one of the most important in the world is a testament to how important it is that we recreate the city, captured by the title of this issue of the Van Alen Report and emphasized by John Hockenberry's remarks given at the Chrysler Design Awards. As well as reporting on ongoing VAI projects in **NEWSFRONT**, this issue responds to the tragedy of September 11th. We talk to Natalie Fizer and Mabel O. Wilson in **PLATFORM** about what role a memorial could play in the city, as well as describe VAI's upcoming exhibition: *Renewing, Rebuilding, Remembering* in **20TH CENTURY HISTORY**.

We also look at the role of the cultural district, a growing aspect of urban life. Barrett Feldman, an M.Arch student at Harvard GSD and a summer fellow at the Institute, gets the scoop on the cultural district being developed in Brooklyn around the Brooklyn Academy of Music in **FEATURE**.

Also pertinent to this discussion is a conference that took place in October, co-organized by VAI and discussed in **LETTER FROM ABROAD**. Held in Long Island City, "Creative Cities," was part of the citywide UKwithNY festival and was inspired by Charles Landry's ambitious volume of the same name. VAI's Executive Director, Raymond W. Gastil met with Landry and got his thoughts on how to think differently about culture, community and development.

Finally, in **PUBLIC PROFILE** we highlight the work of New York-based architects Asymptote, who are challenging the boundaries of public architecture.

In the next issue look forward to further reports on the issues of cultural districts and recreating the city relevant to the Creative Cities conference and the results of the Queens Plaza Design Ideas Competition. We welcome your responses.

ZOË RYAN ZRYAN@VANALEN.ORG

editor's letter

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ARCHITECTURE+WATER UPDATE

This fall the Institute held two major forums in conjunction with VAI's ongoing waterfront program. The first was a panel of New York designers and the second a lecture (co-sponsored by The Architectural League) by London-based Foreign Office Architects whose design for the International Ferry Terminal in Yokohama, Japan was on view in ARCHITECTURE + WATER. New York Times architecture critic Herbert Muschamp lauded the VAI-initiated exhibit, curated and designed by Lewis.Tsurumaki.Lewis, for demonstrating that "architecture — the individual building — has an important role to play in the planning for larger urban projects" and giving examples of "other ways to bring people into relationship to the natural environment." Extended through October 26, ARCHITECTURE + WATER will travel to several major institutions around the country in 2002. Please visit www.vanalen.org for the venues and schedule.

The September 6 panel, NYC on the Verge: The New Architecture of the Waterfront, had in retrospect a wrenching title, and the discussions of ferry terminals, infrastructure, public space, and design have all taken on new meaning in a city where ferries suddenly became a key to an evacuation plan, where Governors Island temporarily returned to its military role as a base for the National Guard, and where the goal of "iconic" and "interactive" projects has been put into question. Co-sponsored by Parsons School of Design, the symposium was made possible by The Stephen A. and Diana L. Goldberg Foundation. An audience of 500 listened to insights from architects Thomas Balsley, Laurie Hawkinson, Frederic Schwartz, Barbara Wilks and Sheila Kennedy, followed by a discussion moderated by Michael Manfredi and Raymond Gastil. Panelists were asked to respond, in part, to the issue of how a project could maintain a distinct identity given the special challenges of designing on the waterfront in New York.

Fred Schwartz, architect of Lower Manhattan's new Staten Island Ferry Terminal, read aloud the names of 25 public agencies from an even longer list of groups involved in this enormous public project. He explained that it had taken years to plan and design the Terminal and frustratingly even more time to build due to regulatory and physical complexities. Just the decision of "a bus turnaround," Schwartz explained, "held up our project for a year." Yet his firm's long-awaited project is now under construction and scheduled to open in 2003. Sheila Kennedy of Kennedy & Violich noted that the East River, often thought of as a relic of its great industrial past, is in fact "as busy with ships as La Guardia Airport is with airplanes."



Panelists address the design of New York City's waterfront.
MARCUS WOOLLEN

In response, her firm's design for a number of ferry terminals along the East River illustrates that today's industry is more electronic than physical. The project prompted them to "think of ways to take the existing maritime infrastructure and fit it with up-to-date information technology" such as digital display panels and laptop computer ports embedded into benches. Laurie Hawkinson focused on her firm's built design for Pier 11 and the primary importance of collaborating with engineers.

This opportunity to do a public project in New York with a strong infrastructural relationship to the city was her "inspiration," she said. Landscape Architect Thomas Balsley highlighted the need for flexible designs for the waterfront, emphasizing the importance for "designers and clients to understand that we don't know how the waterfront will be used ten years from now. We should begin thinking of active strategies, such as floating barges that we can add onto the waterfront for different recreational uses that can be changed without having to rebuild the entire infrastructure." Barbara Wilks of W Architecture, currently engaged in the Harlem Piers project, also spoke to this issue saying, "people want the waterfront to be public open space. The big change that needs to be addressed is the public edge versus its historic industrial uses that weren't open to the public." **ZOE RYAN**



Poster on 22nd Street showing Philip Johnson's new residential concept. MARCUS WOOLLEN

A POSTER CAMPAIGN FOR A NEW BUILDING?

"Be A Friend to Art and Say Yes to Philip Johnson's Habitable Sculpture," read posters that have been appearing all over downtown Manhattan, and even next door to the Institute on 22nd Street.

The terracotta posters that feature a rendering of Johnson's new structure are part of a campaign organized by Place Vendome Realty in an unprecedented move by a developer to drum up support for a design and heighten awareness of its perceived artistic merit. Antonio Nino Vendome, principal of the development firm is urging the public to show their support and sign a petition in favor of the new building. "I want to reach out to the silent majority in the community that I believe feel the same as me, and hope to get 50,000 people to sign a petition that I can present to the New York City Board of Standards and Appeal. We need inspiring design and a reexamination of the way we get to build good architecture."

So far Vendome says he has had a good response and a large number of people are signing the petition in favor of Johnson's design for a Cubist inspired apartment block that has yet to get planning permission from the City and has faced a backlash from Community Board 2 that passed a resolution against it. The proposed 24-story tower named The Seasons has an eye-catching jagged exterior made of various multi-colored facades that curl around the structure and overlap one another. It is to be built at Spring and Washington Street in SoHo, next to a New York landmark, The Ear Inn, an unpretentious watering hole in an historically industrial area known as Hudson Square. Vendome's poster campaign is an effort to engage a far-reaching public beyond the local community board to influence the decision by public agencies. Is this the wave of the future, are television adverts next? We'll wait to see how this one does... **ZR**

gallery and public space and has opened up its building by making a beautiful blue glass staircase the focal feature that allows light to shine through-out. In addition, the International Center of Photography has also chosen glass as its preferred material constructing an elegant, albeit discreet, pavilion on 43rd Street that marks the entrance to its new underground headquarters.

Vishakha N. Desai, Senior Vice President of the Asia Society and Director of Asia Society Museum and Cultural Programs has been an advocate for a redesign since her tenure began 10 years ago. "It will really show this is a public building," she says, and is necessary to improve the museums conference, education and performance facilities, as well as to expand its gallery space. Founded in 1956 by John D. Rockefeller III, the museum on Park Avenue at 70th Street was designed in 1980 by Edward Larrabee Barnes. Voorsanger & Associates, known for their successful renovation of the Piermont Morgan Library Garden Court in 1992, undertook this further expansion. "We have really emphasized the engagement of the public," explains Bartholomew Voorsanger. "By opening up the entrance to the building visitors will be able to see the whole building and the movement of people throughout." An intricate glass-covered garden visible from the street also helps to expose the building to natural light and adds 4,000 sq ft more to the building with exhibition and event space to generate additional revenue for the museum.

As well as a thought-provoking design, the museum has decisively engaged new technology. MIT graduates David Small and Andrew Davies have designed a series of interactive displays, the most ingenious of which is operated by touching heat sensitive pads that have been inlaid into a section of the handrail of the central staircase. When the handrail is touched, antennas embedded in the wood project a timeline of upcoming events onto the wall. Each pad is programmed to show different events. In addition, developing further the design for an interactive information table that was featured as part of the MoMA's Unprivate House exhibit in 1999, Small has produced a series of interactive tables where visitors can spend time learning about Asia. By moving one of the six rocks over a map that is projected onto the tables, visitors can choose whether to access a variety of subjects including headline news and Asian cuisine. By placing the



A rendering looking down through the luminous blue glass central stairwell of the Asia Society and Museum. JOCK POTTLE PHOTOS

THREE MUSEUMS OPEN UP

Since the 1960s, American museums have worked hard to open themselves up to the broader culture, whether through programming such as populist "blockbuster" exhibits spearheaded by the Metropolitan Museum of Art, or the democratization (and to some, commercialization) of their interiors and services, from escalators to gift shops.

Museums have had a harder time interpreting this openness in architectural terms, as they try to go beyond the character of a sealed vault, conveying accessibility even as they maintain security. It is heartening that today, even after the events of September 11, major cultural institutions are able to carry forward their architectural designs to show a transparent, public face to the city. Their collective message is clear, with galleries on the ground floor visible through the main window, or glazed pavilions at the heart of a cultural campus, museums are projecting a confidence in public life and architecture with designs that fire the imagination as much as the works exhibited within them. Examples include The Studio Museum in Harlem, which has recently completed Phase I of its impressive two-stage expansion and introduced a stunning green glass façade, and The Asia Society and Museum that despite setbacks brought about by the events of September 11, causing it to push back its opening until November 17, is determined to double its

rock over a desired country on the projected map, information relating to the chosen topic and country appear. "I think that the information should be the primary focus, rather than the technology or computer," says Small, "so that people become involved in what they can find out rather than with the technology."

Of chief importance in the resolute expansion of the Studio Museum in Harlem was the creation of a dynamic relationship between the museum and pedestrian traffic on the street. The new green glass façade shines like a beacon and literally glows at night, interrupting the busy thoroughfare of stores and office blocks on 125th Street. "We wanted to embrace the unusual characteristic of the museum situated directly on the sidewalk", explains Robert Rogers of Rogers Marvel Architects, who together with his partner Jonathan Marvel are embarking on an even more ambitious Phase II. "The calm material [glass] is a symbolic feature of the streetscape." Forthcoming plans incorporate a sculpture garden on the ground floor and a 2,500 sq ft permanent collection gallery, a 100-seat auditorium, and a café in the basement. Construction is pending funding but is planned to start at the end of the year.

The Studio Museum hopes that the expansion by Rogers Marvel, whose redesign in 1999 of Pratt Institute's Higgins Hall won a National AIA Honor Award, will solidify it as the leading cultural institution of contemporary art by artists of African descent in the US as well as a destination point for the local community. So far it seems to be working. Thelma Golden, the Deputy Director of Exhibitions and Programs and Chief Curator for the museum jokes, "we need to put bar stools on the sidewalk for the crowds of people that gather at night to see what's going on and then come in."



The Studio Museum in Harlem, ROGERS MARVEL ARCHITECTS



The glass pavilion entrance to the new campus of the International Center of Photography. GENSLER

The International Center of Photography School, directly across the street from ICP's recently expanded galleries, which opened in 2000, relocates this fall from a mansion on Fifth Avenue to 6th Avenue at 43rd Street. But don't feel perplexed when you get there if all you find is a glass pavilion: the 55,000 sq ft campus that will centralize the Museum, Collections and School has been built under Grace Plaza. New York based architectural firm Gensler, who are well known for notable corporate and institutional projects, most recently the renovation of Christie's at Rockefeller Plaza, designed the new facility for the largest photography museum-school in the world. "In the 1960s the original design of the plaza called for a pavilion but it never happened," explains Madeline Burke, the Project Director. "The pavilion is the key link between the adjacent gallery and the school. The activity of the building will help animate the plaza."

The new building will increase classroom and lab space for the 5,000 students, and "provide an important sense of identity for the school," says Willis Hertshorn, ICP's Director. Digital labs will be equipped with state-of-the-art technology, and more resources will be available for video editing and production, and multimedia and digital photography, including a professional shooting studio. A gallery for student work greets visitors on entering the space with a central core of labs behind. These are surrounded by offices, study rooms and the library. With facilities situated on a horizontal plane, Hertshorn hopes that "the energy from the students and the work of the staff will be fully integrated." 48



Rendering of the interior of MVRDV's proposed design for Eyebeam Atelier's Museum of Art and Technology. EYEBEAM ATELIER

EYEBEAM BEAMS IN ON THE "FUTURE ARTSPACE"

When we last reported on Eyebeam Atelier's design competition for a new Museum of Art and Technology in Chelsea (VAR 9, May 2001), the roster of 30 invited architects was about to be sliced in half, with the remaining thirteen to exhibit their conceptual designs on the site of the future building at 540 West 21st Street. Soon thereafter the final three contenders would be named — Diller + Scofidio and Leeser Architecture of New York, and MVRDV of Rotterdam, The Netherlands — and their schematic designs unveiled to the public in an installation entitled Open Source Architecture: Building Eyebeam, a review of the two-year selection process undertaken to explore "the relationship between new media artworks and the spaces and structures that enable and present them."

Engaging the competition's themes of Interrelation, Intersection, Transformation, and Adaptation, the three finalists have each responded adeptly to the challenge of creating a building that can accommodate — and indeed, exploit — fluidity in both program and media. But of the two fundamental charges — the first, merging the distinct functions of art production and presentation, and the second, maintaining the flexibility of space in anticipation of new technologies — evidence of the former is clearer and more convincing. In Diller + Scofidio's undulating ribbon proposal, alternating spheres of creation, education, and exhibition meet at intersections of "controlled contamination" to allow for interface between artist and audience. In Leeser's

scheme, this interaction takes place in "exchange pods" distributed throughout the building, and for MVRDV, such encounters occur within a network of interconnecting, inhabitable tubes cleverly dubbed "Eyebeams."

While all three schemes claim mutability in light of the uncharted future of this emerging art form, participants in Eyebeam's open on-line forum at <http://b.parsons.edu/~eyebeam/> — launched in cooperation with Parsons' Center for New Design to solicit feedback on the process and proposals — are overwhelmingly skeptical. Brendan Harnett writes with concern about sufficient "neutrality of virtual space" and Patrick Lichty wonders about the "shelf life" of the finalists: "How well can a structure be reconfigured and upgraded without major structural renovations? When looking at any of the designs, I look skeptically at the novelty factor of any one, and give higher points for the flexibility, reconfigurability, and the openness of the plan." The museum's spatial adaptability, concurs architect David Riebe, "is crucial to any notions of new media, and perhaps crucial to considering the state of the institution itself." All agree that only Leeser's design allows for a broad range of possibilities.

However, the possibilities are limitless for the future of New York City if both cultural and corporate clients follow Eyebeam's example of bringing many creative minds to bear on new paradigms for public space. With an ambitious mission and program, and an impressive body of design and speculation culled from a talented international roster of contributors, the Museum promises to be a vital place for innovation, invention, and interaction.

With the final decision to be announced any day, what has been learned from this exploration into "The Future Artspace"? Will Eyebeam's "open source" process of research and dialogue succeed in producing a truly "open" space? Will this space, in turn, facilitate and sustain an open discourse on the future of architecture and technology and their impact on the public realm? And finally, can the open spirit of Eyebeam's endeavor serve as a model for recreating downtown? **CLAIRE R. NELSON**



Rendering of the lobby of Leeser Architecture's proposed design for Eyebeam Atelier's Museum of Art and Technology. EYEBEAM ATELIER



Rendering of the interior of Diller + Scofidio's proposed design for Eyebeam Atelier's Museum of Art and Technology. EYEBEAM ATELIER

OLYMPIC SCULPTURE PARK, SEATTLE ART MUSEUM

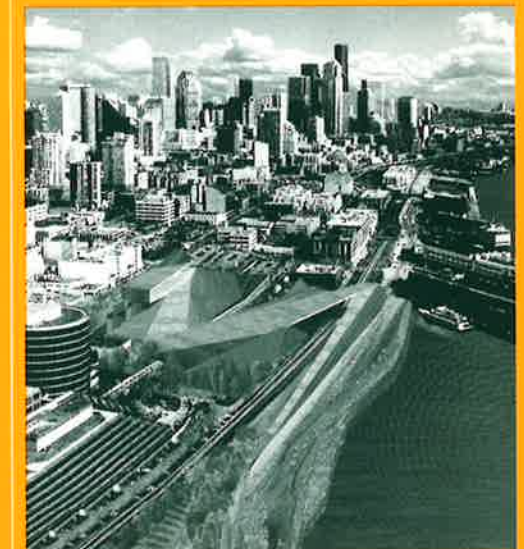
Innovatively integrating architecture, landscape architecture and urban planning, New York-based interdisciplinary designers Marion Weiss and Michael Manfredi of the 12-year-old firm Weiss/Manfredi Architects are known for their distinctive public design. Projects such as the compelling Women's Memorial and Education Center at Arlington National Cemetery built in 1997 and most recently the Museum of the Earth in Ithaca, New York, scheduled to open in June 2002, are examples of Weiss/Manfredi's insightful approach. This appealed to the Seattle Art Museum, which in June chose the firm as lead designers of the Olympic Sculpture Park.

Museum Director Mimi Gardner Gates is delighted with the choice. "Working with Weiss/Manfredi we will develop a design that reflects the history of publicly sited art, as well as ways artists today are creating works to be seen outside of museums." The Olympic Sculpture Park, which will be a third venue for the Seattle Art Museum, will be a significant public space, transforming a desolate six-acre waterfront site on Broad Street in Belltown, one of Seattle's burgeoning neighborhoods. "What interested us most about the project was the rare opportunity to fully integrate architecture, landscape architecture, infrastructure and art into one design," says Weiss/Manfredi. Describing the site they explain that it is "traversed by a four-lane arterial road and a train line. It abuts the water's edge and there is a 40 ft change of grade from one end of the site to the other." Weiss/Manfredi's proposal for the site, which has magnificent views of Puget Sound and the Olympic Mountains, will intersect with Myrtle Edwards Park, home of the monumental 1976 concrete and granite public sculpture *Adjacent, Against, Upon* by Michael Heizer.

An international group of firms responded to the Request For Qualifications issued by the Seattle Art Museum and finalists included Caruso St John Architects, of London; Michael Maltzan Architecture, of Los Angeles; Tom Leader Studio, of Berkeley, California and Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates, of New York (who lectured at the Institute in June). As in Toronto's Downsview Park Competition, exhibited at Van Alen Institute in winter 2000-2001, the organizers of the selection process in Seattle were eager to engage designers with a comprehensive vision for the urban, environmental, and esthetic challenges of the site. In Seattle, however, the finalists were asked to illustrate an approach, not develop a design.

Weiss/Manfredi, together with their project architect Lauren Crahan and Kok Kian Goh, Sarah Stevens and Yehre Suh have begun working with the Museum's Design Panel to build a team of artists, designers and landscape architects to realize an aspiring design. After a year-long design process, construction is planned to start in early 2003 for a scheduled opening date of mid 2004.

Weiss/Manfredi says their approach "envisions a park that wanders from the city to the water's edge. It will be a carpet of concrete, stone, grass and sculptures that undulate across and down the eight-acre site. At the site's high point a pavilion housing a series of exhibit spaces, a café and offices will provide an urban edge and entry to the sculpture park. Parking will be tucked under this pavilion. Along the water a more variegated edge will be created." Speaking about the existing urban area, they conclude, "We couldn't have asked for a more dynamic and challenging site." **ZR**



Weiss/Manfredi Architects' concept for the Olympic Sculpture Park, Seattle. WEISS/MANFREDI ARCHITECTS

VAI ANNOUNCES THE 2001-2002 DINKELOO FELLOW

VAI has been awarding the Dinkeloo Fellowship since 1978. Named in honor of John Dinkeloo (1918-1981), a long-term partner in Kevin Roche John Dinkeloo + Associates, the Fellowship is consistent with his belief in the crucial link between architecture and technology as expressed in the partnership's landmark achievements, most notably the atrium of the Ford Foundation headquarters in New York. It also continues the Institute's long tradition of encouraging the development of American architectural students dating back to the Institute's Paris Prize of the early 20th century. The Fellow stays at the American Academy in Rome for two months and is given a stipend for travel related to their project.

In keeping with the spirit of Dinkeloo's vision, the theme of the 2001-2002 Fellowship, "The Ecology of Public Life," required potential fellows to submit portfolios and a study proposal that demonstrated a creative understanding of how the design of architecture and public space can enhance the environmental infrastructure of air, water, land and urban life.



A project from Dinkeloo Fellow 2001/2 Amanda Sachs' winning portfolio.

The jury consisted of four VAI Trustees: Stan Allen of Field Operations, Diana Balmori of Balmori Associates, Andrew Darrell of Environmental Defense, and Michael Manfredi of Weiss/Manfredi Architects, as well as Nicholas de Monchaux, the 1999-2000 Dinkeloo Fellow.

Reviewing the submissions in June, the jurors considered such issues as the nature of the study proposal and the quality of the work presented in the portfolio. After vigorous debates, the jury was able to reach a unanimous decision. The winning portfolio by Amanda Sachs, a 2001 graduate of Princeton School of Architecture, proposed to "document the operation of one piazza in detail," by charting such aspects as "the cycle of human use, the flows of water, both waste and supply," and "the locations of social interaction." Sachs' goal is to "determine a method of engagement with public space, be it a physical intervention or a research plan, culminating in a deployment and relocation of these strategies in New York."

Michael Manfredi commented that Sachs' portfolio was "well organized and graphically intelligent. The work was strong; particularly given the range of the projects included."

The alternate was Brian Burke, a 1999 graduate of Rice University School of Architecture. Citations were awarded to Katherine Snider, a 2001 BS graduate of the University of Virginia; Marcel Wilson, Harvard GSD 2000, and Adam Ruedig, Yale University School of Architecture 2001. NATHANIEL H. BROOKS

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HOW OR WHAT TO REBUILD IN DOWNTOWN MANHATTAN AFTER THE SEPTEMBER 11TH TERRORIST ATTACKS ON THE WORLD TRADE CENTER HAS PROVED A CONTENTIOUS ISSUE. As the clusters of spontaneous memorials of flowers and candles are cleared away the debate quickens about what will be built as a meaningful tribute to those who have died and allow for Lower Manhattan to breathe again as a place to live and work.

platform >

DEVIL'S TOWER. THE DEMOCRATIC MONUMENT IN AMERICA



Having researched monuments in America and internationally, **NATALIE FIZER**, Director of the Undergraduate Program, Department of Architecture, Parsons School of Design, and co-curator of *The Democratic Monument in America* (with Glenn Forley of FizerForley Design and Richard M. Sommer, Associate Professor of Architecture and Urban Design at Harvard GSD) and **MABEL O. WILSON**, an Associate Professor of Architectural Design at California College of Arts and Crafts, a visiting professor at Columbia University and a partner in the design collaborative KW:a spoke with VAR Editor **ZOË RYAN** and VAI Director **RAYMOND W. GASTIL** about the monuments that have inspired their work and the need for a thoughtful response to recent events.

ZOË RYAN> Natalie, in the wake of the September 11 World Trade Center disaster your recent exhibit proved an inspirational starting point for thinking about rebuilding downtown. It approaches the idea of a monument from a unique perspective.

NATALIE FIZER> **The exhibit comprised of three components, arranged chronologically: The first was the ten primary monuments that we chose from each decade between 1900-2000. We paired these with the second component, the "trail" of other examples. The trail encompasses the ways in which we think of democracy and monument-making in a broader, and more participatory sense that is not reduced to a singular object, for example, Boston's Freedom Trail. The third piece is a timeline that acted as the context for the exhibit.**

ZR> What were your criteria for selecting the ten primary monuments?

NF> **We chose monuments that address some aspect of democracy with the understanding that democracy is a historically contingent category. For example, Plymouth Rock and the canopy designed for the rock by McKim Mead and White in 1916 was built at a time when the issue of immigration and who constitutes an American**

citizen was being talked about a lot. Another factor was the potential for the monument to challenge traditional notions of monument-making either in its methods of production or in its relation to a particular historical context.

ZR> Mabel, you have written extensively about the monument from an African American perspective. What first interested you in the subject?

MABEL O. WILSON> **I was personally interested in questions of memory and history. Often African American families don't discuss their family roots. I think Alex Haley when he published *Roots* in 1976 changed that and generated interest in black genealogy but for some people there has always been a sense of reinventing the family every generation. Another aspect was my research on the African Burial Ground in Lower Manhattan. It started to raise a lot of questions about history; the burial was registered on maps of New York and people knew about it for over two hundred years, but it was suddenly built over a hundred years ago, and then in 1991 was rediscovered. How to mark the site has started a very interesting discussion. Right now it is marked as a void. It raises the question of social and national memory. In the same way that Natalie was talking about Plymouth**

Rock I think that how one defines a national memory is very important within the context of the moment and how it transforms over time.

ZR> Mabel, in your essay "Between Rooms 307: Spaces of Memory at the National Civil Rights Museum" published this year in Craig Barton's book *Sites of Memory* you state that "we must confront the risk of enshrining any particular interpretation of history; for as James E. Young asserts, [in *The Texture of Memory: Holocaust Memorials and Meaning*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993] by doing so we fail to allow for the mutability of collective meaning and memory. Monuments that resist transformation risk losing their significance to future generations." The idea of not fixing a particular memory of an event or person seems very important with regards to thinking about a memorial to the World Trade Center disaster.

MW> **Young is saying the artifact can't stand for it all: That we as a national and social body have to do the work to remember and place meaning and significance onto the monument. The meaning of the monument is going to change over time with regards to our individual relationship to that specific site, event or person and it is this process of engagement that raises the questions about what type of monument is appropriate. Today, people have their own personal archives of news footage**

THE DEMOCRATIC MONUMENT IN AMERICA EXHIBITION. PHOTO: FIZER/FORLEY DESIGN



PLYMOUTH ROCK UNDER A CANOPY DESIGNED BY MCKIM MEAD AND WHITE IN 1916. DEMOCRATIC MONUMENT IN AMERICA



and images. It forces us to figure out how we should engage with the event and what its material presence should be.

ZR> What monuments have you found particularly inspiring?

NF> I find the Bunker Hill Monument in Charleston, Massachusetts interesting. It relates to the idea that Mabel was discussing: That the perceived intent of a monument can change over time and so our understanding of certain events change as well. The monument was built in 1842 to commemorate the Battle of Bunker Hill. In 1998 Krzysztof Wodiczko used the 200 ft obelisk as a backdrop for a public art project. He projected videos of interviews he had undertaken with people from the Charleston neighborhood about their personal experiences of violence and freedom. He changed the Monument by inscribing something else onto it and developed another narrative for it.

MW> For me viewing the Vietnam Veterans Memorial by Maya Lin in Washington is an incredibly powerful experience.

ZR> Aside from Wodiczko's art project, these two examples are traditional types of monuments. Could you give an example of an alternative approach to monument-making that you think has been particularly effective?

NF> The Vietnam Veterans Memorial in particular is a

fixed and permanent marker of an event as opposed to, for example, the AIDS Memorial Quilt. The Quilt is not authored by one person but made by many in a collective way. It's nomadic, portable and constantly being added to. These two memorials operate in opposition to one other.

MW> The AIDS Memorial Quilt operates by taking an individual memory of someone and making it a collective experience. I think its presence, especially because there have been so many images of it running the length of the Washington Mall, give it a national perspective. Typically the memorial has to do with the event by marking it or marking someone's life. To be able to mark multiple lives and events is an incredible accomplishment.

RAYMOND W. GASTIL> Did you go to Union Square and seek out the different memorials to the World Trade Center disaster? There were pictures of people's faces and small shrines next to them that became almost brief stories of people's lives in a similar way to the names embroidered into the AIDS Quilt.

NF> I walk past there everyday and it was interesting to see how on a daily basis it would transform. Now everything has been cleared away by the Parks Department and is being kept in an archive.

MW> Union Square was an interesting example because historically it has operated as a public space in

the city. It really proved that the public life of New York is on the streets. Its proximity to downtown and to the border that was created at 14th Street, which you couldn't pass during the first week after the attack unless you were a resident, made it a very significant place.

ZR> There seems to be a polarization between marking the site of the World Trade Center as a memorial by leaving it void and rebuilding. What are your thoughts?

MW> What is remarkable about New York, and in the same way a violent aspect of the city, is the way it constantly renews itself by erasure. For example, there was a whole community in downtown Manhattan of docks, remnants of which you can see on Gansevoort Street, before they cleared them for urban renewal. It wasn't until the land deals of the 1960s that the towers were built. It was an incredibly broad gesture to remove the remnants of the docklands. Rebuilding has to be carefully thought out because it is part of a complicated history.

NF> I agree. That same attitude of clearing is true of other cities such as St. Louis with The Gateway Arch and in Philadelphia with the Philadelphia Mall, where they used historical sites or relics to sponsor urban renewal projects. There is a desire to remake, reform and recast history. New York's

history has to be revisited, collected and reassembled. New formats for public participation and contributions must be invented so those involved can be part of the discussion.

RG> One of the most powerful images of the destroyed World Trade Center site has been the parts of the Towers that remain. There have been considerable arguments for preserving these remnants as a testament and monument. What do you think of this strategy?

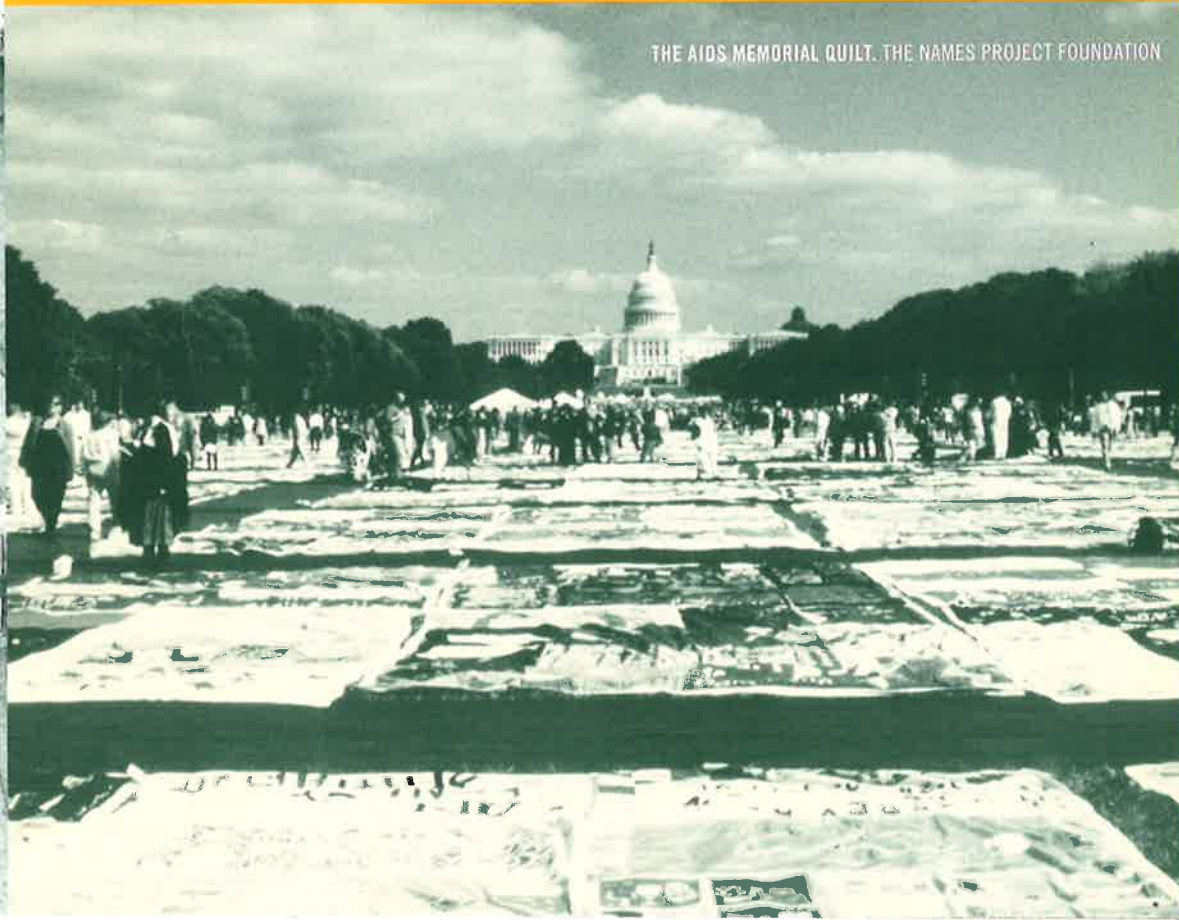
NF> The question, to what extent do you need an authentic relic in order to deposit a memory that becomes authenticated by the fragment, has a resonance. It is problematic. It works in different ways, for example, with Plymouth Rock we claim it's authentic but we don't really know. Do you really need the actual pieces in order to evoke something? I would say probably not, although for some people I would imagine that is not the case. The newsreels and photographs may have more potency for future generations than, say, a bone fragment of a saint.

MW> The same question could refer to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial when it was built. The ability to erect or establish one singular image of that event was contradicted by the subsequent newsreels and narratives.

AFRICAN BURIAL GROUND. COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE



THE AIDS MEMORIAL QUILT. THE NAMES PROJECT FOUNDATION





cultural districts:

BAM and beyond >

GIANT OUTDOOR LIVING ROOM IN THE MIAMI DESIGN DISTRICT BY ARTISTS ROBERTO BEHAR & ROSARIO MARQUARDT OF R&R STUDIOS

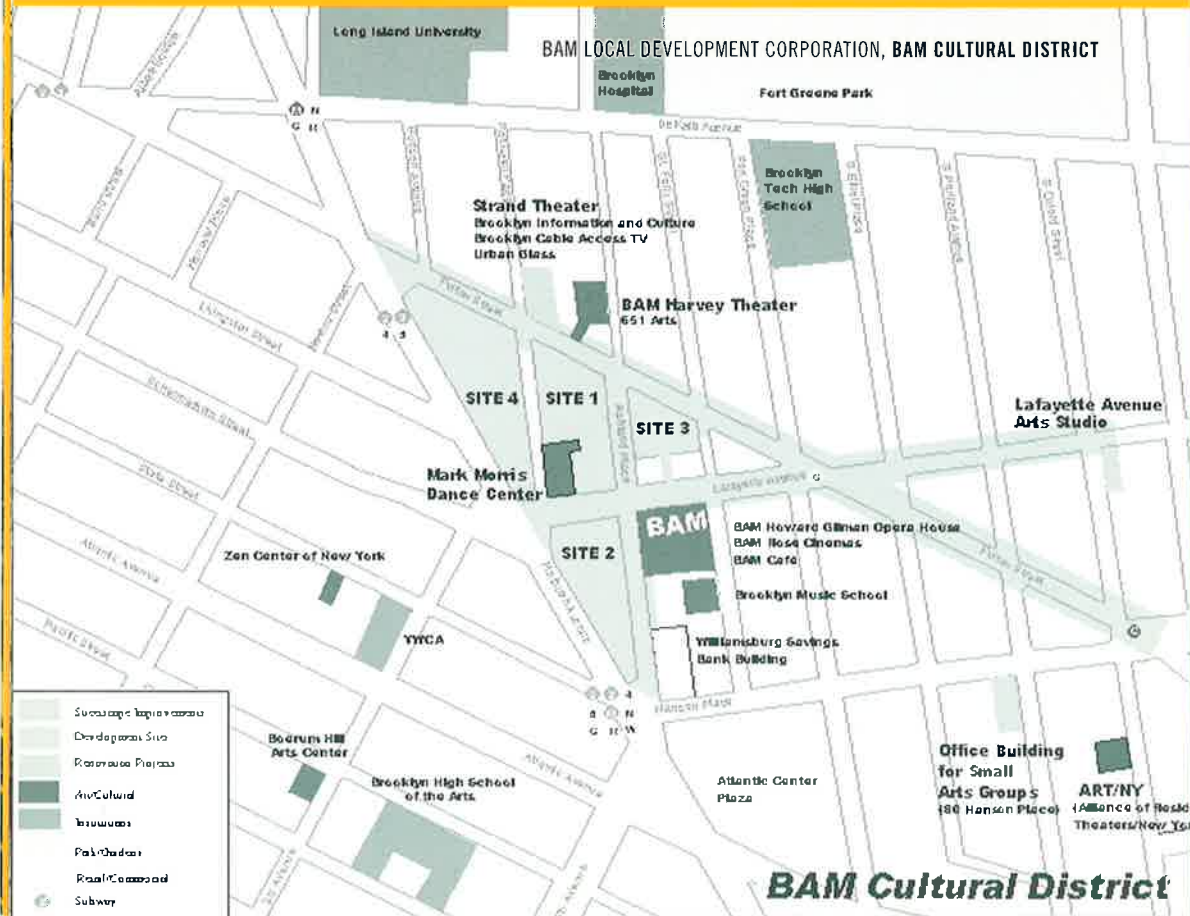
From Williamsburg to Greenpoint, Dumbo to Bedford-Stuyvesant, Brooklyn is alive with a burgeoning artist community that has encouraged an influx of prominent galleries, most recently Deitch Projects. In contrast to this relatively organic transformation, the Brooklyn Academy of Music Local Development Corporation has been established in Fort Greene with plans afoot to cultivate its own district dedicated to the arts at a cost of \$630 million. Barrett Feldman, VAI's 2001 Harvard University Graduate School of Design Community Service Fellow met with Jeanne Lufy, President of the BAM LDC, and got her bearings on the project.

In Tuscon, Scottsdale and Los Angeles it's called an "Arts District." In Atlanta and Miami it's called a "Design District." In Philadelphia and Portland, it's called a "Cultural District"—and now Fort Greene of Brooklyn, New York is getting one too. Each of these districts has a different title. Regardless, they create nodes within the city devoted to the visual and performing arts and have proven a promising and sometimes controversial device for urban regeneration.

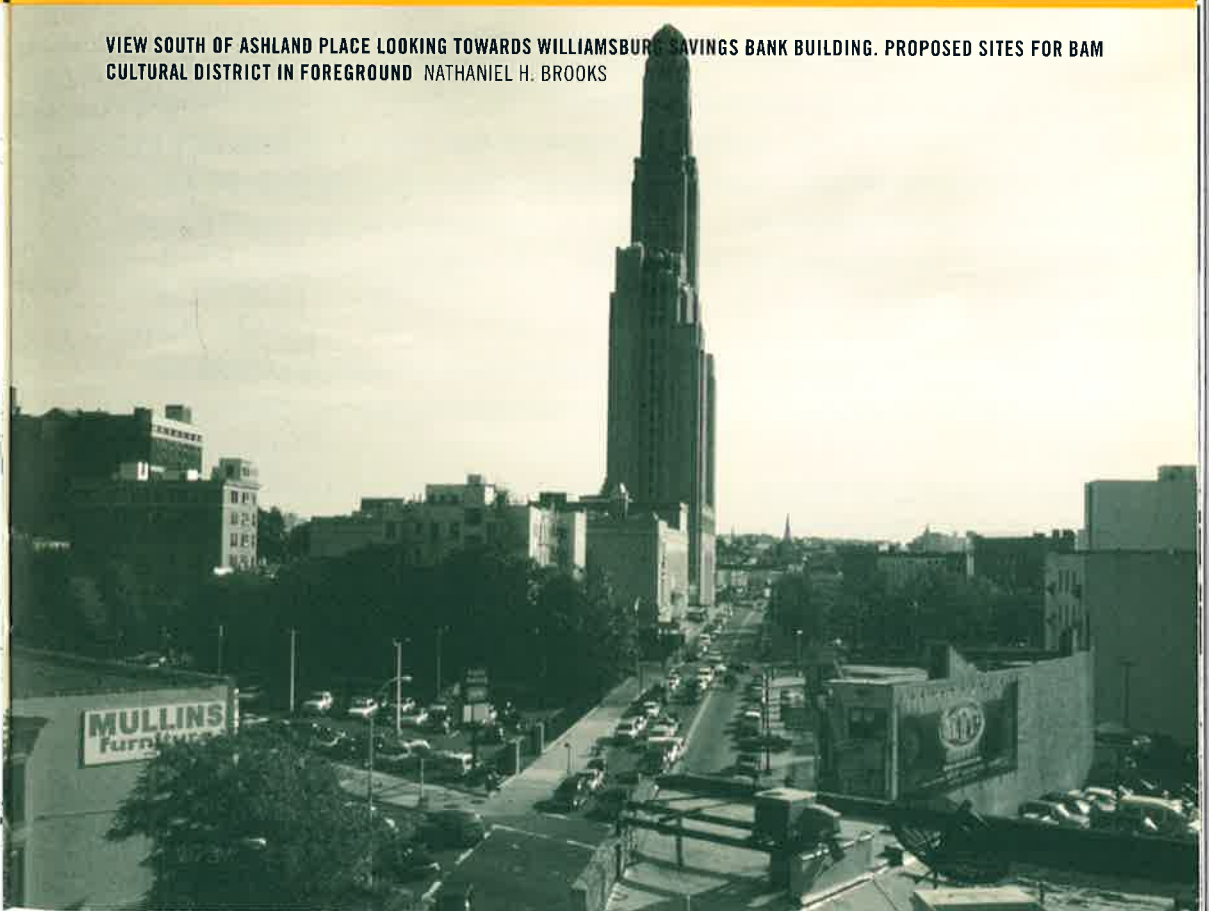
The districts are inspired by New York City's SoHo of the 1970s and 1980s when it was a booming artist community. The original arts district, it has stimulated "Sohos" as far afield as Japan and London. Paradoxically, SoHo developed in the opposite way from recent established districts: It evolved over time, aided by a 1971 zoning law that called for "Joint Living and Working Quarter for Artists" (JLWQA) and encouraged artists certified by the Department of Cultural Affairs.

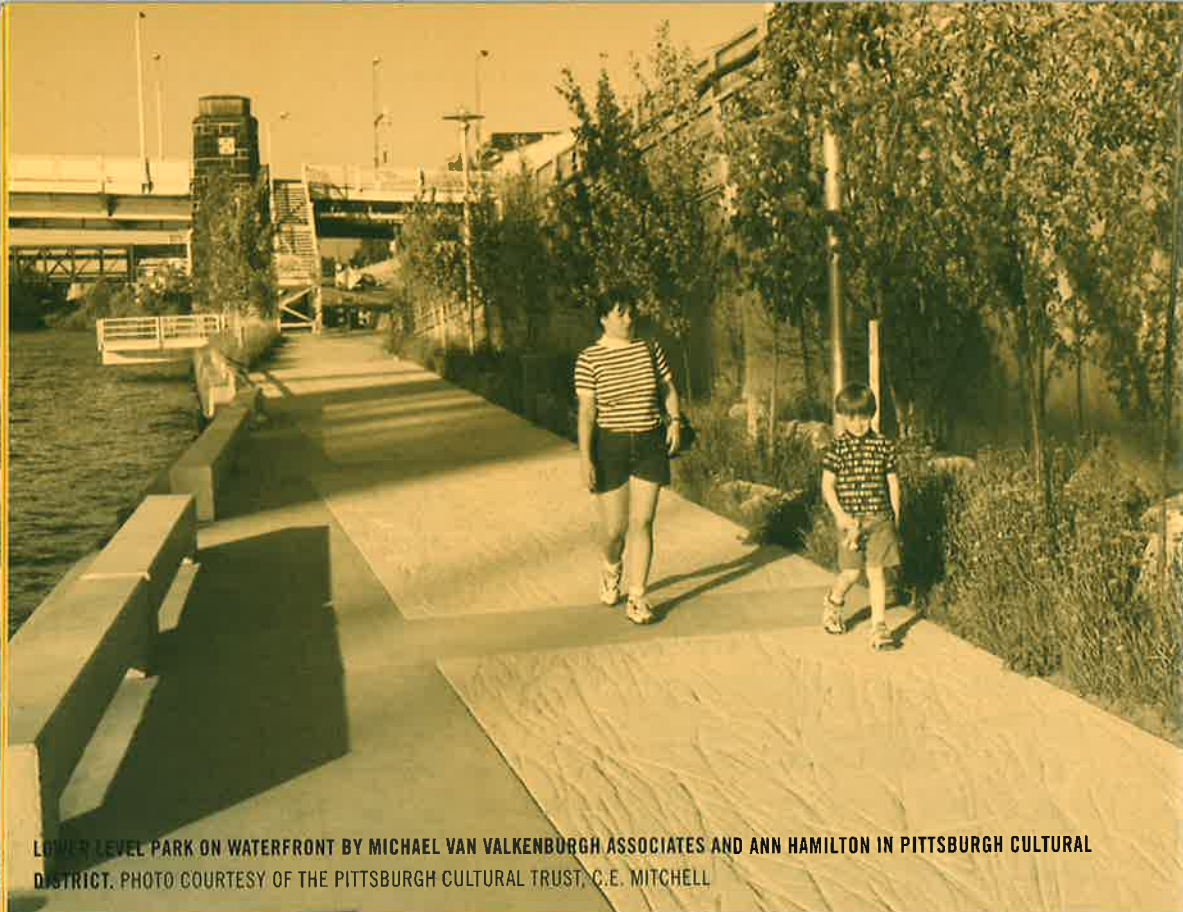
Contemporary districts are characterized by more extensive planning efforts. In Fort Greene, Harvey Lichtenstein, former president of the Brooklyn Academy of Music, established the BAM Local Development Corporation (LDC) in 1999, which has a fourteen member Board and a small staff, to create the BAM cultural district. Lichtenstein led BAM through 32 years of creative programming, shaping a renowned Performing Arts Center famed for innovative theater, including opera, dance, music, drama and performance art. The ambitious project for the district is estimated to take ten years and to cost \$630 million, \$80 million of which has already been raised through local and state government support to go towards capital projects in the district.

Sitting in a cramped conference room surrounded by planning maps of the future cultural district, Jeanne Lufy described their inspiration. "I think Harvey felt as though BAM was an island in a sea of parking lots," referring to the lots surrounding BAM's Beaux-Arts-designed



VIEW SOUTH OF ASHLAND PLACE LOOKING TOWARDS WILLIAMSBURG SAVINGS BANK BUILDING. PROPOSED SITES FOR BAM CULTURAL DISTRICT IN FOREGROUND NATHANIEL H. BROOKS





LOWER LEVEL PARK ON WATERFRONT BY MICHAEL VAN VALKENBURGH ASSOCIATES AND ANN HAMILTON IN PITTSBURGH CULTURAL DISTRICT. PHOTO COURTESY OF THE PITTSBURGH CULTURAL TRUST, C.E. MITCHELL



A MOTHER AND DAUGHTER PLAY BY A GERALD JACQUARD SCULPTURE OUTSIDE THE TUSCON MUSEUM OF ART IN THE TUSCON ARTS DISTRICT. TUSCON ARTS DISTRICT PARTNERSHIP, INC.

Opera House. This discontent inspired Lichtenstein to have the forward-looking idea to create a context for the cultural resource he fostered.

Started as the vision of one person, plans for the BAM cultural district have been transformed by ideas of an entire team including prominent architects engaged at the beginning. Initially, the Development Corporation worked with SOM and Rockwell Group to develop a master plan identifying four main sites, presently the vast, dreary parking lots surrounding BAM. (See map p20) Rising New York City real estate prices prompted planners to suggest 500-800 units of affordable housing and studio spaces for artists to live, work and present work. The key goal was a place of production as well as consumption of the arts. This density will create a need for amenities like restaurants, retail, and public open spaces generating lively activity on the streets.

After initial planning, the BAM LDC decided they "needed architecture" to go beyond their master plan approach. Jeanne Lutfy describes the project: "There are not many opportunities to have a positive impact on the New York City landscape from an architectural standpoint. This is one of those places." Thus, they brought together architects Rem Koolhaas of the Office of Metropolitan Architecture (OMA) in Rotterdam and Liz Diller and Ricardo Scofidio of Diller+ Scofidio in New York. Lichtenstein cites Koolhaas' expertise in planning and Diller+ Scofidio's experience with theater and media installations as making them "the right people to help strategize, plan and make something that can be surprising, innovative, and exciting to people."

More than a year since the OMA/Diller+ Scofidio team began, no schematic designs or architectural renderings have been produced. Instead, the architects have been developing concepts

to create a mixed-use district where mixing actually occurs creatively and spatially. Describing the concept, Diller says, "Contrary to the convention of building on side-by-side lots, a dense array of cultural programs will span several building lots and city blocks with major cultural spaces articulated as strands running along the grain, in the north-south axis." The hope is that the outcome fosters productive collaboration between artists and arts organizations. Diller continues, "The cross grain is intercepted periodically by public spaces that cut across the building masses in the east-west direction. This often produces intricate views and public access to the cultural programs."

The proposal for BAM cultural district is distinguished by its commitment to involving architects at the forefront of the planning stages to ensure the project has well-designed architecture that responds to the needs of the community at large. Jeanne Lutfy says, "People go to Bilbao to see the architecture of the museum as well as what's inside. If this district could become a destination for the work that is produced here, but also because the architecture is innovative and wonderful, that would be great." However, unlike at the internationally acclaimed Bilbao Guggenheim Museum, they propose a district where art will be presented and also created. The challenge is to design a cultural district fostering the arts in local and global realms — a tall order that not everyone finds convincing.

In recent articles, representatives of local groups express discontent with the LDC's plans, criticizing them for caring more about bringing in artists from Manhattan than helping local people and artists. Robert Evans, Chairperson of Community Board 2, of which Fort Greene is a constituent, expresses a different opinion. Evans says, "I think for the most part people are wel-

coming and unfortunately those speaking up are not. They are throwing around the term gentrification, but that is not a concern. I've lived in the neighborhood for more than 20 years and it has both a minority and white population, a diverse community. I think it will be a big plus for the community and a very progressive move for the local community and Brooklyn." In terms of the architecture, Evans warns, "I really don't know what is coming. I hope it is not restrictive but complementary to the 19th Century architecture. I think anything too avant-garde would not be helpful."

Public dissent stems in part from concern that the district will cause rent increases forcing current residents to move out of the area. In response, BAM LDC feels the proposed housing will lessen the impact of rising real estate prices by designating 80 percent as subsidized middle income for residents on the brink of being forced out of Fort Greene and 20 percent as subsidized for artists.

Development is occurring in Fort Greene as cultural organizations relocate near BAM. For example, in January 2000 the Alliance of Resident Theaters purchased a building on South Oxford Street, just five blocks from the BAM Opera House. They renovated it, leased it to twenty theater companies who needed affordable office space but still have a long waiting list of prospective tenants. It is hard not to ask, if cultural development is already happening incrementally, why is this ten-year, \$630 million project necessary? A basic answer is that BAM LDC sees a need for more affordable spaces for performing artists, prompting the renovation of three underutilized buildings in addition to the four primary sites. The new Mark Morris building at 3 Lafayette Avenue houses the famed dance company for which it is named and opens this fall.

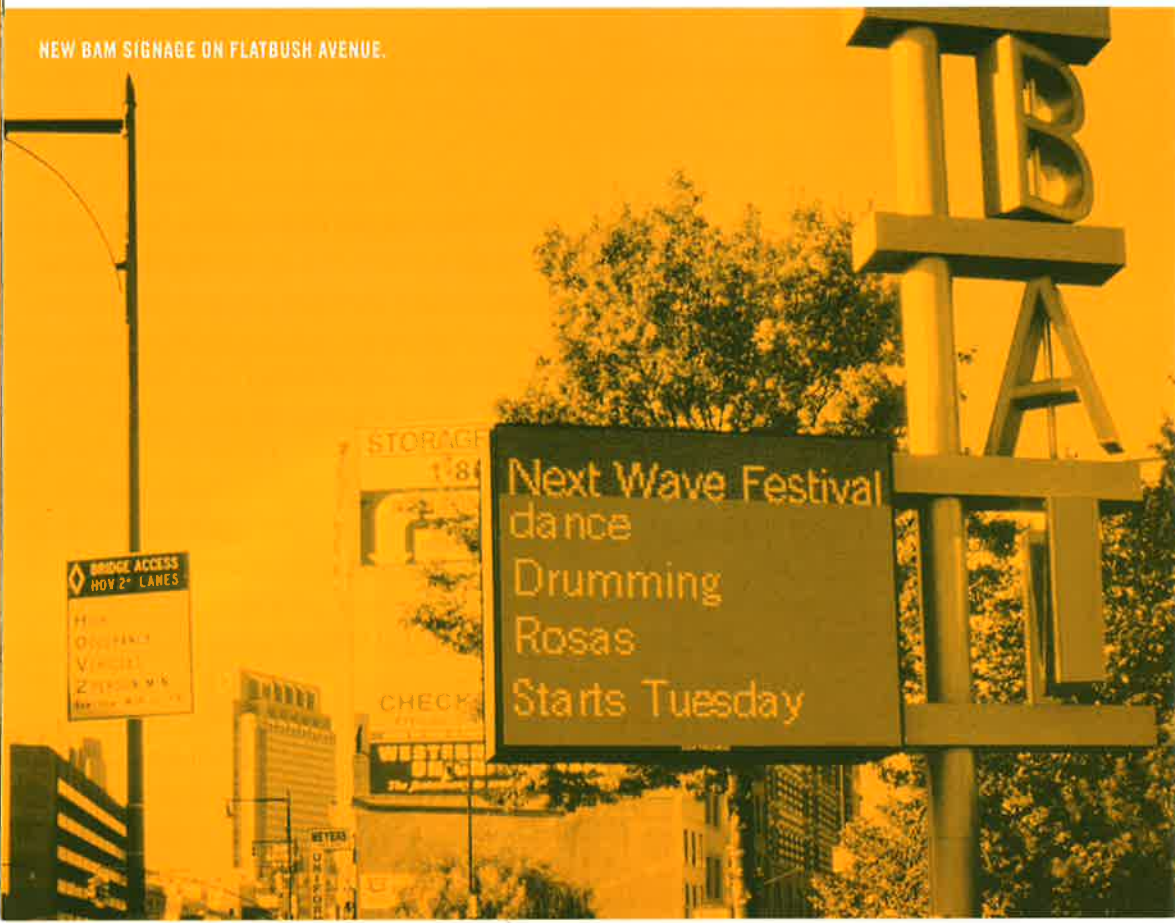
PHOTOGRAPHS ON P. 24-25: NATHANIEL H. BROOKS #10.24

80 Hanson Place will be renovated by next September to create affordable office space for arts organizations. (So far the state has budgeted \$1 million towards this renovation). In addition, there are plans to develop a former Sunday school in the Lafayette Avenue Presbyterian Church, which has been vacant for more than 25 years.

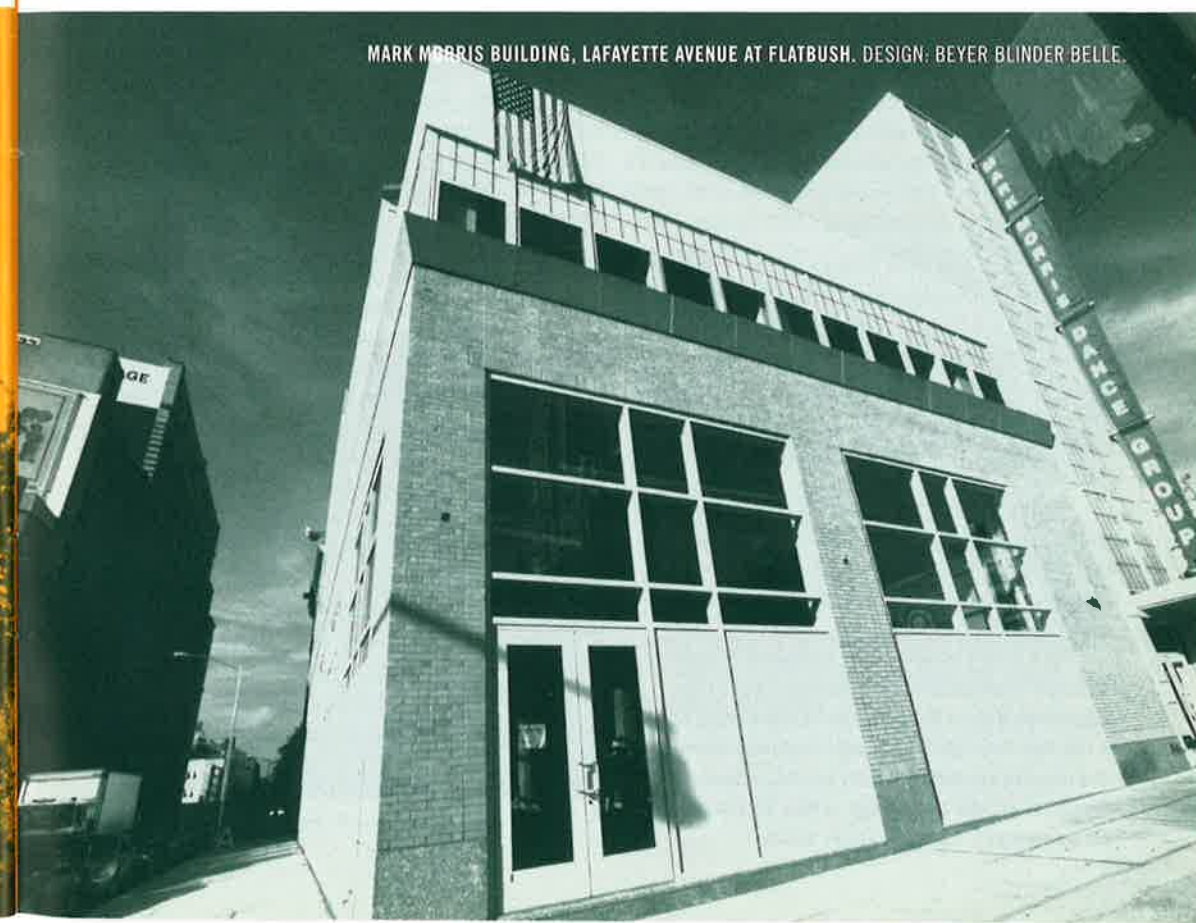
The renovation projects and approach to housing indicate a commitment to working within the existing urban fabric. The architects do not want elevator lobbies exclusively dedicated to residential units. "Instead, we want to bring people down in multiple locations within each building project and feed them through the cultural tenants." Diller continues, "The dispersion of people will help to break down the perceived largeness of the district—changing the scale and interweaving the resident and visiting populations." The BAM LDC and the architects involved feel housing is an important component that will give the district an active and creative energy aside from the main arts attractions, and something that is lacking from more traditional cultural enclaves such as Lincoln Center.

The project requires a careful balance. Aware that they are walking a tightrope, the Development Corporation is willing to play multiple roles to realize a dynamic cultural district. Lutfy explains, "Sometimes we are the developer and sometimes we are not, instead offering assistance and guidance." They want to make a destination, yet also a place for the community. They want the district to emerge from the local community, yet they want to instigate its emergence with a plan. Although Lutfy says they don't feel like they have to "touch everything," they will be touching a great deal in the hope that BAM will go from an island in a sea of parking lots to part of the mainland.

NEW BAM SIGNAGE ON FLATBUSH AVENUE.



MARK MORRIS BUILDING, LAFAYETTE AVENUE AT FLATBUSH. DESIGN: BEYER BLINDER BELLE.





Univers Theater for the Aarhus Theater Festival, Denmark. ASYMPTOTE

Having followed a conventional course of study (Couture received an M.Arch from Yale University and Rashid earned his M.Arch from Cranbrook Academy of Art), the partners have since taught innovative architectural design programs at a series of prominent institutions. Rashid teaches at the Graduate School of Architecture and Urban Planning at Columbia University in New York where he introduced the paperless studio. Couture also teaches at Columbia as well as in the Department of Architecture at Parsons School of Design. Peter Wheelwright, Chair of Architecture at Parsons, says: "I think what is often not appreciated about Asymptote, largely because of their identification with digital work and speculations about immaterial space, is what strong designers [of physical space] they are." Continuing, he explains Couture's impact on the department. "As one might imagine, she exerted a directional influence in the development of the digital curriculum, but it is her interest in and ability to speak to broader social/spatial issues that has been most provocative."

Their impact on the conventional built environment also embraces the digital and the temporary, designing architectural performances that are often part of emerging cultural precincts whose role in the future of the city is undergoing a reassessment. Asymptote believes that the concentration of activities, "can contribute to the formation of a cultural community which provides support, access, visibility, opportunity and an audience to a wide variety of participants from artists and curators to the general public." In this realm, Asymptote has designed such projects as the Aarhus International Theater Festival in Denmark, first installed in 1996, and the United State Pavilion at the Venice Biennale in 2000. For Couture and Rashid, these installations define the site of an event and act as incubators for the exchange of ideas and for collective experience.

public profile

"The role of architecture and design should be to support constantly evolving forms of cultural production and experience, to enable these to flourish." ASYMPTOTE

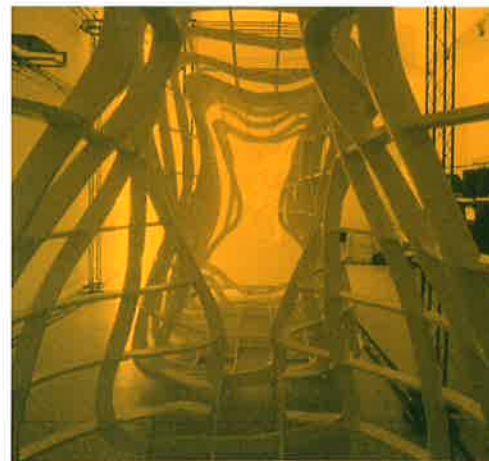
Hani Rashid and Lise Anne Couture of New York-based architecture firm Asymptote are known for redefining architectural practice by challenging the boundaries of public architecture and exploring the potential of new technologies. Their architecture has engaged physical public space with virtual space in the realms of finance and culture, an approach more critical than ever today.

Their first significant work was a 1988 design for a monument commemorating Pacific Rim immigration, the Los Angeles West Coast Gateway, known as the Steel Cloud, where they integrated architecture and media projections.

Their recent projects have continued to explore interactive architectural environments such as the Guggenheim Virtual Museum, the virtual trading floor for the New York Stock Exchange, and most recently, a provocative competition entry for the Eyebeam Museum of Art and Technology in New York and a multimedia research facility in Kyoto, Japan.

Asymptote plays out this idea in the Univers Theater, a temporary 30,000 sq ft multi-media installation for the Aarhus International Theater Festival. The multi-functional tent-like structure made using sail and mast technology was suspended over Bispertov Square. The flexible structure was designed for reuse as part of the festival over the next ten years. It proved an important point of convergence and exchange with an information center and three stages equipped to accommodate theater and music. More important however, was its role as a site of orientation for the entire festival. Bringing together architecture, theater and media technology, the environment capitalized on the use of tensile materials and was used as a backdrop for multimedia projections showing live performances happening around the city. Asymptote asserts that "With real time links to remote locations, the Univers Theater was capable of providing the visitors with the simultaneous experience of an "elsewhere" which was both local and global."

Aarhus on the east coast of Denmark is known most famously for being the headquarters for Maersk, the largest shipping company in the world. Now it is recognized as also having the largest reoccurring theater festival in Denmark, a feat that Asymptote says was catalyzed by their architectural intervention in Bispertov Square that "created a new tectonic landscape, in fact two interweaving landscapes across the entire site, by providing the city with not only a place but a symbol."



US Pavilion Venice Biennale 2000. ASYMPTOTE

Writing about the U.S. Pavilion at the Venice Biennale, Rashid asserts: "Space, be it physical or virtual...is being redefined despite the context and boundaries of the actual site. Whether on the Web or within an existing structure, this notion of the fluid space requires the architect to possess an omnipotent view of the spectrum of possibilities afforded by the digital medium." Rashid and architect Greg Lynn invited students from the Department of Architecture and Urban Design at UCLA and the Graduate School of Architecture at Columbia University to participate in setting up a research laboratory. A series of studio programs developed around a central theme of new technology and its application to public building archetypes — such as the airport, performance center and stadium — proved a successful generator of ideas for new methods of architectural practice.

An accompanying exhibition, both virtual and three dimensional, made up of a steel frame covered in scrims with computer-generated images projected onto them, "anticipates a structure utilizing robotics technologies to alter the architectural forms with which we surround ourselves as we move and displace real space," says Rashid. Asymptote explains that they find "it fascinating to be able to interact with architecture, exert one's presence and perhaps even control and influence a spatial condition. Moreover, the Univers Theater and Biennale Pavilion sought to bring technology into the fold, not as a tool of production and representation but as a means of engagement via interactivity and connectivity to global networks."

Asymptote believes that temporary structures are an effective vehicle for generating creative exchange because the "architecture itself can often be non-traditional and even somewhat radical," and can therefore even contribute to the program by encouraging and "accommodating non-conventional events and works," such as in the Univers Theater. The simultaneous projections of performances happening in remote areas of Aarhus and live television broadcasts provided multiple experiences relative to the culture of the city. Similarly in Venice the U.S. Pavilion enabled students to participate in reviews and seminars and contribute to an ongoing dialogue about the impact of technology on architectural practice.

Asymptote is currently working on an interactive environment that has yet to be named for the 2002 contemporary art exhibition Documenta 11, in Kassel, Germany, and a cultural building to also be completed in 2002 for the Floriade horticultural festival held once very ten years in the Haarlemnemeer region, near Amsterdam, in Holland. ZR

letter(s) from abroad

New York has never lacked for creative ideas, but it often lacks for creative actions. If there were ever a time to rehabilitate the concept and practice of creativity, from the built environment to social, economic, and cultural programs, it is now.

This October, Van Alen Institute, the British Council, and the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey brought Charles Landry to New York for a conference focused on Long Island City, Queens.

Landry, based in the United Kingdom, has worked in dozens of cities around the world, advocating the "Creative Cities" process from Helsinki to Hong Kong. His recent work includes *Creative Lewisham*, a broad visioning and implementation exercise undertaken with the leadership and citizens of that London Borough just west of Greenwich on the south side of the Thames.

Landry sums up his analysis of the need for creativity in the following paragraph, and in the interview that follows expands on how he has applied this in his recent projects.

CHARLES LANDRY >

The world is changing dramatically in ways that will reshape what cities are for, how they are used, and what they will look and feel like. In this transformation process some will gain, but others will lose out unless a new form of planning and urban design framework is put in place. This framework will need to be strong on principles and ethos and tactically flexible in its implementation.

A focus on principles will help to guide decision-making from the macro to the micro; and the principles themselves will need to tap into the deeper desires and expectations of the 21st century citizen — which include a wish for experience, engagement, connection, and conversation, as well as equity, sustainability, coherence, and cohesion.

At the same time the economic and social dynamics in urban areas demand that we provide conditions that allow people to feel more at ease with rapid change; and this highlights the need for flexibility, transparency, and adaptability.

VAI > In your projects you identify cultural industries as one of the leading agencies of change in urban communities, yet at the same time you stress that in renewing a community, "creativity" isn't the exclusive domain of the arts. Could you expand on that?

CL > In the Creative Lewisham report, I made the distinction that there are two things going on separately and simultaneously. One is that what we are talking about cultural factors, i.e., what is the approach of a place to how it addresses problems. If you think of a city as a personality, you can see that what I'm proposing in Lewisham and what I'm proposing in general is seeing how you can create imaginative solutions to seemingly intractable problems.

If, for example, Lewisham feels that they have high ambition, that would be a cultural factor determining what their cultural aspirations are and how they go about their day-to-day business. With Lewisham, you have an embedding strategy, placing this idea deep down into the management structures.

Coincidentally, culture in the narrower sense of the cultural industries, fits that ambition at this moment, at a time of a shift. Because within the arts is a cultural imagination of "let's look at things differently." The two are connected, but the most important of the two is that a social activist, or a business person, or an official feels that they can be just as creative as someone in the cultural industries, and that has a whole set of ramifications for the organizational culture.

R10.28

VAI > In many cities, including New York, there can be great skepticism when the word "creativity" is brought up for audiences ranging from the private sector to a community board. How do you overcome that?

CL > It all depends on where they're located. The drapery manufacturer, obviously, is very creative in terms of getting to market and producing good work, and the planner has a different situation. In the end, the lure we've got to have is something tangible that they can be involved in to see that it is worth it in the first place. In Lewisham, there are thirty to forty projects already happening which just need a slight shift in point of view [including the Laban Centre designed by Herzog and De Meuron]. And one of the strategies there is to take people around so they see other things. For example, we could take them to see Will Alsop's library in Peckham, which is a mile from the boundary of Lewisham, to see how it can be done.

VAI > Sometimes a local community takes pride in seeing a major international art or architectural program or project take place on their turf, other times they see it as depriving their own cultural producers of important opportunities on their home turf. How do you grapple with this?

CL > I argue that the outsider is fresh, but also ignorant in a sense, whereas the insider knows the detail of the fine texture, but at the same time might be weighed down by history. You've got to maximize the potential between the inside and the outside. Will Alsop [who practices both in London and internationally, on both master planning and architecture projects] is good because he doesn't call what he does "consultation" because if you just consult, people just tell you what they already know.

VAI > And as you've said, there have to be opportunities for local cultural production.

CL > Yes. In Lewisham, what they've done with the planning guidelines is that they've sold a couple of buildings at far below market value as creative incubator units in order to keep that diversity. There will be a whole series of buildings, some of which are in trust (one of them called Arts in Perpetuity Trust) where the cultural uses are guaranteed.

VAI > Do you believe in the idea of a "cultural district"?

CL > In Lewisham, the commission was originally supposed to be a cultural commission, and I argued that it should focus on cultural urban development with an urban design focus. My point was that it's all very well to get people to feel they're "transformed" [by being connected to cultural programming], yet to sus-

tain that they can't be in an environment that doesn't inspire them. In terms of the cultural district in general, one of the key things is that it should include both production and consumption. The theater, concert hall and museum nearby, with a few restaurants in between isn't a cultural district. And increasingly you find cultural people working in dispersed modes, and what you then have to do is generate synergies of these dispersals and dispersed things. I'd prefer to call it a cultural community, with overlap onto a specific spatial configuration.

VAI > What happens when the economy is under duress, when a city is cutting back all operating budgets by 15% or more, and even more drastic cuts to capital budgets, as in New York now?

CL > If you've got 15% less, and if we don't then immediately just assume that we need to do the tried and tested, you can say 'how do we meet a visionary aspiration, with 15% less?' You might think I'm sounding vague, but if we pose that challenge to the group, the planners, the engineers or whoever is involved, I find, from my experience, that people come up with solutions.



Charles Landry speaking at the Creative Cities Conference. NATHANIEL H. BROOKS

20th century history

VIEW OF MANHATTAN FROM THE STATEN ISLAND FERRY LOOKING NORTH, OCTOBER 2001, NATHANIEL H. BROOKS

Historians often try to break apart the centuries according to events that don't quite coincide with the C.E. calendar's hundred-year cycles. For example, a book on "19th century European History" is bound to end not at 1900, but with the opening of WWI in 1914. One hopes that future historians will put the September 11, 2001 attack and its aftermath in with their volumes on the history of the 20th century, a final violent chapter in a rough hundred years.

For all the destruction of the past century, an honest narrative will also tell of the amazing feats of reconstruction after unthinkable destruction by the hand of man and nature. Caribbean and Pacific islands that withstood hurricanes and tsunami and then rebuilt; the whole continent of a devastated Europe at mid-century, some parts rebuilt stone by stone, others constructed in a totally modern idiom, some within a decade, and others only now. Beirut, Sarajevo, Mexico City, Kobe, Hiroshima; War, earthquakes, fire, oil spills. Sometimes, there will be no recovery to praise — such as in Chernobyl — but overall the record of renewal against great odds will be inspiring.

In the spirit of this age, the Institute has called for images to show in an exhibition entitled "Renewing, Rebuilding, and Remembering" from architects, artists, landscape architects, editors, historians, students, professionals, journalists, photographers and many others who have studied, visited, lived in, or still live in dozens of places around the world that have come back from disaster. Their record and report on the world is a project in public architecture to inspire and inform. We have attempted the impossible but we hope not disingenuous task of being apolitical in this: identifying disasters without explicating why or how a terrorist attack happens anymore than we would explain a hurricane.

There are other exhibits and other disciplines for that. Architecture often gives into the fascination of war — indeed, much of landscape architecture, engineering, and building design have been driven by the desire for military advantage, and some see the drive for ecological advantage as similarly destructive. For this reason, the exhibit will not concentrate on attacks, damage, or devastation, where the temptation to aestheticize destruction runs very high. The exhibit will focus on how at various around the world, citizens have rebuilt, remade, and rethought their urban life. And for this reason, it shows how monuments specific to disaster are integrated with vital urban places.

RAYMOND W. GASTIL

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