

VAN ALLEN INSTITUTE
30 West 22 Street
New York, New York 10010
tel 212.924.7000
fax 212.366.5836
email: vanalen@vanalen.org
http://www.vanalen.org

VAN ALLEN REPORT JUNE 2005

\$4.00

06.05

18

civic exchange

Competitions
and
Dialogues



Zoë Ryan 3 EDITOR'S LETTER

Sherida E. Paulson 4 CHAIR'S LETTER

5 UPFRONT

Coney Island

Dinkelloo

Philadelphia

FEATURES

6 Civic Exchange

Kudambert Baxi 8 Introduction

Craig Schwilke 20 Evolving Futures:
Sustainable Master Planning

Byron Stoppa 21 Summary of the Day

23 Urban Dialogue

28 The Good Life

29 20th Century History

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.

For more information:
www.vanalen.org.

VAN ALEN REPORT 18

Zoë Ryan Editor

Hello Graphic Design

Van Alen Report is published seasonally. Subscriptions are a benefit of membership and are also independently available to libraries and universities. Individual issues can be purchased at our gallery and in bookstores. For more information, call 212.924.7000.

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

On the cover:
Civic Exchange, Antenna Design (front)
Civic Exchange, The Exchange (back)

editor's letter

We admit, we couldn't resist choosing recreation as the overarching theme for the year and our projects are turning out to be fun-packed: a **competition for a new information system for Lower Manhattan** where residents and visitors can gain access to what's on in the city p6; a competition for a **recreational pavilion in New York's most famous amusement park-Coney Island** p5, and an **exhibition** planned for spring 2006 that will explore how **21st century leisure and recreation** that is accessible to different cultures and different economic levels is being designed into the everyday physical realm of cities across the globe p30.

As our projects show having fun is a serious business and not only in a commercial sense. Recreation and leisure not only allow us to kick back during our time away from work but are essential components of daily life. From how we spend our time commuting to how we spend our weekend leisure time, they have become essential to our experience and understanding of urban life and are a driving force behind the design of cities globally. Whether bungee-jumping along the Hudson River, taking part in cultural activities in Lower Manhattan, playing games in the Central Park, or simply enjoying the density of city streets, pulsing with life, **recreation and leisure can uplift spirits, bring people together to share common experiences, facilitate learning and help in the development of skills that can elevate the quality of life.** The challenge for designers is how to create public spaces that animate the city and encourage multiple activities and programs for diverse groups of people.

As the discussions on p20-29 reveal, a thriving city requires **sustainable master planning** that not only encompasses environmental concerns but also social issues. Through our upcoming programs, exhibits and competitions we aim to open the dialogue about recreation and public space. We welcome your comments and suggestions. zryan@vanalen.org.

ZOË RYAN

chair's letter

As Van Alen Institute joins in celebrating the **75th birthday of the Chrysler Building**, our namesake's notable New York City landmark, we are poised to announce the first winner of the **New York Prize**. This new prize will continue our tradition of seeking out and identifying the next generation of leaders in the design of the public realm, as evidenced by our previous awards, discussed on p31.

In addition to the New York Prize, the Institute has been busy this spring hosting the **Stirling Prize Colloquium with the Canadian Centre for Architecture and the London School of Economics** and reviewing the **800+** entries for the **Parachute Pavilion in Coney Island**. In addition, we are preparing for VAI's next Executive Director, following Raymond Gastil's relocation to the Manhattan Office of the New York City Department of City Planning. His move has supported Chair Amanda Burden's clear emphasis on the importance of design in planning for the City's future, and has challenged us to contemplate VAI's next projects in the public realm. We continue to draw from the widest sources—artists, designers, architects, engineers, journalists and yes, developers, to engage in conversations, competitions, conferences and action around the topic. **Stay tuned for the next episode, the new director, and future projects.**

SHERIDA E. PAULSEN

upfront

COMPETITIONS

VAI has received 864 entries from 46 countries for **THE PARACHUTE PAVILION: AN OPEN DESIGN COMPETITION FOR CONEY ISLAND**. This is the largest response to a VAI competition to date. Announcement of the winner to be made in late May 2005. In concert with the Coney Island Development Corporation's planning initiatives, VAI organized a competition with the New York City Economic Development Corporation inviting designers worldwide to generate innovative design



proposals for a project in Coney Island on a site adjacent to the famed Parachute Jump, now a designated landmark. Throughout history, pavilions have acted as catalysts for animating parks, waterfronts and urban districts by accommodating a myriad of recreational and commercial activities as well

as being paradigms of innovative design. The hope is that this pavilion will be an exciting addition, contributing to the ongoing revival of Coney Island and its vibrant public life in the 21st century.

Check our website, pick-up the next VAR, and come by the gallery this summer to view a selection of the most inspiring designs, including the winning proposals.



Another great opportunity for upcoming and recent graduates of architecture and related programs is the Institute's **2005-6 DINKLEOO FELLOWSHIP**. Winners get to spend two months at the American Academy in Rome developing a research project and receive an additional travel grant of \$4,000. Previous winners have included Elizabeth Diller of architecture firm Diller Scofidio + Renfro, and architects Brian Healy and Alexander C. Gorlin.

This year the theme of the fellowship, **THE GOOD LIFE: DESIGN AND RECREATION**, directly relates to Institute projects, including an exhibition planned for next year and the Coney Island competition. Proposals should address how urban public space contributes to the experience of recreation and fun in cities. More information at www.vanalen.org.

TOP AERIAL PHOTO OF CONEY ISLAND SHOWING SITE OF PARACHUTE PAVILION COMPETITION NEXT TO PARACHUTE JUMP PHOTO: JONATHAN COHEN-LITANT/VAI
RIGHT AERIAL VIEW OF NORTH PHILADELPHIA SHOWING ABANDONED LOTS PHOTO: JONATHAN COHEN-LITANT/VAI
BOTTOM SPANISH STEPS, ROME, ITALY PHOTO: JONATHAN COHEN-LITANT/VAI



As if we weren't busy enough with competitions, later this year we will announce a new project. This time it is not in New York but in **PHILADELPHIA**, and not one site, but 40,000. No, this is not a typo. Together with the

Philadelphia-based City Parks Association and their partners, the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, the Pennsylvania Environmental Council, and The Reinvestment Fund, VAI is working on **PHILADELPHIA LANDVISIONS**. www.landvisions.org.

Following a recent community envisioning process, the Institute will take the lead in framing and managing a two-stage international competition. **RECONNECTING THE LOTS** is scheduled to be launched by the end of summer 2005. Entrants from around the world will be asked to imagine new possibilities for designing a comprehensive vision for the 40,000 lots of unused urban land with specific consideration to ecology and the built environment. Check back for more information at www.vanalen.org.

NEW YORK / CANADA FORUMS

In October, the Canadian Consulate General in New York and Van Alen Institute organized a series of public forums as part of the Consulate's Cities Project.

Liquid Assets: Reclaiming, Redeveloping & Revitalizing our Waterfronts addressed the steps that are being taken to redevelop, revitalize, and reclaim the waterfronts of New York and Toronto and how residents are being included in this process. Included in the discussion was Toronto's HtO Park designed by one of Canada's leading landscape architecture firms Janet Rosenberg + Associates, in which a unique step-down beach is being incorporated as part of the scheme.

If we build it, will they come? focused on the role of cultural districts in urban renewal projects. Jeanne Lutfy, President of the BAM LDC discussed the Brooklyn Academy of Music Cultural District as an example of how arts development projects can catalyze the revitalization of urban communities. Tim Jones, Chief Executive Officer of Artscape, a non-profit organization based in Toronto that is engaged in real estate and program development for the arts and creative sector, explained plans to build an environmental-arts center in a new park in the city as part of their ongoing initiatives to secure affordable space for the arts. Artscape is also working on the rehabilitation and redevelopment of Governors Island. In March 2005, VAI participated in two additional roundtables. **Sustaining our Cities** focused on sustainable energy alternatives in the wake of the 2003 blackout and **Building the Intelligent City** looked at the possibilities for leveraging information technology to build the city of the future.

an interactive public installation for lower manhattan civic exchange



Can information—displayed with creative interfaces and with variable content for multiple audiences—generate desirable interactions in cities and activate public spaces? Do electronic technologies provide new ways to access, use, and share information? Can popular consumer devices, such as cell phones and PDAs that promise to make our lives more efficient and comfortable as individuals, be exploited to encourage us to act collectively? What contributions can an interactive public installation add to a site where commerce, tourism, transportation and leisure intersect, and where overall renewal strategies are currently being discussed, debated and planned? And, as we confront local issues of a specific site, does our easy access to virtual networks that are global also provide opportunities to think and act beyond our neighborhoods, cities and countries?

These are some of the questions that the Institute undertook last year by collaboratively initiating a competition titled **Civic Exchange** that sought proposals for a public interactive installation for a site in Battery Park City in Lower Manhattan. The competition, conducted in partnership with **The Architectural League** and **Battery Park City Authority**, began with a Request for Expressions of Interest that generated responses from highly qualified professionals in the fields of design, architecture and new media. Four teams including **Antenna Design**, **Leeser/StoSS/Levin/Kurgan**, **The Exchange**, and **MESH Architectures/ORG inc.**, were selected as finalists.

The final proposals are creative insights into ways of embedding information in objects, and the different forms

these objects may take in a public space. The work engages many disciplines ranging from industrial design to architecture to landscape to interaction/graphic design. Given that there are few precedents for such projects, the teams' original ideas present innovative solutions that engage users through interactivity. The jury selected **Antenna Design as the winner**, recognizing their project's ability to creatively solve many of the functions that this installation was asked to address. These include seating, a space for gatherings, easy access to different levels of information, and energy efficiency. They were also impressed by their inventive use of readily available materials such as LEDs behind glass mosaic tiles.

The institute would like to thank its partners: **The Architectural League** (Rosalie Genevro, Executive Director) and **Battery Park City Authority** (Stephanie Gelb, Vice President for Planning and Design), for their significant contributions to the overall development of this competition. On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I would like to extend many thanks to the energetic **VAI team** (Katherine Romero, Zoë Ryan, Marcus Woollen, and Ari Duraku) and exhibition designer **Inez Suen**. Congratulations to **Jonathan Cohen-Litant** for successfully completing a complicated project, and providing liaisons to the many entities involved. Also, thanks to **Raymond W. Gastil** (former VAI Executive Director) for leading this project with a unique vision.

I invite you to visit the **VAI gallery on 22 Street** to view an exhibition of these projects by the four finalists teams, boldly presented through digital representations, animations and videos. Reactions to these proposals and their mandate to go "beyond the kiosk" are welcome.

THESE PROPOSALS ARE THE ORIGINAL WORK SUBMITTED BY THE FOUR FINALIST TEAMS FOR THE CIVIC EXCHANGE

COMPETITION. THESE PROJECTS BY FOUR HIGHLY CREATIVE AND MULTI-DISCIPLINARY TEAMS UNDERSCORE THE CRITICAL ROLE OF INNOVATIVE DESIGN THINKING IN THE REGENERATION OF LOWER MANHATTAN.

THE COMPETITION ENCOURAGED DESIGNERS TO GO "BEYOND THE KIOSK" IN ENVISIONING AN INTERACTIVE PUBLIC INSTALLATION FOR THOSE WHO LIVE, WORK, AND VISIT DOWNTOWN MANHATTAN. RESPONDING TO A CHALLENGING BRIEF, THE PROPOSALS EXPLORE THE

BOUNDARIES BETWEEN EXISTING AND NEW TECHNOLOGIES. THEY ARGUE FOR BOTH A PHYSICAL AND A VIRTUAL EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION, AND THEY PROPOSE AN ARRAY OF INTERACTIVE ENVIRONMENTS THAT TACKLE THE CHALLENGES OF CREATING A PHYSICAL INSTALLATION THAT CAN SERVE MULTIPLE AUDIENCES.



CIVIC EXCHANGE TEAM MEMBERS DISCUSS THEIR PROJECTS WITH JANET ABRAMS AND KADAMBARI BAXI AT A PUBLIC FORUM CO-SPONSORED BY VAI WITH THE LOWER MANHATTAN CULTURAL COUNCIL, FEBRUARY 2005. PHOTO: VAI

THE CIVIC EXCHANGE PROPOSALS:

- **PROVIDE A PLATFORM FOR INFORMATION AND GENERATE INTERACTION**
- **STIMULATE PLACE-BASED ACTIVITIES**
- **ENHANCE THE APPEARANCE, PERCEPTION, AND EXPERIENCE OF PUBLIC SPACE**

COMPETITION BACKGROUND

The extraordinary circumstances of the 9/11 attacks on Lower Manhattan and its current renewal demonstrated the need for a structured system of information that is accessible to a broad public. The Civic Exchange competition communicates the value of information and exchange in urban regeneration.

Civic groups, cultural and educational institutions, private and public organizations, as well as governmental entities, have engaged in numerous initiatives for informing the public about immediate conditions and future improvements downtown. There is still, however, a critical need to give a physical presence to information exchange using contemporary technology that is both informative and functional, and represents Lower Manhattan as a community that is at the forefront of technological and cultural activity.

R18.10

In June 2004, the Project Team distributed a Request for Expressions of Interest (RFEI). Local, national, and international teams comprised of interaction designers, graphic designers, industrial designers, architects and educators were encouraged to submit a portfolio and brief strategy/approach description. In July 2004, the four finalist teams were selected out of a pool of more than 40 responses. Each team was awarded a \$10K stipend to develop their proposal. In October 2004, following presentations by the finalists, the jury selected Antenna Design as the winner of the competition.

COMPETITION SITE

The site for the prototypical Civic Exchange installation is at the southern end of Battery Park City. This is a critical crossroads of commerce, tourism, transportation, leisure, and culture in Lower Manhattan.

PROJECT TEAM:

VAN ALLEN INSTITUTE

Raymond W. Gastil
Jonathan Cohen-Litant, Competition Manager

THE ARCHITECTURAL LEAGUE

Rosalie Genevro, Executive Director

THE CIVIC EXCHANGE JURY:

JANET ABRAMS, Director, Design Institute, University of Minnesota

KADAMBARI BAXI, Partner, Martin/Baxi Architects and Principal, imageMachine

STEPHANIE GELB, Vice President for Planning and Design, Battery Park City Authority

JOYCE LEE AIA, Chief Architect, NYC Office of Management and Budget

JOHN MAEDA, Co-Director of the SIMPLICITY Consortium at MIT's Media Lab
MICHAEL ROCK, Partner, 2x4, a multidisciplinary design studio
TUCKER VIEMEISTER, Industrial Designer, President, Springtime-USA

This project was supported in part by an award from the National Endowment for the Arts.



NATIONAL
ENDOWMENT
FOR THE ARTS

Additional funding was received from the Stephen A. and Diana L. Goldberg Foundation.

This project was also made possible with the participation of the Hugh L. Carey Battery Park City Authority.

winning entry antenna design

MASAMICHI UDAGAWA Principal (Concept and Design)

SIGI MOESLINGER Principal (Concept and Design)

BRUCE PRINGLE (3D Modelling and Rendering)

GASPARD GIROUD (3D Animation)

VERONIQUE BROSSIER (Animation and Programming)

JONATHAN BRZYSKI (Animation)

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This installation becomes a beacon in the environment. It is an easy access point for useful local information and a public space for social interaction. The digital information displayed encourages activities that range from the purely practical to the educational and entertaining. The design was inspired by the image of people gathering around a bench under a tree, as found in city parks. The installation features the following components:

- The main information screen is a multi-user interactive map table. The interactive map of Lower Manhattan provides direct access to place-based news, events, alerts and other information. People can engage in community dialogue by responding to polls, articles and by annotating the map. Local organizations can produce content for specific place-based activities.



- A public announcement screen in the form of a LED column presents broadcasted as well as interactively-invoked content. The various types of information are distinguished through color and motion. Normally, text is animated in a poetic manner, respectful to the residential and recreational neighborhood. In alert or emergency modes, messages are presented to command attention. Also integrated into the column is an emergency intercom.
- A single-user internet terminal allows for private exchange. Seating modules invite people to gather together. A roof with solar panels, which provides partial and back-up power, offers shade for the interactive display and acts as a shelter from the rain.

The physical components are designed as a modular system, like a “hub” with “spokes,” which can be tailored to the requirements of various locations. Key to Antenna Design’s project is their ability to take readily available materials and appropriate them in inventive ways. For example, embedding LEDs behind glass mosaic tiles, which are framed by a stainless steel grid for durability, subdues the luminous “Times Square” quality of the diodes and unifies the display with the rest of the installation.



R18.14

the exchange

INBAR BARAK (Interactive Design)

JAKE BARTON/LOCAL PROJECTS (Interactive Design)

CLAUDIA HERASME (Urban Design)

DAN SHIFMAN (Interactive Programming)

ROSTEN WOO/CUP (Urban Participation Design)

GUY ZUCKER (Architecture)

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Exchange encourages group use without forcing interaction. It engages different user groups with diverse interests and needs that pass the site at varying speeds. Screens are orientated in multiple directions, which optimize viewing angles for different traffic flows. Cyclists and bus commuters can read the messages at the top of the screens from a distance of 40 feet, while pedestrians can receive a cross section of neighborhood news and community “chatter” up close.

The main features of The Exchange are:

- The information filtering system based on the proximity to the physical location of the object.
- The interface, which is for the community by the community, inspired by the model of the community garden.



- Enabling a passerby/tourist to understand and learn more about the adjacent community.
- The potential for interactivity, where body movement is the essential element.

There are two main display elements for The Exchange: the “Media Façade” and the “Directory.” The Media Façade is an ambient visual cross-section of the neighborhood displayed in a clear hierarchy. New and important “official” updates appear at the top of The Exchange and migrate down the screen as they decrease in importance. Messages from the community appear at the bottom of the screen, growing in size and moving upwards as people interact with them. The backdrop is an ambient video mirror that attracts users with playful, yet subtly responsive interaction design. This surface uses “Magink,” which is a passive reflective display technology. It is essentially a dynamic paper, not an internally lit technology like LEDs or LCDs.

The Directory at the rear of The Exchange is a group interface that allows one to find out about activities and places of interest in the neighborhood. These vertically-oriented lists of restaurants, cultural locations and walking tours are constantly updated and ranked to reflect their popularity within the community.

leeser/stoss/ levin/kurgan

THOMAS LEESER/LEESER ARCHITECTURE (Concept and Design)

GOLAN LEVIN (New Media Artist)

CHRIS REED/STOSS (Landscape Urbanism)

LAURA KURGAN (Design)

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This project proposes a modular free-standing structure, which is inserted into the landscape as a small sunken circular space. Plasma screens that are six-feet-by-six-inches-high are mounted back to back in a translucent Corian box which houses back-up batteries, as well as necessary power links to the grid. One side of the screen broadcasts information, while the other presents an intuitive interactive interface.

The structure is eight-feet-high and can be installed in widths of five feet, ten feet, fifteen feet or twenty feet. Embedded in the structure is a pico-cell antenna. When viewers register with the system (1-800-NY CALLS or via the internet), they will receive calls providing precise place-based information within a 200-foot-radius of the installation. This pico-cell could be linked to a network of other cells throughout the city in similar installations, or as an invisible cell zone which calls you once you enter its boundary.



This project presents a simple interface which visitors can easily use to select and navigate a variety of content. The interface makes use of computer-vision-based tracking technologies, and thus, allows hands-free interaction at a variety of spatial scales. The user is presented with five virtual buttons above their head and uses their hand/body to navigate the interaction environment.

The other side of the installation is partly advertising, partly civic information, and partly the display of human portraits that have been captured from cameras placed around the site. The program filters data captured from relevant websites and randomly displays this information in a moving sequence.

The system has two components: a confined set of choices, allowing one to get to the information one wants when one wants it, and simultaneously, a free-form range of information that can be accessed in an intuitive and unencumbered way, not unlike the chance encounters made possible by civic space.



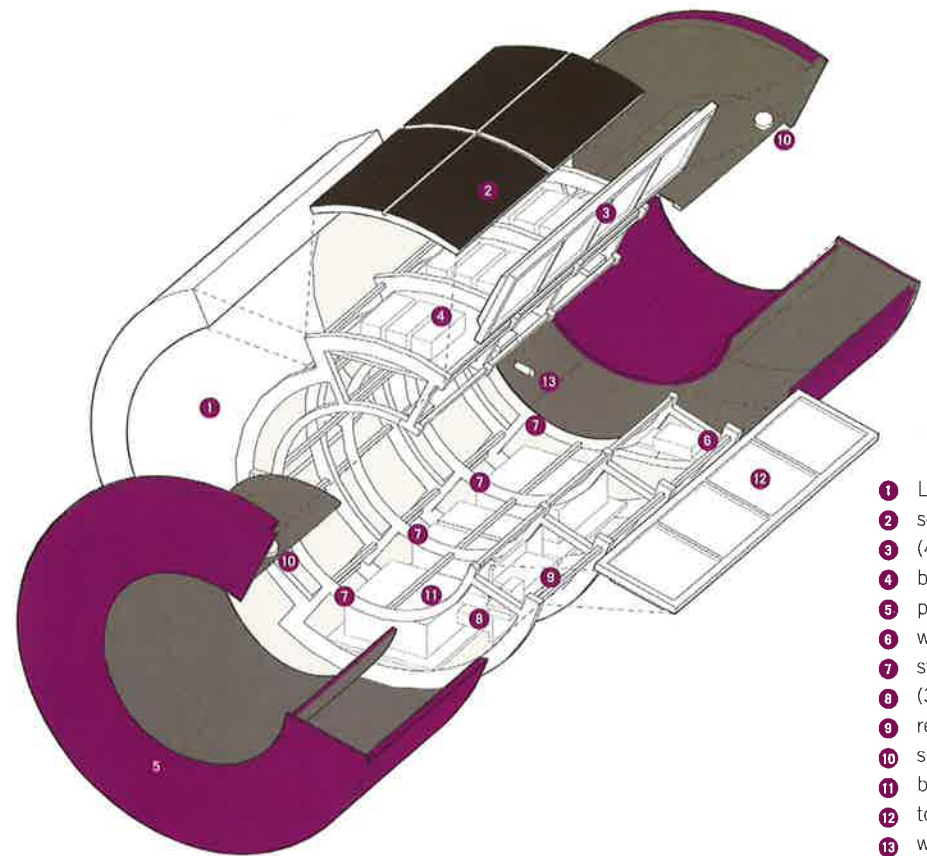
MESH Architectures/ ORG inc.

- ERIC LIFTIN (Concept and Design)
- DAVID REINFURT (Concept and Design)
- LEO VILLAREAL (Project Artist)
- NINA RAPPAPORT (Project Consultant)

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The letter "C" (for Civic, City, Community, etc.) creates an iconic form and a strong visual identity for the Civic Exchange. Its 15-degree-tilt and distinctive purple color help the C become a familiar logo. Scaled to human size, the C naturally accommodates an inside and outside. One side engages people and is open and receptive. The convex exterior displays information. The ends of the C hold screens at an accessible height.

Through a linear band of information, the C interface aims to simplify the presentation of heterogeneous information by separating it into: Events, History, News, Rebuilding, and Transportation. Each of these modes is an extended timeline, with a line marking each event or news item. The length of the line reflects how highly the item is rated. When a band is touched, the information becomes visible.



- 1 LED panels
- 2 solar panels
- 3 (4) LCD screens
- 4 batteries for solar panels
- 5 ptd. metal panel
- 6 wi-fi router
- 7 steel structural ribs
- 8 (3) rack mtd. computers
- 9 receipt printer
- 10 speakers
- 11 batteries & transmitters
- 12 touch LCD screens
- 13 webcam

The convex side of the C is an LED screen, large enough to be read from a distance. It faces the street so it can be seen by pedestrians, cars, and nearby residents. A sequence of bright, high-resolution images and messages scrolls continuously from bottom to top. A mix of information, images, videos, and art is tuned to the patterns of site activity. During the day, practical information is combined with messages and images of visual interest. At night, when activity slows down, light-based art predominates and animates the site.

A server and wi-fi router enable wireless access to the installation from up to 200 feet away. The inside of the C is left open and becomes a protected space in which three speakers are located creating the possibility for sound pieces and other audio effects.

Evolving Futures: Trends in Sustainable Master Planning was a unique event in the context of urban dialogues at Van Alen Institute. The discussion focused on new ideas and best practices for sustainable design within an international context. The Institute has tackled the concept of sustainability with words like “infrastructure” and “the ecology of public life.” However, today these issues have become increasingly complex and urban planners are grappling with how to bring a term like sustainability into the design, planning and construction of our cities. As a platform for emerging issues, the Institute’s mission focuses on encouraging serious debate and fostering public response. This event enabled VAI to bring together a diverse group of construction industry designers, practitioners, policymakers and educators from Europe and the United States to discuss sustainability on a bigger-than-building scale. Infrastructure touches every aspect of life: energy, drinking water, transportation, education, governance, open space, nature preserves, social equity, hydrology, fashion and economics. Designers, practitioners, policymakers and educators make decisions everyday that affect the quality of urban form. On November 5, 2004 sustainability turned out to be a driver that everyone at the table agreed is necessary to improving the quality of modern urban living.

CRAIG SCHWITTER Partner, Buro Happold Engineers

summary of the day

BYRON STIGGE

Senior Environmental Designer, Buro Happold Engineers

November 5, 2004, three days after the 2004 presidential election was a charged time to discuss sustainability, environmentalism, and social equity within the context of planning urban infrastructures, especially given the substantially “red” outcome of the election. “Evolving Futures: Trends in Sustainable Master Planning,” a one-day colloquium brought together planners, architects, engineers, landscape architects and policymakers from the United States and Europe to open the dialogue about sustainability within the context of urban planning.

The forum co-sponsored by Buro Happold Engineers in partnership with the Van Alen Institute and with support from the Stephen A. and Diana L. Goldberg Foundation, investigated the recent interest in sustainable urban planning and how practitioners are solving the challenges of sustainable practices on large scales through planning and policymaking.

**There’s a reason
infrastructure is gray and
not a color, so you don’t
see it. I’ve always argued
that if we painted all
the infrastructure purple,
lime green and red
people would take notice.**

WILLIAM R. MORRISH

Community groups as well as planners and those working in the field of construction are adopting more technical approaches as a way to integrate infrastructure into urban planning and justify planning decisions. Green infrastructure is one approach that is softly-technical yet the issue of sustainable infrastructures encompasses a larger range of concerns: water, sewers, energy grids, urban densities, air quality and other highly technical problems that need appropriate solutions. For Hillary Brown, the technical solutions are just the start. The former Assistant Commissioner of New York City’s Department of Design and Construction’s Office of Sustainable Design now heads New Civic Works. The organization works to make green building initiatives mainstream practices in the public sector through a variety of prototype projects, policy development, outreach and education. Her approach is one of Civic Environmentalism, a collaborative venture using collective intelligence to deal with environmental problems at a local level. This is not a regulatory method in the command-and-control sense favored by the United States Environmental Protection Agency, but an alternative approach to illustrate the best possible practices for designers and institutional agencies. The Green Infrastructure Guidelines developed in 2003 by Brown are more about process than product, helping designers become more trans-disciplinary and illustrating how they can include more technical issues such as microclimate, hydrology, energy planning, and public transportation into their design solutions.

Fundamental to the discussion was the inadequacy of the term “Master Plan” as a way of describing the design of infrastructures that encourage an active city life. A more integrated approach is necessary, which William R. Morrish, professor at the University of Virginia, defines as layering and stacking the elements that contribute to urban place-making. The European architects Stefan Behnisch of Behnisch, Behnisch and Partner, and Louis Becker of Henning Larsens Tegnestue agree and illustrate this approach in projects that take into account energy, microclimate, orientation,

daylight, worker productivity, social interaction, sewer systems, public transportation systems, and even fashion. In contrast, Russell Perry of William McDonough & Partners has developed a more overt blueprint for integrative design and sustainable master planning. His firm actively begins a design process by addressing the four major infrastructure systems of sustainable planning: biodiversity and habitat, land form and hydrology, climate and energy, and community and planning.

When we talk about sustainability, it always comes down to two approaches: Do you want to change the world? Or do you want to change our behavior to preserve the world? STEFAN BEHNISCH

For Morrish, transparency and social equity are essential aspects of the sustainable master planning process. He defines three key areas:

- **Knowledge Management:** the arbitrage of knowledge between people who are managing time, budgets, and resources, and infrastructure as accessible information.
- **Interconnections:** how to better understand how culture and ecology or people meshed with nature work together.
- **Synthesis:** More than plants and animals, a sustainable infrastructure comes from synthesizing many issues: water, energy, history, transportation, air, economics, etc.

Vishaan Chakrabarti, former director of the Manhattan office of New York City's Department of City Planning argues that density is vital to cities and the urban environment and can be a primary solution to a sustainable master plan. Urban living, and thus sustainability, is a lifestyle choice which does not necessarily sacrifice quality of life. For example, Chakrabarti describes the surprising demand for family-friendly apartments in Manhattan, claiming that density is the reason we live in New York City, but that means with appropriate light, air and parks. Susan Kaplan, a senior project manager at Battery Park City Authority (BPCA) argues that green buildings are possible in high density areas. She uses BPCA as an example of a public authority that has kick-started investment in environmental building methods at the high end scale of development. Be it enlightened political leadership or a political response to a public mandate, BPCA has managed to implement green guidelines in a city thought to be one of the toughest economically-driven development environments.

Sustainability, therefore, means different things to different people. Brown seeks a process of Civic Environmentalism. Morrish argues that transparency and equity in infrastructure will produce more sustainable cities. Perry encourages unique experiences for all. Behnisch begins the design process looking at design from the level of the individual. Chakrabarti strives for density. Kaplan finds economic marketing opportunities for sustainability. Becker's goal is an holistic approach to design. For Craig Schwitter, sustainability may just be the very best of the basics of city planning: densification, investment in infrastructure, creating and maintaining land values, natural systems, equitable governance and a fair educational system.

The conclusion is that infrastructure is the key phrase when thinking about sustainability on an urban scale. It's big, it's slow, it's fiercely political but it has the potential to make positive changes to our cities. It is imperative that we build infrastructure as substantially as our predecessors did with respect to public transportation, energy supply, waste treatment, open space and habitat preservation. Yet we need to do so in new ways that better mesh human development with natural flows.

evolving futures: trends in sustainable master planning

Louis Becker, a partner at Henning Larsens Tegnestue in Copenhagen, is a practicing architect with commissions throughout Europe, the United States, and China.

Stefan Behnisch, of Behnisch, Behnisch and Partner, Stuttgart, Germany, recently completed Genzyme Center in Cambridge, MA.

Hillary Brown is the founder of New Civic Works, New York City, and was instrumental in writing the NYC Department of Design and Construction's High Performance Building Guidelines in 1999 and is currently working on a counterpart for Green Infrastructures to be released later this year.

Vishaan Chakrabarti, the former director of the Manhattan office of the NYC Department of City Planning, is now a director of urban design for Skidmore Owings & Merrill, LLP.

Michael Fishman manages the Consulting Business Group for Halcrow, LLC., in New York City, and is a professor of Urban Planning at Columbia University. His work focuses on sustainable transportation systems and engineering for pedestrian networks.

Denzil Gallagher, a group manager at Buro Happold Engineers, runs the mechanical engineering group in the New York office and is an expert in the field of low energy building design.

Adam Hinge, founder of Sustainable Energy Partnerships in Tarrytown, NY, is an energy planner who advises institutional and governmental clients in the US, Europe and China.

Susan Kaplan, a senior project manager at Battery Park City Authority, directed the development of the Battery Park City Green Guidelines and New York City-wide initiatives in green building design.

Tony McLaughlin, a senior partner in the Bath office of Buro Happold Engineers, is an expert in the design of low-energy, environmental buildings.

William R. Morrish holds the multi-disciplinary Elwood R. Quesada professorship at the University of Virginia, where he conducts research and teaching in architecture, landscape architecture and urban planning.

Russell Perry, a partner with William McDonough + Partners from Charlottesville, Virginia, is an architect engaged in sustainable design.

Martha Schwartz, founder of Martha Schwartz, Inc., is a practicing landscape architect and faculty at the Harvard Design School.

Craig Schwitter, a partner at the New York office of Buro Happold Engineers leads an office of structural, mechanical and environmental engineers.

Also in attendance:

Raymond W. Gastil, former executive Director of Van Alen Institute, is director of the Manhattan office of the NYC Department of City Planning.

Brian Goldberg is a professor of architecture at the Rhode Island School of Design.

Tom Jost is managing director and director of urban planning at Field Operations.

George Leventis, P.E., is president of Langan International, a firm specializing in environmental and engineering services.

Sherida E. Paulsen is a partner at Pasanella + Klein Stolzman + Berg Architects and Chair of VAI's Board of Trustees.

Byron Stigge is a senior environmental designer at Buro Happold Engineers.

shifting definitions: sustainable master planning

Craig Schwitter: There seems to be a fundamental shift taking place in city planning towards the integration of more technical applications and a desire to base projects on partnerships: public/private, design/construction, and social/cultural that are rooted in something other than form and aesthetics. This is an interesting phenomenon, not unlike some of the issues architecture has dealt with throughout the last century, such as the move away from form-driven design toward more technical considerations. Today, these shifts are

happening under the guise of sustainability, which we are hoping is not another passing trend. If sustainability is just a trend right now, we are in trouble. The planning of sustainable infrastructure is something that people must engage in seriously.

Tony McLaughlin: What makes a master plan sustainable? I suggest it's about energy.

Stefan Behnisch: I would partly agree and partly disagree. Sustainability is about energy but energy triggers the whole process. Today's oil prices are not just a bump in the road. Sustainability is mainly about usability, feeling at home, and raising the quality of life for people who live in cities. And master planning



NYC2012 OLYMPIC VILLAGE COMPETITION ENTRY
IMAGE: HENNING LARSENS TEGNESTUE

is a process that aims to achieve this. It's easy to talk about energy and to calculate it but it's very difficult to talk about changes in society and quality of life in cities, which are constantly changing, growing and spreading by the minute. How can we reorganize and make changes to fulfill the future needs of a society we cannot envision yet? Sustainable solutions need to be flexible so they can adapt over time to accommodate future changes that are unknown today.

Russell Perry: Issues of energy consumption in relation to urban planning primarily arise when discussing the effectiveness of transportation systems, increasing walkability, public transportation, reducing car trips, and mixed-use zoning. These strategies reveal themselves in urban form to some degree but we find in our work that form is largely determined by other factors such as urban hydrology and the creation of habitats for biodiversity. If you look at all these things together, infrastructure becomes a rather poor word for creating systems where life can thrive. It's an engineering term when it needs to be poetry somehow.

Schwitter: So are we trying to regain greenfields?

Perry: If we are trying to set standards and long term goals for which we aspire and by which we can measure levels of sustainability, then the greenfield is the place to start. If we can have a city that has as much biological diversity, rainfall runoff, and microclimate as the greenfield it replaced, then we have achieved 100% sustainability for each of those particular items. How we do that in a situation where thousands of people occupy one square kilometer is the real challenge.

guidelines versus legislation

Schwitter: I find "guidelines" to be a perfect word to approach institutions and agencies with as a way to say, "this is a good idea if you choose to do it." In Europe the approach is different. It is much more top-heavy and is based on regulations rather than guidelines. What is the key to getting these guidelines, or suggestions, implemented?

Hillary Brown: I would say the key is to find champions. We know that champions exist and are imbedded in bureaucratic culture. There are always individuals with vision and talent with whom the principles of sustainability resonate. For me the learning curve of any set of guidelines is achieving a shift in the culture of an organization. It is possible to change the mindset of an organization by offering them information then letting them put that into their own language. That is the primary way to achieve buy-in from a client.

Behnisch: It is a process, and with government agencies it is usually a slow process. Most champions are at mid-level rather than top-level so information has to filter up to positions of authority.

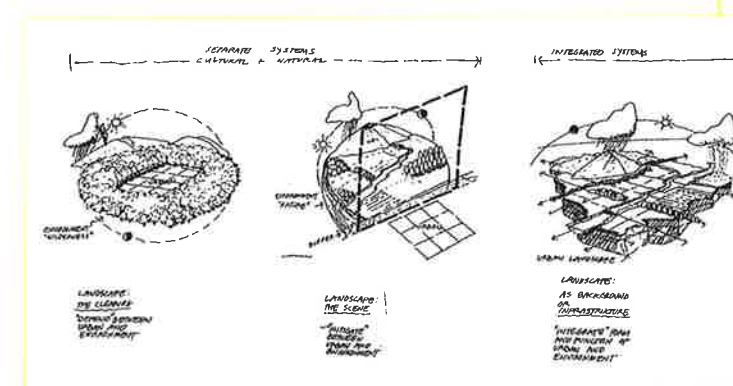
In Europe there are legislations being developed but they mostly concern energy use and the quantitative aspects rather than the qualitative aspects of sustainability. We don't have anything like the LEED system in the States that rates green buildings. It is not perfect but it is a holistic process that works on a voluntary basis.

McLaughlin: The difference between how you sell sustainability to North America and Europe is interesting. Europeans feel a responsibility to environmental issues so it is easier to convince them that sustainable design, planning and engineering is the right thing to do. In Europe, we have some regulations such as the BRE Environmental Assessment Method, which reviews and improves the environmental performance of buildings.

the public/private debate

Behnisch: In Germany, infrastructure is being privatized. The main problem with privatization is that it doesn't provide the same service at the same price for everybody. Infrastructure is inherently a public good and was paid for with money from public taxes. Making infrastructure profitable is an idea that does not really serve society because in the end it doesn't provide equal service for all.

William R. Morrish: Who is going to plan, build and maintain our local and global infrastructure? This is the question facing corporations, cities, and nations. The Reagan/Thatcher era promoted



LANDSCAPE INTEGRATION SKETCHES
IMAGE: WILLIAM MORRISH

privatization and devolution of centralized governmental structures, which has had two effects: the federal government has in effect abrogated their responsibility, passing down unfunded infrastructure mandates to local agencies or to corporations, two entities who have little desire or experience to collaborate, at a time when interconnectedness and ecological functions are central issues to infrastructure building. It is not clear who leads, who gets access, and what quality of life this infrastructure system will support.

Michael Fishman: What happened to public/private partnerships? This sounds like a problem of polarization. It's not an either/or solution in my mind.

Adam Hinge: In New York, a great ex-ample is Governors Island. Water transportation has been privatized, and therefore, New York Waterways is not receiving public subsidies. This is generating interesting policy debates about how people should be getting to the island.

creating density

Vishaan Chakrabarti: We are in a "grow or die" environment—sustainability is often placed in opposition to the concept of growth. We need to understand how to grow in a sustainable way. I think density is one of the best things we can do for the environment.

Schwitzer: If you are saying sustainability is a grow or die concept and is therefore motivating multiple parallel agencies at the same time, what motivates the Department of City Planning versus the Department of Environmental Protection versus the Landmarks Preservation Commission?

Chakrabarti: I can only speak for the New York City Department of City Planning. The problem starts when you get to the State and City level. For example, for a project such as the Hudson Yards redevelopment in New York City, the hard part is mustering the political will to get Upper West Siders to say: "there will be more traffic on the West Side and that's good for all of us." When the opposing factions to a plan describe the negative implications of the development of Hudson Yards as more "traffic and people on the West Side—like Midtown Manhattan during holiday shopping," we all stand up and give a resounding cheer! At a certain point you have to have the confidence to say that's right and that's good.

Hinge: Is the question really grow or die? Can it be evolve or die?

Behnisch: I don't think it's grow or die. I think it's very simple—it's growing. Cities today are growing all over the world and there's nothing we can do but cope with it and manage them as best as possible.



TOP LAS VEGAS RECREATIONAL PARK MASTER PLAN BOTTOM LAS VEGAS RECREATIONAL PARK MODEL, IMAGES: BEHNISCH, BEHNISCH & PARTNERS

Chakrabarti: There is a split in places where there is unbridled growth as in China and India, but this is not happening in older cities in North America and Europe. There are a lot of people who are comfortable with the way things are and don't want a city to grow or develop or change.

the question of open space

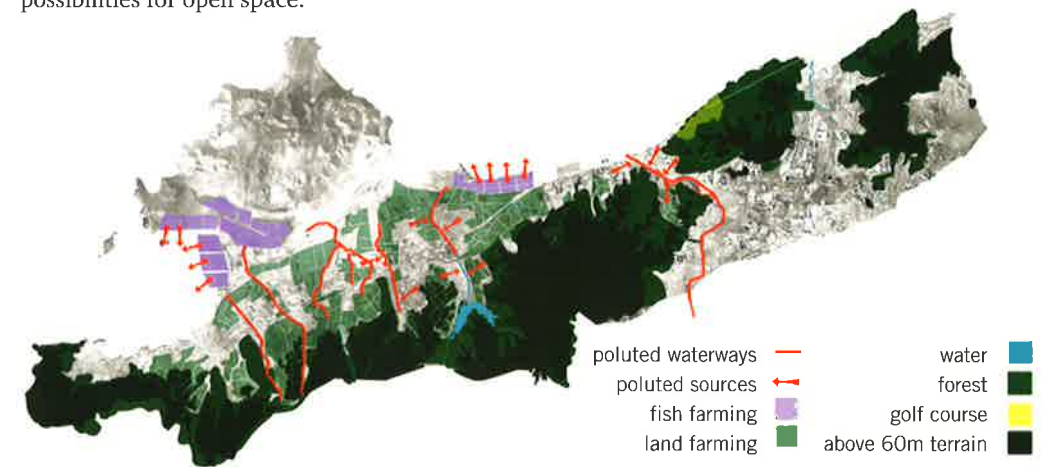
Martha Schwartz: The green areas between buildings in planning projects continue to be the least discussed component of master plans. We are still getting ambiguous, ambivalent green areas at bottom of the buildings. These can be dangerous and desperate spaces that nobody cares about, nobody uses and nobody maintains.

Louis Becker: I agree. There is not enough said about public green space in the sustainability debate. Often green spaces mean traditional city parks which are sometimes completely public. For our concept for the NYC2012 Olympic Village project, the areas around the canal have a complex mix of public and private buildings where people can meet and mingle. It's a three dimensional way of thinking which allows for semi-private space that the public has access to.

Schwartz: Yes, but these spaces need to be designed so it is clear who owns them. People tend to love and cherish something that is their own. Could some of the allocated green space become more private? Do we really need all this public green space?

Denzil Gallagher: Much of the problem is that most architecture doesn't even begin to engage with the landscape. Stefan does this very well with his buildings. He really engages the landscape both inside and out. It is something that is really lacking in New York.

Morrish: You raise an interesting point, Martha. We need to redefine what we mean by open space. This can be a more complex and productive term, representing a mosaic of varying private, semi-public and public activities. In the past open space was land set aside for open grazing of a community's livestock. Hopefully this term will be redefined to incorporate a richer interconnection of cultures, habitats (including people), and ecological flows so we can really understand the possibilities for open space.



DALIAN, CHINA MASTER PLAN, IMAGE: HENNING LARSENS TEGNESTUE



the good life

IN PREPARATION FOR VAI'S SPRING 2006 EXHIBITION, *THE GOOD LIFE*, WHICH EXPLORES 21ST CENTURY RECREATION AND PUBLIC SPACE WE ASKED A DISTINGUISHED GROUP OF ADVISORS WHAT THEY FIND FUN IN THE CITY...

ANNE PASTERNAK, DIRECTOR, CREATIVE TIME

Coney Island is fun because it's not the kind of New York that you experience on a day to day basis if you're working or living in Manhattan. Going to a Mets game last summer was really fun. It was the first time I had gone to a baseball game and I loved screaming out loud in public. I realized we don't have many opportunities to scream out loud and express ourselves unless we're yelling at somebody on the bus or the subway. Density is also fun. That visceral confrontation is totally engaging and overwhelming.

PAOLA ANTONELLI, CURATOR, DEPARTMENT OF ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN, MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

My idea of fun is not very adrenaline inducing. For instance, I love to be in a window seat on a public bus, not a tourist bus, in a city that I don't know. To me that's exciting. It's the surprise or the absorption in seeing something new.

DEEDEE GORDON, CO-PRESIDENT AND CO-FOUNDER OF LOOK-LOOK, INC. AND CO-PUBLISHER OF LOOK-LOOK MAGAZINE

Traveling on the subway and listening to other people's conversations is fun, especially in New York.

SUSAN RODRIGUEZ, PARTNER, POLSHEK PARTNERSHIP

Fun is about timing. Cities are fun because they allow for unexpected encounters and activities that are often very difficult or impossible to plan.

NATALIE JEREMIJENKO, ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF VISUAL ARTS, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO

I think fun places are those that aren't scripted and framed by consumption alone.

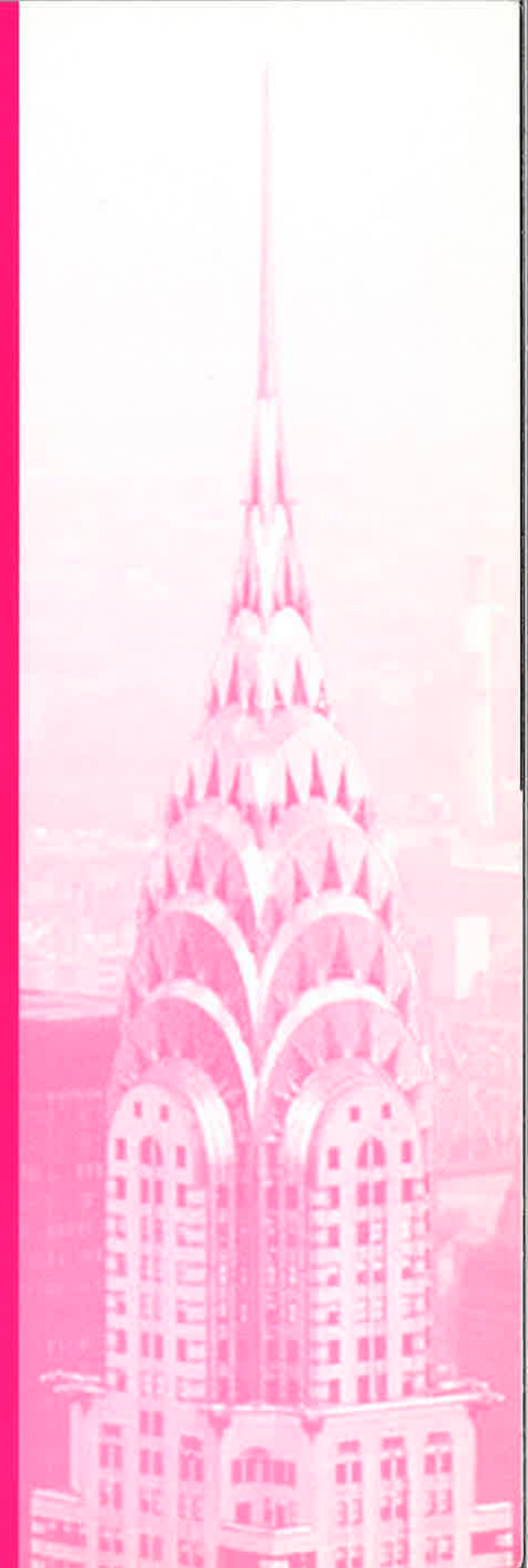
DAN WOOD, PARTNER, WORK ARCHITECTURE COMPANY

I think something is fun only when it's a unique experience. For me the unexpected object or activity in a city is fun, not things you do all the time. At the point at which something starts to be duplicated it's no longer fun. That happens with games too, even video games. Once you've mastered it and you're good at it, it's no fun anymore.

CONCEPT DESIGN FOR A TIMES SQUARE MEDIA OUTPOST BY WORK ARCHITECTURE COMPANY WITH K48 ARTISTS COLLABORATIVE
PHOTO: WORK ARCHITECTURE COMPANY / CREATIVE TIME

20th century history

Last year, the Institute celebrated one hundred years of awarding prizes to emerging architects. To mark this occasion, we recently established the **NEW YORK PRIZE** to further underscore the critical importance of design in improving the urban public realm. The \$10,000 award will be given this year to the winner of The Parachute Pavilion Open Design Competition for Coney Island. The winner will be invited to develop a project that will form part of the Institute's programs for 2005. Since the **PARIS PRIZE**, the Institute's first award, given in 1904, VAI has continued to be committed to providing opportunities for designers to research and develop ideas to further the understanding and innovation of the design of the public realm. Here are some of the highlights, which not only tell the story of our fellowships and prizes but also VAI's 100-year history.



The **PARIS PRIZE** (1904-1963), awarded by the former Society of Beaux-Arts Architects, VAI's predecessor, entitled an architect to enroll in the First Class of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts and also provided a \$3,000 stipend, raised to \$5,000 in the 1960s.

In 1926, the Paris Prize Fund was completely endowed and named in honor of Lloyd Warren, President of the Society of Beaux-Arts. In 1908, **WILLIAM VAN ALEN** won the Paris Prize with a design for a theater. He went on to design the City's landmark Chrysler Building, opened in 1930, and subsequently became the Institute's namesake in 1996. Other recipients have continued to have significant impact on architecture, education, and the public realm. These include **DOUGLAS ELLINGTON** (1911), a professor and the first American to win the Prix de Rougevin; **PERCIVAL GOODMAN** (1925), a professor and master draftsman who designed more than 50 temples in the United States; **LAWRENCE B. ANDERSON** (1930), dean of MIT's School of Architecture and Urban Planning from 1965-1972 and designer of the MIT Alumni Building in 1940; **MICHAEL MANFREDI** (1975), a VAI trustee and partner at Weiss/Manfredi Architects and winner of a 2004 Academy Award in Architecture by the American Academy of Arts and Letters, and Matthew Baird (1992), a professor and principal of Matthew Baird Architects.

VAI's **DINKELOO FELLOWSHIP**, first awarded in 1978, is a biannual prize given to recent design graduates or students completing their degrees during the year of the prize. The fellowship includes a two-month residency at the American Academy in Rome and a \$4,000 travel grant. Recipients develop a research project on a theme related to the Institute's projects. Previous winners include **ELIZABETH DILLER** (1980), of Diller Scofidio + Renfro, also the recipient of the 1990 MacArthur Foundation Award, the first

for architecture. Additional fellows include architects **BRAIN HEALY** (1982) and **ALEXANDER C. GORLIN** (1983), and **NICHOLAS DE MONCHAUX**, an assistant professor at University of Virginia's School of Architecture.

Other Van Alen fellowships have provided grants for research by **JESSE REISER** and **NANAKO UMEMOTO** for the East River Corridor Project in 1998 as well as **LEWIS.TSURUMAKI.LEWIS ARCHITECTS** who developed VAI's Architecture + Water exhibition in 2001.

A century-on and the Institute continues to develop opportunities for designers to inform the future of architecture and the built environment. Check back this summer for more news about VAI's **NEW YORK PRIZE**.

ELIZA KOSHLAND VAI Project Intern

RTB.30

INSTITUTE STAFF

Senior Program Manager, Design Competitions + Special Projects
JONATHAN COHEN-LITANT

Associate Director, Administration + Development
KATHERINE ROMERO

Senior Curator & Editor, Van Alen Report
ZOË RYAN

Program & Administration
BEATRICE DEMIRJIAN
ARI DURAKU
MARCUS WOOLLEN

Research Assistant
KAREN KICE
Coney Island Competition Assistant
LINDA ROBY
Civic Exchange Exhibition Designer
INEZ SUEN

VAI Project Interns
CAROLYN ACEVEDO, KAREN CHIN,
ELIZA KOSHLAND, EVA CHRISTINA VELA

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Chair
SHERIDA E. PAULSEN

First Vice-Chair
SUSAN T. RODRIGUEZ

Second Vice-Chair
DIANA BALMORI

Treasurer
CRAIG SCHWITTER

Secretary
MARC TSURUMAKI

JANET ABRAMS
STAN ALLEN
PAOLA ANTONELLI
KADAMBARI BAXI
BYRON BELL
MICHAEL BELL
ANDREW H. DARRELL
ROBERT S. DAVIS
SUSAN E. FINE
LISA FRIGAND
LESLIE GILL
RICHARD GLUCKMAN
ABBY HAMLIN
GEORGE LEVENTIS
KEVIN LIPPERT
MICHAEL A. MANFREDI
MICHAEL ROCK
PETER SLATIN
PETER WOLF

THE INSTITUTE GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGES ITS MAJOR SUPPORTERS:

BENEFACTORS: Kadambari Baxi, Michael Bell, Elizabeth & James Chandler, CK Architect P.C., Columbia University, Robert Davis, Empire State Development Corporation, Fosdick Fund, Robert Fox, Jr., Mildred Friedman, Leila Gastil, Hanrahan & Meyers Architects, Kaehler/Moore LLC, New York Building Congress, Randy Polumbo, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Rogers Marvel Architects, Steven Spinola, USM Modular Furniture, Pennell Whitney, Peter Wolf

SUSTAINING BENEFACTORS: Balmori Associates, Cornell University, Fox & Fowle Architects, Leslie Gill Architect, Stephan Jaklitsch Design, Wendy Evans Joseph Architect P.C., Leslie Klein, George Leventis, Thomas Phifer & Partners, Weiss/Manfredi Architects

GRANTORS AND PATRONS: Consolidated Edison Company of New York, Gluckman Mayner Architects, Stephen A. & Diana L. Goldberg Foundation, The Independence Community Foundation, Elise Jaffe + Jeffrey Brown, KeySpan Energy, Kohn Pedersen Fox Associates P.C., National Endowment for the Arts, New York State Council on the Arts, Polshek Partnership Architects, Susan T. Rodriguez, Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, LLP, Target Stores